

**MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE  
MAY 13, 2003**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the RCC meeting of April 15, 2003 were approved with the following correction on page 9: *Warren Strumpfer made the motion to approve the release of the Draft DVRPC FY 2004 TIP for New Jersey; the motion was seconded by Lorraine Brill.*

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Dennis Winters, Chair, noted that a list has been generated showing the RCC's participation on various DVRPC committees. Warren Strumpfer added the I-295 Study Committee on which he serves.

Mr. Winters drew the RCC's attention to the Board's response to committee recommendations from April. Tom Cooper expressed his displeasure with the Board's vote and questioned the Board's lack of direction and clarity in dealing with this SEPTA issue. He will attend the May 22<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting to clarify his feelings.

**DVRPC DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC RECORDS POLICY:**

William Greene, DVRPC Assistant Executive Director, Administration, explained that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has amended its Right-to-Know Law (PL390) with Act No. 2002-100, enacted June 29, 2002. New Jersey has enacted PL 2001c.404, an Open Public Records Act. DVRPC is subject to the provisions of the Pennsylvania Right-to-Know Law and the New Jersey Open Public Records Act. Both of these statutes require DVRPC to adopt a policy for the release of Public Records. Mr. Greene reviewed the draft policy statement that will go to the Board this month for approval. The Board will also consider the request to open a public comment period for the DVRPC Public Participation Plan which will have to be amended to include the Disclosure of Public Records Policy.

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

***MOTION*** (by Miles Day, seconded by Elaine Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve the Disclosure of Public Records Policy and open a public comment period to amend the DVRPC Public Participation Plan to include this statement.

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

**TIP ACTION PA03-23a: YARDLEY BOROUGH/LOWER MAKEFIELD TOWNSHIP**

**BIKEWAY AND TIP ACTION PA03-23b: LIMERICK TOWNSHIP BIKE IMPROVEMENTS:**

Warren Strumpfer, Transportation Subcommittee Chair, explained that PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY 2003-2006 TIP for Pennsylvania by removing the Yardley Borough/Lower Makefield Township Bikeway project (\$371,000 CMAQ/\$93,000 Local Match) from the TIP. The project has not been advanced by the township. The funds will serve as a partial source for the West Chester Transit Center.

In addition, PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2003-2006 TIP for Pennsylvania by removing the Limerick Township Bike Improvements project (\$489,000 CMAQ/\$122,000 Local Match) from the TIP. The project is no longer being advanced by the township. These funds will also serve as a partial source for the West Chester Transit Center.

*Discussion: The RCC noted the subcommittee’s concern with this trend that is resulting in bicycle/pedestrian projects not moving forward. Lorraine Brill stated that there is a need within the CMAQ process to ensure that municipalities maintain their commitments when applying for funds. Although many felt that leadership and a lack of awareness as well as a lack of motivation were key factors in dropping bicycle projects, members also acknowledged that the economy may have played a role.*

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board oppose TIP Actions PA03-23a and PA03-23b on the basis that the implementation of bicycle/pedestrian projects at the municipal level is flawed due to changes in leadership and/or motivation.

A solution involving outreach needs to be developed to move these projects forward; they should not fall victim to false beliefs or a lack of awareness of their benefits to the community. The choice for a healthy transportation mode is essential to the region’s citizens. The committee asks that DVRPC staff apprise the RCC of similar bicycle/pedestrian projects that are lagging behind schedule in time that members could question and perhaps urge municipal action.

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

**TIP ACTION PA03-23c: SWAMP ROAD CULVERT AT PENN’S WOODS ROAD:**

PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2003-2006 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Swamp Road Culvert project at Penn’s Woods Drive to the TIP.

The project would be programmed with a FY 2003 preliminary engineering phase

(\$378,000 Bridge/\$95,000 State), and a FY 2005 final design phase (\$396,000 Bridge/\$99,000 State). The purpose of this project is to replace a simple span steel bridge on Swamp Road at Penn's Woods Drive, just southeast of the culvert project on Swamp Rd. at Worthington Mill Rd. (MPMS #13683). It is estimated that construction will start in March 2007 (\$1.480 million Bridge/\$370,000 State), approximately two years after the project completion date of the Worthington Mill Road Culvert project.

*Discussion: At the subcommittee, Sue Herman had explained that there is a two-year lag between construction on the Swamp Road culvert at Penn's Woods Drive and the Swamp Road culvert at Worthington Drive. She believes that weight restrictions will continue on Swamp Road if the projects are sequenced in this way; this means that trucks will continue to use residential roads. Ms. Herman noted that she went to the Bucks County Commissioners on May 7 asking that letters be sent to DVRPC requesting that construction on the Penn's Woods Drive culvert be moved ahead to 2004. The Commissioners deferred to the Bucks County Planning Commission which agreed to send letters to DVRPC with this request. Ms. Herman has asked her state legislators to do the same.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA03-23c, PennDOT's request to amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006), by adding the Swamp Road Culvert at Penn's Woods Road project into the TIP. However, both the Swamp Road culvert at Penn's Woods Road and the Swamp Road culvert just south of Worthington Mill Road should be fast-tracked, in parallel, for construction to begin in the spring of 2004. Heavy trucks should be removed from residential roads as quickly as possible.

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

**TIP ACTION PA03-23d: PA 413/PA 532, NEWTOWN BYPASS INTERSECTION:**

PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY 2003-2006 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the PA 413/PA 532, Newtown Bypass Intersection project back into the TIP in order to add a FY2003 construction phase. The request seeks authorization to advance construct \$2.240 million federal STU funds/\$560,000 State funds which would then be converted in FY 2004. This project involves intersection widening to accommodate dual left turn lanes on northbound PA 413 at Richboro Road and Buck Road. Additional shoulder widening and road overlay will be included during construction for safety purposes.

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by Bob Machler to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA03-23d, PennDOT's request to amend the FY 2003 TIP for PA (FY2003-2006), by adding the PA 413/PA 532 Newtown Bypass Intersection project back into the TIP. In addition, the RCC should ask that design of this project be done properly to ensure safe bicycle and pedestrian access.

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

**DVRPC DRAFT FY 2004 TIP FOR NEW JERSEY:**

Warren Strumpfer reported that the Transportation Subcommittee had discussed the Draft DVRPC FY 2004 TIP for New Jersey, referring RCC members to the subcommittee's highlights. At the request of DVRPC staff, the subcommittee was striving to come up with recommendations for the RCC's consideration this month, thus allowing those comments to be reviewed by the RTC and Board in June in time for response and in time to be entered into the public record. The comment period on the TIP ends June 5, 2003. RCC members are welcome to submit individual comments up to that time.

*Discussion: Ernest Cohen voiced his concern about NJ Transit's practice of leasing equipment rather than purchasing it, as well as about the need for ferry service for commuters. After this discussion and after some debate, the RCC voted to submit the following comments on the Draft New Jersey TIP.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by Elaine Cohen) that the DVRPC Board and staff consider the following RCC comments on the Draft DVRPC FY 2004 TIP for New Jersey:

The **TIP** should show that priority is being given to projects that provide congestion relief and should contain a vision for public transportation that places emphasis on moving people not cars. The vision should contain concepts that address:

**TRANSIT PROJECTS**

Implementation of commuter information systems (GIS/GPS) to attract riders and for service improvements.

Emphasis on transit projects (Ferry/Rail/Bus Rapid Transit) to the South

Philadelphia stadium complex area and airport that would provide congestion relief to the Rt-295/Rt-42/Rt-676 intersection.

Setting transit travel time goals that are competitive with automobiles.

Evidence to show that DVRPC Census Worker Flow, Cordon Studies and Parking Lot Study data is being used to create transit commuter service to relieve road congestion.

The TIP also needs projects that will provide safe bicycle and pedestrian travel capability on or parallel to county routes connecting institutions, businesses, malls and transportation facilities.

### **HIGHWAY PROJECTS**

The Deptford Mall area needs improvements to relieve highway congestion on Rt-55 and Rt-42 to include commuter congestion relief at the Rt-55/Rt-42 intersection.

Conversion of one or more “Jersey Circles” to **Roundabout** – “**Yield on Entry**” operation to improve safety and determine if traffic circles really need to be replaced.

### **COMMENTS ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS**

The RCC continues to oppose the Delaware River Tram (TIP#2374) for the following reasons:

- a) There is no justification for the project;
- b) This project is tantamount to an amusement park ride;
- c) There is much concern about the operation of the tram in different weather extremes;
- d) DRPA should focus on its core mission which is to expand PATCO operations;
- e) The agency should be addressing other, more timely transportation issues.

Route 55 (DB#00302) seems to be in a study phase. The committee questions the advisability of widening Route 55 further out in Gloucester County to Cape May in rural areas. This is also a wetland area and this causes environmental concerns.

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

## **DVRPC FY 2003 AND FY 2004 WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: TRANSIT AREA MASTER PLAN FOR BEVERLY CITY AND EDGEWATER PARK TOWNSHIP,**

## **BURLINGTON COUNTY:**

Barry Seymour, DVRPC Assistant Executive Director, Regional Planning, explained that the Southern New Jersey Light Rail Transit System is nearing completion and is expected to be operational by the end of 2003. This line will run for 34 miles between Camden and Trenton, with a total of 20 stations. There are 11 stations in Burlington County, many of them in communities that were previously served and developed around the train stations. The Beverly/Edgewater Park station is unique among these stations in that it lies on the boundary of two communities. Beverly City is a higher density town that has seen population loss and economic decline over the past few decades. Edgewater Park has also seen decline and disinvestment, but has a supply of developable open space located near the proposed light rail station. With cooperation between these two municipalities, the new light rail system could bring economic growth and a renewed sense of community to both Beverly and Edgewater Park.

The proposed project would engage a consultant to develop a Master Plan for transit-oriented development and redevelopment in the area of the station in Beverly City and Edgewater Park Township, Burlington County. The project would build on DVRPC's report, *Transit Village Design in Burlington County*, which examined and prepared preliminary recommendations for the area, by preparing a community needs assessment, market analysis, physical site evaluation, and master plan for the area with an implementation agenda for local, county, state, regional, and private sector action. DVRPC would issue the RFP and oversee the contract, with technical oversight by Burlington County. Funding would be provided through NJDOT's Land Use Planning Department.

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

***MOTION*** (by Ernest Cohen, seconded by Warren Strumpfer) that the DVRPC Board amend the FY2003 and FY2004 Work Programs to add a project to prepare a transit area master plan for Beverly City and Edgewater Park Township, Burlington County.

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

## **STONE ARCH BRIDGES:**

Mr. Seymour also announced that DVRPC staff has met with the consultants who are planning for the rehabilitation of 126 stone arch bridges throughout Pennsylvania. The largest number of these bridges are located in southeastern PA.

Public meetings have been scheduled throughout the region to accept comments as a means of prioritizing maintenance; a sheet listing dates was distributed to committee

members. This is will be an action item for the RCC in June.

**UPDATE OF THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA) URBAN BOUNDARY FOR PENNSYLVANIA AND NEW JERSEY:**

John Coscia, Jr., DVRPC Senior Transportation Engineer, reviewed this effort, stating that following each decennial census, the Federal Highway Administration requests each state to update the Urban Boundary line. This line demarcates the urban areas from the rural areas in the state for the purposes of the federal functional classification of public roads.

Urban area boundaries are fixed primarily for capital project funding and are not to be confused with boundaries established for the comprehensive, cooperative and continuing urban transportation planning process.

While this boundary is generally based on the Bureau of the Census's urbanized areas, the states are permitted to smooth the boundary line to meet the objectives of the highway classification system. The boundary should be adjusted to smooth out irregularities, maintain administrative continuity along routes, and encompass fringe areas having residential, commercial, industrial, and/or national defense significance. Transportation terminals such as airports and seaports should also be included within the urban boundary if they lie within a reasonable distance of the urbanized area. Urban boundary determinations should also consider the service areas of transit operations. Where the urban boundary line follows a road, that road would be considered within the urban area.

To update the boundary line, the states ask the MPOs to coordinate the effort with their respective counties. DVRPC has worked with its member counties in the process of smoothing line around the urbanized areas of our region and has also coordinated our effort with the adjacent MPOs.

*Discussion: the RCC voiced concern that sprawl could be the result of this action.*

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Warren Strumpfer ) that the DVRPC Board approve the proposed FHWA Urban Boundary for Pennsylvania and for New Jersey and forward this recommendation to the respective state DOTs for approval by FHWA.

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

**MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING WITH READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY (RATS) AND LEHIGH VALLEY TRANSPORTATION STUDY (LVTS):**

Richard Bickel, DVRPC Deputy Director, Regional Planning, explained that the decennial

U.S. Census determines those areas that qualify as Urbanized Areas (UAs) based on total population (50,000) and population density (1000 persons per square mile). The U.S. Department of Transportation Metropolitan Planning regulations require planning activities for UAs to be conducted by a new or existing MPO or to be covered by adjacent MPOs. In response to this requirement, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between adjacent MPOs can be defined and executed to clarify the responsibilities for transportation planning and programming for newly created or extended UAs that cross MPO boundaries.

The purpose of this action item is to propose two MOUs for Board approval and execution in response to expanded UAs as a result of the 2000 US Census. The MOUs establish and reaffirm the respective responsibilities for transportation planning and programming with each neighboring MPO.

- An MOU is proposed with RATS, in Berks County, to reflect the expansion of the Small Urbanized Area around Pottstown Borough, which overlaps into Chester and Montgomery counties, along US Route 422 and PA Routes 100 and 73.
- An MOU is proposed with LVTS, in Lehigh and Northampton counties, to reflect an extension of the Allentown UA into Bucks County, near Coopersburg and Quakertown boroughs, along PA Route 309.

In each case, the key principle proposed to govern transportation planning and programming responsibilities is that each MPO would be responsible for the portions of the UAs within their boundaries, while sharing information and maintaining open communication and coordination in response to cross-boundary issues and projects.

The proposed MOUs have been coordinated with the Berks County and Lehigh Valley planning commission staff, and they concur in the wording. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation is seeking action on this matter by the end of May.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Ajay Creshkoff, seconded by Bob Machler) that the DVRPC Board execute Memoranda of Understanding with the Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS) and the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS) to clarify the responsibilities for transportation planning and programming for newly created or extended UAs that cross MPO boundaries.

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

**DVRPC FY 2003 WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE  
NORTHEAST EXTENSION/PA 309 CORRIDOR INCIDENT/TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT  
PLAN:**

Dr. Donald Shanis, DVRPC Deputy Director, Transportation Planning, reviewed this proposed work amendment. He clarified that the purpose of this project is to initiate development of a unified traffic management and signal coordination plan within the Pennsylvania Turnpike Northeast Extension (I-476)/PA 309 Corridor. The plan must be capable of handling both routine traffic conditions and incident diversions onto the arterial network.

There are two critical components of this effort: (1) an inventory of traffic signal equipment on the corridor's arterial network, and (2) an agreement on an approach to oversee traffic management under emergency conditions.

The I-476/PA 309 corridor provides mobility for north-south travelers within central Montgomery and western Bucks Counties. Although a network of arterial roads exists in this corridor, the Northeast Extension and PA 309 carry the bulk of the through trips. When congestion, resulting from incidents, restricts travel on those highways, traffic diverts to the arterial network. At the present time, there are no coordinated plans to manage traffic on these parallel roads, many of which are already heavily traveled and experience congestion. The study corridor includes 21 municipalities in the area generally bounded by I-476, PA 309, PA Turnpike mainline, and PA 113.

DVRPC will serve as the project manager. Our primary role will be to establish and coordinate the activities of a study advisory committee and retain an engineering firm to: (1) conduct a detailed inventory of traffic signal equipment in the corridor, and (2) develop scenarios for the operation of intermunicipal traffic signal coordination.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**MOTION** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by Bob Machler) that the DVRPC Board amend the FY2003 Work Program to add a project to initiate development of a unified traffic management and signal coordination plan within the Pennsylvania Turnpike Northeast Extension (I-476)/PA 309 Corridor.

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

## **RANCOCAS MAIN BRANCHES GREENWAY PLAN:**

Patty Elkis, DVRPC Manager, Office of Environmental Planning, reviewed his recently published report entitled, *The Rancocas Main Branches Greenway Plan*, for which she will shortly receive an award from the Rancocas Conservancy.

Ms. Elkis explained that this document, the second Rancocas Greenway plan, builds on the momentum of the 1,000+ acres along the Rancocas that have already been protected as part of the greenway. She noted that DVRPC was engaged to conduct a greenway plan for the Main Stem of the Rancocas, which was completed in 1996. Later in the decade, through the leadership of the Rancocas Conservancy, in partnership with Burlington County, DVRPC was again engaged to extend the greenway planning effort along the Main Branches to the border with the Pinelands. The plan's purpose is to preserve a green buffer along the Rancocas to preserve water quality and habitat; to provide recreational opportunities linked to the water to instill appreciation of the creek as a resource; to facilitate communication, cooperation and coordination among and between the municipalities that share this resource; and to promote eco-tourism in the Rancocas Valley as a further means to protect the creek and to restore and invest in its historic villages

Ms. Elkis concluded by outlining the four main issues of the study, as well as the major recommended actions that, if implemented, will serve to address the issues.

*Discussion: The RCC noted that there is a need for this type of project in Pennsylvania. DVRPC is seeking 501c-3 status so that it is eligible for grants to do this type of work in PA.*

## **SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIONS:**

### **PENNDOT I-76 PROJECT IN SOUTH PHILADELPHIA:**

The Transportation Subcommittee reviewed a project brought to its attention by RCC member John Nacchio. The project is being done by PennDOT in South Philadelphia in the Stadium District. Specifically, PennDOT began widening the ramp at Broad and Packer Avenues. However, without notice to residents, they are removing up to 22 trees that have been in place for more than 75 years. The Packer Park Civic Association and the Veterans Stadium Neighbors feel that they have not been adequately informed about the scope of this project. Mr. Nacchio has asked that the RCC refer the following comments to PennDOT for a response.

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

**MOTION** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by John Pawson) that the RCC is concerned that PennDOT may have misrepresented the I-76 project in South Philadelphia to the Packer Park Civic Association and the Veterans Stadium Neighbors. The RCC asks that the DVRPC Board forward the following questions to PennDOT for a response:

*Was an EIS completed?*

*Were public meetings held and did the public have input on this project?*

*Was this project based upon a study done in 1990 and not updated?*

*Was or is this project in the TIP?*

*Why isn't context sensitive design being used and what are the plans for landscaping?*

*Shouldn't the impact of this project be solely on the intersection?*

*Will there be more such projects specific to the neighborhoods encompassing the Packer Park Civic Association and the Veterans Stadium Neighbors?*

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

(NOTE: A response from PennDOT to the questions listed above is attached to the Staff Summary of Board Response, dated May 22, 2003.)

#### **SEPTA SERVICE ABANDONMENTS:**

At the Transportation Subcommittee, John Pawson had submitted a resolution regarding SEPTA service abandonments, explaining his estimate of ridership impacts. This opened a discussion regarding the impact of proposed service cuts.

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

**MOTION** (by Warren Strumpfer, seconded by Lorraine Brill) that the RCC urge the DVRPC Board to instruct staff to run DVRPC's travel model to determine the impact of SEPTA's proposed service cuts which will affect tens of thousands of regional citizens.

Regarding the overall funding issue for public transit, the RCC asks the county elected officials sitting at the DVRPC Board table to urge their state legislators to support the state revenue portion of the Governor's budget as a short-term fix.

As a long-term solution, the RCC urges the DVRPC Board to endorse the intent of amending the state constitution to allow the use of gasoline tax and motor licensing fees for transit as well as for highways and bridges.

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

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Ajay Creshkoff stated that he believes that the RCC should come up with a strategy for its discourse with the Board that would better ensure a positive response to the actions we request. Members need to be very concise in their statements.