

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
JANUARY 11, 2000**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of November 23, 1999 were approved as mailed.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Sue McNamara, RCC Chair, thanked Dennis Winters for his tenure as Chair and for increasing the RCC's credibility.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by John Pawson, seconded by Bob Machler) to officially thank Dennis Winters for his work and efforts on behalf of the RCC.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. McNamara stated that she sees her role as RCC Chair as a taxpayer's voice. She also addressed expanding the RCC's membership. She emphasized that each RCC member should look within his or her own organization for additional members. She urged members to make use of the new DVRPC Citizen's Guide, which she cited for its excellence. Ms. McNamara emphasized her priority of keeping the meetings shorter, and using a method of allowing 15 minutes of discussion per action item; the assembly must then vote to add another 15 minutes of discussion time. The RCC agreed with this concept.

APPOINTMENT OF RCC OFFICERS:

Ms. McNamara proposed the following appointments for RCC officers: Cathy Zukoski, PA Vice Chair; Peggy Killmer, NJ Vice Chair; and Dennis Winters, RTC Representative. Don Nigro questioned Cathy Zukoski's eligibility to run for Vice Chair, questioning whether the three-year term limit applies to Vice chairs. (**NOTE:** In checking the RCC Rules, as adopted in 1997, the following applies: *The terms of all officers shall be limited to three consecutive complete terms.* In addition, in checking RCC records, Cathy Zukoski has served two previous terms as Vice Chair and is eligible to run in 2000. Vice Chairs in 1997 were Lorraine Brill and June Morton.)

Ms. McNamara also stated her belief that the RTC Representative and Transportation Subcommittee Chair should be one and the same person for continuity.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Finley Shapiro, seconded by Dennis Winters) to ask the Rules Subcommittee to meet to discuss, along with any other business it might have, the issue of whether the RTC Representative and the Transportation Subcommittee Chair should be one and the same person.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ms. McNamara opened the floor for other nominations for the positions of PA and NJ Vice Chairs and RTC Representative. There being no other nominations, the Chair closed the floor. She called for a vote on the nominees. The RCC concurred with the nominees unanimously.

Ms. McNamara called for nominations for the position of RTC Alternate. Lorraine Brill nominated Pat Horrocks for RTC Alternate. There were no other nominees, and the RCC concurred on this appointment.

TIP AMENDMENT 9927:

Dennis Winters, representing the Transportation Subcommittee, outlined TIP Amendment 9927, which is a request from the City of Philadelphia, for a number of projects, the majority of which are bridge replacements. These projects are included in PennDOT's 12-Year Program and they need to be added to the TIP for consistency. The projects include the Montgomery Avenue Bridge over Amtrak tracks; the Sedgley Avenue Bridge over Conrail tracks; the 59th Street bridge over Amtrak tracks; the Ontario Street Bridge over Conrail tracks; the Hunting Park Avenue Bridge over Conrail tracks; the Erie Avenue Bridge over Conrail tracks; and the Rising Sun Avenue Bridge over Conrail tracks. Funding for these projects, at a total of \$900,000 will be provided from two current TIP projects which have been de-obligated. These projects are TIP 9752 and TIP 9753. The subcommittee recommends approval of TIP Amendment 9927. The RCC discussed the future of abandoned rail lines.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Amendment 9927, the City of Philadelphia's request to amend the TIP to add preliminary engineering phases to seven bridges.

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

TIP AMENDMENT 9928:

Winters reported that TIP Amendment 9928 is a request from Bucks County to amend the TIP to utilize the Bicycle Mobility Program funds. This placeholder reserves dollars for projects identified by the counties and is currently down to under \$1 million. Bucks County has targeted two projects in Lower Makefield Township; namely, the Yardley Borough/Lower Makefield Pedestrian/Bikeway Interconnect Project, and Lower Makefield Pedestrian/Bikepath Facilities. CMAQ funds totaling \$1.424 million will be added to the local match for these projects. The subcommittee recommends approval of TIP Amendment 9928. The RCC discussed the need for Bucks County to complete a bicycle plan, such as Montgomery County has done.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Amendment 9928, Bucks County's request to amend the TIP to add two new projects to the TIP for bicycle lanes in Yardley and Lower Makefield Township.

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

TIP AMENDMENT 9929:

Winters explained that TIP Amendment 9929, which was submitted by PennDOT, includes additions and modifications to the TIP to fully fund the construction phase of the I-95 Airport Ramp. The I-95 Airport Ramp project is scheduled to be let in April, 2000, and the changes are necessary for the project to advance to this phase. The additions and project modifications that are necessary to fully fund the Ramp project and to keep the TIP fiscally constrained impact TIP project numbers 0511B, 5355, 6741, and 7900. (These projects will probably be re-funded when the new TIP is adopted later this year.) The Ramp project already has more than \$34 million in federal earmarked funds programmed in the construction phase; with the additional transferred funds, the construction dollars will total \$74,400,000. There are currently no state funds in the Ramp project, but the requested changes will provide a total of \$18,600,000 in state dollars to match the federal funds. The Ramp project ties into the large terminal expansions that are taking place at Philadelphia International Airport. The subcommittee recommends approval of TIP Amendment 9929. The RCC discussed the cost of these ramps and asked that, in the future, someone from engineering come and present specifically where the ramps will go.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that approve TIP Amendment 9929, PennDOT's request to amend the TIP to make several modifications and additions to fully fund the construction phase of the I-95/Airport Ramp project, TIP #9745.

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

TIP AMENDMENT 0001:

Winters then outlined TIP Amendment 0001, TIP Amendment 0001, which has been forwarded by NJDOT, is a handful of projects that fit into the Department's transition list. The first two projects, Ark Road and Perry Street, are existing projects that did not move in the past and now need to be added back into the TIP. The third project, Burlington Computerized Signal, is ready to move in 2000. The remaining projects, Route 29 Delaware River Pedestrian/Bike Path, Maple Avenue Bridge, Route 73 (at Fox Meadow Road), and Route 73 (at Route 70), are slipping. A "Reason for Change" column is added on the new project sheets that NJDOT is now providing. The subcommittee recommends approval of TIP Amendment 0001; the subcommittee also recommends that the RCC commend NJDOT for the additional information that these new sheets provide and urge PennDOT to use this expanded format.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Elaine Cohen) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Amendment 0001, NJDOT's request to modify six TIP projects and amend the TIP with an additional project. The RCC also wants to commend NJDOT for the additional information provided on its newly formatted TIP information sheets and urges PennDOT to use this same expanded format.

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

NEW JERSEY STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT/PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT:

Dennis Winters explained that the New Jersey Study and Development/Planning Work Program Amendment is a request by NJDOT to conduct a feasibility study to resolve congestion and safety questions about local access along Routes 42 and 168, as well as on parallel and intersecting local roads. Some of the traffic is accessing major county facilities in the area. Local officials believe that a full interchange at College Road would relieve congestion and improve safety.

In response, NJDOT is proposing that an environmental and engineering screening be conducted to identify fatal flaws for considering a new interchange. If no flaws emerge,

NJDOT would proceed to a 90-day “sketch planning” assessment of the merits of a new interchange. In addition, the department may choose to launch a Corridor Strategy Development effort, working with DVRPC, to assess all aspects of meeting future demand in the corridor.

Peggy Killmer pointed out that it is a bad idea to sketch out solutions without first examining environmental, social and economic issues. Winters pointed out that this request only proposes examining the concept of a correction.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Claudia Crane, seconded by Elaine Cohen) to recommend that the Board approve an amendment to the Study and Development/Planning Work Program by NJDOT to add an evaluation of the interchange of Route 42 and College Road in Gloucester Township, Camden County. The RCC also recommends that NJDOT include public participation early in the planning process, and asks that NJDOT provide a progress report to the committee within sixty (60) days.

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

INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (ITS) SCHUYLKILL EXPRESSWAY CORRIDOR, INCIDENT/TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN:TIP AMENDMENT 9930 AND FY 2000/2001 WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENTS:

Chris King, DVRPC Transportation Planner, explained that the ITS Management Plan, Phase I, will provide alternative routing in the Schuylkill Expressway Corridor when incidents or excessive traffic cause delays during the Year 2000 Republican national Convention. This project will gather local township, city and county representatives to identify key routes to and from Philadelphia, select sign locations, and generally focus the group’s direction toward a temporary solution and set the stage for Phase II, which will provide a permanent solution to a comprehensive incident and traffic management program. Phase I needs to be added to the DVRPC 2000 Work Program to proceed.

Phase II of the ITS Management Plan will reduce traffic congestion along key roads and critical intersections in the Schuylkill Expressway Corridor through incident management and advanced technology systems. The project will develop a unified traffic management and signal coordination plan within the corridor to handle both routine traffic conditions and diversions from the Expressway. Institutional cooperation will be examined and will focus on intermunicipal traffic signal coordination. Phase II needs to be added to the DVRPC 2001 Work Program and to the current TIP.

King pointed out that one of the benefits of the ITS projects is to eliminate the need for

building new roads or impacting the environment further. Don Nigro pointed out the need for an intermodal connection through variable message signs. The RCC discussed ramp metering; the need for SEPTA's input to this project; and incident management long after the National Convention is over.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Don Nigro, seconded by Claudia Crane) to recommend that the Board approve the ITS Schuylkill Expressway Corridor Incident/Traffic Management Plan, Phases I and II on the condition that the plan take a multimodal approach. Specifically, the following should be considered:

- * Directing commuters to transit routes, particularly the R-6 Norristown line;
- * Providing sufficient parking at key transit stations; and
- * Implementing Transit First measures for key bus routes.

Phase I should be added to the FY 2000 Work Program, and Phase II should be added to the FY 2001 Work Program and the current TIP.

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

DVRPC FY 2001 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM:

Ben Ginsberg, DVRPC Senior Regional Planner, stated that on December 3, 1999 the DVRPC Board approved the release of the Draft FY 2001 Work Program for public comment. Changes in the funding amount anticipated from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) have provided an additional \$195,000. Last year, DVRPC assumed a 10% FTA increase, and only received about 5%. This year, the situation is better, and the funding will be split with \$102,000 going to Pennsylvania, and \$93,000 for New Jersey. These dollars must be divided between the nine counties in the region. Also added to the Work Program will be a PATCO Parking Study (funded at \$44,000) and a Transit-Oriented Development Study (\$60,000). The Work Program Committee will meet again on January 27, 2000 prior to the Board meeting to finalize the document. The Board will then vote on the FY 2001 Work Program that day, and the final Work Program will be forwarded to the funding agencies.

Ginsberg thanked the RCC for its comments. The majority of comments received have dealt with the need for a Bicycle Map. An additional chapter will be added to the document to include those projects that have not been funded but may be eligible for other sources of funds, and will also list all other projects taking place in the region. Ginsberg asked that any other comments should be forwarded to him by January 14, 2000.

Don Nigro questioned the PATCO Parking Study, and the agency's philosophy of not charging parking fees. Illy Sobel asked for changes in the output to a number of projects to

support his Route 202 Express Bus project. He reported that his project is planned as a generic effort to prove that high quality bus service can compete with the automobile. He asked the RCC what can be done to achieve this goal. He hopes to promote a dialogue on this issue, and circulated his paper to committee members.

Pat Horrocks outlined her displeasure, as well as that of SCCOOT's, with a letter sent by John Coscia to PennDOT Deputy Secretary Mike Ryan stating that the Chester County Commissioners should have control over the Route 41 Land Use Study. This gives the impression that a county-selected consultant will be directed by the commissioners to come up with desired results. Barry Seymour clarified that additional funding, through project construction dollars, are available from PennDOT to support the Route 41 Study. A consultant will be selected jointly by DVRPC, PennDOT and Chester County. The contract for the consultant is through DVRPC and is in the agency's Year 2000 and 2001 Work Program. The RCC is concerned about how various Work Program elements are conducted; the committee discussed how work is implemented and its impact on tasks.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Claudia Crane, seconded by Dennis Winters) to recommend that the Board approve the DVRPC FY 2001 Work Program with the inclusion of the Regional Bicycle Map project.

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

MOTION (by Don Nigro, seconded by Dennis Winters) to community to the Board that the RCC has concerns about ten Work Program projects: namely, PA Route 41; PATCO Parking Study; Implementing TOD; Transportation Technical Assistance; Regional Competitive CMAQ Program; Member Government Special Projects; Transit Planning by Chester County Planning; Economic Development Coordination; Regional Technical Assistance; and Transit Support Program. RCC members are working on these issues and will invite DVRPC staff at its earliest convenience to work with the committee on implementation of certain tasks.

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

UPDATE ON HORIZONS, YEAR 2025 WORKSHOPS:

Barry Seymour, DVRPC Assistant Executive Director for Regional Planning, reported that DVRPC began a two-year effort in 1999 to prepare a new long-range plan. Known as *Horizons*, the Year 2025 Plan will build upon the extensive work undertaken in preparing *Direction 2020*, which was adopted in 1995, and will focus on reviewing and refining the 2020 goals and policies, preparing population and employment forecasts to

2025, and developing a new regional vision for land use and transportation facilities.

Seymour stated that the Commission is seeking maximum opportunities for public participation in developing the 2025 Plan as a means of gathering relevant local information and assessing public sentiment. Newsletters, surveys, a website, public workshops and hearings are being used to create possibilities for public input. Four 2025 evening workshops were held October 28 - November 15 in suburban and center city locations to outline the purpose of the plan, provide background information on current land use and transportation conditions, and review recent trends. Invitations to the workshops were sent to several thousand people on DVRPC's mailing list, distributed through the region's TMA's, forwarded by e-mail to a wide variety of organizations, and listed in area newspapers. Approximately 50 - 100 people attended each workshop, with a total of about 300 over the four evenings. Participants were primarily citizens with some local and state officials and professional staff.

The workshops divided participants into break-out sessions focusing on Existing Centers, Cities and Older Suburbs; Growing Suburbs; and Rural Exurbs. The break-outs were adjusted for the Center City Workshop. Those present were given \$100 of DVRPC "play money" in \$10 denominations to deposit among six categories (Preserving farmland and open spaces; Revitalizing towns and cities; Bicycle and pedestrian facilities; Building new roads; Building new public transit systems; and Improving existing transportation facilities). Seymour outlined the results and prioritization of these categories, and stated that discussion focused on trends, land use, transportation issues, environment and resource protection, housing, taxes, and education.

Bill Rafsky noted that there is a need for low-income housing and this should be noted in the Plan findings; Ernest Cohen stated that there is also a need for rooming houses. The committee also recommended that the categories of highways and transit should be separated out in the "improving transportation facilities" category.

Dennis Winters cited Bill Beetle's letter to Jerrold Colton, DVRPC Chair, which suggests using an alternative approach to the preparation of future population and employment forecasts. He believes that three sets of forecasts should be generated: 1) Projections to be based strictly upon past trends as well as on the assumption of full build out according to current zoning; 2) Forecasts that represent achievable objectives and would have practical application for data users; and 3) "Vision" forecasts that show a scenario based upon the realization of the goals of the DVRPC Long-Range Plan and the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

The RCC thanks Bill Beetle for this progressive thinking and commends him for this suggested approach.

VENICE ISLAND:

Darlene Messina began the Venice Island discussion by stating that the situation in Manayunk raises concerns about poor decision-making. A number of government officials have quietly stated their concern with proposed plans for developing Venice Island. She stated that the City has a vision for Venice Island, and therefore hosted three charrettes that resulted in three large concepts, all involving large residential and commercial building. She cited the City's flood control regulations which "finds that development along existing rivers and creeks within the City of Philadelphia has led to increased flooding, thereby endangering the loss of property and life, creating health and safety hazards, and causing the expenditure of public funds for protection and relief. To prevent such adverse conditions, it is necessary to impose restrictions and regulations on development along rivers and creeks that are subject to flooding."

Ms. Messina believes that future human-made disasters can be prevented with good planning. Venice Island sits within a floodplain in a floodway, and falls under city, state and federal restrictions on land use in such areas. Ms. Messina distributed newspaper accounts of damage caused to Venice Island during Tropical Storm Floyd, and stated that disaster relief is the subsidization of bad decisions. She also stated that dredging has begun on the Schuylkill River in front of Boat House Row; sedimentation is increasing due to development.

Comprehensive planning under DVRPC includes a variety of areas of planning and should include watershed management. Ms. Messina encouraged DVRPC to consider a more proactive role. The Venice Island project does have transportation implications since there are only two narrow routes off of the island. She also noted that the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) cannot step in on this issue unless there is a lack of codes; the agency is encouraging the buy-out of residential areas in the floodplain. This is a public safety and environmental issue, and plans to develop the island should not continue. We will all pay for these mistakes. Lorraine Brill stated that Philadelphia City Council has passed rezoning bills over objections from Manayunk residents. Venice Island is now zoned R-1.

Barry Seymour countered that he sees two issues: the issue of floodplain management; and DVRPC's role in the issue. He reviewed FEMA maps of floodways to provide a context for the discussion. He stated that floodplain management is governed at several levels -- federal, state and local. DVRPC's role in the region is defined in a number of ways: namely, through the Work Program, fitting into local area plans or region-wide projects and defined by the Board; by pursuing funding to work on projects that are defined by or requested by a committee, or federal or state agency; and on a policy level such the Delaware Estuary or Bucks County Floodway issues. Seymour stated that DVRPC staff has proposed watershed planning two different times and it was not given high priority by the Board. He suggested that the Commission can examine the larger issue of watershed management if the Board chooses, or the Board can comment on Venice Island as a local project. Darlene Messina suggested that an intermunicipal cooperation project on

watershed management would be timely. Patrick Starr suggested that this would be an ideal time for DVRPC to set up a project to determine policy for areas prone to flooding by preserving open space along rivers. It would be most effective if a coalition of agencies was established including DVRPC, DRBC, PEC, etc. The RCC discussed New Jersey's large, active watershed project and questioned why Pennsylvania cannot do the same. Ernest Cohen cited a loophole in the law that allows for building in a floodway on existing developed land. The RCC referred this subject to the Environmental/Legislative Subcommittee if further discussion is needed.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Ernest Cohen, seconded by Patrick Starr) to request that DVRPC direct staff to develop a Watershed Study Plan, utilizing other regional partners, and possibly drawing funding from a project such as "Growing Greener." Such a plan is needed to ensure that the Year 2025 Long-Range Plan excludes floodplain from infill development, such as the recent decisions regarding Venice Island development.

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

MOTION (by Jane Glenn, seconded by Dennis Winters) to ask that the Board respond in writing to the Venice Island issue, specifically that watershed management is not a regional issue, and to the decision by the City of Philadelphia to place residential units in a floodway.

MOTION CARRIED.

GETTING OLDER AND GETTING AROUND: AGING AND MOBILITY IN THE DELAWARE VALLEY:

Mary Bell, DVRPC Senior Regional Planner, noted that a new report, *Getting Older and Getting Around*, was completed in December, and reviews the location and scope of the Delaware Valley's current and forecasted elderly population. The publication presents recommendations to improve mobility and enhance the quality of life for elderly residents, both in urban areas, and developed centers, and in suburban and rural areas, where many of the next generation of elderly are expected to live.

Projections indicate the Delaware Valley will be home to over 1.1 million people age 65 and older by 2025, with an expected increase of 58% in the elderly population since 1990. Almost one in five of the region's residents will be over the age of 64, up from its current 13%. Most of this growth will occur in the region's suburbs, in areas not currently served by public transit and at densities which will make it difficult to implement transit as a viable alternative to the private automobile. Driving is the preferred means of transportation for

older adults. Most have relied solely on their automobiles, are unfamiliar with other modes of transportation, and are hesitant or unable to learn new modes at an advanced age. By the year 2030, almost 20% of all driver mileage will be attributable to elderly drivers. Once they are absolutely unable to drive, many seniors will find themselves unable to independently access necessary services and facilities or to continue to participate in social, cultural and community activities.

Getting Older and Getting Around recommends both transportation and non-transportation strategies that would improve the ability of the region's seniors to access services and facilities and enhance their quality of life. Some key recommendations include:

- ▶ Suburban municipalities should revise municipal plans and zoning regulations, to encourage increased densities, mixed-use communities and service clustering. Similarly, non-profit agencies and developers should work with the region's municipalities to expand affordable housing opportunities for seniors (including independent living units, intermediate care units and nursing homes) in existing developed centers.
- ▶ The region's transit service providers should work pro-actively to create a more efficient, cost-effective and accessible region-wide transit network. Transit accessibility for people of all ages should be enhanced and marketing campaigns that encourage all residents to try transit should be expanded.
- ▶ The multitude of social service agencies, church and community groups that currently provide transportation services to the elderly should coordinate their efforts.
- ▶ State and federal transportation agencies should re-design suburban highways in appropriate locations in response to the needs and abilities of older drivers.
- ▶ Likewise, the private sector should re-design automobiles to assist elderly people who are capable of safely operating their own vehicles.
- ▶ Finally, senior citizens and the near-elderly should be encouraged to realistically plan for the day when they will no longer be able to drive, and consider how their transportation needs will be met after retirement.

NEW JERSEY JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE UPDATE:

Jeff Butler, DVRPC Regional Planner, explained that the Job Access and Reverse Commute Program is an offshoot of TEA-21.

The intent of the program is to design welfare to work and reverse commute mobility strategies and projects. This highly competitive project calls for a 50% match and is coordinated through the metropolitan planning organization (MPO). The FY 1999 Grant Program totals \$1.84 million for the entire region; \$515,000 is allotted for the three New Jersey counties. DVRPC had adopted six strategic objectives for the program to eliminate transportation barriers: namely, 1) to promote transit affordability; 2) to promote job retention; 3) to expand transit education; 4) to improve accessibility; 5) to promote

long-term viability; and 6) to develop more effective coordination strategies.

The FY 1999 projects approved in the DVRPC New Jersey counties include the Camden County Improvement Authority Employment Shuttle Service ; the Burlington County Urban Enterprise Zone; and the Mercer County Workforce Investment Board/TMA Route 130 Shuttle Service. In FY 2000 New Jersey will receive \$2 million statewide. The current schedule calls for letters of intent to be received by January 17, 2000; the DVRPC Board Policy Committee will review these applications on January 19; and the Board will vote on applicants and priorities on January 27. Full applications are due February 18; the Board will vote on full applications on February 24; and applications will be forwarded to NJDOT and NJ Transit on February 28.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Year 2025: Ernest Cohen stated that a report on the Schuylkill Valley Metro has been completed by his subcommittee and will be attached to the next set of minutes for RCC review. In addition, a "SEPTA cost recovery by operating unit" sheet drafted by John Pawson will also be attached.

Other subcommittee reports were deferred due to the lack of a quorum.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Lorraine Brill announced that former RCC Dick Walter had passed away. Walter was one of the original members of the committee and had represented New Jersey.