

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 18, 2008**

Present: Warren Strumpfer (Chair), Aissia Richardson, Tom Cooper, John Burkhardt, Larry Menkes, Pat Mulligan, Dennis Winters, Cheryl Tumola, Catherine Zukoski, John Boyle, Kathryn Garza, Larry Shaeffer, Elaine Cohen, Ernest Cohen, Robert Machler, John Pawson, Lorraine Brill, William Faltermayer, Ajay Creshkoff, Bridget Chadwick, Jim Richardson (citizens); Michael Boyer, Chick Dougherty, Candace Snyder, Jane Meconi (staff).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the October 14, 2008 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS: NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT:

John Pawson, Nominating Committee Chair, made a motion to set aside the three-term limit for the position of RCC Chair. John Boyle seconded this motion; the motion passed with one negative vote.

John Pawson then nominated Warren Strumpfer as RCC Chair for calendar year 2009; the motion was seconded by Ajay Creshkoff. There were no additional nominations from the floor.

Warren Strumpfer was elected RCC Chair for calendar year 2009 by acclamation.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Warren Strumpfer, Chair, reported that the RCC's proposed Electric Car Work Program project had been selected at the last Work Program Committee meeting and designated with a \$100,000 budget. (The current write-up of the project is attached.)

David Mandelbaum, the PA Governor's Appointee questioned why project this is needed. Mr. Strumpfer responded that recent presentations underscored a strong need by the city for study and preparation to meet future challenges, particularly for new "Electric Car" technology. The relative impacts on emissions, fuel, energy efficiency and supporting infrastructure requirements on the region's transportation network are important since this MPO is an emissions non-attainment region. The presentations were: The "Sustainable Skylines Initiative" and "Proposed Course on Energy and Smart Growth." Mr. Strumpfer urged RCC members to contact Mr. Mandelbaum to show their support for this project.

Mr. Strumpfer also discussed "Making the land use connection" – the regional what-If scenario analysis. He emphasized how the scenarios are analyzed for impacts on land use, transportation, the environment and economic development. He also reported on a staff presentation on "Seamless Regional Transit Access."

RTC REPORT:

John Boyle noted that the RTC voted in favor of all action items.

He also stated that Leo Bagley of Montgomery County noted that there was a streetscape project in Norristown that has not moved forward. He felt that streetscape improvements and context sensitive treatments were necessary for suburban locations, not just for Philadelphia. Mr. Boyle also announced that the RTC had an interesting presentation on modeling and trip generation.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES:

Mr. Strumpfer requested that all RCC representatives to other committees submit brief written reports of meetings attended.

Federal Safe Routes to School

Aissia Richardson reported that she spoke with Ryan Gallagher at DVRPC regarding Federal Safe Routes to School. PennDOT Central office will be making its funding decisions in mid-November and Mr. Gallagher is checking the PennDOT website regularly to get the status of the ten DVRPC recommendations for funding. The committee will meet in January and an update will be given to the RCC after the committee meets.

PA JARC / NF Sub-Committee Meeting

Warren Strumpfer attended the Job Access Reverse Commute/ New Freedoms Subcommittee on November 14, 2008. Mr. Strumpfer announced that the RCC needs a representative from PA on this important committee

Below are the meeting highlights:

State Application and timelines

- Process Delay due to application improvement needs
- Project Selection approval – April Board meeting
- Discussion on validity of data to application validity
- 2010 funding only (Act-44 vs additional new sources, i.e. I-80, etc)
- PA DOT application for the local match vs DVRPC MPO (control change?)
- 10 PA DOT Transit employees vs 100 PA DOT highway personnel. 10-people trying to play catch-up. They will select projects from DVRPC recommendations!

Mr. Strumpfer also noted the application approval process:

- RCC/RTC/Board approval deliberate process process
- Cost per rider not a criteria?
- Common statewide application. Pittsburgh/Phila differences combined into a unified for consistency (content and scoring)
- Review process complete vs partial county committee member involvement

Next steps included timeline discussions (5-months, 20 weeks) and Mr. Strumpfer had some unasked questions:

- Opportunity for new ideas slim, because of less money available?
- Are there coordinators for each county to assure all Social services agencies are considered?

- Fuel assistance or fuel vouchers for Social services agencies?
- Is it possible to have unified transit assistance at call centers via 511?
- Does this program provide an opportunity for a collaboration opportunity between Chester City and Pureland in Swedesboro?
- Are these busy county contacts actually county coordinators?

Mr. Strumpfer also appreciated the good input and participation by SEPTA staff.

NJ Transit South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee Meeting

Mr. Strumpfer attended the NJ Transit South Jersey Transit Advisory Committee meeting on October 31, 2008. A customer service presentation was given, in particular an update on the discontinuation of the 1-800 customer service line. Highlights of the presentation include

- 1-million calls per year in 1981 with 30 employees to 5-mil calls per year in FY07 with 65 employees.
- Cost of 1-800 system over \$600K annually.
- Manpower reduction to achieve savings
- Current statistics show 35,000 customer inquires. 66% website, 20% automated calls and 14% handled by operators
- Despite all these reductions they still decided to discontinue toll free service.
- Other major cities have no toll free numbers
- Rational based on facts that 92% of customers have cell phones. So need for toll free service lessened and impact on caller would be minimal since most calls would be covered by plan minutes.
- Therefore only a small percentage of customers would be impacted.
- Retain 800 service for Access Link customers

Regarding the 511 Toll Free Service

- Highway only
- Just started talking about transit
- Cross border Issues
- # of 511 systems in NJ
- 511 is not in near future for transit despite being available for highway

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.

PA09-08a: Parkway Streetscape Improvements Project (MPMS #84649), Philadelphia

On behalf of the Fairmount Park Commission, PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, Parkway Streetscape Improvements Project (MPMS #84649), and programming \$3.75 million (\$3,250,000 Federal STP/\$500,000 Local), acknowledging a toll credit match in FY09. The federal funding for this project is comprised of \$2 million in statewide discretionary funds and \$1.25 million in DVRPC regional TIP funds.

The local funding will be provided by the City of Philadelphia's Capital Budget funds. As a key component of the city's "tourism infrastructure" there are plans for \$17 million worth of improvements to the Ben Franklin Parkway by the State, City of Philadelphia, Fairmount Park Commission, Center City District, and Charitable Foundations (Pew, Knight, and William Penn). A \$5 million commitment by PennDOT will be directed towards 2 specific projects: The 1600 and 1700 blocks of the Parkway (\$3.25 million) and the new Shakespeare Park (\$1.75 million – see TIP Action PA09-08b).

This project will include streetscape improvements such as new granite curbs, exposed concrete paving with brick edging, new benches, trash receptacles and plantings along the 1600 and 1700 blocks of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway between Love Park and Logan Square. The project will be managed by the Fairmount Park Commission.

Discussion: Some RCC members thought the project could be more pedestrian friendly, and there were questions regarding how the Fairmount Park Commission would administer the project as it becomes part of the Parks and Recreation Department. It was also noted that there needs to be coordinated development in the area.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-08a, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, Parkway Streetscape Improvements Project (MPMS #84649), and programming \$3.75 million (\$3,250,000 Federal STP/\$500,000 local), acknowledging a toll credit match in FY09 for construction. The RCC urges coordinated development and value engineering for this project, as well as accounting for new development.

PA09-08b: Shakespeare Park at 19th/20th/Vine/Parkway (MPMS #85059), Philadelphia

On behalf of the Center City District, PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, Shakespeare Park at 19th/20th/Vine/Parkway (MPMS #85059), and programming \$1.75 million federal STU funds, acknowledging a toll credit match in FY12 for construction.

As a key component of the city's "tourism infrastructure" there are plans for \$17 million worth of improvements to the Ben Franklin Parkway by the State, City of Philadelphia, Fairmount Park Commission, Center City District, and Charitable Foundations (Pew, Knight, and William Penn). A \$5 million commitment by PennDOT will be directed towards 2 specific projects: The new Shakespeare Park (\$1.75 million), and the 1600 and 1700 blocks of the Parkway (\$3.25 million – see TIP Action PA09-08a).

This project will fund the renovation of the existing park area in front of the Free Library of Philadelphia between Vine Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, and 19th and 20th Streets and will include new plantings, paving, benches, and other landscape and pedestrian amenities. It will be managed by the Center City District and advance concurrently with MPMS# 80054, Vine Street Expressway Bridges.

Discussion: There were questions regarding whether the most economically feasible materials were being used for this and the above project, as well as the life cycle costs of materials being used.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve approve TIP Action PA09-08b, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, Shakespeare Park at 19th/20th/Vine/Parkway (MPMS #85059), and programming \$1.75 million federal STU funds, acknowledging a toll credit match in FY12 for construction.

PA09-09: PA 252 Underpass and US 30 Intersection (MPMS# 85062), Chester County

On behalf of Tredyffrin Township, Chester County has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, PA 252 Underpass and US 30 Intersection (MPMS# 85062), and programming \$150,000 (\$120,000 DEMO/\$30,000 Local match) in FY09 for a feasibility study. The DEMO funding is provided by a \$1.319 million SAFETEA-LU Earmark (Fed ID# 1468), and the Local match will be provided by Tredyffrin Township.

The feasibility study will investigate the potential alternatives for widening the railroad underpass to maintain a four lane cross section of PA 252, providing adequate turning lanes at the US 30 intersection, as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The narrow railroad bridge creates a bottleneck at the underpass where 252 narrows from 2 lanes in each direction to 1 lane in each direction. Improvements will help to reduce congestion, increase safety, and improve access to transit and employment centers in the region. Cost estimates will be determined at the completion of the feasibility study. This project is being planned in conjunction with the Paoli Transportation Center (MPMS# 47979 and 60574).

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-09, Chester County's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, PA 252 Underpass and US 30 Intersection (MPMS# 85062), and programming \$150,000 (\$120,000 DEMO/\$30,000 Local match) in FY09 for a feasibility study. The RCC also passed the following notation to the study: "This four track bridge (two tracks for freight trains and two tracks for passenger trains) can be replaced with a two-track bridge because freight usage was discontinued approximately twenty years ago and cannot be restored under present conditions."

PA09-10: PA 309, Fort Washington Interchange - Commerce to Pennsylvania Avenue (MPMS# 64275), Montgomery County

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a project back into the FY09 TIP, PA 309, Fort Washington Interchange - Commerce to Pennsylvania Avenue (MPMS# 64275), and increasing the construction phase by programming \$14,836,000 STP in FY09 in order to address Accrued Unbilled Costs.

This project includes the complete removal and replacement of the existing roadway, shoulder widening, extending the acceleration and deceleration lanes, and reconfiguring the PA309/PA Turnpike Interchange. Replacement of the existing Norfolk Southern railroad structures was also included to accommodate the widened roadway.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-10, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a project back into the FY09 TIP, PA 309, Fort Washington Interchange - Commerce to Pennsylvania Avenue (MPMS# 64275), and increasing the construction phase by programming \$14,836,000 STP in FY09 in order to address Accrued Unbilled Costs.

NJ09-01: Laurel Springs Streetscape Improvements Project (DB# D0901), Camden County

The Borough of Laurel Springs has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, Laurel Springs Streetscape Improvements Project (DB# D0901), and programming \$382,351 DEMO provided by a SAFETEA-LU Earmark (Fed ID# 1642, NJ ID# 182) in FY09 for construction. Any additional funds required to complete the project will be provided locally.

The downtown Laurel Springs area has deteriorated and is in need of improvements in order to improve the appearance, provide a sense of place, and encourage economic and community development. This project will include streetscape improvements such as curbs, sidewalks, stormwater drainage, landscape and lighting improvements along Stone Road, West Atlantic Avenue, and East Atlantic Avenue in Laurel Springs, and will be managed by the borough. The preliminary engineering and final design phase was completed by the Borough of Laurel Springs in 2008. The project is expected to be advertised for construction in the Spring of 2009.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-01, the Borough of Laurel Springs's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, Laurel Springs Streetscape Improvement Project (DB# D0901), and programming \$382,351 DEMO in FY09 for construction, only if bicycle racks are included in the project.

NJ09-02: River Road/Ave. Improvements/Cramer Hill (DB# D0902), Camden County

The Cooper's Ferry Development Association in Camden, New Jersey, on behalf of the City of Camden has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, River Road/Ave. Improvements/Cramer Hill (DB# D0902), and programming \$4,008,241 DEMO in FY09 for construction. The DEMO funds will be provided by a 2 SAFETEA-LU Earmarks (NJ ID#'s 253 and 268). Any additional funds required to complete the project will be provided locally.

This project will help implement a multi-phase effort to address the long standing issue of heavy truck traffic along River Road/Avenue, the primary commercial corridor through Cramer Hill in the City of Camden. This project will include traffic calming and pedestrian improvements such as high visibility crosswalks, truck route signage, signal timing changes to slow trip through the area, bulbouts, medians, and intersection geometric improvements.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-02, the Cooper's Ferry Development Association's request on behalf of the City of Camden to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, River Road/Ave. Improvements/Cramer Hill (DB# D0902), and programming \$4,008,241 DEMO in FY09 for construction.

FY 2009 Planning Work Program Amendment: TreeVitalize Municipalities Collaboration in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties

Launched by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in 2004, TreeVitalize produced impressive results in the Greater Philadelphia Area during its first four years:

- Planted over 20,000 trees along streets, in parks, schools, and other public lands;
- Restored nearly 300 acres of forested riparian buffer;
- Educated 2,800 citizens through Tree Tender classes;
- Engaged 11,000 volunteers in community tree plantings.

The Southeast Pennsylvania TreeVitalize partnership, spearheaded by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, continues to grow. Meanwhile, DCNR has launched a comparable TreeVitalize program in Pittsburgh. By 2010, TreeVitalize will have reached urbanized communities in all metropolitan areas of the state.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission proposes to continue its collaboration with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to promote tree planting and municipal capacity building initiatives in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the FY 2009 Integrated Work Program to include the TreeVitalize Municipalities Collaboration in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties and enter into a \$20,000 contract with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to enable DVRPC staff to conduct outreach and coordination with the PHS to promote tree planting and capacity building in Southeastern Pennsylvania through the TreeVitalize Municipalities Program.

FY 2010 Transit Support Program and Supportive Regional Highway Planning Program Special Studies

The DVRPC Planning Work Program includes budgets for Special Study work programs funded as part of the SRHPP (New Jersey only) and the TSP (both Pennsylvania and New Jersey). Calls for Projects were issued in July, September, and October for member governments to submit candidate work programs. For FY10, the programs were all undersubscribed. Because this process coincides with the DVRPC Board Work Program Committee's activities, additional candidate projects were selected by staff from among the list of worthwhile but otherwise unfunded Work Program projects.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the FY 2010 Transit Support Program and Supportive Regional Highway Planning Program Special Studies be included in the Draft FY 2010 DVRPC Work Program.

Adoption of the 2008 Regional Congestion Management Process (CMP) Update

The CMP is a systematic process for managing congestion that provides a range of strategies to minimize congestion and enhance the mobility of people and goods. It uses a range of multimodal strategies, including enhanced coordination with land use planning.

The CMP provides regionwide analysis and agreed-upon corridors with strategies for each subcorridor. It is guided by and is a source of technical analysis for the Long-Range Plan. It helps in consideration of proposed TIP projects and selecting corridor studies. It is also a federal requirement. DVRPC's 2006 CMP is in circulation nationally as a best practice example.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board adopt the 2008 CMP Update to help minimize congestion and advance toward regional goals in a coordinated manner. "Complete Streets" should be included as one of the "very appropriate strategies" for each corridor. The RCC also recommends that the emphasis in the process should be an appropriate analysis of "reasonable" (including multimodal) travel demand reduction and operational management strategies for the corridor in which a project that will result in a significant increase in capacity for SOVs is proposed to be advanced with federal funds.

Approval to Distribute the DVRPC Draft Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program

Authorization is being sought to distribute for review and comment the Draft Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program consisting of : (1) DVRPC's Regular Work Program, (2) Supportive Regional Highway Planning Program (SRHPP), and (3) Transit Support Program (TSP). The Planning Work Program reflects the policy direction provided by the Board's Planning Work Program Committee and the input from member governments, operating agencies and other regional organizations.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve distribution of the DVRPC Draft Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program for review and comment.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: 2009 SURFACE TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION: WHAT ROUTE WOULD YOU CHOOSE?:

John Boyle delivered a presentation developed by RCC member Hans van Naerssen highlighting various transportation issues that will need to be addressed in the coming years. Mr. Boyle started with a recent history of transportation, from the development of the Interstate Highway System to the current federal transportation bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). He also noted that driving is down, transit usage is at a 50 year high, but issues such as oil dependency, global warming and funding are issues. Also, active transport, such as walking and bicycling, is still not actively promoted.

A new transportation bill will be developed in the coming year, as SAFETEA-LU expires in 2009. Mr. Van Naerssen recommends a renewed focus on maintaining and improving interstate highways, more local authority and flexibility, greater accountability and refocus safety, non-gas tax funding. Mr. Boyle also highlighted Barack Obama's platform paper: Investing in 21st Century Transportation, which highlights strengthening core infrastructure, supporting AMTRAK funding, developing more high speed rail for freight and passengers, cutting down congestion, including bicyclist and pedestrian access and improving job access by eliminating transportation disparities.

STAFF PRESENTATION: CONNECTIONS 2035 LONG-RANGE PLANNING:

Michael Boyer, DVRPC Manager, Office of Long-Range Planning presented an update of the current status of long-range planning activities as well as the information being used to shape part of the Plan. Mr. Boyer noted that throughout the fall, there have been a series of public workshops in each county to gather public input on the Long-Range Plan and the issues surrounding the plan. He noted that there have been many new "faces" at these meetings— individuals who have not participated in DVRPC planning processes before.

Mr. Boyer presented the "What-If" Scenarios used in the planning process. DVRPC undertook a scenario planning exercise to compare two contrasting development patterns with current land use trends in order to better understand how different development patterns affect land use, transportation, the environment and economic development. This exercise is intended to spur discussion on the long-range planning process and what the region envisions for the future.

Mr. Boyer also noted that core cities, land use choices, environmental impacts, economic competitiveness, comparisons of scenarios and costs of lifestyle decisions have all been discussed in the workshops. It was found that many participants valued the plan's goals but may not be willing to actually support them through lifestyle changes or land use decisions.

The issue areas and the key plan principles were also noted:

Transportation: "Fix it First"

Land Use: Invest in livable communities

Environment: Protect green spaces

Economic Development: Build a more energy efficient economy.

Discussion: A facilitated discussion was meant to follow Mr. Boyer's presentation for RCC members to express their opinions. Due to timing, this discussion will be moved to the January 2009 RCC meeting. Ajay Creshkoff suggested that a survey be sent to RCC members in advance of the January 2009 meeting.

TIP DISCUSSION:

Ajay Creshkoff stated that it would help RCC members to have more information on TIP projects. He proposed that staff provide a history of each project, citing the project's evolution and pertinent issues. Chick Dougherty, DVRPC Director of Technical Services, clarified that staff serves as the gatekeepers for TIP projects and cannot render opinions on the validity of the projects. He will consider asking staff to include a brief paragraph in the TIP Action write-up that identifies any known issues related to the project, with particular attention to the public comments received during the TIP Public Comment process.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Strumpfer also noted that he believes in term limits and that RCC members should start thinking about potential RCC Chairs for Calendar Year 2010.

Ajay Creshkoff prepared a response to the "DVRPC Accomplishments" document that was distributed. This response is attached for discussion at the January meeting.

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