

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
MAY 17, 2005**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of April 19, 2005 were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Dennis Winters, RCC Chair, welcomed everyone and introduced visitors. He then called upon Lorraine Brill to provide the RTC report in Warren Strumpfer's absence. Ms. Brill reported that Warren Strumpfer had stated at the RTC meeting that many of the RCC comments about last month's TIP actions centered on bike/pedestrian concerns. He asked if the RCC is alone in caring about this issue in these projects. Is there any way the RCC can get reassurance that something is being done? Is it unreasonable for the committee to expect that bike/ped accommodations be included in the TIP project descriptions?

DVRPC's Don Shanis and PennDOT's Robert Hannigan assured him that DVRPC and PennDOT's policy and procedures require consideration of bicycle accommodations in the project design phase. They felt there was no need for the RCC to continue asking for these provisions since many projects would contain these accommodations.

Mr. Strumpfer then expressed the RCC's concern about the FY 2006 Work Program amendment re: the Bucks County Regional Traffic Study: The RCC believes that the goal, tasks and funding of this project should be expanded so that the rail alternative for hauling quarry stone could be considered to alleviate quarry truck traffic through residential roads. The RCC also requested that the "Bucks County Regional Traffic Study Scope of Work" be included in the work program to ensure that additional concerns of the study are part of the Work Program tasks. Finally, the RCC requested that a rail representative from the "Goods Movement Task Force" be added to the major stakeholders' list.

PENNDOT DISTRICT 6 CONTROL CENTER:

Manny Anastasiadas, PennDOT Traffic Operations Manager, who was introduced by DVRPC's John Ward, stated that the District 6 Control Center had been in operation since 1993. It now provides 24/7 operations and employs ten full time and nine part time staff. A 40% reduction in congestion has taken place by removing broken down vehicles in a timely manner and by providing drivers with real-time information that allows them to decide upon a course of action. The Center is able to survey the number of vehicles on the highway and to determine what is happening via cameras that are located throughout the region.

Mr. Anastasiadas outlined the software used to locate trouble spots and to color-code speeds. This software interacts with CCTV which can zoom in on specific segments of the road. Expressway service patrols on I-95, Vine Street Expressway, and parts of the Schuylkill Expressway have provided more than 35,000 motorists assists since July, 2000. Video information is shared with partners such as 911 operators, the Philadelphia Police, etc.

Future plans include a new dispatch center in Norristown, more incident management, more ramp metering, enhanced real-time information, expanded ITS devices, and integrated corridor management. He clarified that the Center coordinates with centers up and down the East Coast. Mr. Anastasiadas thanked the RCC and DVRPC for their support through TIP actions that provide the funding for equipment for part of this operation.

TIP ACTION NJ05-14: TRAFFIC SIGNAL VIDEO CAMERA DETECTION RETROFIT PROJECT (DB #D0505), GLOUCESTER COUNTY:

Ms. Brill stated that Gloucester County has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2007 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new project, the Gloucester County Traffic Signal Video Camera Detection Retrofit project using \$2.4 million of funds that were made available to the region this year as part of the additional federal obligation authority. The county maintains over 100 traffic signals which stretch over more than 400 miles of roadway. The county proposes to retrofit traffic signals with video camera detection systems for traffic controlling, relying on vehicle movement to send the signal to the signal controller. Currently, most of the county's signals operate as part of a loop detection system which rely on significant masses of metal to break magnetic current and send the signal for the traffic light to change. As technology advances many automobiles are now being constructed using less iron/steel/metal than in previous years. Further, motorcycles and bicycles go undetected. The county wants to address traffic congestion and safety by installing an efficient, county-wide system that is compatible with existing equipment. The request is to program \$2.4 million STP-STU funds for construction in FY05, drawing down from the \$2.468 million programmed in the DVRPC Future Projects line item, DB #D026. Funds will be used to purchase video equipment, brackets, cable, and new communication panels as necessary.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by John Nawn) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ05-14, Gloucester County's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for New Jersey (FY2005-2007) by adding a new project to the TIP, the Gloucester County Traffic Signal Video Camera Detection Retrofit project, programming \$2.4 million STP-STU for construction in FY05.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-28: PHILADELPHIA PORT ACCESS ENHANCEMENT (MPMS #72359):

PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, the Philadelphia Port Access Enhancement project (MPMS #72359), programming \$500,000 specially earmarked TCSP (Transportation and Community System Preservation) funds in FY05. The Delaware River Maritime Enterprise Council (DRMEC) is the sponsor of the project and will use the funds to develop a strategic plan that establishes a conceptual framework for future public and private investment. An assessment of several issues/items will be done, including: infrastructure at or near the Port of Philadelphia; identification of military and commercial hubs and freight corridors that connect to the Philadelphia seaport; and identification of state of the art transportation technologies, business, and information sharing processes.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Ken Edmonds) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA05-28, PENNDOT's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by adding a new project into the TIP, Philadelphia Port Access Enhancement project (MPMS #72359), programming \$500,000 specially earmarked TCSP funds in FY05.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-29a: ROUTE 313 SIGNALS (MPMS #57638), BUCKS COUNTY:

PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Route 313 project to the TIP with a \$306,000 CMAQ FY05 utility phase and \$1.5 million construction phase (FY06 and FY07). Design for this project was funded and advanced locally, with the project first appearing on the FY01 TIP in July of 2000 with a projected construction cost of \$536,000 to be federally funded. The project will provide for a closed loop traffic signal system on Route 313 between Sawmill Road and East Court Street, in addition to a signal on Main Street between Ashland Street and Swamp Road.

Discussion: The RCC discussed whether to add a comment regarding bicycle/pedestrian considerations. They strongly feel that documentation is needed regarding whether bike/ped issues are really considered by the DOT's. The committee feels that DVRPC should follow through by demanding these answers from the DOT's. Roxane Shinn asked if it is possible to monitor the results of RCC recommendations to the departments of transportation. Ms. Snyder explained that this could be a fulltime job and that she doubted that staff could do this. Dennis Winters pointed that consistent use of the bicycle checklist by the DOT's would accomplish a number of the goals requested by the RCC.

The committee also discussed the need to carefully apply the bike/ped statement to actions since its consistent use seems to be ignored by the Board and by the agencies. It is necessary to submit credible statements to the Board. Mr. Winters, however, stated that he intends to mention DVRPC's lack of response to RCC comments at the federal certification review.

(NOTE: In discussing this issue with John Coscia, DVRPC Executive Director, Candace Snyder, DVRPC Director of Public Affairs, learned that he also is somewhat frustrated that DVRPC does not have the authority to follow through with the departments of transportation, which take the RCC suggestions and turn them over to their design teams. DVRPC does not have access to this department and cannot get answers to some questions. He suggested working more closely with PennDOT's Bicycle Advocate; Ms. Snyder will follow up with John Madera, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, to get the pertinent contact information.)

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA05-29a, PENNDOT's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by adding a project into the TIP.

The Route 313 Signal project (MPMS #57638), programming a \$306,000 CMAQ FY05

utility phase, and a \$1.5 million CMAQ construction phase in FY06 and FY07.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-29b: MERION AVENUE BRIDGE (MPMS #16180), MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by advancing the construction phase for the Merion Avenue Bridge project (MPMS #16180). This project was recently added to the TIP for final design and utility phases totaling \$2.45 million (Federal/State/Local), with construction expected in FY08 or later. Over the last couple of months PENNDOT's bridge consultant has been working with Amtrak to determine a feasible schedule, as the bridge runs over Amtrak's line and requires that Amtrak determine the construction schedule. The bridge crosses over Amtrak and SEPTA R5 rail lines in Lower Merion Township. Amtrak has identified a window to address the construction within the next several months, and PENNDOT is working to advance the project quickly, in order to take advantage of Amtrak's schedule. The request requires that \$7.218 million (\$5.774 federal Bridge/\$1.083 State/\$361,000 Local) be programmed in FY05 for construction. This project will advance in conjunction with the Church Road Bridge in Lower Merion Township, MPMS #16155.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA05-29b, PENNDOT's request to modify the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by advancing and increasing the construction phase of the Merion Avenue Bridge project (MPMS #16180) by programming \$7.218 million (\$5.774 federal Bridge/\$1.083 State/\$361,000 Local), for construction in FY05. The RCC questions whether bicycle/pedestrian issues are being address in this project.

AMENDMENT (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Finley Shapiro) to remove the question regarding bike/ped issues from the motion.

MOTION CARRIED, AS AMENDED. (See Item D on voting record.)

TIP ACTION PA05-29c: CHURCH ROAD BRIDGE OVER R5, (MPMS#16155), MONTGOMERY COUNTY:

PENNDOT has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by advancing the construction phase for the Church Road Bridge project (MPMS #16155). This project was recently added to the TIP for final design and utility phases totaling \$2.575 million (Federal/State/Local), with construction expected in FY08 or later. Over the last couple of months PENNDOT's bridge consultant has been working with Amtrak to determine a feasible schedule, as the bridge runs over Amtrak's line and requires that Amtrak determine the construction schedule. The bridge crosses over Amtrak and SEPTA R5 rail lines in Lower Merion Township.

Amtrak has identified a window to address the construction within the next several months, and

PENNDOT is working to advance the project quickly, in order to take advantage of Amtrak's schedule. The request requires that \$5.664 million (\$4.531 federal Bridge/\$850,000/State/\$283,000 Local) be programmed in FY05 for construction. This project will advance in conjunction with the Merion Avenue Bridge in Lower Merion Township, MPMS #16180.

Discussion: The RCC expressed its concern regarding the need for sidewalks on this bridge. There are no sidewalks on the adjacent roadway. John Nawn clarified that two foot shoulders are needed for drainage and are the minimum required by law.

(NOTE: Following the meeting, Elizabeth Schoonmaker, DVRPC TIP Manager, checked with Leo Bagley of Montgomery County who clarified that sidewalks are included in the reconstruction of the bridge.)

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA05-29c, PENNDOT's request to modify the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by advancing and increasing the construction phase of the Church Road Bridge project (MPMS #16155) by programming \$5.664 million (\$4.531 federal Bridge/\$850,000/State/\$283,000 Local) for construction in FY05, if sidewalks are included on the bridge.

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

RCC POLICIES RE: *DESTINATION 2030* - DVRPC'S LONG-RANGE PLAN:

The RCC reviewed the policies submitted by a special task force that had been charged with drafting statements regarding *Destination 2030*, the Draft DVRPC Long-Range Plan. After a few wording changes and some discussion, the committee took the following action:

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Ajay Creshkoff, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the RCC submit the attached Policy Statements re: *Destination 2030*, the Draft DVRPC Long-Range Plan, to the DVRPC Board and staff as its official input.

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

RCC INPUT TO DVRPC DRAFT FY 2006 NJ TIP:

Lorraine Brill noted three projects that citizens might want to include in their individual comments. These included Camden County Civic Center Access Improvements (DB#03340); Delaware River Tram (DB#98553); and three Cramer Hill projects (DB#02395C, DB#03295B, and DB#02395A).

Without the input of many New Jersey RCC members, the committee discussed a number of issues and agreed to submit the following statement re: the DVRPC Draft FY 2006 NJ TIP:

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Finley Shapiro, seconded by Cathy Zukoski) to recommend that the RCC submit the following statements regarding the DVRPC Draft FY 2006 New Jersey TIP:

The RCC continues to oppose the **Delaware River Tram (DB #98553)** 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.

DRPA should focus on its core missions of expansion of PATCO operation and bridge operation and maintenance. We believe that the entire population should fund economic development projects, rather than the toll-paying motorist. The agency should be addressing other, more timely issues, such as retrofitting the Ben Franklin Bridge walkway to meet ADA requirements. The agency should improve and expand ferry operations, including expanding hours for commuters as needed to include airport and stadium complex service.

Route 95, Scudders Falls Bridge and Interchange at Route 29 (DB#04315): The project description should include bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

The RCC reserves the right to submit additional comments regarding the Draft FY 2006 New Jersey TIP in June, 2005 prior to Board adoption.

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

2005 PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY FOR DESTINATION 2030:

Barry Seymour, DVRPC Assistant Executive Director for Regional Planning, reported that a public opinion survey, conducted by outside firm, was completed as part of the *Destination 2030* process to supplement the public input already received. The telephone survey was a random but scientifically accurate polling of citizens across the region. Some of the findings included the following:

- Most residents drive alone to work;
- Most purchases are completed in the region's larger malls;
- Internet purchases are generally the territory of the young (under 35);
- The greatest environmental issue cited was retaining open space;
- The most significant housing issue cited was affordable housing (among first-time buyers) and housing for seniors (among older citizens);
- Major transportation issues raised included reducing congestion and rebuilding facilities;

In managing future development, most residents cited linking new development to current infrastructure as the major priority; When asked how to provide additional funding to highway and transit improvements, most responded that they didn't have a recommendation, with creating tolls a distant

second choice;

When asked how to improve the operation of the transportation system, most cited responsiveness of traffic signals;

Bicycle and pedestrian needs were listed as very important by most respondents;

When asked about increased opportunities for residents, most listed examining social/environmental impacts, and increasing transit to employment centers;

The primary challenges listed for the years ahead were preserving open space and rehabilitating transportation systems.

CMS UPDATE - DRAFT CORRIDORS:

Zoe Neaderland, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, provided an update on the Congestion Management System (CMS), explaining that CMS advances the goals of the Long-Range Plan and strengthens the connection between the Plan and the TIP. It identifies congested corridors and strategies to mitigate congestion. Where additions to capacity are appropriate, the CMS includes supplemental strategies to reduce travel demand and improve operations.

The CMS is region-wide and provides information on transportation system performance, as well as examining strategies that may include improvements to transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transportation system management, and addition of road capacity. The update of the CMS is guided by an Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from each county, the departments of transportation and transit authorities, federal partner agencies, the RCC and others. DVRPC staff, with the review of this advisory committee, developed draft corridors and are now working on strategies for subcorridors. The draft corridors resulted from CMS analysis points and major flows of people from the traffic model. Criteria used for the analysis included current daily congestion of roads and intermodal centers; current peak hour congestion of roads; heavily used roads and intermodal facilities; future daily congestion from 2025 model simulation; frequent crash-related congestion; intermodal importance; and land use.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The RCC deferred action on two Transportation Subcommittee recommendations because of lack of a quorum (i.e., the resolution regarding how to deal with bicycle/pedestrian issues, pending a meeting between DVRPC staff and the RCC Chair and Vice Chair; and the review of agency responses to the TIP Rebuttal).