

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 15, 2002**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of September 17, 2002 were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The meeting was led by Lorraine Brill, Vice Chair for Pennsylvania, in the absence of Patrick Starr.

TIP ACTION PA 03-02a (I-95 NOISE WALLS - BUCKS COUNTY):

Dennis Winters, Chairman of the Transportation Subcommittee, reported that PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY 2003-2006) by adding a new project to the TIP. The proposed project will provide noise walls on the southbound side of I-95, and would program \$400,000 for final design in FY 2003 and \$2.590 million for construction in FY 2005. Both phases would be funded with state (149) demonstration monies.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA03-02a, PENNDOT's request to amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006) by adding a new project to the TIP, I-95 Noise Walls, Frieda Rd. to Station Ave.

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

TIP ACTION PA 03-02b (SUMNEYTOWN PIKE, MONTGOMERY COUNTY):

Mr. Winters stated that PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006) by adding a project back in to the TIP. The project was originally programmed with an FY 2003 construction phase in the FY 2001 TIP but was inadvertently left off of the new TIP when the project was separated into two different projects. PennDOT proposes to add the project back with a \$1.4 million FY 2003 construction phase (\$1.120 million STU/\$280 Local Match) and to correct the limits of the project to read "Supplee Road to Broad Street." This portion of the project involves widening Sumneytown Pike from two to four lanes and traffic signal upgrades. Mr Winters also noted that endorsing this project would reflect a reversal of the RCC previous opinions.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Patricia Horrocks) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA03-02b, PENNDOT's request to amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006) by adding the Sumneytown Pike project back into the TIP with a \$1.4 million FY03 construction phase (\$1.120 million STU/\$280 Local Match) and to correct the limits of the project to read "Supplee Road to Broad Street."

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

TIP ACTION PA 03-02c (OXFORD VALLEY ROAD, BUCKS COUNTY):

Mr. Winters reported that PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006) by adding a project back in to the TIP. This intersection improvement project was originally programmed for construction in the FY 2001 TIP but was inadvertently left off of the new TIP. PENNDOT proposes to add the project back with a \$3.73 million FY 2003 construction phase (\$2.984 million HWY/ \$746,000 State).

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Patricia Horrocks) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA 03-02c, PENNDOT's request to amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006) by adding the Oxford Valley Road project back into the TIP with a \$3.73 million FY03 construction phase (\$2.984 million HWY/ \$746,000 State).

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item C on voting record)

DISCUSSION ITEM: PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY INTERSECTIONS:

Mr. Winters noted that RCC member Bear Bernard attended the Transportation Subcommittee meeting to ask the RCC to take a position on incorporating pedestrian-friendly designs when intersections are improved or new intersections are created. Mr. Winters noted that the Transportation Subcommittee has taken these concerns under advisement, and will draft a general statement for approval at the November RCC meeting.

FY 2004 WORK PROGRAM PRIORITIES:

Mr. Winters presented the Transportation Subcommittee's recommendations of priorities for the FY 2003 Work Program.

The priorities, in order of importance, are as follows:

1. Regional Car Sharing (Tie)
1. Rail Restoration Study (Tie)

3. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Utilization Projects
4. Housing for an Aging Population (Tie)
4. West Chester Pike Busway Between 69th Street Terminal and Interstate 476 (Tie)
5. Quarterly Legislative Round-up (Tie)
5. Telecommunications and the Information Highway ITie)
5. Transporting Quarry Materials (Tie)
6. Mercer County Airport Multi-modal Transportation Center Study

DISCUSSION: Ajay Creshkoff asked that the RCC consider asking staff to relate all work program projects to the long-term plan, to provide context and implications of projects. Other discussion focused on the possibility of addressing the Closed Route Traffic Signal Optimization Program in Bucks County and the Fort Dix Public Access Study in the Work Program recommendations. Because both items could be funded outside the work program, it was suggested that both items be addressed as New Business.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to accept the Transportation Subcommittee’s proposed priorities, as listed, and forward to staff; the RCC also approved a request that staff provide terms of reference for each project as a means of relating it to the goals of the Year 2025 Plan.

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

PENNVEST APPLICATION: DILWORTHTOWN PARTNERS, CHESTER COUNTY:

Cathy Zukoski, Chair of the Environmental Subcommittee, presented the Dilworthtown Partners PENNVEST application. Dilworthtown Partners, in Chester County, requests a \$619,000 loan to extend the Birmingham WWTP sewer main to the existing homes and businesses in the Village of Dilworthtown as per the ACT 537 Plan. Many properties in this area have failing septic systems.

DISCUSSION: Discussion focused on whether this extension of the sewer main was helping “many properties,” as the application suggested, or if it mainly benefited a single corporate interest.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Cathy Zukoski, seconded by Patricia Horrocks) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve the application of Dilworthtown partners for a \$619,000 loan to extend the Birmingham WWTP sewer main in the Village of Dilworthtown.

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

PENNVEST APPLICATION: SCHWENKSVILLE BOROUGH, MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

Ms. Zukoski presented the application of Schwenksville Borough for a loan of \$94,000 to install a stormwater conveyance system to alleviate problems of insufficient capacity to manage stormwater on Third Street and Maple Avenue. These projects serve to alleviate existing problems and are in areas already developed or identified as Future Growth Areas as designated in the DVRPC Year 2025 Plan. As such, these projects are consistent with the goals and policies of the regional plan.

Discussion: The RCC discussed the potential environmental implications of mismanaged stormwater runoff, and the lack of information supplied in Schwenksville Borough's application.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Cathy Zukoski, seconded by John Pawson) to recommend that the DVRPC Board oppose Schwenksville Borough's application for a loan of \$94,000 to install a stormwater conveyance system on Third Street and Maple Avenue. Due to insufficient information as to how runoff will be handled, it appears that this request is not in accordance with Pennsylvania State Stormwater Management Manual regulations.

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

2000 Urbanized Area and Urban Clusters:

William Stevens, DVRPC Manager of GIS Systems, presented information, compiled from updated 2000 Census Data, on Urbanized Areas and Urbanized Clusters in the DVRPC region. The Census classifies as urban all territory, population and housing units located within an urbanized area or an urban cluster. It delineates Urban Area and Urban Cluster boundaries to encompass densely settled territory, which consist of core census blocks with a population density of at least 1000 people per square mile and surrounding blocks that have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile. The population of an urban area is greater than 50,000. An urban cluster is where an urban population is located outside of the urban area and has a population between 2,500 and 50,000 people.

Mr. Stevens' presentation highlighted changes in the Delaware Valley's Urban Areas and Urban Clusters between the 1990 Census and the 2000 Census data, including which areas had gained or lost Urban Area or Cluster status. This data will be used as by DVRPC planners and area decision-makers as they determine the future of the region.

Discussion: The RCC discussion focused on practical applications for this data, and the difference between rural and urban areas. Mr. Stevens suggested visiting the Census webpage at www.census.gov for more information about Urban Areas and Urban Clusters.

REGIONAL ITS INITIATIVES UPDATE:

John Ward, DVRPC Manager of Corridor Planning, presented updates on the following GIS initiatives:

1. Delaware Valley Highway Operations Group (HOGS) Communications Project: This project focuses on providing a way for first responders to communicate both with each other and with their home bases from the scene of an accident or other incident. Twenty-six NexTel cellular phones have been distributed to a variety of organizations, including NJ DOT, NJ State Police, Delaware River and Bay Authority, Burlington County Bridge Commission and others, to assist in communication. So far, these groups have indicated that the initiative has been helpful. HOGS is in the process of developing a NexTel Phone List for distribution, and is considering expanding the program.

2. I-95 Corridor Coalition Video-Sharing Initiative: The Coalition is currently assessing the feasibility of an initiative to share closed-circuit video footage of the corridor with interested parties.

3. PENNDOT Video-Sharing project: Similar to the above initiative, PENNDOT is offering their closed-circuit video of area roadways to any interested party. The Montgomery County Emergency Center (911 Dispatch) is working with PENNDOT to procure this video in real-time, to assist dispatchers and help locate incidents more efficiently.

4. Incident Management Task Forces: Two such Task Forces currently meet— one for the Blue Route/ Schuylkill Expressway area in PA, and one for the Routes 295-76-42 interchanges in NJ— to discuss the problems and issues faced by emergency responders in these areas. The PA Task Force has worked with PENNDOT to install ramp designation signs to help identify each piece of on/off ramp in the Blue Route/ Schuylkill Expressway region, making it easier to pinpoint the exact location of accidents. The NJ Task Force is working on a similar initiative in their region.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

25 Year Task Force: Ernest Cohen reported that the task force is examining its goals for the future. Members are working on the philosophy that 25 years from now, there will be serious petroleum shortages, so the transportation networks and types of vehicles existing today will no longer be appropriate.

Nominating Committee: Patricia Horrocks reported that the nominating committee has met three times, and is moving forward. She noted that the committee would welcome volunteers, both to sit on the committee and to run for RCC offices.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sue Herman requested support from RCC members at an upcoming public meeting, held by Wrightstown and Newtown Townships (Bucks County), to discuss replacing culverts on Swamp Road leading to a local quarry. Ms. Herman noted that the townships are opposed to reopening the road, but the citizens feel that fixing the culverts and reopening Swamp Road should be the highest priority in order to get heavy quarry trucks off of their current detour through residential roads. The meeting will be held December 5 at 7 p.m. in Wrightstown. Karen Friedman has offered transportation to any RCC member willing to attend. Ms. Herman also described her interest in the Traffic Light Optimization Project for the work program. She stated that the ten traffic lights along the Route 332 Bypass must be synchronized in order to make the Swamp Road route the most attractive option for trucks going to the Quarry. The RCC offered several recommendations for local action.

Wayne Becker requested that the RCC recommend that the Fort Dix/ Wrightstown Public Access Study be given immediate attention, as roads in that area have been closed for security reasons since September 11, 2001.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Wayne Becker, seconded by Elaine Cohen) recommending that the DVRPC Board give immediate priority to the Fort Dix Public Access Study.

MOTION PASSED.

Tom Cooper noted that in a draft of the Member Government Recommendations for the 2004 Work Program, the wording of a project from Chester County brought up several questions and made it appear as if Chester County had withdrawn their support for the Schuylkill Valley Metro. It was decided that Mr. Cooper would draft a letter to the Chester County Planning Commission addressing these questions. The letter will become an action item at the November RCC Meeting for possible adoption.

The letter would then be forwarded to the DVRPC Board as a request for answers from Chester County.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ajay Creshkoff announced the Big City Planners Symposium, to be held in Meyerson Hall at the University of Pennsylvania on November 7 at 6 p.m.

Elaine Cohen reminded interested persons to attend the 13th Annual SSAP Conference on “Evolving a Sustainable Future,” to be held November 17 at Philadelphia University. The topic will be Materials.

Christopher Ritzau presented information for consideration in GIS/ ITS Work Program projects. The information will be passed on to staff.