

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
JANUARY 13, 2009**

Present: Warren Strumpfer (Chair), Tom Cooper, John Burkhardt, Larry Menkes, Pat Mulligan, Dennis Winters, Cheryl Tumola, John Boyle, Kathryn Garza, Elaine Cohen, Ernest Cohen, Robert Machler, John Pawson, Lorraine Brill, William Faltermayer, Ajay Creshkoff, Jim Richardson, Jim Black, Tim Kelly, Kamil Siddiqi, Bill Marston, Eugene Cipriani, Kathryn Jurasek, Roy Jones, Jeannine Missaoui (citizens); Michael Boyer, Eric Grugel, Patty Elkis, Candace Snyder, Elise Turner (staff).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the November 18, 2008 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Warren Strumpfer, Chair, discussed the Draft FY 2010 Work Program description for the Alternative Vehicles project which had its origins in the RCC's Electric Car proposal. Mr. Strumpfer and members of the Action Task Force felt that the project description had strayed too far from the original proposal and now does not mention electric vehicles at all. The Task Force has asked that Patty Elkis, DVRPC Associate Director, Comprehensive Planning, explain the intent of this project at this point. (Ms. Elkis clarified to the RCC that staff had expanded the project description to include new technology in addition to electric vehicles. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Elkis agreed to add the phrase "electric vehicles" back into the project description.)

Mr. Strumpfer then reviewed TIP Action PA09-09 which the RCC had reviewed in November. The RCC's recommendation indicated that the four track bridge could be replaced with a two track bridge because freight usage has been discontinued and cannot be restored under present conditions. Barry Seymour, DVRPC's Executive Director, responded at the Board meeting that the lines in question on this bridge are active and are used regularly by Amtrak. Tom Cooper had responded by email to Mr. Seymour, indicating that when the RCC added its notation to the approval of this TIP Action, the RCC had no misunderstanding regarding the location of this four-track bridge or its present usage. The notation was intended to preclude the wasteful expenditure of public funds if the bridge were to be rebuilt with all four tracks.

Mr. Seymour in turn responded that there are several SEPTA trains that pass through this area to deadhead that would be affected by the elimination of the two tracks - those trains would then have to use the remaining tracks, which could affect scheduling and movement. Both SEPTA and Amtrak prefer to have the flexibility of using these four tracks. If the two center tracks were eliminated there would need to be an additional interlocking to allow the two tracks to then reconnect with the four tracks further eastbound, which would result in additional costs. Finally, there have been discussions with Norfolk Southern about increasing freight along the Harrisburg branch, so there is a possibility that freight service could resume through here and thus need the four tracks. Mr. Cooper noted that he has requested a meeting with Mr. Seymour to discuss this further because he feels that Mr. Seymour has been given incorrect information.

Eugene Cipriani stated that Norfolk Southern has a freight easement through Paoli and a desire to develop the old Paoli rail yard. This will require four tracks.

Mr. Strumpfer went on the comment on a listing of annual issues and projects that Candace Snyder had drafted at his request. This listing provides a heads-up for RCC members and will be available at the next meeting.

Candace Snyder clarified that the 2009 meeting date list had one typo on it; a new listing will be provided at the next meeting. She also announced that Jane Meconi gave birth on December 1, 2008 to a baby girl named Amelia.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

Mr. Strumpfer appointed Cheryl Tumola and Patrick Mulligan as the RCC Vice Chairs for calendar year 2009. Jim Richardson was appointed as the RTC representative (and PA Subcommittee representative) with Mr. Strumpfer serving as the NJ Subcommittee representative and Tom Cooper as the RTC alternate.

RTC REPORT:

Tom Cooper attended the January 6, 2009 RTC meeting and reported on a discussion that took place regarding how to proceed in light of the forthcoming new administration in Washington. He also reported on the Draft FY 2010 Work Program and the listing of new projects. Presentations were provided at the RTC that will be on the RCC's February agenda.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES:

An updated listing of RCC representatives to other DVRPC committees is attached.

Mr. Strumpfer noted that he attended the NJ Subcommittee meeting at which time the NJ TIP schedule and NJ CMAQ program were discussed. He also led a discussion on the Idleaire facilities in New Jersey.

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.

TIP Action PA09-15a: PA 100 South, Pines Community Noisewalls (MPMS #84989), Chester County – Proposed New Project and PA09-15b: I-476 Southbound, Avondale Springs Noisewalls (MPMS #84990), Delaware County – Proposed New Project:

John Boyle, RCC Action Task Force Chair, explained that PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, PA 100 South, Pines Community Noisewalls (MPMS #84989), and programming final design in FY09 (\$350,000 ECON) and construction in FY10 (\$4,300,000 ECON). This project is funded with economic development funds which are additional funds to this region.

This project includes the construction of approximately one mile of noisewalls on PA 100 southbound from the existing Kirkland Avenue overpass to Phoenixville Pike which will mitigate noise in the Pines Community in West Goshen Township. _

In addition, PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, I-476 Southbound, Avondale Springs Noisewalls (MPMS #84990), and programming final design in FY09 (\$100,000 ECON) and construction in FY10 (\$500,000 ECON). This project is funded with economic development funds which are additional funds to this region. This project includes a minor extension of the existing noisewalls on southbound I-476 to provide mitigation for the Avondale Springs community.

Discussion: RCC members noted their objection to economic development funds being used for a projects that don't generate jobs and economic benefits for these communities. Members also disagreed with the apparent circumvention of the normal process for approving noisewalls. In addition, the committee felt that reflective noisewalls don't provide the best soundproofing. They felt that this type of noisewall is environmentally reprehensible and that dense forestation could be an alternative. The Action Task Force had proposed a motion that would have approved these TIP Actions, noting their concern with the type of noisewalls being proposed. This motion failed.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board not approve TIP Action PA09-15a and TIP Action PA09-15b because economic development funds are being used for a purpose that does not create jobs or economic benefits to these communities. In addition, the normal process for noisewall selection was bypassed.

TIP Action PA09-16: US 322, Main Street/PA 10 Intersection Improvements (MPMS #72603) Chester County – Proposed New DEMO Project:

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new DEMO project into the TIP, US 322, Main Street/PA 10 Intersection Improvements (MPMS #72603), and programming preliminary engineering (\$75,000 DEMO), final design (\$25,000 DEMO), and construction (\$275,000 DEMO) in FY09, acknowledging a toll credit match. Two SAFETEA-LU Earmarks were made available for this project; a \$384,566 earmark (PA ID# 374, Fed ID# 1076), and a \$100,148 earmark (PA ID# 575, Fed ID# 4765).

This intersection supports a high volume of truck traffic and is a safety concern due to the constrained turning movements within the intersection. This project will include intersection improvements such as new traffic signals and timings. The signal installation will include new posts, mast-arms, heads, conduit, wiring, and a new controller. The curb ramps at the four corners of the intersection will be updated to comply with ADA standards. The feasibility study was completed by PennDOT.

Discussion: RCC members noted their unhappiness with the use of DEMO funds for this project.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-16, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new DEMO project into the TIP and programming preliminary engineering (\$75,000 DEMO), final design (\$25,000 DEMO), and construction (\$275,000 DEMO) in FY09, acknowledging a toll credit match for the US 322, Main Street/PA 10 Intersection Improvements (MPMS #72603).

TIP Action PA09-17: Schuylkill River Park Pedestrian Bridge (MPMS #TBD), Philadelphia – Proposed New Project:

The City of Philadelphia has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, Schuylkill River Park Pedestrian Bridge (MPMS #81584) and programming (\$1,000,000 Statewide Discretionary TE/\$4,201,000 Local match) in FY09 for the construction of an ADA accessible pedestrian bridge, connecting Schuylkill River Park and Schuylkill Banks Park. The State Discretionary TE funds are additional funds to the region. The local match is being provided by the City's Capital Budget.

This project is a result of a settlement between the City and CSX to improve access to the Schuylkill Banks Park. CSX agreed to the construction of an at grade crossing over the CSX railroad at Race and Locust Streets if an additional pedestrian bridge over the CSX railroad in the vicinity of Locust Street would also be constructed. The at grade crossing (MPMS #74829) is complete. The project will be managed by the Philadelphia Streets department and will link the Schuylkill River Park and the Schuylkill Banks Park. The purpose of the pedestrian bridge is to provide bicyclists and pedestrians with an alternative to access the Schuylkill Banks Park from the Schuylkill River Park when the at grade crossing is closed due to CSX train activity.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action TIP Action PA09-17, The City of Philadelphia's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP and programming (\$1,000,000 Statewide Discretionary TE/\$4,201,000 Local match) in FY09 for the construction of the Schuylkill River Park Pedestrian Bridge (MPMS #81584).

TIP Action NJ09-05: Maple Shade Township Special Projects Road Program (DB #TBD), Burlington County – Proposed New Project::

Maple Shade Township of Burlington County has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, Maple Shade Township Special Projects Road Program (DB #TBD), and programming (\$700,000 DEMO/\$2,277,000 Local match) in FY09 for the reconstruction of three sections of roadway. The project will be funded by a SAFETEA-LU Earmark (Fed ID# 2728) and a local match will be provided by Maple Shade Township in the form of bond funding.

This program will include the reconstruction of the following roadways: School House lane from Old Kings Highway to Route 41 (.14 miles), West Mill Road from Route 38 to South Fork Landing Road (.42 miles), and East Mill Road from South Fork Landing Road to Fellowship Road (CR 610) (.48 miles).

The existing asphalt roadway of School House Lane has deteriorated to a point where safety has become a major concern. The existing roadway also has potholes and inadequate surface drainage. The township proposes to complete a full reconstruction of the roadway and a 5' wide stone shoulder to mitigate erosion at the low point of the road way. These improvements will provide proper surface flow drainage and minimize ponding and winter icing conditions. The existing asphalt roadway West Mill Road and East Mill Road has also deteriorated and has had numerous utility cuts throughout its entire length. The township proposes to complete a full reconstruction of the road way, and other improvements such as eliminating the barriers through the installation of curb cuts and ramps at the intersections along Mill Road, upgrading all the existing ramps that do not meet ADA standards and utilities in the roadway, replacing the concrete curbs and sidewalks as needed, the installation detectable warning strips to aid the visually impaired, crosswalk striping and stop bars, new storm sewer frames and grates. This will enhance access and safety for pedestrians, particularly for school students accessing Maude Wilkens Elementary School on West Mill Road and support the ongoing commercial development along the State highways interconnected by the roadways. No bicycle facilities will be included in this project due to funding constraints and the width of the roadways.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-05, Maple Shade Township's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, Maple Shade Township Special Projects Road Program (DB #TBD) and programming \$700,000 DEMO/\$2,277,000 Local match in FY09 for the reconstruction of three sections of roadway. For the record, the RCC wishes to note its unhappiness regarding the use of SAFETEA-LU earmarked funds for this project.

TIP Action NJ09-06: Bridge Rehabilitation (DB #DR040), DRPA – Add back in:

DRPA/PATCO has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a project back into the TIP, Bridge Rehabilitation (DB #DR040), and programming \$2.5 million (\$2,000,000 Section 5309/\$500,000 DRPA/PATCO) for engineering, right of way, and construction in FY09. This project will provide for preventive repairs of approximately 25 bridges built in 1968, including miscellaneous steel repair, concrete repair, joint filler, and spot paint and is now ready to advance to construction.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-06, DRPA/PATCO's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a project back into the TIP, Bridge Rehabilitation (DB #DR040), and programming \$2.5 million (\$2,000,000 Section 5309/\$500,000 DRPA/PATCO) for engineering, right of way, and construction in FY09.

Approval of DVRPC FY 2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP);

The UPWP consists 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.

The Board approved distribution and review of the UPWP with a public comment period that will end on January 16, 2009. DVRPC staff is in the process of responding to the few comments that have been received and is working to resolve any issues. Following Board adoption, relevant revisions will continue to be incorporated into the Work Program and the final document will then be produced. To support certain projects the Board has selected for the DVRPC FY2010 UPWP, certain TIP Actions will need to be made to the FY2009 TIP for New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The source of funds for projects in New Jersey and Pennsylvania will be obtained by making adjustments to other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. A list of new projects is available from staff.

Discussion: The RCC discussed the Alternative Vehicles project description (see earlier reference under the Chairman's Report).

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board adopt the FY 2010 DVRPC Unified Planning Work Program, authorize the Executive Director to submit applications and documentation as may be required to fund the program and enter into, negotiate and execute all required contracts and agreements by passing Resolution No. B-FY09-003. Further, approve the actions to amend or modify the FY 2009 TIP for New Jersey (NJ09-04) and the FY 2009 TIP for Pennsylvania (PA09-14) as required. In addition, the RCC noted that the "Alternative Vehicles" project has been reworded to an uncomfortable level. The committee would like this project description moved back to include and specify "electric vehicles."

STAFF PRESENTATION: CONNECTIONS 2035 LONG-RANGE PLANNING:

Michael Boyer, DVRPC Manager, Office of Long-Range Planning, provided an overview of Connections, the 2035 Long-Range Plan, beginning with the Commission's public outreach efforts and Environmental Justice. Mr. Boyer noted that DVRPC had run an online survey that drew about 5000 respondents in the spring of 2008. In addition, focus groups were held during last summer that enlisted individuals who are not regularly involved with the Commission. Portfolio Associates were hired to recruit these citizens as well as to bolster attendance at the nine fall county workshops that concluded in November, 2008. This effort also resulted in a large database of individuals and organizations that can be used in the future for RCC recruitment; it particularly targeted groups that represent the underserved. The input from the focus groups and the workshops will be used in further developing the Plan.

The presentation then described the What-If Scenarios which examine recentralization versus the trend, and sprawl versus the trend. In addition, Mr. Boyer outlined the issue areas and the key plan principles which include:

Transportation: "Fix it First"
Land Use: Invest in livable communities
Environment: Protect green spaces
Economic Development: Build a more energy efficient economy.

Discussion: Eric Grugel, DVRPC Regional Planner, who is also responsible for implementing Title VI, provided background on the degrees of disadvantage and the use of this mapping tool for the Plan. The RCC discussed Limited English Proficiency, social as well as physical environmental justice, and the need for a policy and operational definitions for these concepts. Roy Jones also noted the need for a Plan policy that addresses eminent domain as related to recentralization. Additional issues that were noted include affordable housing, pedestrian/bicycle/transit options, low income, and environmental degradation. The RCC felt that DVRPC should lead the way in designing a model for sustainable building. Mr. Boyer agreed that evaluating criteria that are meaningful is a step that needs to be taken. The committee noted the need for public education. The education and implementation components of the Plan will begin in July following Board adoption in June.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

John Boyle reported that the Action Task Force had re-elected him as Chair for 2009. The task force discussed DVRPC's use of recycled paper and asked that light weight paper be incorporated for everyday use. Candace Snyder will also look into the possibility of handling more of the mailings by email.

John Pawson noted that the Long-Range Plan Task Force had met that morning. He emphasized that the Action Task Force's "other business" segment is the proper place to voice concerns regarding short-term and local issues.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Jim Richardson outlined a list that had been prepared by the US Conference of Mayors, prioritizing infrastructure projects for the Obama stimulus package. Mr. Richardson questioned whether DVRPC was aware of this list and was coordinating their list with this one. Ms. Snyder said she would pass this information along but didn't know whether the Mayors' list was considered or not.

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