

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
AUGUST 10, 2004**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of July 20, 2004 were approved as mailed.

RTC REPORT:

Warren Strumpfer questioned whether the RCC's resolution regarding regional transit coordination and a future meeting with the transit agencies was moving forward. Dennis Winters noted that the Board had no response at its July meeting to the thoughts forwarded by the committee. Candace Snyder, DVRPC Public Affairs Director, stated that in speaking with Dr. Don Shanis, DVRPC Assistant Executive Director for Transportation Planning, she had learned that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between DVRPC and NJ Transit was in the works. This MOU would promote regional transit service. Dr. Shanis will come to the September 15 RCC meeting with this action and to update the committee on the proposed meeting with all three transit companies.

DISCUSSION RE: RESPONSES TO RCC COMMENTS ON FY 05 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP):

Dennis Winters commented on his disappointment regarding the response from DVRPC regarding bicyclists and pedestrians as a follow-up to RCC comments submitted on the FY 05 TIP for PA and NJ. The response, in Mr. Winters' opinion, doesn't comply with national law which calls for decision-makers to provide for the needs of all users. Warren Strumpfer made the point that the RCC comments focused on grade level changes that can be made on almost any road to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. DVRPC's response indicated that it is not practical, nor safe, to accommodate riders and pedestrians on every road, missing the point that it should be done where feasible.

John Pawson brought up a number of issues, including "Improved Coordination between NJ Transit Agencies" and "NJ Transit Service into Philadelphia", noting that the response reinforce the RCC's belief that DVRPC should coordinate transit efforts. After further discussion and in the interest of time, RCC members agreed that Candace Snyder should coordinate all of the RCC's comments regarding agency response to public comments on the FY 05 TIP, and compile a list of RCC rebuttals to be reviewed by the Transportation Subcommittee and then the RCC at the September 15th meetings. Anyone wanting to offer input to this initial list should email or mail their thoughts to Ms. Snyder by @8/20/04.

DRAFT COMMENTS ON JOB ACCESS AND REVERSE COMMUTE (JARC) PLAN UPDATE:

DVRPC staff presented the Draft JARC Plan Update at the July RCC members. The committee has the opportunity to make comments at this time even though the official public comment period ended on August 9, 2004.

John Pawson noted that the map on page 23 of the JARC Plan Update shows a clear discrepancy between the lack of available transit service on the four bridges (between the Ben Franklin and Trenton) into New Jersey and the locations of employers. In addition, the map on page 40 shows the locations of persons with disabilities who would also benefit from interstate transit service on these bridges. This is indicative of the need for better coordination between transit agencies. Discussion focused on the fact that SEPTA's Route 8 service could be extended to cross the Delaware River to Pennsauken and Cherry Hill. Karen Cilurso, DVRPC Regional Planner, explained that a study was done five years ago on the viability of a bus connecting routes for bistate commuting. However, it found that there would be very little ridership. The trend is now suburb to suburb. Dr. Shirley Loveless stated that transit agencies don't ask the general public the right questions. They only survey people who are on their buses. Sheikh Gardrie pointed out that the older communities in the region could benefit from better transit service. Jim Farny pointed out the need for circumferential transit routes.

The RCC voted to forward the following comments to DVRPC staff regarding *Improving Access to Opportunities*, the Draft JARC Plan Update for 2004:

- JARC bus routes or another program should provide bus service on all of the bridges located between the Commodore Barry Bridge and the Turnpike Bridge to meet the needs of all riders.
- There is a lack of circumferential transit in the region that needs to be addressed.
- An initiative is needed to address unused capacity that could be redirected for other purposes such as transit service during rush hour for those who need job access. A shared fare agreement between NJ Transit and SEPTA would help to facilitate this idea.
- Where feasible, the MPO should coordinate with neighboring MPOs to accommodate inter-regional jobs.
- The SEPTA "bikes on buses" information needs to be updated. Currently SEPTA Has adopted a policy of purchasing all new buses with bike racks and is using Federal Transit Enhancements to retrofit 655 buses with bike racks. To date, over 50% of the buses are equipped with bike racks. SEPTA buses will be 100% bike accessible by 2006. It should be noted that the RiverLINE also has bike racks on its trains and carries more than 100 bikes a day (Source: Bicycle Coalition).

PROPOSED WORK PROGRAM PROJECTS FOR FY 2006:

The RCC discussed various proposals submitted in the past as well as new ideas for FY 2006 Work Program projects. The attached list of proposed projects will be submitted to DVRPC staff for consideration in the FY 2006 Work Program process. The committee did not rank the projects because a full listing of all submitted projects will be forthcoming from staff and the RCC will be asked to rank projects at that time. The Low Car Housing Workshop, which was proposed last year, was discussed but Larry Shaeffer felt that this should not be proposed as a Work Program project at this time because the project may be handled through the CarShare membership. Members expressed interest in a Philly CarShare presentation, possibly in October. (**NOTE:** Also attached to the Work Program proposals is a later submission by Roxane Shinn, new RCC member, for the Camden Regional Alternate Transportation Infrastructure Survey.)

CONSTANT FLOW TRAFFIC SYSTEM:

Joe DiMedio, new RCC member, presented his idea of the Constant Flow Traffic System (CFTS) which is based on mandatory distances between vehicles and produces constant movement in all areas not controlled by traffic signals. Mr. DiMedio explained that the system can save lives and reduce road rage, as well as traffic jams, through lane specifications and common driver courtesy. In what are defined as control areas, specific locations on various roadways are designated for reduced speed and coordination of high and low volumes of traffic. When applied to a circle or round-about, a control area will produce continuous movement and better coordinated traffic. Mr. DiMedio felt that the CFTS would be a good demo project, particularly as applied to the Collingswood or Brooklawn Circles.

Discussion: Larry Shaeffer, on behalf of the RCC, thanked Mr. DiMedio for sharing these ideas and asked that he keep the committee informed of any progress in promoting this idea. The RCC will consider the CFTS as a possible demo project for round-abouts or circles in the region. The committee also discussed the use of dots to remind drivers of the appropriate distances between cars. The impact of road design on drivers' speeds was also a topic of discussion.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sue Herman brought the committee up to date on Swamp Road. During the last recent rainstorm, one of the quarries on Swamp Road collapsed. Approximately one mile of Swamp Road is closed, and a detour onto Route 413 has been suggested by PennDOT. Because of local opposition, police have closed this road to trucks. This same problem exists on Worthington Mill Road but because this is a state-owned road, local law enforcement cannot keep trucks off of the road. The RCC discussed the rail gondola idea, although it was pointed out that local politicians feel it is not economically feasible.

