

**MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE  
MARCH 13, 2001**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the RCC meeting of February 13, 2001 were approved as mailed.

**CHAIR'S REPORT:**

Patrick Starr, RCC Chair, appointed Dennis Winters to serve as the representative to DVRPC's Land Use Committee. Pat Horrocks was appointed to the position of Parliamentarian. Ms. Horrocks said that she would review Robert's Rules of Order to refresh herself on procedure. Mr. Starr placed the RCC appointment to the Housing Committee on hold until the RCC had an opportunity to hear from Mary Bell on current housing issues.

Mr. Starr turned the floor over to Candace Snyder, DVRPC Director of Public Affairs, for an Environmental Justice update. Ms. Snyder explained that the technical task force and the public affairs task force held meetings in February. Highlights of these meetings were included in RCC member packets. The initial attendance was disappointing at both meetings. Staff was pleased that the meeting discussions offered some suggestions for enlisting more individuals in the process. Once both meetings were held, staff decided that the suggestions pointed to DVRPC reevaluating its approach to Environmental Justice outreach. The reevaluation yielded three ideas for initial focus: making appointments to visit organizations in their places of work; meeting with the planning commissions of the four major cities to discuss area issues leading to workshops; and doing outreach to reach groups not involved in the process.

*Discussion: Darlene Messina stated that she may have more suggestions for groups to be contacted. Mr. Starr suggested that DVRPC make presentations to associations. Ajay Creshkoff suggested placing an ad in The Inquirer or other newspapers and writing a commentary for the Op/Ed page. The RCC questioned its role in the EJ Task Force. Ms. Snyder explained that the RCC was represented through its Chair. The committee is not open to the RCC for membership.*

**DVRPC BOARD GOALS AND RCC INTERACTION:**

Board Chair Timothy Carson thanked the RCC for having him as a guest at this meeting. He explained that it is important for the Board to receive the RCC's perspective. In his role as Board Chair, he stated that increasing inter-municipal and inter-county

communication was one of his goals. He also wants to promote cooperation between the Boards of regional authorities as a means of discussing issues of mutual interest. Mr. Carson also noted that he plans outreach and education for elected officials to get them involved in the planning process.

He thanked the RCC for the time and effort the committee has given to planning issues. He noted that public participation enriches the process. He explained two ways in which the RCC could help the Board: 1) Identify issues of concern for the Board, especially when reviewing the Work Program 2) Strengthen the RCC by recruiting committee members from areas not currently represented, such as different ethnic and economic backgrounds, and varying geographic interests. He stated that the second objective would increase the credibility of the RCC.

Executive Director John Coscia thanked the RCC and said that the RCC should speak with Mr. Starr or Ms. Snyder if there are any areas of planning that the committee would like to explore. He stated that the RCC is unlike any other committee because of its open membership. He encouraged the RCC to work on shortening the length of meetings as one way of attracting new members. He also encouraged the committee to provide proposals with background and focused information. On the matter of Board actions and RCC recommendations, he asserted that it should never be taken personally when the Board acts on items the RCC believes need more time. He stated that there are instances where the Board has to choose between the risk of losing a project or expediting it for the sake of moving a project along.

*Discussion: Several RCC members asked why groups like NJDOT, DRPA and SEPTA are not voting members of the board. Mr. Coscia explained that a Board committee reviewed this issue several years ago and decided against opening the compact to add new members and voting privileges. Opening the compact take an act of both governors and would enable legislators to appoint themselves to the Board, thus changing the nature of the organization dramatically. The Board would change from one governed by local governments to one that would be more influenced by the legislative branch of government.*

*Ajay Creshkoff stated that DVRPC must work with state and local officials to achieve a more comprehensive approach to long-term planning. Mr. Creshkoff noted that there is an educational component that is critical to this type of work. William Marston suggested that there be some sort of mediation mechanism that allows non-voting parties to give input on important issues. Mr. Coscia replied that DVRPC committees cast a wide net to serve that function. He believes that some of the difficulty lies in poor communication within the large agencies that should be taking part in those discussions and meetings.*

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS FROM THE RULES SUBCOMMITTEE:**

Pat Horrocks, Rules Subcommittee Chair, reviewed current and proposed RCC procedures and asked RCC members for input. Some committee member expressed concern that the requirements for the nominating committee were more than what the RCC would be able to meet. Some RCC members suggested that the committee try putting these procedures into practice before modifying them again.

### ***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Dennis Winters) to recommend that the committee approve the proposed *RCC Current and Proposed Procedures*.

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

## **FY 2002 WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: PENNDOT TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (TMA) PROPOSED WORK PROGRAM FUNDING:**

Dr. Don Shanis, DVRPC Deputy Director, Transportation Planning, gave an overview of the history of DVRPC and TMA funding procedures. PennDOT has funded TMA activities annually for selected TMAs since 1992. This program was developed to provide operating assistance to these public-private partnerships to support their travel demand management work. This ongoing program is based on annual renewal. In FY 2001, PennDOT requested that DVRPC assume joint oversight of work program development and execution.

There are five TMA's serving suburban areas in southeastern Pennsylvania and one applying to serve Center City Philadelphia. The suburban TMA's perform similar work. The newly formed Central Philadelphia TMA's work is aimed at the transportation needs of Center City. Until FY 2001, each TMA could apply for a maximum of \$100,000. An additional \$100,000 was available regionally for a competitive Supplemental Grant program for selected additional work elements. For FY 2002, PennDOT has agreed to consider up to an additional \$60,000 per TMA to eliminate the Supplemental Grant Program. This step would also make funding available for an additional TMA.

The Bucks County, Chester County, Delaware County, Greater Valley Forge, and Partnership TMAs have applied for \$160,000 each in two-part work programs - the core program for \$100,000, and additional work for up to \$60,000. The Central Philadelphia TMA has applied for \$100,000. The complete application package totals \$900,000 (\$720,000 CMAQ + \$180,000 local match).

*Discussion: Dennis Winters noted that Paul Levy of the Center City District is the organizer of the Central Philadelphia TMA. He stated that he and the Clean Air*

*Council have serious reservations about the work that would be performed under Mr. Levy and the Center City District's direction. Citizens raised questions about the evaluation of the TMA's. The RCC also expressed a concern that this would draw more funds out of the CMAQ funding pool. In addition, they asked about the renewal of this funding.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Ajay Creshkoff, seconded by Dennis Winters) recommend Dennis Winters act as the RCC representative on the reviewing committee, but notes several concerns:

The RCC recommends that Dennis Winters act as the RCC representative on the RTC's subcommittee to review TMA applications, but notes several concerns:

1. There need to be more stringent guidelines for evaluation of TMA's;
2. There need to be restrictions in place to ensure that CMAQ funding awarded to TMA's will not be used to promote single occupancy vehicles; and
3. TMA's should be moving toward becoming independent of public support.

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

**TIP ACTIONS:**

Dennis Winters, Chair of the Transportation Subcommittee, reviewed the following actions:

**TIP Action NJ0106:** Camden County has requested that DVRPC add the preliminary engineering phase of the East Atlantic Avenue Bike/Pedestrian Trail project to the TIP at a total cost of \$300,000. The proposed eight to ten foot wide trail will run parallel to a freight rail line and link twelve municipalities from Oaklyn to Clementon, for a distance of about 17 miles. Financial constraint will be maintained by drawing funds from the DVRPC Project Development Line Item (DB #X80B).

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ0106.

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

**TIP Action NJ0107:** NJDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the TIP by adding

one new project and adjusting the cost and schedules of two existing projects. The projects include:

1. **Route 195 Eastbound Resurfacing- (DB #00334), Mercer County**

This new project requires \$2 million for construction in FY01 and \$6.2 million for construction in FY02.

This is the companion project to the Rt. 195 Westbound Resurfacing project that was authorized in FY2000.

Financial constraint will be maintained in FY01 using funds available from the fiscal constraint bank combined with the right-of-way funds from the Rt. 9 Bridge over Bass River project. The right-of-way funds for this project were authorized in FY00. Financial constraint in FY02 will be maintained using funds from the Route 41/42 Freeway project. This project will be programmed with state funds instead of federal funds.

2. **I-95/Scotch Rd. Interchange- (DB #9194), Mercer County**

Increase the amount programmed in FY01 from \$10 million to \$16 million. A pump station has been added to the project and previously unknown utilities were discovered since the original cost estimate was made.

Financial constraint will be maintained using funds from the Rt. 29 Boulevard Landscaping project (DB #551A) and the Marlton Circle Elimination project (DB #567), neither of which will be ready to advance in this fiscal year.

3. **Rts. 70/73 Marlton Circle Elimination (DB #567), Burlington County**

Add the \$600,000 preliminary design phase back to the TIP in FY2002.

Financial constraint will be maintained by deferring the design phase from FY01 to FY03 and the right-of-way phase from FY02 to FY04.

*Discussion: Larry Shaeffer stated that many places are moving away from converting circles to intersections. He cited cases from California where roundabouts have been successful. Peggy Killmer noted that there may be too much traffic at Marlton Circle for NJDOT to convert it to a roundabout.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Illy Sobel) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ0107, but notes that the RCC, as recorded in the past, opposes the I-95 Scotch Road project.

Also, the RCC asks that NJDOT reconsider the Marlton Circle elimination in light of recent research and FHWA guidance on traffic calming mechanisms such as

roundabouts..

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

**TIP Action PA0117:** DRPA has been awarded an ITS Deployment Program earmark for their Smart Bridges project in the amount of \$995,000. This former TIP project must be added back to the current TIP. DRPA will match the earmarked funds in an equal amount, for a total cost of \$1.990 million. The Smart Bridges project will integrate various ITS applications from planning, systems engineering, and operations perspectives. This project supports building a regional and national ITS architecture. There will be no impact on financial constraint.

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA0117.

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

**TIP Action PA0118:** PennDOT has requested that DVRPC add the Passyunk Ave. Drawbridge Rehabilitation project to the TIP. The District Bridge Unit has determined that there are mechanical repairs needed to the hardware that operates the opening of the bridge. The preliminary engineering phase will be programmed in FY01 at a total cost of \$350,000 (\$280,000 federal, \$70,000 state.) The current construction estimate is \$1.7 million and will be shown in "Later Fiscal Years." Financial constraint will be maintained through adjustments to other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed.

*Note: At the request of the Transportation Subcommittee, Judy Barnet contacted the Streets Department on this issue. Ms, Barnet learned that the drawbridge opens approximately two - three times per week. A two-person crew is on call for these openings. Users must give 24 hours' notice for an opening. The bridge is generally used by two companies in the area.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA0118.

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

*Discussion: While some members expressed concern about using public funds to*

*operate the bridge for two private companies, the group voted on the motion recognizing that waterborne traffic takes priority over auto traffic.*

## **INFORMATION ITEMS:**

### **DRAFT 2025 REGIONAL AVIATION SYSTEM PLAN:**

Roger Moog, DVRPC Manager, Office of Aviation Planning, gave an overview of the Regional Aviation System Plan (RASP). The last Plan was adopted in 1995. There are still many projects that are needed from the 1995 Plan that have yet to be completed. Most of those projects have been held up by citizen opposition. Since 1995, commercial travel has increased 5% annually. At this rate, the large gap between demand and capacity will continue. Suburban airports continue to be privately owned. This creates problems because, in many cases, these airports provide a public service and have not received public funding that would help them to continue operating. The Plan estimates from \$1 billion to \$2 billion to pay for improvements over the next 25 years. Some of the ideas proposed for the Plan are the expansion of Trenton/Mercer to alleviate Philadelphia International, investment in the air-side capacity of Philadelphia International, more hangars in suburban airports, and runway extensions that appeared in the 1995 Plan. Moog also discussed Bud Schuster's implementation of AIR-21.

*Discussion: Ajay Creshkoff stated his concern that the Plan focuses on supply and demand analysis and does not sufficiently address the economic and social impacts of the Plan. Peter Javsicas asked why the Plan does not examine aviation in relation to regional transportation. Mr. Moog stated that most of the trips involved in aviation are not directly comparable to those that can be handled by ground facilities. He also noted that the money allotted for airports is not transferrable to other transportation facilities and is not tax dollars, but derived from aviation fees and taxes.*

### **JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE UPDATE:**

DVRPC Regional Economist, Maria Nonemaker, reviewed the Job Access/Reverse Commute Program, which is aimed at increasing job access for low-income individuals. Ms. Nonemaker reviewed the process for project prioritization. The review committees for Pennsylvania and New Jersey will meet on March 16<sup>th</sup> to select projects. The RCC representatives to those committees are Darlene Messina (PA) and Peggy Killmer (NJ).

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**2025 Task Force** - Ernest Cohen announced that the 2025 Task Force had additional remarks to add to John Pawson's RCC resolution which was passed at the last meeting. Mr. Pawson proposed the following seven points for another resolution on the Preliminary Year 2025 Plan:

1. The RCC reiterates its opposition to the Delaware River Tram (B004).
2. We urge the Quakertown rail restoration project be restored from study status to full-project status.
3. As an added study project, service beyond Quakertown to Allentown via Bethlehem should be included. This extension should not be allowed to delay service as far as Quakertown.
4. Restoration of Newtown via Fox Chase service should be advanced (C018). The RCC is concerned about reports that some elements of the rail line have been removed or made more difficult and expensive to restore.
5. As a general principle, rail service initiation or restoration without electrification should be considered to facilitate early and economical expansion of service.
6. It is known that diesel trains operate out of 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station (Atlantic City Service) and have even been operated in the Penn Center Suburban Station. These facts should not be overlooked in short-range (5-10 year) planning.
7. We urge that sprawl be minimized by restricting new development to "future growth areas."

With little time left in the meeting, the RCC decided to defer further action until the points could be more thoroughly discussed. Mr. Pawson and Ernest Cohen agreed to provide these points to be mailed with the next RCC notice.

***Environmental/Legislative*** - No report.

***Transportation*** - No additional report.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Larry Shaeffer distributed a 1989 DVRPC memo on Route 202 to RCC members. (staff excluded). Mr. Shaeffer outlined the memo's contrast to later DVRPC actions and called DVRPC's credibility into question. Ms. Snyder reminded Mr. Shaeffer and the RCC that the committee and staff are not permitted to address issues related to the US 202 project still under litigation. Mr. Shaeffer continued by proclaiming that DVRPC's population projections were inaccurate. Ms. Snyder explained that the numbers are not a DVRPC product alone, but are coordinated with the counties in the region.