

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
July 18, 2006**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the June 13, 2006 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Warren Strumpfer, Chair, announced that there were several committee vacancies that need to be filled. Those committees and their newly appointed representatives include:

CMAQ Committee: John Boyle - alternative modes
John Pawson - transit
Sheikh Gardrie - environmental
Warren Strumpfer - general citizen
CMP Advisory Committee: Creighton Rabs, Larry Shaeffer (alternate)
Central Jersey Transportation Forum: John Boyle
Job Access and Reverse Commute: Dennis Winters (PA); NJ representative to be named.
Land Use/Housing Committee: Lorraine Brill

Mr. Strumpfer then reviewed Board actions taken in June, noting that a vote on the Upper Darby TIP Action had been postponed (as the RCC had requested); the Board voted to add the suggested RCC clause to the Self Certification resolution; and he reiterated the additional comments he made regarding the FY 2007 TIP and the need for multi-modal strategies, the need to reduce SOV capacity increases; the direct connect issue at 76/42/295; and the needed station rehab at Avondale. He then referred RCC members to the Gloucester County response that had been received regarding the RCC's recommendation on TIP Action NJ06-12.

PHILADELPHIA DIESEL DIFFERENCE WORKING GROUP:

Eric Cheung, Coordinator, Diesel Difference, distributed a brochure on *Forging Partnerships to Reduce Diesel Emissions* and reviewed the role of the Clean Air Council. As the Co-Chair for the Diesel Difference project, Mr. Cheung explained clean diesel technology and the need to plan for clean diesel in the future. He stated that the technologies can include hardware, clean fuels, and EPA-verified technologies. He noted that the future challenge of the diesel marketplace is the durability of equipment which will need to be retrofitted to newer standards. The Philadelphia Diesel Difference is a 40-member stakeholder group that supports the voluntary implementation of clean diesel technologies and provides outreach and education about the subject. The program focuses on the five PA counties in the region. Mr. Cheung then review the accomplishments of the group and the funding outlook. He clarified that the Clean Cities program addresses automobile emission while the Diesel Difference deals with the conversion of larger vehicles and fleets.

NORTHERN DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT:

Patrick Starr, Vice President, Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), Southeast Region, explained that PEC is a statewide environmental organization; he is in charge of the regional office.

He outlined the Greenway Planning Project which is the culmination of ten years of work and is

funded by the PA Department of Environmental and Natural Resources. The project looked at current uses along the Delaware River waterfront in the communities of Wissinoming, Tacony, Holmesburg and Bridesburg, and examined opportunities for improvement. These opportunities included continuing the public edge to the river; cleaning up brownfields; establishing a "Regional Choice" neighborhood; and managing stormwater. A Riverfront Plan was created with a large amount of public involvement. This plan encompasses the Betsy Ross Bridge to Pokessing Creek. Mr. Starr reviewed the proposed improvements to each of the communities, many of which included paved pedestrian and bike trails, riverwalks, fishing and canoeing opportunities, and habitat restoration. Mr. Starr stated that a cost benefit analysis had been completed and reviewed property value impacts.

SEAMLESS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ACROSS NJT-SEPTA-PATCO FRONTIERS AND BEYOND:

John Pawson reviewed the white paper that has been drafted by the Transportation Subcommittee and the 2030 Task Force (which had been mailed to RCC members), and presented it for action. He stated that this paper had been generated as a means of presenting new approaches to fill in transit service gaps.

Discussion: Creighton Rabs had a number of issues that he felt should be clarified in the paper, such as rerouting selected trips over the Walt Whitman Bridge and access over the Commodore Barry Bridge. He will clarify these and email them to Candace Snyder. Warren Strumpfer had submitted additional comments via the RCC chat room but had not yet received feedback.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by John Pawson, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to submit the *Seamless Transportation White Paper* to the DVRPC Board, staff and transit operators once the suggested changes have been incorporated into it.

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

TIP ACTION NJ06-13: BUS ACQUISITION, (DB #T111), NJ TRANSIT:

John Boyle, Transportation Subcommittee Chair, announced that New Jersey Transit has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2006-2008 TIP for New Jersey by increasing the funds programmed in the Bus Acquisition Program for the DVRPC region (DB #T111 by \$21.447 million). The increase in funds are needed for making mandated annual vehicle lease payments due in September of this year for 650 NOVA Transits and 1371 Cruiser buses, and will also enable NJ TRANSIT to improve cash flow for the required payments for this program, especially since "COPS" funding (State Certificates of Participation, a state funding source previously available and able to be used for payments in advance of the beginning of the federal fiscal year for which they were programmed) will no longer be used as a funding mechanism. The amount of the lease payment is not increased. Appropriate levels of federal and state Transportation Trust Fund funding are adequately programmed in the new FY07 TIP update for this project.

The source of funds for this action will be \$13.68 million of new Section 5307 funds made available to the DVRPC region based on higher than anticipated FY06 appropriations. These funds will be combined with \$7.767 million of Section 5307 funds to be transferred from the "Other Rail Stations" project (DB #T55, which includes Trenton Station rehabilitation), since that

amount can now be covered by funds from a new SAFETEA-LU earmark (\$25.499 million of Section 5309 Discretionary funds), which will fully fund the Trenton Rail Station Improvements. The cash flow of this project does not require additional funding until FY07.

NJ TRANSIT would normally have applied the additional 5307 funds from all three MPO regions in order to address the required increase for bus lease payments, but the North Jersey MPO (NJPTA) funds are still tied up in negotiations with New York to agree on the FY06 suballocations, and funds are “frozen” until that time, and unavailable for use by NJ TRANSIT. Therefore the programming increase for this action comes only from the DVRPC and South Jersey MPO regions. At such time as the suballocations are agreed upon, the NJTPA additional 5307 funds will allow approximately \$50 million state funds from the ARC (Access to the Regions Core project, DB #T97) to be applied to the Morrisville Yard improvement project (a component of DB #T37, Rail Support Facilities) in the DVRPC region, thereby making the DVRPC region fiscally whole.

Discussion: The RCC reviewed comments submitted by Anne Carroll and discussed the need for equitable fleet distribution between north and south Jersey. Jerry Lutin, NJ Transit representative, stated that he will take this concern back with him to Newark. He clarified that all new transit buses will have bicycle racks. John Boyle urged putting racks on the flexible buses because the luggage bays can often be full and bicyclists are then refused entry. Cleaner fuel vehicles were discussed and Mr. Lutin stated that all buses are using clean diesel technology. Fuel efficiency, however, is also a concern for the transit agency and this is not always a result of using the cleanest technology.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by John Boyle, seconded by Roxane Shinn) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Action NJ06-13, NJ TRANSIT’s request to modify the FY2006-2008 TIP for New Jersey by increasing the Bus Acquisition project (DB #T111) by \$21.447 million (\$13.68 million additional Section 5307/\$7.767 Section 5307 from DB #T55). The RCC urges New Jersey Transit to purchase buses that include bicycle racks and that are as fuel-efficient as possible, ideally utilizing alternative fuels.

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

TIP ACTION PA05-79: BRANDYWINE VALLEY SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN (PROPOSED NEW PROJECT), CHESTER COUNTY:

Chester County has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2005-2008 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan for \$150,000 (\$120,000 special Scenic Byway Section 1101 funds/\$30,000 local match) on condition that the project is awarded FHWA approval for funding. This project has received state designation as a scenic byway, and a coalition of municipalities in Chester and Delaware Counties has applied for the special byway funding in order to prepare a Corridor Management Plan. The plan would enable the group to come to consensus about an improvement plan for the selected roadway and is required in order for the Byway to be eligible to secure federal byways designation, and subsequent federal byway funding.

PennDOT and Chester County are expecting notification of approval/denial for the \$120,000 Scenic Byway Section 1101(a)(12),1802 funds prior to the July 27th DVRPC Board meeting, but will

table the request if word is not received, or withdraw the request if approval is denied.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by John Boyle, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Action PA05-79, Chester County's request to amend the FY 2005 TIP for Pennsylvania (FY2005-2008) by adding a new project into the TIP, the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan for \$150,000 (\$120,000 special Scenic Byway Section 1101 funds/\$30,000 local match) in FY06. The committee hopes that this byway designation helps to maintain the historic character and landscape along the roads in this area.

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

SCENIC BYWAYS DESIGNATION FOR THE PROPOSED STRASBURG ROAD HISTORIC BYWAY IN CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA:

Paula Coyne, Chairman, East Fallowfield Historic Commission, explained that the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) administers the Pennsylvania Byways Program. The purpose of the program is to (1) enhance and improve the visual quality of specific routes; (2) maintain the natural resources and intrinsic qualities along specific routes; (3) educate residents and visitors on the history and culture of the Commonwealth; and (4) provide enhanced opportunities for funding in related programs such as the Transportation Enhancements Program. The resulting designation, in concert with local planning and zoning amendments, can help to protect corridor resources from encroachment by incompatible uses, including billboards and signage. Applicants must identify the resources (scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, archaeological or natural) that are intrinsic qualities of a nominated corridor.

East Fallowfield Township, in cooperation with East and West Bradford townships, has prepared a consolidated application proposing the designation of a 12-mile portion of Strasburg Road as a Historic Corridor Byway. The intrinsic qualities of the proposed Byway are documented in the attached application. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) has been requested by the Chester County Planning Commission to submit a letter of support for the proposed designation that would accompany the application to PennDOT.

The proposed Byway designation is consistent with the previous *Horizons 2025* and the current *Destination 2030*, the region's adopted long-range Land Use and Transportation Plan. The proposed Byway designation is also consistent with Chester County's adopted *Landscapes* comprehensive plan and with local planning and zoning amendments intended to support implementation. Richard Bickel, DVRPC Director of Planning, stated that staff think this is an excellent application and is supportive of the project. This project has involved the cooperation of a number of municipalities and is consistent with the Chester County and the DVRPC Plans.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Creighton Rabs, seconded by Elaine Cohen) to recommend that the Board approve the letter of support for the Scenic Byways Designation for the Proposed Strasburg

Road Historic Byway in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

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

DVRPC FY 2007 PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: SUPPLEMENTAL I-95 TRAFFIC STUDY (I-676 TO ALLEGHENY AVE):

Tom Walker, DVRPC Manager, Office of System Planning, stated that in FY 05, DVRPC prepared traffic forecasts for I-95 and its interchanges for use by PennDOT and its consultants for project level planning and design studies. These traffic studies did not consider planned casino and condominium development along Delaware Avenue. Under this supplemental work program, DVRPC will prepare 2030 forecasts for Delaware Avenue, I-95 mainline, and Vine Street, Girard Avenue, and Allegheny Avenue I-95 interchanges, assuming construction of the proposed slots casino(s) and condominiums along Delaware Avenue, north of Vine Street. Also, the project includes an analysis of bicycle / pedestrian safety in the corridor. A supplemental study is proposed for the spring of 2007.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by John Pawson, seconded by John Boyle) to recommend that the Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2007 Planning Work Program to include the Supplemental I-95 Traffic Study (I-676 to Allegheny Ave).

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

TRACKING PROGRESS TOWARD 2030: INDICATORS FOR THE LONG-RANGE PLAN:

Jienki Synn, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, reviewed progress to date on the "Tracking Progress to 2030" project, and distributed two hand-outs that summarized the purpose of the project, the scope and objectives, methodology used, and the development of indicators. These indicators encompass the areas of growth management, urban revitalization, the environment, economic development, and transportation. Summaries of kick-off meetings and an initial set of indicators were also provided. Ernest Cohen suggested that planners need to address energy consumption more adequately and Mr. Synn agreed. A broad outreach effort will be taking place throughout FY07 for the update of the 2030 Plan and the indicators.

FREIGHT FOR A DAY:

Ted Dahlburg, DVRPC Manager, Office of Freight Planning, reviewed the "Freight for a Day" concept which will be held on September 20, 2006. This idea will serve as a public education tool and will complement DVRPC's comprehensive commodity flow analysis that used data from the FHWA's *Freight Analysis Framework*. This region-wide event will mobilize key companies/agencies to collect information about the various modes of freight transportation and will lead to a descriptive profile.