

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
MAY 19, 2009**

Present: Warren Strumpfer (Chair); Juanita Lewis Hatton, Khadijah Jones, Tom Cooper, John Burkhardt, Larry Menkes, Eugene Cipriani, Jim Richardson, Jeannine Missaoui, Dennis Winters, James Farny, Kathryn Garza, John Boyle, Mark McKee, Ernest Cohen, Elaine Cohen, John Pawson, Lorraine Brill, Ajay Creshkoff (citizens); Scott Ginesin, Thyme Gadson, Michael Monastero (guests); Jane Meconi, Candace Snyder, Michael Boyer (staff).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April 14, 2009 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

At last month's Board meeting, Mr. Strumpfer requested CMP information for the Rt. 202 and Rt. 309 TIP projects. He also noted that he spoke with residents near the Swamp Rd. TIP project, and they felt that the project was fair and responsive to the issues in the area.

Mr. Strumpfer noted that he and some other RCC members met on the upcoming schedule of presentations to the RCC, and he reiterated to members that if they had a presentation request, to pass along the information to Candace Snyder to schedule the presentation, and to not schedule a presentation independently. He also reminded members that if they had items to distribute at the RCC meeting that required copying, please give the item to Candace Snyder at least a day before the scheduled meeting. If items are given to staff the day of the RCC meeting, they will be copied and distributed at the next month's meeting.

Mr. Strumpfer also directed RCC members' attention to this month's Air Quality Alert newsletter.

RTC REPORT:

Jim Richardson reported that the RTC heard a presentation on the American Community Survey, as well as a presentation on alternatives to bus transit on I-76. He also reported that the Philadelphia Bike/Ped Plan is in process, and John Boyle noted that there is a public meeting on May 20 regarding the plan. Mr. Richardson also reported that Leo Bagley of Montgomery County Planning Commission discussed the 422 Work Program proposal and the public-private partnerships being developed to get the study going.

REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES:

Mr. Strumpfer participated in the Long-Range Plan subcommittee meeting, and noted funding issues related to fiscal constraint. He also highlighted the I-95 Coalition vision plan as a good example of long-range planning.

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.

PA09-34a: Watermark Road over Muddy Run Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86696), Chester County – Proposed New Local Bridge Project

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, Watermark Road over Muddy Run Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86696), and programming preliminary engineering (\$360,000 Bridge/\$68,000 State/\$22,000 Local) in FY09, and final design (\$280,000 Bridge/\$83,000 State/\$17,000 Local) in FY12 for the replacement of Watermark Road bridge.

This is a local bridge that could be advanced as part of an effort to fund more local bridge projects and will be evaluated for construction funding during the next TIP Update. The project will include the replacement of a structurally deficient, functionally obsolete, posted bridge located in Upper Oxford Township.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve PA09-34a, however, as per Pennsylvania vehicle code, bicycles and pedestrians have a legal right to the road, and all new construction must provide for the safe use of all road users, including bicycles and pedestrians. The RCC recommends, at minimum, the inclusion of “share the road” signage, painting, and pavement markings for the safe passage of all roadway users.

PA09-34b: Osborne Road over Beaver Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86698), Chester County – Proposed New Local Bridge Project

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, Osborne Road over Beaver Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86698), and programming preliminary engineering (\$96,000 Bridge/\$18,000 State/\$6,000 Local) in FY09, and final design (\$64,000 Bridge/\$12,000 State/\$4,000 Local) and right of way (\$40,000 Bridge/\$8,000 State/\$2,000 Local) in FY12 for the replacement of Osborne Road bridge, which provides the local access between State Route 340 and US Route 322.

This project was identified by the PA subcommittee as a local bridge that could be advanced as part of an effort to fund more local bridge projects. This group of bridges selected to advance to design will be evaluated for construction funding during the next TIP Update. The project will include the replacement of a posted, single lane, structurally deficient bridge located in Caln Township.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve PA09-34b, PennDOT’s request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, Osborne Road over Beaver Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86698), and programming preliminary engineering (\$96,000 Bridge/\$18,000 State/\$6,000 Local) in FY09, and final design (\$64,000 Bridge/\$12,000 State/\$4,000 Local) and right of way (\$40,000 Bridge/\$8,000 State/\$2,000 Local) in FY12. The RCC recommends, at minimum, the inclusion of “share the road” signage, painting, and pavement markings for the safe passage of all roadway users.

PA09-34c: Mount Alverno Road over Chester Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86368), Delaware County – Proposed New Local Bridge Project

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, Mount Alverno Road over Chester Creek Bridge Replacement Project, (MPMS #86368), and programming preliminary engineering (\$320,000 Bridge/\$60,000 State/\$20,000 Local) and final design (\$280,000 Bridge/\$53,000 State/\$17,000 Local) in FY09 for the replacement of Mount Alverno bridge.

This project was identified by the PA subcommittee as a local bridge that could be advanced as part of an effort to fund more local bridge projects. This group of bridges selected to advance to design will be evaluated for construction funding during the next TIP Update. The project will include the replacement of a single span, structurally deficient bridge located in Aston Township.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-34c. The RCC appreciates that the Delaware County Planning Department has already requested the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in this project. The RCC recommends the inclusion, at minimum, of “share the road” signage, painting, and pavement markings for the safe passage of all roadway users.

PA09-34d: Tribett Avenue over Hermesprot Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86370), Delaware County – Proposed New Local Bridge Project

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, Tribett Avenue over Hermesprot Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86370), and programming preliminary engineering (\$320,000 Bridge/\$60,000 State/\$20,000 Local) and final design (\$280,000 Bridge/\$53,000 State/\$17,000 Local) in FY09 for the replacement of Tribett Avenue bridge.

This project was identified by the Pennsylvania subcommittee as a local bridge that could be advanced as part of an effort to fund more local bridge projects. This group of bridges selected to advance to design will be evaluated for construction funding during the next TIP Update. The project will include the replacement of a structurally deficient, single span bridge located in Folcroft Borough.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-34d, and recommends that the design of the bridge include Complete Street features to accommodate all roadway users.

DVRPC 2009 Work Program Amendment: US-422 Expressway Tolling and Transit Feasibility Study

This project is a feasibility study of the general tolling of the 25-mile US-422 Expressway from US-202 in King of Prussia to its terminus in Amity Township, Berks County. Toll revenues may be used to fund highway and transit improvements in the US 422 corridor to reduce congestion levels and increase corridor transport capacities.

It is anticipated that the expressway alternatives will include widening from four to six lanes as far west as Limerick. Transit alternatives may include Wyomissing to Philadelphia 30th Street dual mode commuter rail service and possibly a second alternative with improved service frequencies.

It is anticipated that two consultant firms will be hired by DVRPC under separate contracts. Consultant #1 will be retained to utilize DVRPC 2035 travel forecasts to conduct a preliminary traffic and revenue study for the expressway. Consultant #2 will conduct preliminary engineering analyses to estimate capital costs for needed expressway improvements, as well as, rail transit capital costs necessary to provide service to Wyomissing/Reading.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve the DVRPC 2009 Work Program Amendment: US-422 Expressway Tolling and Transit Feasibility Study, and requests that the study include the capital and operating costs for both electric (which may utilize renewable energy resources) and dual-mode trains.

STAFF PRESENTATION: CONNECTIONS: THE REGIONAL PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE:

Mike Boyer, DVRPC Manager of Long-Range Planning, presented an update on the *Connections* Long-Range Plan. Mr. Boyer first gave an outline of the existing regional trends related to sprawl, land use, population and employment growth, which set the stage for outlining a vision for the future. The visioning process was based on *Destination 2030*, which was DVRPC's last long-range plan, but there was a significant public outreach component that also informed how *Connections* developed. An online survey was conducted, and focus groups were convened. In fall 2008, nine county workshops were held to get the public's input, and there was also a special recruitment of environmental justice communities to participate in the outreach process. *The Link* newsletter was also produced to give the public updates on the planning process.

The Plan is developed around the issue areas of land use, the environment, economic competitiveness and transportation, and four key plan principles were developed: to create livable communities, manage growth and protect resources, build a more energy-efficient economy and create a modern, multi-modal transportation system.

Mr. Boyer presented an overview of the plan, which is going out for public comment on May 22, 2009. The draft plan is available online at http://www.dvrpc.org/Connections/DRAFT/Connections_Public_Comment.pdf, and is also available at the DVRPC Resource Center. Two meetings have also been scheduled from 4-6 PM for the public to learn about and comment on the plan: June 4, 2009 at DVRPC's offices; and June 11, 2009 at the Cherry Hill Library.

Discussion: Lorraine Brill asked about the exclusion of the Roosevelt Boulevard transit project. Mr. Boyer responded that the fiscal constraint of the plan precluded the project's inclusion, although various scenarios were investigated. The project may still be revisited, as there is potential to "right-size" the project so that it would fit into the fiscally constrained plan. Ajay Creshkoff noted that this is DVRPC's most comprehensive plan to date, asked if this regional plan would be linked to adjacent regional plans, and that the long-range plan should include a glossary of technical and planning terms. He also noted that social and physical impacts should be investigated in addition to environmental impacts.

Jane Meconi noted that a companion document to the long-range plan will be released this fall and will cover environmental justice issues in the region; a public EJ forum is also planned.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: HYDROPOWER IN THE DELAWARE VALLEY REGION:

Scott Ginesin, president of American Governor Company, discussed issues related to hydropower and the potential for hydropower in the Delaware Valley region. Hydropower has many benefits, in that it is clean, reliable, excellent at meeting changing demands, and is also beneficial for flood control and for reservoirs. Approximately 7% of electricity in the United States is derived from hydropower, with Alaska, Washington, California, Oregon, Idaho and Tennessee being the largest producers of hydropower. Mr. Ginesin described various types of hydropower, such as dams, diversion and pumped storage. Hydropower is also politically and socially popular, and the economic of hydropower have improved. While there are not many opportunities to construct new dams, especially large-scale ones, many opportunities exist for smaller-scale hydropower. For instance, there are 85,000 dams in the U.S., but only a very small percentage are used for electricity production. Of the 1500 dams in Pennsylvania, between 8 and 20 produce electricity, even though there are more than 500 dams that are over 25' high and could potentially produce electricity. In New Jersey, there are over 100 potential sites for energy production in the 4-county region. Mr. Ginesin also described the planning, engineering, permitting, construction and operation tasks needed to utilize the various dams for hydropower.

Discussion: Mr. Ginesin clarified that all the potential hydropower locations he described are already existing, they would just need to be retrofit with new equipment.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: SEPTA POSITIVE TRAIN CONTROL (PTC) PROJECT:

This presentation was in response to an interest RCC members had in this topic, as it was approved last month as a TIP action. Michael Monastero of SEPTA, explained PTC is the result of a law enacted due to the commuter train crash in California in 2008. As defined by law, PTC is a system that would automatically prevent train-to-train collisions, prevent incursions of trains into roadway worker safety zones, prevent over-speed derailments, and prevent a train from running through a switch in a wrong position. Further, the Federal Railroad Administration added the requirement that a PTC system prevent trains from passing through a signal displaying a stop aspect. In addition, there must be interoperability of PTC systems among different carriers. All train systems must implement PTC by 2015.

Currently, SEPTA makes use of two Train Control systems: Automatic Block Signal System and Automatic Train Control System. ABS systems are comprised of a series of signals spaced stopping distance apart that conveys information to the train engineer. Automatic Train Control is a continually updating system that responds to changing conditions ahead of the train and provides immediate responses to changing conditions in real time. SEPTA is now moving toward installing Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES), which is a type of PTC, and acts as an overlay to control a train's speed. SEPTA is also working with other carriers, such as AMTRAK, CSX, Norfolk Southern and other carriers that use tracks that SEPTA trains travel on to ensure interoperability and standardized communications.

INFORMATION ITEM: SAFE HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE PRESERVATION ACT (SHIPA):

Thyme Gadson of the Pennsylvania Highway Safety Coalition presented issues surrounding the Safe Highways and Infrastructure Preservation Act (SHIPA) legislation. Currently, groups representing large shippers and trucking companies are actively pushing for Congress to allow “higher productivity vehicles” on highways across the country. The American Trucking Associations (ATA) has put its support behind proposals to allow heavier single-trailer trucks and longer combination vehicles (LCVs) nationwide. Other groups such as Americans for Safe and Efficient Transportation (ASET) and the Agricultural Transportation Efficiency Coalition (AgTec) are pushing to increase the maximum gross vehicle weight on federal highways. SHIPA primarily keeps the status quo weight limit (80,000 lbs.) for big trucks on the Interstate and extends this weight limit to the National Highway System (NHS). The issue surrounding this legislation is that higher weight trucks can negatively impact highway infrastructure, and be of considerable detriment to already structurally-deficient bridges.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ajay Creshkoff distributed a Philadelphia Inquirer article regarding the cost-benefit dodge. This issue is related to DVRPC’s need to look at cost/benefit analysis. Next month’s agenda will also include Mr. Creshkoff’s accountability statement that was distributed at last month’s meeting.

There was also general discussion related to the RCC and its effectiveness, particularly in its recommendations to the Board. Kathryn Garza requested a quantification of how often the Board voted with the RCC. Candace Snyder replied that she would review staff summaries over the past couple of years.

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.