

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
JULY 17, 2001**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of June 19, 2001 were approved with the following corrections: on page 1, under PENNVEST, the name of the nursery should be Conard-Pyle; on page 7, Dr. Alan Miller corrected the perception that he was on the Board of the Bucks County TMA, stating that he was a member only.

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Lorraine Brill, Vice Chair, who chaired the meeting, asked members if they felt there was a need to hold an August meeting. The consensus, after dealing with other business, that the RCC would not meet again until September 12th.

Candace Snyder, DVRPC Director of Public Affairs, introduced Kendall Miller, DVRPC's new Public Outreach Manager, who will be available to the RCC to help with membership outreach as well as working toward broader public participation goals, including environmental justice.

TRANSITCHEK UPDATE:

Jennifer Scimone, DVRPC Marketing Associate, stated that TransitChek, which is administered by DVRPC, is a voucher system through which employers subsidize employee commutes on transit or vanpools in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. TransitChek permits employers of any size to offer transit subsidies as a tax-free employee benefit and a tax-deductible business expense. TransitCheks can be redeemed for the purchase of tickets, tokens and passes on local providers including SEPTA, PATCO, NJTransit, DART-First State, AMTRAK and third-party vanpool companies. The program has been in place since 1991 and is now enjoying much greater participation with 456 employers enlisted to date. Ms. Scimone also reviewed the regional breakdown of the participants as well as the sales history of the program.

Discussion: RCC members suggested that greater outreach and marketing is needed in New Jersey. They also pointed out that better connections are needed between transit stops and employment locations.

ECOMMUTE:

Stacy Bartels, DVRPC Marketing Manager, explained that ecommute is an emissions credit incentive test that is administered by the National Environmental Policy Institute (NEPI). Philadelphia has been selected as part of a national pilot program to implement the program during a time frame that runs from 2/01 until 10/02. The purpose of the pilot is to test the effectiveness of emissions credits accumulated through a telework program as an incentive for businesses to reduce emissions. Telework is in turn promoted to local employers as a quality of life issue. DVRPC serves as the administering agency, sits on a steering committee and contracts with the TMA's to reach out to regional businesses. To date, staff has created a brochure to explain the program, completed basic training and held a regional kick-off event in conjunction with Ozone Action.

FY 2002 TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS PROGRAM:

Ron Roggenburk, DVRPC Manager, Office of Air Quality Planning, stated that the TE program is a 10 percent set-aside of each state's Surface Transportation Program (STP) dollars. TE was mandated by Congress in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) to fund non-traditional projects designed to enhance the transportation experience, to mitigate the impacts of transportation facilities on communities and the environment, and to enhance community character through transportation-related improvements. The current round of competition in Pennsylvania will total \$10 million, including SEPTA's portion of the program, and will be announced through a mailing that will go out August 6th to municipalities, previous applicants and DVRPC's committees. Applicants are asked to attend one of three meetings scheduled for August 22nd, 29th and September 12th. The counties and representatives of the RCC will review proposals in November and December. The Board will approve a list of recommendations to be sent to the state at its February, 2002 Board meeting. PennDOT will then make the awards in May of 2002.

Staff will check on the number of RCC representatives who sat on the TE selection committee last year; the RCC will select these representatives at its September meeting.

RECOMMENDATION OF YEAR 2025 TASK FORCE:

Ajay Creshkoff provided an overview of the work done by the Year 2025 Task Force over the past eight months, noting that the document that is now recommended to the RCC has been the result of an evolving process. Differences in the proposed document's language that had been opposed by some members have now been resolved and the intent of the paper is to be a discourse on how planning is done in this region. Pat Horrocks stated that watershed planning should be given greater importance.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Ajay Creshkoff, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to adopt the attached statement and to pass this on the the DVRPC Board and staff for their review and reaction. The RCC also asks that this document be included in Board Retreat discussions, if appropriate.

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

PENNDOT TRAFFIC CALMING HANDBOOK:

Doug Tomlinson, PennDOT Assistant Traffic Signal Manager, noted that PennDOT's Traffic Calming Handbook is intended as guidance for municipalities as well as for PennDOT itself. Tomlinson reviewed the contents of the booklet which is currently only available online at www.dot.state.pa.us (under publication #383). He stated when and under what circumstances traffic calming is appropriate, the 16 different traffic calming measures outlined in the handbook and legal issues. Finally, Tomlinson outlined traffic calming issues and the study and approval processes that are now in place. The book is intended to be used in conjunction with the ITE Traffic Calming Manual.

THE LTAP PROGRAM:

Mark Hood, Traffic Safety Engineer, explained that the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) works for the Local Roads Program out of Penn State. The program is designed to provide information to municipalities on road issues. He complimented PennDOT on its Traffic Calming Handbook, noting that Pennsylvania was one of the first states to have such a tool.

Hood described the problem as one of taking back local streets, noting that there are solutions available such as 4-way stop signs, selective enforcement and artificial speed limits. He reviewed case studies in which various measures had or had not worked and offered a number of traffic calming alternatives. Hood stated that additional information is available by calling 1-800-for-LTAP or by emailing LTAP@psu.edu.

FY 2002 WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: VALLEY FORGE AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY:

Jerry Coyne, DVRPC Manager of the Office of Transportation Studies, stated that the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) currently contains a study project to evaluate improvements to the Route 422 corridor with special emphasis on the sections of highway from Route 202 to Route 363. Under the leadership of Montgomery County, an area wide study will get underway this fall. Montgomery County has requested DVRPC to provide public participation, local government coordination and regional overview, as well as to prepare regional travel demand forecasts for the study analyses. Dennis Winters voiced his concern about the impacts on the Schuylkill River Trail. The committee asked if an

RCC representative could sit on the study committee to provide feedback on the status of the project. Staff agreed with this request.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Pat Horrocks) to recommend that the DVRPC Board amend the FY 2002 Work Program to include the Valley Forge Area Transportation Study. The RCC also appointed John Boyle to serve as the RCC representative on the study committee.

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

DVRPC ANNUAL SELF-CERTIFICATION:

Dr. Don Shanis, DVRPC Deputy Director of Transportation Planning, outlined the Self-Certification process, noting that ISTEA requires that DVRPC as a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), must annually certify to FHWA and FTA that its transportation planning process addresses the major issues facing the region and that it does so in accordance with applicable requirements. Rulemaking for TEA-21 has not yet been adopted but it is presumed that the Annual Self-Certification requirements remain the same. Dr. Shanis reviewed the resolution that will be sent to the Board for approval and stated that the federal government has visited DVRPC and considers the Commission to be a model MPO. Ajay Creshkoff questioned the credibility of the first statement on the hand-out which contends that "improvements to the transportation system have been the result of a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive process carried out by state and local officials."

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Peggy Killmer, seconded by Pat Horrocks) to recommend that the DVRPC Board adopt the resolution certifying that the DVRPC Regional Transportation Planning Process is in conformance with federal regulations implementing TEA-21, the Clean Air Act Amendments and other federal legislation.

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

DVRPC DRAFT FY 2002 - 2004 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY:

Charles Dougherty, DVRPC Associate Director of Transportation Planning, explained that the TIP is the near-term expression of the Regional Transportation Plan that lists all

regionally significant projects and all other projects seeking federal funds. The TIP is required by federal law and is the best estimate of project schedule and costs. In Pennsylvania, the TIP is a four-year program that is updated every other year; in New Jersey, the TIP is a three-year program and updated every year.

The New Jersey program is a coordinated effort between DVRPC, the counties, NJDOT, NJTransit, DRPA/PATCO. This year's TIP includes 180 projects, totaling \$909 million over three years. \$486 million are set aside for the highway program, and \$423 million for transit. Public outreach for this year's TIP included GIS mapping of low income and minority populations, mailings to 1500 individuals and groups, contacts with community organizations, legal notices, media releases, posters in libraries and throughout communities, a PATCO seat drop, public meetings and a 30-day public comment period and use of DVRPC's website.

Dougherty then outlined the comments received during the public comment period. He also reviewed the changes proposed by the Regional Transportation Committee (RTC) which included adjusting the cost or schedule of projects currently shown in the draft; adding back a phase for projects from previous TIPs that were not yet obligated; adding new projects to the Study and Development (S & D) Program; and removing projects from S & D that are not yet ready to advance.

Discussion: Peggy Killmer noted that 37 letters had been sent by residents of West Windsor Township arguing against a five-lane widening of CR571, supporting the township's proposal of a three-lane alternative for the project which is east of the Millstone Bypass. Dougherty noted that until the township and the county can agree on what project they want and who will take the lead, it is not ready to go into the S & D Program. The RCC discussed the proposal recommended by the Transportation Subcommittee which included comments submitted by Warren Strumpfer as well as a redrafting of past RCC comments on the New Jersey TIP.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by William Faltermayer) to recommend that the DVRPC Board adopt the FY 2002 - 2004 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the New Jersey portion of the region as the region's official selection of transportation projects for federal funding. The RCC also submits the attached comments for the Board and staff's consideration.

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

DVRPC DRAFT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN:

Candace Snyder reviewed the Draft Public Participation Plan that had been mailed to RCC members, pointing out that the purpose of the document is to provide guidance for

the Board and staff in dealing with the public and to make a statement to the region's citizens that the agency intends to deal with them honestly. She then defined the importance of environmental justice, noting that it is one part of a larger public outreach effort. She also outlined the contents of the document noting that it includes direction on notification of meetings and events, committee management, access to information, comment and review periods, public disclosure and the use of DVRPC's name. Staff is proposing a 45-day public comment period opening on July 30th and continuing until September 12th. Public outreach will include notices to about 1500 individuals and organizations, a public meeting, media releases and legal notices, and distribution to regional libraries.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Peggy Killmer) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve the release of the DVRPC Draft Public Participation Plan to the public for a 45-day public comment period beginning on July 30th and ending on September 12th, 2001.

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

SCHUYLKILL VALLEY METRO (SVM):

Dennis Winters presented the resolution that had been drafted by Don Nigro, edited by Candace Snyder and approved by the Transportation Subcommittee. Don Nigro stated that he had reviewed the letter sent in response by Chris Patton of SEPTA to the RCC's last set of comments regarding the Schuylkill Valley Metro. He noted that SEPTA's response was evasive. Subcommittee members questioned whether the DVRPC Board had taken the time to read SEPTA's response. Nigro asked Ms. Snyder to add back the portion of his resolution that addressed the "cost per mile", the quote by former DVRPC employee John Dawson, and the Red Rock Tunnel graphic.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Don Nigro) to approve the attached resolution on the Schuylkill Valley Metro with the editing changes noted above and to forward this resolution to the DVRPC Board for action.

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

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Environmental Legislative: No report.

Transportation: No additional report.

2025 Task Force: No additional report.

NEW BUSINESS:

Larry Shaeffer distributed an editorial on “Hidden Perks for Cars”, pointing out the inequities in auto and transit spending. He suggested this as a possible subject for discussion in the future. This will be passed on to the RCC officers for their consideration along with the subjects suggested previously by Peter Javsicas.

William Faltermayer applauded SEPTA's efforts to rebuild the bridge on the R-5 that had been washed out by the floods in June and noted that the agency also completed the Fort Washington tunnel.