

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
JULY 15, 2008**

Present: Warren Strumpfer (Chair), Tom Cooper, John Burkhardt, Larry Menkes, Cheryl Tumola, Shirley Loveless, Kathryn Garza, Dennis Winters, Catherine Zukoski, Bill Marston, Tim Kelly, Aissia Richardson, Ernest Cohen, Elaine Cohen, William Faltermayer, Robert machler, John Pawson, Lorraine Brill, James Farny, Ajay Creshkoff (citizens); Barry Seymour, Elizabeth Schoonmaker, Ryan Gallagher, Robert Berger, Will Stevens, Mike Boyer, Zoe Neaderland, Joseph Hacker, Greg Krykewycz, Jean McKinney, Candy Snyder, Jane Meconi (staff); Joung Lee (guest)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the June 17, 2008 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Mr. Strumpfer stated that he relayed the RCC motion recommending that the DVRPC Board urge SEPTA to restore electric vehicles on two routes where infrastructure already exists (Route 29 and 79 in South Philadelphia) as well as the Route 23 Trolley. At the Board meeting, Mr. Seymour noted that as DVRPC embarks upon the planning process for the next iteration of the Long-Range Plan (LRP), this project may be debated along with other projects in the region to determine consensus on the region's priorities.

In response to the RCC's request, Barry Seymour will extend an invitation to Andrew Altman, Deputy Mayor of the City of Philadelphia, to speak to the RCC.

Mr. Strumpfer noted that he attended the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Planning (CHSTP) meeting on June 24, and was impressed with the important work that the project will be undertaking, particularly its impact on affected Environmental Justice (EJ) groups. He is also looking forward to the completed Seamless Regional Transit plan, as it may impact work related to CHSTP.

At the Board meeting, Mr. Strumpfer also presented some questions related to the project selection process. Mr. Seymour replied that those are very large issues: selection of projects for the LRP and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is always evolving, and the process is designed to be as transparent, equitable and rational as possible. As the long-range planning process gets underway, there will be debates related to issues of policy, constraints and consensus building, and citizen input will be part of that process. Ajay Creshkoff noted that the project selection criteria needs to be revisited, and it would be beneficial for the RCC to receive a progress report on the process.

Mr. Strumpfer also commented on the importance of air quality conformity, and its impact on future generations.

RTC REPORT:

Lorraine Brill noted that the RTC reviewed the same action items that are on the RCC agenda. The RTC also heard two presentations: *The Route 202, Section 100 Study* and *2005 to 2035 Zonal Demographic and Employment Forecasts for Modeling*.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES:

Candy Snyder stated that some RCC representatives to other committees have not been submitting reports of these meetings or attending RCC meetings. Representatives to the CMP committee as well as an alternate to the RTC need to be reappointed.

DVRPC BOARD AGENDA ITEMS:

The items below are agenda items for the DVRPC Board. As per the new RCC format, a “consent agenda” format is in place, meaning that the RCC does not have to address every agenda item before them.

PA07-100: I-95 Design Review Manager (MPMS #46959), Philadelphia:

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2007-2010 TIP for Pennsylvania by increasing the preliminary engineering phase of the I-95 Design Review Manager project (MPMS #46959), by \$10.3 million (\$8,800,000 DEMO/\$1,500,000 State) in FY08 for the design support services of I-95. The additional funding is provided by a TEA-21 Earmark (Fed ID #1847/PA ID# 228), and a state match.

This project will provide for the design support services for the sections of the I-95 Corridor Improvement projects currently under design, sections “GIR” (Girard Avenue Interchange) north to the Cottman/Princeton Interchange. Support services include design reviews and coordination of numerous submissions including structural, environmental, geotechnical, and traffic components for these sections.

The funding will be programmed in FY08 for preliminary engineering (\$8.8 million DEMO/\$1.5 million state match).

Discussion: The RCC questioned who is looking at the larger vision of what I-95 should look like and how it should be utilized. Elizabeth Schoonmaker explained that PennDOT is working with a large team (including PennPraxis and Philadelphia city officials) to move this project forward.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA07-100, PennDOT's request to modify the FY2007-2010 TIP for Pennsylvania by increasing the FY08 preliminary engineering phase by \$10.3 million (\$8.8 million DEMO/\$1.5 million state match) for the I-95 Design Support Services project, MPMS #46959.

DVRPC FY 2009 Planning Work Program Amendment: Gloucester County Transportation Needs Study:

Over the past several decades, Gloucester County has experienced significant growth in both population and employment. A continuation of this growth is expected into the future as forecasts project increases of 35% by 2035 in both population and employment. These forecasts show Gloucester County with the highest growth rate in the Delaware Valley Region. This growth has created ever-increasing traffic demand, which is burdening the County's transportation system. This is becoming of particular concern as plans for the PATCO Transit Expansion move forward, which is expected to create major shifts in the County's travel patterns.

This two-year, three-phased study will provide a comprehensive review of the multi-modal and intermodal transportation improvements that will be needed to promote an efficient flow of people and goods through the county. It will be important to coordinate with the County and DRPA to share and obtain available data. This applies especially to items from DVRPC's travel simulation model currently being used by DRPA for the Alternatives Analysis that will help determine a possible PATCO expansion alignment. Phases I and II of the Study will include an analysis of the impacts of the proposed PATCO Transit Expansion alternatives on the transportation facilities that provide access to the proposed transit stations. Phase III (to be proposed for the FY10 Work Program) will take a comprehensive long-range look at overall mobility in the County and develop a set of improvement strategies to address the County's future transportation needs.

Discussion: Warren Strumpfer stated that this project was requested by Gloucester County to examine alternative issues to what is being studied by PATCO.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2009 Planning Work Program to include the Gloucester County Transportation Needs Study.

Priority Transportation Investments from the Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development (LUTED) Planning Process:

The Integrating Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development Planning (LUTED) project seeks to foster coordination and communication between the economic development and planning communities and insure consistency between land use and transportation goals and policies contained in regional plans with economic development strategies. The primary motivation for the LUTED project is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment and Resource Conservation. These principles were adopted in 2005 by six state agencies and serve as Pennsylvania's general goals and objectives for economic development and resource conservation. Since its inception, the LUTED project has since expanded to include the New Jersey portion of the region. The project is also motivated by recognition, embodied in the 2005 federal surface transportation act (SAFETEA-LU), of the importance of coordinating land use and transportation planning with economic development activities. Finally, the project recognizes the importance of regional cooperation and planning to our region's ability to compete both domestically and globally for residents, businesses and jobs. The importance of such coordination is heightened in this era of constrained transportation budgets at the federal, state and local level.

A previous project task identified transportation as one of the greatest regional economic development challenges, and as the top initiative to spur economic growth in the region. To further identify types of projects that are important to economic growth and to begin to create a regional consensus of priorities, DVRPC staff worked with Select Greater Philadelphia to develop a survey of transportation investments that would be key for regional economic growth. Investments ranged from well-defined projects that were already on the Transportation Improvement Program to concepts or policies that, while not fully developed, represented investments in key corridors, facilities or technologies that were deemed important to serve existing residents and businesses and attract new employers and workers to the region.

The survey was also administered to the Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force and at the Penjerdel Council's Transportation Conference. These results were augmented by the RTC, RCC, and DVRPC Board. The LUTED set of transportation investments to support coordinated planning and economic development denotes the consensus investments deemed most critical by the economic planning, development and freight respondents.

The priority investments demonstrate a key product of the continuing LUTED project. They also represent a summary of the collaborative process undertaken with Select Greater Philadelphia and other members of the economic planning, development and freight communities to develop priority regional transportation projects that were viewed as critical for future economic growth.

This set of investments can also serve as an important multi-organization input to the Connections Long-Range Plan set of transportation projects alongside other contributing inputs such as the Dots & Dashes exercise, the Transit Vision project and other future stakeholder and public outreach activities.

Discussion: Mike Boyer noted that groups participating in LUTED include county economic development organizations, 10,000 Friends of Philadelphia, The Economy League, developers, and Chambers of Commerce. Ajay Creshkoff asked how these projects address environmental equity? Mike Boyer replied that the key issues addressed in these recommendations include workforce access, access to key business centers, reinvesting in existing infrastructure and accessing the region's core. He also noted that these recommendations are just one facet of all the recommendations that will inform the long-range plan. Focus groups, public county workshops, input from committees, DVRPC programs and plans, among other items, will also provide input to the long-range planning process.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board accept the *Integrating Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development Planning (LUTED)* set of transportation investments to support coordinated planning and economic development and consider these investments in developing the transportation projects for inclusion in the *Connections Long-Range Plan*. The RCC also recommends that if/when it becomes a national priority to reduce petroleum consumption, this list will be revisited. It is also recommended that the project selection process criteria be evaluated and that job access planning and environmental justice issues be incorporated into the priority investments selection process; these issues should be weighted and assessed for their impacts.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Funding and Policy Challenges Facing the National Surface Transportation Program:

Joung H. Lee, Senior Analyst for Transportation Finance and Business Development, The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) presented issues related to the looming funding crisis with the Highway Trust Fund, some key findings and recommendations of the National Commission, and to discuss the outlook for the next transportation authorization bill.

Mr. Lee outlined some issues that have caused the challenges, such as dramatic growth to the nation, that earmarking has negatively affected the public's perception of federal programs, and that the impact of inflation has significantly eroded purchasing power. Included in the last challenge is declining purchasing power, in that the motor fuel tax is not indexed to inflation, and that commodity and construction prices are rising at a greater rate than inflation.

Certain trends were also illustrated, such as 88% of growth in the US is concentrated in the south and west, the amount of vehicle miles traveled is constantly increasing, increases in freight trips, as well as significant increases for both highway and transit funding for the next thirty years.

Currently a Highway Trust Fund shortfall is anticipated, with an expected FY 09 HTF deficit to be \$3.2 billion or higher, which would greatly impact spending in the region. There is a proposed solution from the Senate Appropriations committee that includes a one time transfer of \$8 billion from the general fund to the Highway Trust Fund.

Mr. Lee also highlighted the Report of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission, which was released December 2007, which contains the goals of maintaining facilities, reliable mobility within and between metropolitan areas, and that traffic volumes are balanced among roads, rails and public transit. . The report recommends program consolidation and highlights 10 programs, with titles such as “Rebuilding America,” “Global Competitiveness/Freight Transportation,” “Environmental Stewardship,” and “Intercity Passenger Rail.” The report also reviews funding opportunities to manage the shortfall.

Looking ahead to the next transportation bill, the new bill will not be a reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU, but an entirely revamped surface transportation program, and being the most radical change expected in the bill since ISTEA in 1991.

Discussion: RCC members noted issues related to climate change, funding issues, pricing structures and economic baselines.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2008 Pennsylvania Federal Safe Routes to School (FSRS) Program

Ryan Gallagher EIT, DVRPC Project Implementation Coordinator noted that a cycle of applications is currently underway for this program, which is implemented under SAFETEA-LU and has a budget of \$21 million. The application deadline is August 1, and there is no match required for funding— 100% of the project can be paid for with federal funds. Mr. Gallagher noted that there has been great interest, as notification was sent organizations, schools, school districts etc. to apply, and he expects a very competitive selection process. Applications will be submitted to PennDOT, who will work with the PA Subcommittee for project selection, and then project will be reviewed and approved by DVRPC committees. Mr. Gallagher also noted that while NJ has a Safe Routes to School program, it's process and organization differ slightly from PA's program.

LONG-RANGE TASK FORCE REPORT:

John Pawson reported that members discussed population and development increases.

The group also talked about sea level rise. Rob Graff, DVRPC Manager, Office of Economic Analysis & Coordination attended the meeting and discussed climate issues, as well as DVRPC's coordination with other groups around the country related to this topic.

The 2035 Subcommittee also requested a staff presentation on possible effects of climate change on this region, for the RCC's September or October meeting.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

A special RCC meeting has been scheduled for August 19, 2008. There will be no formal business, but a screening of the film "Who Killed the Electric Car." John Pawson recommended the book *Plug-in Hybrids* by Sherry Boschert.

An update of the Seamless Regional Transit study and Project Selection Criteria process was requested. These presentations will be scheduled for the September or October RCC meeting.

RCC members discussed inviting Harold Finnegan to discuss Peak Oil at an upcoming meeting.

The EPA opened a public comment period on July 11 for a Greenhouse Gas Document.

The RCC passed the following motion:

NJ Transit has recently changed its customer service phone number from a toll-free number to a toll call. The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board urge NJ Transit and all regional transit agencies to ensure that customer service lines are toll-free and offer live customer assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

DVRPC fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC's website may be translated into Spanish, Russian, and Traditional Chinese online by visiting www.dvrpc.org. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages or formats, if requested. For more information, please call (215) 238-2871.