

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 12, 1999**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of September 14, 1999 were approved with the following amendment: Illy Sobel clarified that PennDOT is weighing US 202 Bus Service; they have not yet given their support. This statement should replace a sentence in the minutes that states that "bus service has been discussed at the PennDOT 202 Executive Committee meeting and there is support for the concept."

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Dennis Winters, RCC Chair, stated that RCC policy calls for the appointment of a **Nominating Committee** in October for the purpose of proposing candidates for RCC Chair in calendar year 2000. He declared that procedures state: the Nominating Committee shall consist of five (5) members; the RCC Chair shall call for volunteers from the floor and make initial appointments, keeping in mind that consideration should be given to equal geographic representation; a motion to accept the Chair's appointments should follow from the floor; if a motion is not forthcoming, the Chair shall submit a new slate. Winters then asked for volunteers for the committee.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Illy Sobel, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to approve the following volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee for RCC Chair: Sue McNamara, Bob Machler, Illy Sobel, Cathy Zukoski and Finley Shapiro.

MOTION CARRIED.

Winters pointed out that he hopes the Nominating Committee will propose an individual or individuals who will carry on the tradition of democratic procedures that have become standard in RCC meetings; someone who is a good communicator and able to convey RCC concerns to the DVRPC Board; and someone who can commit the necessary time.

Winters then outlined a letter that had been sent to the DVRPC Board regarding **Venice Island**; copies were forwarded to RCC members.

The letter urged DVRPC to implement an environmental cost-benefit review policy for land use and development proposed within floodplains in the Delaware Valley. The Board referred the issue to its newly formed Land Use and Development Committee. Winters pointed out that the RCC has a seat on this committee, and he urged anyone with an interest in this issue to attend future meetings. Darlene Messina distributed photos of the flooding caused in the area by tropical storm Floyd, and stated that a document issued by the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) in 1996 encourages DVRPC's role in more environmental planning.

Dennis Winters then outlined his concerns with the **US 202 (Section 300) Categorical Exclusion** which he pointed out is the lowest form of environmental review by the federal government. He stated that he had been told by DVRPC staff that the 202 study had been forwarded to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and once approved, would be released to the public. There is no document to be reviewed at this time. The chairman stated that he is deeply concerned that the RCC has established an Environmental Subcommittee for the purpose of reviewing such documents, and then is not given the opportunity to do so. He has sent a letter to FHWA, with carbon copies to DVRPC, protesting this situation and will inform the RCC is he receives a response.

Winters reviewed the Staff Summary of the Board's Response to RCC Recommendations. In regard to the US 202 Bus Service recommendation, Illy Sobel felt that the Board was not fully apprised of all available information on this issue and would like to make a presentation to them. Candace Snyder will present this option to John Coscia for his response.

The RCC then considered **Proposed Meeting Dates for the Year 2000**. Because the Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) has shifted its meeting dates to many of the days when the RCC would normally meet, the committee will have to move to the third Tuesday through most of 2000. There are a few exceptions when the RCC will meet on the second Tuesday. The dates are as follows: January 11; February 15; March 14; April 18; May 16; June 13; July 18; August to be determined; September 19; October 17; November 21; and December to be determined.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Claudia Crane, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to adopt the proposed schedule of meeting dates as listed above.

MOTION CARRIED.

TIP AMENDMENT 9921:

Sue McNamara, Transportation Subcommittee Chair, reported on TIP Amendment 9921. The DVRPC TIP for Pennsylvania includes a Bicycle Mobility Improvements line item programmed with \$4.957 million (\$3.966 million CMAQ). Its purpose is to fund on-road bicycle projects in the four suburban counties (a separate project covers Philadelphia). Montgomery County has submitted a proposal to add five projects to the TIP under this line item, totalling \$1.934 million in CMAQ funds. Of approved, \$2.032 million in CMAQ funds would remain in the line item for additional projects. The Montgomery County projects include: Hatfield Township, Limerick Township, Lower Salford Township, Towamencin Township and Upper Merion Township Bicycle Mobility Improvements. The Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) approved the amendment and scheduled an information meeting for any other counties that are not up to date on this line item.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Bob Machler) that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Amendment 9921, Montgomery County’s request for Bicycle Mobility Improvement Projects.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item A on voting record.)

TIP AMENDMENT 9922:

Ms. McNamara reported on TIP Amendment 9922. PennDOT, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia, has requested a series of adjustments to the TIP to accommodate one new project and a cost increase on another. These include:

Mast Arm Evaluation -- The total cost for this phase is \$150,000. The purpose is to evaluate the current signal mast arms, many of which are 20 to 30 years old, to determine remaining useful life and condition. Remedial efforts and possible pole materials will be reviewed.

Washington Ave. Signal Corridor -- This project is currently programmed for construction in FY 2000 with \$4 million. An additional \$1.8 million will be needed for sidewalk widening to decrease the crossing distance for pedestrians, and additional drainage work.

The RTC approved this amendment.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Ernest Cohen) that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Amendment 9922, PennDOT's request to accommodate one new project and costs increases to two other projects.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item B on voting record.)

NEW JERSEY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING:

Ms. McNamara outlined the New Jersey Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that Chick Dougherty had presented to the RTC. She pointed out that the purpose of the MOU is to establish procedures for changing the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) after adoption by DVRPC and approval by the Governor, and for changing the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) after approval by the federal government. The approved TIP/STIP may be amended or modified in order to add new projects, delete projects, move projects among the three years of the program, make cost and phase of work changes and accommodate major scope changes to a project. Fiscal constraint must, however, be maintained at all times. The MOU is an agreement between DVRPC, NJDOT and NJTRANSIT, which establishes classes of amendments/modifications for the purpose of public participation and committee review; as well as for those requiring administrative action only. Dennis Winters pointed out that he saw little change from the last MOU.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Lorraine Brill) that the DVRPC Board approve the New Jersey Memorandum of Understanding.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item C on voting record.)

PENNVEST APPLICATION FROM MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP (BUCKS COUNTY):

Barry Seymour, DVRPC Assistant Executive Director for Regional Planning, outlined a PennVest application received from Bucks County for Middletown Township. The application includes a number of proposed stormwater projects which will address flooding that has occurred in various neighborhoods in the area. A feasibility study was performed to evaluate the stormwater and flooding concerns of residents, and to determine appropriate methods of addressing these concerns. The proposed storm water facilities, storm sewers, and bank stabilization projects will reduce flooding, erosion, and infiltration in the sanitary sewers.

Specifically, the projects include a bermed area within Core Creek Park; stabilization of an

area along a tributary of Neshaminy Creek known as Chub Run; and a dam that was proposed as a result of a flood management study. An impact analysis was also completed and showed that no existing vegetation would be disturbed. The proposed projects are all within the Neshaminy Creek Watershed. Bucks County has completed and adopted an Act 167 Storm Water Management Plan for this area. In addition, Middletown township has adopted the ordinance required by the Act 167 plan. Permits or approvals are being obtained from the Bucks County Conservation District, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (DER) and the Army Corps of Engineers for the various projects.

The RCC questioned whether these projects are consistent with the Year 2020 Long-Range Plan, and whether years of development have contributed to the current situation. Seymour answered that development upstream from this location has definitely impacted this area. Illy Sobel stated that he feels approval of an application should be contingent upon the county or township having tighter control in the future over development. Seymour stated that consistency with environmental permits has been the only control PennVest has invoked in the past. However, Governor Ridge has talked about putting such additional controls in place. Patrick Starr pointed out that the township has adopted a plan and ordinance, and therefore have looked at the impact of future development. Municipalities are mandated to adopt this plan and they may be trying to correct past mistakes. The committee also discussed the fact that this area does not show up on a FEMA map; the sedimentation issue; “soft” alternatives such as the planting of trees and vegetation; and the type of facility proposed for the dam.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Illy Sobel, seconded by Bob Machler) to recommend that the DVRPC Board not approve the Middletown Township application until more information is available regarding the impact of additional planned development.

MOTION WAS LATER WITHDRAWN.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE

MOTION (by Patrick Starr, seconded by Darlene Messina that the DVRPC Board approve streambank stabilization as follows: approval should be given to the stream stabilization project along Chub Run between Lincoln Highway (Route 1) and Eastbrook Ave., as well as to the Core Creek berm project. However, the proposed dam project should not be approved pending clarification of design details and consideration of a watershed-based management approach.

In addition, future development should not be allowed to impinge on this area.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item D on voting record.)

DVRPC PARTICIPATION IN AMICUS BRIEF RE: WINGS AIRPORT PUBLIC FUNDING:

Roger Moog, DVRPC Manager of the Office of Aviation Planning, explained the Regional Aviation System Plan (RASP) recommended in 1995 that Wings Field in Whitpain Township (Montgomery County) be publicly acquired so that it could be kept as a public use airport. It was privately owned at that time. The owners subsequently wanted to sell the airport; Mario Mele, Chairman of the Montgomery County Commissioners, formed an airport authority to look into the county's purchase of the facility. Neighbors near the airport consequently formed a group to put political pressure on the county and township, and thus caused the county to drop the idea. In time, a group of private citizens and businesses, known as Wings Preservation Associates, raised \$10 million and purchased Wings. This group planned to extend the runway at the field for safety reasons, not to allow larger planes to use the field. However, neighbors opposed this as well as the frequency with which helicopters were taking off and landing at the facility.

These residents also contacted their legislators, who attached a rider to an annual budget bill without the knowledge of PennDOT; this bill placed veto power over any proposed change at Wings Field in the hands of the township. This is the only county in the state with this control. Because PennDOT administers state and federal aviation funds for airport facilities, Wings Airport owners believe that the township should not have the extraordinary ability to limit airport development. PennDOT has been unable to process funding for Wings because of this legislation. (Moog pointed out that these funds are collected from aviation users, and are not tax dollars.) At the same time, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has funded a master plan to design the Wings runway and conduct an environmental assessment. Noise from helicopters and planes would decrease if the runway extension is built, and no unmitigatable environmental impact was identified. Wings has been negotiating with its neighbors and the township but the township continues to deny approval for the runway extension.

The owners of Wings have therefore filed suit against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on the basis that this legislation is unconstitutional because it binds them from normal competition for public capital funds and because no other county in the state has such legislation in place. The suit is pending in the state courts, and has been postponed until late October.

A number of organizations in Washington, D.C. -- the Aircraft Owners and Pilots

Association (AOPA), the National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA) and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) -- have filed an amicus brief in support of the Wings lawsuit, stating that such legislation could eventually shut down other small airports around the country. AOPA has asked DVRPC to take part in the brief as a named party. This request came in September, and DVRPC's attorneys have since been reviewing the issue. Moog stated that he has not seen the amicus brief and is waiting for the attorneys to make a recommendation. Staff is recommending that the Commission participate as a named party. The RCC discussed the appearance of signing on to a brief that has been written by national lobbying groups, and whether DVRPC should file its own brief. They also questioned whether they should take a stand on an issue that DVRPC's attorneys have yet to comment on. The committee then discussed the need for these small airports as a means of economic development, and as relievers for Philadelphia International Airport. They also discussed the safety issue. Kevin Smith stated that he doesn't agree with this philosophy and doesn't believe that airplanes will be the transportation mode of the future. J.D. Scott stated that he lives in Whippen Township and is aware of the situation. The airport was operating long before the neighbors moved in.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Claudia Crane, seconded by Rikki Saunders) to recommend that DVRPC not participate in the amicus brief regarding Wings Airport Public funding as filed by various Washington D.C.-based organizations. If DVRPC chooses to file its own amicus brief, the RCC requests that it be forwarded to various DVRPC committees for review.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item E on voting record.)

DRAFT DVRPC FY 2001 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM :

Ben Ginsberg, DVRPC Regional Planner, stated that work has begun on DVRPC's FY 2001 Work Program. He pointed out a number of general assumptions regarding future funding, noting that no increase is expected from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA); an approximate 3% increase in planning funds is expected from PennDOT; and approximately 9.8% more is expected from NJDOT. Ginsberg highlighted the themes that will mark the FY 2001 program; namely the Long-Range Plan; Corridor Studies; Public Outreach and Coalition Building; Public Transportation; Transportation and Land use; Transportation and Economic Development; Intelligent Transportation Systems; Data and Technical Assistance; and Regional GIS and Aerial Photographs.

The schedule for Work Program development is as follows: the Work Program Committee

will meet on October 28th to review all comments to date; on November 4th to finalize projects and priorities that will serve as the draft plan document; and on December 3rd to seek approval from the Board to authorize distribution of the document.

John Dawson, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, updated the committee on the Regional Rail Improvement Program, which the RCC had been instrumental in placing in the previous Work Program. The goal of the current study is to improve the efficiency of the region's public transportation system by strengthening the competitiveness of SEPTA's Regional Rail Lines. The study will examine the potential for raising speeds and reducing travel time on a selected SEPTA rail line. DVRPC will form a Technical Advisory Committee to oversee the study and provide technical direction. A consultant team will be hired to review historic trends with respect to average speeds, to examine all aspects of rail operations that affect time travel and on-time performance, and to recommend improvements with costs and benefits. The project is currently funded at \$100,000, but no funding source has yet been identified. Dawson pointed out that the Doylestown Line will be studied first, with the other end of the R-5 line to probably be studied next. Separate studies will examine parking and fare collection.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Finley Shapiro, seconded by Rikki Saunders) to urge the Work Program Committee to include the Regional Rail Improvement Study in DVRPC's FY 2001 Planning Work Program.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item F on voting record.)

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Kevin Smith, seconded by Cathy Zukoski) that the Regional Rail Improvement Study also examine the frequency of service and late night service.

MOTION FAILED.

Sue McNamara presented three projects for the RCC's endorsement and for inclusion in the FY 2001 Work Program. They include:

BICYCLE MOBILITY MAP:

The City of Philadelphia will be publishing a bicycle map to inform citizens about the Philadelphia Bike Network, and to educate people about using the system safely.

Included will be a map of on-road bike lanes, bike paths, bike parking, bicycle laws, and

tips about how to bicycle safely on city streets. However, no current regional bicycle map exists. A bicycle map that does all of the above for the entire Delaware Valley, and serves as a companion piece to the Philadelphia map, would provide excellent access and information to citizens wanting to travel by bike to work, school, recreational activities or shopping throughout the region. Projected Cost: \$100,000

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRAVEL FORECASTING:

As part of the Travel Simulation Model Enhancement Program, Cambridge Systematics prepared a new component of the DVRPC travel simulation model. This model prepares estimates of the number of work and non-work related pedestrian and bicycle trips for each traffic analysis zone within the region. DVRPC's current travel simulation model does not consider these non-motorized travel modes, although TEA-21 legislation recommends including them. This project will apply this model to the entire region. Such pedestrian and bicycle travel data will be essential for ongoing planning activities conducted by DVRPC and member governments. Projected Cost: To be determined

BIKE PARKING AT TRANSIT STATION INVENTORY:

One of the key components in promoting intermodal bicycle/transit trips is to provide adequate, safe bicycle parking at transit stations. Currently, the availability of bike parking is spotty, with some stations providing full amenities (lockers and/or secure, protected racks) and some providing none. This forces many customers to lock their bikes to nearby signs and fences. SEPTA is not aware of the bike parking facilities (or lack thereof) at many of its stations. A thorough inventory, tracked by a database (such as NJ Transit does) and available at the SEPTA Web site or through SEPTA customer service, would be a valuable resource to customers who want to take SEPTA but leave their cars at home. Projected Cost: \$35,000

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to urge the Work Program Committee to include the Bicycle Mobility Map in DVRPC's FY 2001 Planning Work Program.

MOTION CARRIED.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to urge the Work Program Committee to include Pedestrian and Bicycle Forecasting in DVRPC's FY 2001 Planning Work Program.

MOTION CARRIED. (*NOTE: This project is in the DVRPC FY 2000 Planning Work Program and therefore will not be added to the list of RCC FY 2001 recommendations that will be sent to the Work Program Committee.*)

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to urge the Work Program Committee to include the Bike Parking at Transit Stations Inventory in DVRPC's FY 2001 Planning Work Program.

MOTION CARRIED.

Patrick Starr proposed the inclusion of a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Development Opportunity Inventory in the FY 2001 Work Program. This program would minimize traffic volume and congestion, in part, through greater use of the existing regional mass transit network. Creating activity centers in and around rail stations for housing, employment or shopping can capitalize on this means of travel and can help to reduce automobile trips. This project would compile an inventory of sites ripe for TOD and include a brief analysis of steps necessary to make TOD happen at each site. This would follow up on the CMAQ funded TOD work organized by PEC, and could be the prelude to a future project working with supportive municipalities and transit providers on implementation. Projected Cost: \$75,000

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Patrick Starr, seconded by Bob Machler) to urge the Work Program Committee to include a Regional Transit-Oriented Development Opportunity Inventory in DVRPC's FY 2001 Planning Work Program.

MOTION CARRIED.

PA TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECT SELECTION PROCESS:

John Madera, DVRPC Transportation Planner, reported that PennDOT is in the second of three rounds of Transportation Enhancement (TE) funding and will disperse approximately \$120 million. PennDOT is expected to announce funding targets as well as regional decision-making responsibility in mid-November. TE projects are those that are somewhat non-traditional, such as the restoration of historic train stations, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, signage, landscaping to improve transportation projects, etc. Currently, DVRPC staff is recommending that county and city planning staffs prioritize all projects within their respective jurisdiction. Projects will be ranked high to low, and evaluated based on the responses to questions in the application forms. DVRPC staff will then combine these priorities into a regional list for review by the RTC's PA Subcommittee. The RCC has been asked to review all applications as well.

Madera reviewed the time scheduled which is as follows:

1999:

10/29	Applications due
11/2	Copies of applications distributed to counties, RCC
November	Counties, RCC rank applications
December	Priorities reconciled through RTC PA Subcommittee

2000:

1/4	RTC approval
1/11	RCC approval
1/27	DVRPC Board approval
2/1	Priority List to PennDOT

Dennis Winters voiced his concern that each county and city will push through their own projects, and those projects submitted by organizations will be lost in the ranking. He also feels that this is an unworkable schedule and that the procedure abandons a significant and fair critiquing of applications. He recommended that the CMAQ Committee, which has RCC representation, review and rank the applications. The RCC has no procedure in place to review more than 100 applications. If staff does not agree with the CMAQ suggestion, the RCC will probably have to designate that the Transportation Subcommittee hold a special meeting to review TE applications.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Transportation: No additional report.

Legislative/Environmental: Cathy Zukoski reported that the subcommittee discussed the US 202 (Section 300) Categorical Exclusion, Venice Island and the PennVest

application from Middletown Township.

Rules: No report.

Year 2025: No report.

Housing: No report.

US 202 (Section 100) Bus Service: Illy Sobel asked that the following report be included in the minutes:

The RCC resolution of September 14, 1999, asking that the DVRPC Board endorse the pursuit of quality bus service on 202, was related to the Board by Chairman Dennis Winters. Very few of the characteristics of the service were provided for the Board's consideration. There was a limited discussion of the matter and the board decided to take no action.

The PennDOT Office in Harrisburg reported that the subject is being pursued from their side. All concerned agencies are being contacted and briefed to take part in discussing and planning the service.

Don Shanis of DVRPC was contacted by Larry King's Office at PennDOT, and was informed that consideration was being given to studying and eventually implementing the service.

A question remains as to whether full information should be presented to the DVRPC Board in the near future, as a means of seeking approval of the project. This would put more emphasis on the Bus Project and permit the DVRPC staff, as well as Chester and Delaware county personnel, to participate fully.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Candace Snyder reported that DVRPC has scheduled four Year 2025 Workshops and urged the RCC to participate. They are scheduled for October 28 in Valley Forge, PA; November 4th in Glasboro, NJ; November 9th in Philadelphia; and November 15th in Burlington City, NJ.