

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
MAY 16, 2006**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April 18, 2006 RCC meeting were approved with one clarification by Lorraine Brill; namely, under TIP Action PA05-68, the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development is the financial arm of the Philadelphia Industrial Center.

WELCOME FROM NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Barry Seymour, newly appointed DVRPC Executive Director, welcomed RCC members and thanked them for their ongoing participation and input. He encouraged an active interchange of ideas and stated that he valued the time that committee members have dedicated to this effort. He plans to work to better the communication between the RCC and the Board. The RCC congratulated Mr. Seymour on his appointment and wished him the best in this position.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Warren Strumpfer, Chair, reviewed the Board's response to TIP Action PA05-67d: Naaman's Creek Road Restoration, Delaware County (Delaware County agreed with the RCC's suggestion to widen the shoulder); TIP Action PA05-68: Philadelphia Naval Center Shuttle, Philadelphia (this is already a Work Program project); TIP Action PA05-71: PA 422 Reconstruction, PA 29 to Township Line, Montgomery County (the Board will forward the RCC's comments); and the RCC's concerns regarding the Seamless Transportation project.

RTC REPORT:

No RTC report was available this month.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: THE BENEFITS OF TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION AND CLOSED LOOP TECHNOLOGY:

Preston W. Hitchens, Project Manager, RETTEW Associates, Inc. and Anthony Still, Vice President, General Highway Products, explained the ITS projects that their firms had worked on, including Route 476 ramp metering; NJ Light Rail; Hudson Bergen Light Rail; and various other closed loop systems. Mr. Still defined closed loop as the controller assemblies that utilize the same communication path back to a central PC for data gathering. He outlined the differences between centralized and localized loop systems, as well as how the closed loop communicates. He stressed the importance of coordination in allowing the system to work at its optimum level.

Mr. Hitchens outlined objectives of the system, and stated his belief that a closed system is not necessarily needed to ease traffic flow, as much as signal timing controls the system. He cited a number of examples of where and how the system had worked, and reviewed the cost benefit analysis that has been done. He has seen benefits of 40 - 1 on traffic improvements in some locations.

Discussion: The RCC questioned the availability of raw data; traffic flow and the need for good engineering to ensure real time synchronization; traffic signal coordination methods; and the need for preventive maintenance.

PENNSYLVANIA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (PENNVEST) FUNDING REQUEST FOR CHESTER COUNTY:

Patty Elkis, DVRPC Manager, Office of Environmental Planning, explained that PENNVEST is an independent agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania managed by a 13-member Board of Directors and chaired by the Governor, which provides funding for drinking water, wastewater treatment, and stormwater management projects, as well as brownfield assessments and remediation projects.

The Program provides long-term loans through a revolving loan fund to municipalities, authorities and some private entities at below-market interest rates.

PENNVEST has forwarded two applications to DVRPC for review for consistency with the regional plan.

Chester County

- East Coventry Township - PENNVEST loan request for \$6,000,000 to provide sewer connections to the North Coventry Municipal Authority wastewater treatment plant from 200 existing homes in East Coventry. These homes are all currently on septic systems and most are failing or have failed. This project will only serve the existing homes.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Dennis Winters, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to authorize the Executive Director to send a letter to the PENNVEST Board approving the Chester County request for East Coventry Township.

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

PENNSYLVANIA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (PENNVEST) FUNDING REQUEST FOR DELAWARE COUNTY:

Delaware County

- Southern Delaware County Authority - PENNVEST loan request for \$4,646,580 for rehabilitation or replacement of approximately 15,710 feet of sewer line in Bethel and Upper Chichester Townships along the Marcus Hook Creek. The system is approaching its design life of 50-60 years and is currently subject to problems of infiltration and inflow.

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 2030 Plan. As such, these projects are consistent with the goals and policies of the regional plan.

Discussion: Hans van Naerssen suggested that the county coordinate, where necessary, if these improvements are near bike/ped trails.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by John Pawson, seconded by Dennis Winters) to authorize the Executive Director to send a letter to the PENNVEST Board approving the Delaware County request for the Southern Delaware County Authority.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-73a: PA 363, Trooper Road Interchange (MPMS #16669), Montgomery County:

Lorraine Brill, who chaired the RCC Transportation Subcommittee for John Boyle, noted that PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a project back into the TIP, the PA 363, Trooper Road Interchange improvement project (MPMS #16669) by programming a \$500,000 STU funded construction phase in FY06, acknowledging Toll Credit match. This project covers the US Route 422 off-ramp improvements associated with the Betzwood Bridge replacement (MPMS No. 16489) which is currently underway for design. The bridge replacement project will result in re-establishing two-way traffic on SR 0363 at its intersection with US Route 422 westbound off-ramp. Presently traffic in the southbound direction of PA 363 is limited to local access. Improvements are required at the off-ramp merge to maintain safety and handle the extra capacity. Improvements include the installation of a new traffic signal, new signs, new pavement marking and minor island/barrier reconstruction/removal.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Dennis Winters) that the Board approve TIP Action PA05-73a, PennDOT's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by adding a project back into the TIP, the PA 363, Trooper Road Interchange improvement project (MPMS #16669) and programming a \$500,000 STU funded construction phase in FY06.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-73b: PA 23 at Old Betzwood Bridge (MPMS #16490), Montgomery County:

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a project back into the TIP, the PA 23 at Old Betzwood Bridge project (MPMS #16490) and programming a \$4.860 million STU funded construction phase in FY06, acknowledging Toll Credit match. This project addresses the roadway approach improvements associated with the Betzwood Bridge replacement (MPMS #16489) which is currently in design.

Improvements include major reconstruction of the roadway on either side of the bridge between PA Route 23 and Route 422 on Route 363, noting that both the bridge and the roadway will be raised approximately 2 feet higher than previous configurations. This will both accommodate the railroad underneath and improve the safety of the intersection at Route 23.

A new signal and turn lane at the intersection of Route 23 and Route 363, and a new signalized intersection on Route 363 at the Boat Launch and Riverview housing development are included. Signal and turn lane improvements at Outerline Drive are not part of this project and the title and project description will be edited to reflect the proper scope. New drainage, signage and construction services are also included in the construction estimate.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by John Pawson) that the Board approve TIP Action PA05-73b, PennDOT's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by adding a project back into the TIP, the PA 23 at Old Betzwood Bridge project (MPMS #16490) and programming a \$4.860 million STU funded construction phase in FY06. The RCC noted that consideration should be provided for safe bicycle and pedestrian crossings, and the project needs to include the ability for pedestrians, when crossing Route 23, to stop the flow of traffic by hitting a button on the traffic signal.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-73c: State Road Closed Loop Signal System (MPMS #57756), Delaware County:

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a project back into the TIP, the State Road Closed Loop Signal System project (MPMS #57756) by programming a \$320,000 CMAQ utility phase and \$1.2 million construction phase in FY06. Originally selected as a project through the DVRPC Competitive CMAQ Program, this project is now ready to advance to construction. The construction phase includes the installation of an interconnected closed loop traffic signal system by replacing obsolete traffic controllers at 13 intersections. The system will be tied via fiber optics to a central monitoring location which will most likely be the Upper Darby Township Building. It will be monitored by Upper Darby's in-house personnel and remote access will be accommodated. Pedestrian poles, pavement markings, and signage will be included. The description and title should be revised to reflect project limits on State Road from Rolling Road to Hilltop Road.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by John Pawson) that the Board approve TIP Action PA05-73c, PennDOT's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by adding a project back into the TIP, the State Road Closed Loop Signal System project (MPMS #57756), and programming \$1.52 million CMAQ funds for utility (\$320,000) and construction (\$1.2 million) phases in FY06.

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

TIP ACTION NJ06-09: CR 571/Princeton Hightstown Road (Local Scoping, DB #X80B):

Mercer County has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2006-2008 TIP for New Jersey by programming \$300,000 STP-STU funds in FY06 in the DVRPC Local Scoping Line Item for CR 571/Princeton-Hightstown Road in FY06.

The project limits include the intersections of CR 571 with Clarksville Road (CR 638) and Wallace-Cranbury Road (CR 615), and the approximate 1 mile segment that connects them. CR 571 is a major east-west corridor at the northern edge of the county, and the Central Jersey Transportation Forum endorsed the improvement concept at its last meeting. There is a severe safety concern regarding the area where the road drops from four to two lanes. The County and West Windsor Township hope to make "main street" pedestrian, bicycle, and site access improvements, including sidewalks, protected turn lanes, and no additional through travel lanes. Currently, \$1.48 million STP-STU is available in the Local Scoping Line Item for selected projects, and \$1.180 million will remain after this action.

Discussion: Brian Cuccia, NJDOT representative, noted that this one-mile long project, which involves more than one intersection, is intended to improve safety. Sidewalks are included in this project.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by John Pawson) that the Board approve TIP Action NJ06-09, Mercer County's request to modify the FY 2006 TIP for New Jersey (FY2006-2008) by including the CR 571/Princeton-Hightstown Road Local Scoping Project for \$300,000 STP-STU in the DVRPC Local Scoping Line Item, DB #X80B. The RCC believes that sidewalks should be constructed on both sides of the segment in question. The intersection is ¼ mile from the train station and parking spaces along this corridor are in extremely tight supply with parking permits taking up to two years to obtain.

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

DRAFT FY 2007 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AND THE TRANSPORTATION CONFORMITY FINDING:

Elizabeth Schoonmaker, DVRPC TIP Manager, announced that DVRPC has opened a public comment period for the TIP and Conformity Finding that will close on June 4, 2006. A public meeting has been scheduled for 4 - 7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23, 2006 in the DVRPC Conference Center. Copies of TIP documents are available online as well as in the DVRPC Library.

A POST-GLOBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY:

Kevin Adams, DVRPC Regional Planner, Information Analyst, stated that a sustainable economy calls for the value of our ecosystems to be considered as significantly as other conventional measures of economic performance. As a step in that direction, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) has published *A Post-Global Economic Development Strategy to Energize our Economy and Secure Our Future*. As the primary long-term planning agency for the region, DVRPC is helping the region to "think globally" by understanding these trends and providing a plan for effectively dealing with them.

The report recommends five action steps to move the region toward a successful post-global future. They include: Fostering Eco-Industry Clusters; Promoting Location Efficiency; Investing in the Environment; Becoming a Model Region; and Eco-Branding the Delaware Valley.

These five steps only provide the basic framework. As the next step, economic development strategists within the region should work together to begin formulating specific plans. For a complete copy of the report, contact Regional Planner Kevin Adams at 215-238-2826 or kadams@dvrpc.org.

Discussion: The RCC suggested that DVRPC vary its funding mix so that highways don't dominate the outcome of reports. The committee also suggested listing obstacles to success in each case and prototypes for getting rid of barriers. Next steps and specific goals should also be developed.

TAMING TRAFFIC: CONTEXT-SENSITIVE SOLUTIONS IN THE DVRPC REGION:

Kevin Murphy, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner and Karin Morris, AICP, DVRPC Senior Regional Planner, explained that Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) promotes a philosophy whereby safe transportation solutions are designed in harmony with the community while balancing transportation service needs.

CSS projects recognize community goals and are designed, built and maintained to be sustainable while minimizing disruption to the environment. Traffic calming, a tool of CSS, is one method of managing traffic while minimizing negative impacts on communities. Both the NJ and PA departments of transportation have embraced traffic calming planning and implementation. DVRPC has now completed a report, entitled *Taming Traffic*, that presents various strategies and case studies, and shows the results of a survey that was done with county governments to identify high priority locations suitable for traffic calming.

Discussion: The RCC discussed the need to include bike/ped facilities in the mix; the use of trees as calming measures; and the "Complete Streets" approach to projects.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND ACTIONS:

Transportation:

Alternate Funding for Scudders Falls Bridge: The Transportation Subcommittee recommends that the RCC ask DVRPC to prepare a resolution to the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission, highly recommending that a pathway for bicycles and pedestrians be included on the Scudders Fall Bridge. The additional cost for such a facility relative to the entire projects falls with federal guidelines, and if the project is not built concurrent with the reconstruction of the bridge, it will probably never be built. The addition of such a facility also falls within federal guidelines for accommodating bike/ped needs.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Hans van Naerssen, seconded by Cheryl Tumola) to recommend that the Board pass a resolution to the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge that supports efforts to have a bicycle/pedestrian facility included in the plans for the reconstruction of the Scudders Falls Bridge over the Delaware River between Bucks County and Mercer County.

MOTION CARRIED.

Seamless Transportation Project: The subcommittee requests that NJ Transit and DRPA meet with the RCC so that specific proposals regarding bus access to bridges and ferry traffic can be presented.

Northampton Township Sidewalk Transportation Study: The subcommittee commends Northampton for this study on sidewalk prioritization and encourages other municipalities that have dense populations to consider doing the same type of study.

2030:

John Pawson encouraged RCC members to attend a Rail Stone Quarry meeting on May 31st. He also is exploring the option of having a terminal for the auto-train in Philadelphia.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Ajay Creshkoff had provided a paper on the *Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Transportation, Land Use and Economic Development Integration Strategy and Action Plan*. Members were asked to review this document for action early in the next RCC agenda.

Announcements were made regarding the Building from Strength II Conference, scheduled for May 18th at the Radisson in Trevese, PA, and for the Tracking Progress to 2030 meeting, scheduled for May 23rd. Members were also invited to provide comments as part of the Federal Certification Review on June 1st at DVRPC.

Dennis Winters distributed a paper on Gaming Impacts.