

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 17, 2009**

Present: Warren Strumpfer (Chair); Elaine Cohen, Andy Sharpe, Bob Machler, John Pawson, Lorraine Brill, William Faltermayer, Ajay Creshkoff, Jeannine Missaoui, Bridget Chadwick, Bill Marston, Jim Richardson, Aissia Richardson, Juanita Lewis Hatton, John Burkhardt, Tom Cooper, Ray Rauanheimo, Sue Herman, John Boyle, Cheryl Tumola, John Nacchio, Larry Menkes, Catherine Zukoski, Pat Mulligan, Linda Ingenthron (citizens); Jane Meconi, Candace Snyder, Elise Turner, Christopher Linn, Mary Bell, Gastonia Anderson (staff).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the October 13, 2009 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Warren Strumpfer submitted the attached report.

Mr. Strumpfer added that he has appreciated the privilege of serving the RCC as Chairman, representing the Committee to the DVRPC Board, and having the opportunity to build relationships with representatives of member agencies. He expressed to the new Chair his hopes that the RCC will be portrayed as a body that has broader interests than bicycle advocacy; many members are equally interested in transit, safety and sustainability. He also hopes that the RCC will be a venue that is friendly and civil for all presenters, from DVRPC staff to member agencies.

Ajay Creshkoff also noted the following:

Mr. Strumpfer is at an age when he is getting close to retirement, and he seems to be doing more and more over several years for the last time, and less and less for the first time! We know that you will want to continue as you have contributing your experience with patience and civility, and we all congratulate you on a most excellent performance and next to excellence is the appreciation of it.

RTC REPORT:

Jim Richardson submitted the attached report.

Mr. Richardson also noted that the RCC may be interested in the presentation of Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones that Rich Bickel gave at the November RTC.

REPORTS FROM RCC REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER COMMITTEES

Aissia Richardson reported she attended a street furniture forum sponsored by the City of Philadelphia. A contract for street furniture is to be let soon.

Jim Richardson reported that he attended an RTC TIP subcommittee meeting. TIP funding is down 22% and further cuts are expected.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

John Burkhardt, Nominating Committee Chair, announced that the Nominating Committee met and were submitting the names of Dennis Winters, Jim Richardson and Aissia Richardson as the candidates for RCC Chair for 2010. There were no nominations from the floor. Ballots were cast and counted, and Aissia Richardson, Vice President of Operations for the Uptown Entertainment and Development Corporation, was named as Chair for 2010.

STAFF PRESENTATION: SEA LEVEL RISE IMPACTS TO NATURAL AND HUMAN COMMUNITIES IN THE DELAWARE ESTUARY

Chris Linn, DVRPC Senior Environmental Planner, presented a recent study co-authored by DVRPC. The paper, *Anticipated Sea Level Rise Responses in the Delaware Estuary of Pennsylvania*, was written to motivate discussion about the appropriate response to sea level rise by creating maps that depict the likelihood of shoreline protection given current policies and development patterns. This Pennsylvania-specific paper is part of a nationwide study being reported as "State and local governments plan for development of most land vulnerable to rising sea level along the U.S. Atlantic Coast", appearing in *Environmental Research Letters* (2009).

Climate change is expected to cause global sea level to rise 1 meter by 2100, and a larger rise cannot be ruled out if polar ice sheets melt more quickly than current scientific observations predict. Throughout the Delaware Estuary, coastal lands will be vulnerable to erosion, flooding, and inundation unless states or private property owners armor or elevate the land. While shoreline armoring can protect developed assets, the U.S. experience with protecting populated areas below sea level has not been foolproof, as evidenced by the events in New Orleans. In addition, shoreline armoring prevents the landward migration of tidal wetlands, which, in the face of rising seas, must migrate inland if they are to survive.

When responding to sea level rise, communities can choose two pathways: shore protection or retreat. Most property owners and land use agencies have generally not yet decided how they will respond to sea level rise, nor have they prepared maps delineating where shore protection and retreat are likely. The absence of such maps prevents a realistic assessment of the consequences of rising sea level, and can impair efforts to prepare for those consequences.

A discussion of shoreline armoring and coastal retreat is timely in Pennsylvania where the preparation of redevelopment plans for low-lying coastal areas inhabited by vacant or declining industrial sites raises numerous questions. Should new development be planned in areas that will be threatened by inundation? Should federal and state agencies grant permits for shoreline armoring that would block the landward migration of tidal wetlands? How will sea level rise impact ongoing efforts to restore the ecology of the Delaware Estuary? What do rising seas bode for efforts to increase public access to the waterfront and create new opportunities for waterfront recreation?

Throughout the wider Delaware Estuary and along the entire US Atlantic coast, rising sea level threatens existing coastal wetlands. Overall ecosystems could often survive by migrating inland, if adjacent lands remained vacant. However, the nationwide study being reported in *Environmental Research Letters* estimates that almost 60 percent of the land below 1 meter along the US Atlantic coast is either currently developed or expected to be developed and thus unavailable for the inland migration of wetlands. Less than 10 percent of the land below 1 meter has been set aside for conservation. Furthermore, environmental regulators routinely grant permits for shore protection structures (which block wetland migration) on the basis of a federal finding that these structures have no cumulative environmental impact. The nationwide study suggests that shore protection does have a cumulative impact due to rising seas and the need of wetlands to migrate inland if they are to survive climate change. If sea level rise is taken into account, wetland policies that previously seemed to comply with federal law probably violate the Clean Water Act.

Discussion: There was a question related to the national flood insurance program and how it creates an incentive for development in low-lying areas. Mr. Linn replied that this issue is included in the study. Dennis Winters offered kudos to Mr. Linn in addressing a topic that is under-reported. He questioned the costs of developing infrastructure to address the issue when there is not enough funding for existing infrastructure issues. Andy Sharpe asked if Philadelphia International Airport was investigated, as it is located near tidal wetlands. Mr. Linn replied that the airport was one of six case studies in the report and that future airport expansion plans were also reviewed. There was also discussion related to whether the deepening of the Delaware River would have any impact as well as the topic of “stranded investment” of areas along the coast.

STAFF PRESENTATION: GREATER PHILADELPHIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Mary Bell, DVRPC Manager, Demographic and Economic Analysis, presented the recently released Greater Philadelphia Economic Development Framework, which was created to satisfy a federal requirement for a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the 11-county Greater Philadelphia region, which include Bucks, Chester, Montgomery, Delaware and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Mercer and Salem Counties in New Jersey, and New Castle County, Delaware. A CEDS is a prerequisite for applying for funds under EDA public works, economic adjustment, and most planning programs.

The report identifies regional challenges and opportunities, integrates economic development with land use and transportation planning, as well as with human and physical capital planning. The report establishes regional goals and objectives and leverages EDA funding for regional goals.

The report, co-authored by DVRPC, Select Greater Philadelphia and Ben Franklin Technology Partners, provides an overview of economic development in Greater Philadelphia. The report was officially approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration as the CEDS for the Greater Philadelphia region on September 30, 2009.

A review of more than thirty economic development strategy documents prepared for the Greater Philadelphia region in recent years revealed common goals and objectives, such as:

- Focus growth in recognized centers of development.
- Create appropriate jobs in distressed areas and for populations most in need.
- Create jobs that match workforce supply.
- Support and promote growth in key economic sectors.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Enhance the climate for business growth.
- Invest in public infrastructure.
- Foster a high-quality, productive workforce.
- Increase innovation and new business formation.
- Improve, enhance and celebrate the high quality of life in Greater Philadelphia.
- Expand the Greater Philadelphia's region's connections to the global economy.

Discussion: Pat Mulligan asked for a clarification of distressed counties and communities. Ms. Bell replied that Philadelphia County is the only county in the entire region that is defined as distressed, but that municipalities within other counties, such as Camden, are considered distressed; but Camden County as a whole is not. "Distressed" is defined through per capita income and unemployment levels. Kathryn Garza commented that growth should be de-emphasized and distribution should be emphasized. Jeannine Missaoui asked if other MPO economic development studies were investigated. Ms. Bell replied that DVRPC worked with South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPPO) and the Wilmington Area Planning Council (WILMAPCO), two adjacent MPOs. Ms. Bell noted that in some instances, MPOs can be economic development agencies, but under DVRPC's current state compacts, DVRPC is not an economic development agency. Mr. Creshkoff noted that the economic development framework is insufficient without a comprehensive conceptual framework covering availabilities and utilization of capital and human resources and other constraints over stated time horizons. Limited though it is in comprehensiveness, it has considerable utility in tying together key components of an integrated economic development planning such as goals and objectives. The report should be accompanied by linked labor force and manpower development plans, energy development plans, infrastructure plans and transportation plans, and trade and investment development plans.

INFORMATION ITEM: ONLINE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) INFORMATION OVERVIEW

Gastonia Anderson, DVRPC Transportation Planner, demonstrated how RCC members and the general public can access TIP project information via DVRPC's newly designed website.

The TIP information page can be accessed by visiting DVRPC's website at www.dvrpc.org, and clicking on the TIP link under the "Resources" banner, and then by clicking on "Overview." Ms. Anderson noted that there is a separate link and table/map for the region's stimulus projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

There are separate links to the PA TIP and the NJ TIP, and projects can be searched by county, MPMS number, municipality or keyword. One can also look up a project based on its funding, such as CMP. Projects are then either presented in list or map format, and the mapped projects are color-coded to indicate what type of project it is, eg. bike/ped, transit, or signal improvement. A project description and costs are also displayed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Action Task Force: The Action Task Force met prior to the RCC meeting and developed RCC recommendations for Board Action Items. The highlights of this meeting are attached and recommendations will be relayed to the Board. Action Items are no longer addressed at the primary RCC meeting.

2035 Task Force: John Pawson discussed the DRPA "gambler's trolley" in Philadelphia, and the need for the agency to expand service and funding into other southeastern Pennsylvania counties.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Ajay Creshkoff reported on his correspondence with Rich Bickel, which was included in the November RCC mailing. Mr. Bickel, in attendance at the November RCC meeting, clarified that his letter not only reflected an institutional response, but also his personal and professional opinions related to long-range planning. He continued that many things that Mr. Creshkoff addresses is outside of the MPOs control, and that to spend time and money looking inward doesn't see feasible, and the ability to push operating agencies to examine their perceived flaws and fix them is small.

Candy Snyder noted that the DVRPC Board will be voting to open the public comment period on the Draft FY 2011 DVRPC Work Program. The public comment period is scheduled to run from December 14, 2009 to January 13, 2010.

Elaine Cohen reported that Ernest is now home from the rehabilitation center and is continuing to recuperate.

Juanita Lewis Hatton announced that she attended an Energy Expo event on November 14, with a focus on solar energy and federal subsidies available for individuals to make their homes more energy efficient and to utilize alternative forms of energy.

Best wishes were extended to Ajay Creshkoff on celebrating his 94th birthday!

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11/15/09

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING

1. PENNSYLVANIA STATE WATER PLAN

Lori Mohr, Special Projects Manager, PA Department of Environmental Protection made an impressive and important presentation on the Delaware Regional Water Resources Planning Area to the board.

The Pennsylvania State Water Plan Web Site, (www.pawaterplan.dep.state.pa.us/statewaterplan) is the gateway to the vision, goals and recommendations for Pennsylvania in meeting the challenges of sustainable water use into the future. It contains the State Water Plan Principles, an executive summary, the Pennsylvania Water Atlas and the "Touchstone Document" that summarizes the state water plan.

PA DEP is seeking public input on the area plans. They had a Delaware Regional Public meeting and hearing on the 9th of this month. I alerted our members to this meeting via e-mail and Yahoo list serve. The website contains a calendar of events. Jane is trying to schedule a DEP presentation for the RCC in the near future.

2. SOUTH PINES NOISE WALLS

It's important that we voted we voted against this as the project came outside the normal deliberate process.

3. Low Bid ARRA Savings Projects

It was good to see project savings benefits instead of the usual recent cost increases.

4. TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS PLAN

Expressed disappointment that we were expected to vote on such an important issue before we received the presentation

5. ADOPTION OF THE FY 2009 SAFETY ACTION PLAN

- Safety is very important to the RCC
- Impressed with the Regional Plan
- Gloucester County efforts to keep cars on roadway with excellent rural reflective road markings. Heard comment that "Gloucester County Road markings exceeded NJ Dot Standards" quotation by State employee who lives in county. I commented that the safety-oriented markings are greatly appreciated by the nighttime motorist and not considered excessive. Wish others would follow suit.
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- Impressed with the participants on the Safety Action Task Force

6. OTHER BUSINESS COMMENTS (PRAISE)

- "Bucks-Mercer Transit Needs Assessment Concept Development" Publication is an extension of RCC idea of "Seamless Transit Across the River."

- Board retreat “Mega Regions and Mega Solutions” excellent topics and speakers. Appreciate opportunity to attend and thanks to Candy for inviting other key RCC members. Wished we could have summary for RCC.
- Expressed appreciation for consideration of all RCC work programs submitted. Got indication that some will get further consideration and get worked in and others may go to committees.
- “Feasibility study for Interstate Highway Tolling Options” discussion was healthy and informative. Much angst was expressed, especially for protection of “Act-44” funding.

RTC Report
November 10, 2009
Jim Richardson, RCC Representative

Several items of potential interest to RCC members came up during the monthly RTC (Regional Transportation Committee) meeting yesterday. A summary of the meeting follows:

RTC reviewed six TIP Actions, four amendments to the 2010 Planning Work Programs, a functional classification change for roadways in the Naval Business Center, and a slate of candidate Special Studies projects for PA and NJ. The committee also saw presentations on the status of regional transit projects and a potential new program to provide federal tax incentives for public/private infrastructure improvement programs.

TIP Actions of special interest to RCC:

All TIP Actions were recommended by RTC for approval by the Board.

Committee members questioned PA09-777 which provides funds for a hydraulic study following a severe mudslide on 1-76 near Gladwyne on August 2, 2009. This area had considerable repairs in recent years. Several members pointed out that recent alterations in area housing developments and at Philadelphia Country Club may have changed the topography since that work was done.

Leo Bagley of Montgomery County expressed some concern about the use of approximately \$5 million in economic development funds for PA09-78, Phase One of a larger revitalization and streetscape program on North Broad Street. His concern centered on how PA's Governor uses this discretionary fund seemingly without due consideration to other potential projects of worth. Leo suggested that the City of Philadelphia and the four PA counties develop and provide the governor's office with a list of one project each for consideration. This idea was accepted by DVRPC staff. I believe that this serves two purposes: First, it puts the governor on notice that there are concerns about his use of these funds for discretionary projects, and second, it elevates additional regional projects for consideration.

Regional Highway and Transit Special Studies

The committee approved all candidate projects. Of potential interest to RCC members are: a NJ study of traffic patterns in the Marlton Circle area, a PA US 422 traffic study, and a study on options to mitigate interruptions to I-95 traffic during future rebuilding of the highway and intersections between Girard Avenue and the Betsy Ross Bridge. In my opinion, the whole issue of I-95 through Philadelphia should be raised to one of priority for RCC. For example, Tom Walker of DVRPC staff pointed out that the intersection work alone will cost on the order of \$1 billion. This at a time when the whole future of the roadway has come under scrutiny and possible removal in an effort to provide greater access to the Delaware River from Center City. An ocean of money is going to be spent on these projects and they will have significant impact on the whole region. It behooves RCC to get informed and involved.

Also of interest is a NJ study regarding safety on rural roads. As I know this is a topic of interest to several of our NJ members, I raised a question about how to make input and get involved. Staff said that opportunities for input will arise as DVRPC reviews this project in preparation for its next planning work program.

Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones (RIIZ)

Rich Bickel made a very interesting presentation about a program currently in place in Oklahoma, Kansas and Indiana that has potential to become a national program. Essentially, these states, working together, have created a program whereby private, for-profit organizations can achieve tax benefits through contributions to local infrastructure projects. Strict guidelines prevent use of this program for projects that benefit only the funder. So, for example, a new private road within or leading exclusively to a business location does not qualify. PA's Senator Arlen Specter has prepared draft legislation that if introduced and passed, would make programs like this, administered by MPOs, available on a national basis, with federal tax benefits.

This program has potential to make public-private partnerships more viable and may therefore be a valuable resource in our goal to fill the considerable funding gap for regional highway, transit and infrastructure maintenance and improvement.

Warren and I asked Jane Meconi to include a presentation on this at a future RCC meeting.

Finally, there will be a Transportation Operations Task Force meeting at DVRPC on November 16. This is an interesting opportunity for members to get involved in this wide-ranging area.

There is no RTC meeting in December.

**DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
HIGHLIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RCC ACTION TASK FORCE
MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17, 2009**

PRESENT: Warren Strumpfer, Jim Richardson, Bridget Chadwick, John Boyle, Sue Herman, Tom Cooper, Bill Faltermayer, Jeannine Missaoui, John Pawson, Larry Menkes, Roxane Shinn, Ray Rauanheimo, Bob Machler, Dennis Winters, Aissia Richardson, Ajay Creshkoff, Juanita Lewis Hatton, Lorraine Brill (citizens), Candace Snyder, Jane Meconi (staff)

PA09-75: Adjacent Box Beam Rehab Group (Group A) (MPMS #87241), Delaware and Montgomery Counties

Discussion: Jeannine Missaoui noted that the maps accompanying the TIP packets were very helpful. Jim Richardson questioned how the bridges were being prioritized and asked that the RCC receive a full bridge priority list and inspection information from PennDOT. Warren Strumpfer noted that New Jersey has a complete list of bridge priorities. There was also discussion of the systemic problem of why bridges have been allowed to deteriorate to this point.

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force notes that bridge and deck reconstruction poses an opportunity to integrate Complete Streets design to allow for pedestrian and bicycle access. Every implementing agency needs to have and utilize a Complete Streets policy to plan for the future. While the safety of these bridges is of the utmost importance, the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians utilizing these roads needs to be considered as well. The RCC also requests whether and how bicycle and pedestrian facilities were considered for these projects.

PA09-75b: Adjacent Box Beam Rehab (Group B) (MPMS #87243), Bucks and Chester Counties

See above comment.

PA09-75c: Adjacent Box Beam Rehab (Group C) (MPMS # 87244), Montgomery County

See above comment.

PA09-76: Grove Road Drainage Improvements (MPMS #87281), Chester County

Discussion: There was a question as to the exact location/address of this projects as well as what previous engineering issues were present at the site that were not addressed.

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-76, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, Grove Road Drainage Improvements (MPMS# 87281), and programming preliminary engineering in FY10 (\$250,000 State), and final design (\$200,000 State), utility (\$50,000 State),

right of way (\$50,000 State), and construction (\$1,000,000 STP) in FY11.

PA09-77: I-76 Mudslide Study (MPMS #87522), Montgomery County

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-77, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project to the TIP, I-76 Mudslide Study (MPMS# 87522), and programming a study phase in FY10 (\$65,000 State).

PA09-78: Avenue of the Arts/ North Broad Street Revitalization and Streetscape (MPMS #87937), Philadelphia

Discussion: Ajay Creshkoff asked how will this project bring together the adjacent communities. There was some discussion related to urban design solutions integrated into community development. Aissia Richardson noted that there has not been any public outreach conducted to area stakeholders thus far. Larry Menkes wished to confirm that the new lights being installed will be LED.

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that prior to the approval of funding for this project, there should be a public outreach plan in place as part of the project description, outlining how community members and other stakeholders would be engaged throughout the design and implementation process.

FY 2010 Planning Work Program Amendment: Center City Philadelphia Evacuation and Traffic Model

Discussion: Ajay Creshkoff asked if location/destination areas are being considered.

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that a bike traffic model be included in the Center City Philadelphia Evacuation and Traffic Model in an effort to validate its findings.

FY 2010 Planning Work Program Amendment: New Jersey Route 70 Traffic Study

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include the New Jersey Route 70 Traffic Study.

FY 2010 Planning Work Program Amendment: Supplemental Pottstown Bypass (US 422) Traffic Study

Discussion: Tom Cooper asked if this project was in the TIP. What is the impact of moving the project back to 2015? Jeannine Missaoui commented that this is an innovative approach to funding road maintenance and should be applauded.

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include the Supplemental Pottstown Bypass (US 422) Traffic Study.

FY 2010 Planning Work Program Amendment: Supplemental I-95 Interchange Enhancement, Phase III

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board amend DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include the Supplemental I-95 Interchange Enhancement, Phase III.

Functional Classification Change for Roadways in the Naval Business Center, Philadelphia

Discussion: Are there going to be any studies as to how personnel will travel to the Navy Yard? Will shipping lanes still be present?

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board approve the functional classification change for roadways in the Naval Business Center, Philadelphia

FY 2011 Supportive Regional Highway Planning Program and Transit Support Program Candidate Special Studies

Discussion: Tom Cooper commented that the 422 corridor project contains unfortunate wording, in that the FY 08 Work Study project evolved into the R 6 Extension Study. Mr. Cooper also objected to the list of beneficiaries for the project and asked to clarify the wording of "feasibility" in description.

Comment for DVRPC Board:

The RCC Action Task Force recommends that the DVRPC Board approve the FY 2011 Supportive Regional Highway Planning Program and Transit Support Program Candidate Special Studies

OTHER BUSINESS:

The Action Task Force requested the following presentations for future RCC meetings:

- A discussion of the documentation of financial constraint within the TIP process.
- A comprehensive presentation on I-95 to date: What is being planned considering environmental, energy, social and economic issues?

The Action Task Force requested specific information related to how PA state economic development funds are allocated, both on a state and discretionary basis.