

**MEETING MINUTES  
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE  
JUNE 16, 2009**

Present: Warren Strumpfer (Chair); Juanita Lewis Hatton, Aissia Richardson, Tom Cooper, John Burkhardt, Larry Menkes, Cheryl Tumola, Jeannine Missaoui, Dennis Winters, Bridget Chadwick, Andy Sharpe, Bill Faltermayer, John Boyle, Tim Kelly, Sheikh Gardrie, Scott Gillanders, Ernest Cohen, Elaine Cohen, John Pawson, Lorraine Brill, Ajay Creshkoff, Sue Herman, Catherine Zukoski (citizens); Leo Bagley (guest); Jane Meconi, Candace Snyder (staff).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the May 19, 2009 RCC meeting were approved as mailed.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Warren Strumpfer noted that there were two presentations at the May Board meeting: Mercer Crossings and IDRUM. Donna Lewis of the Mercer County Planning Division presented Mercer Crossings, which is located outside of Trenton and encompasses redevelopment, local foods, transportation and intermunicipal cooperation. The second presentation provided an overview of Interactive Detour Route Mapping (IDRuM). DVRPC staff presented this online application that organizes all existing official Department of Transportation Emergency Detour routes within the Southeastern Pennsylvania region and Southern New Jersey.

Mr. Strumpfer noted that he made a comment to the Board supporting the funding of transit, particularly in the US 422 corridor.

DVRPC staff also announced that a new DVRPC website has launched.

**RTC REPORT:**

Warren Strumpfer, substituting for Jim Richardson, reported that the RTC heard a presentation on a traffic mitigation study for the Ben Franklin Bridge, and he inquired if Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) would be considered.

**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.

**NJ09-25: Egg Harbor Road, Hurffville-Cross Keys Road to Hurffville-Grenloch Road (DB #D0503), Gloucester County**

Gloucester County has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by programming a final design phase for Egg Harbor Road, Hurffville-Cross Keys Road to Hurffville-Grenloch Road (DB #D0503), in FY09 (\$850,000 STP-STU). Funding for the final design phase will be provided by DVRPC's Local Scoping line item (DB #X80B). The final design phase was programmed but not authorized in the FY2008 TIP, and cannot advance unless it is programmed. Construction totaling \$13 million is currently programmed.

Washington Township has experienced significant population growth and Egg Harbor Road provides the direct link from the Route 55 interchange on Route 47 near Five Points to the heart of Washington Township at the junction of Hurffville-Cross Keys. This project will provide for the widening of Egg Harbor Road for 2.5 miles between CR 635 & CR 654 from 2 lanes to four, which will improve circulation and safety along Egg Harbor Road. Significant shoulder widths ranging from 3' to 11' will also be included as part of the widening. Pedestrian crosswalks, count-down timers, and new sidewalks will also be included in some areas. The project will also include an auxiliary lane for left turn movements at selected intersections. The final public information session was held on May 28, 2009.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-25, only if project recommendations from the May 28, 2009 public meeting of area residents are included in the plan. There has been some opposition to the widening of this road, and area residents have instead recommended widening the shoulders of the road for bus/bike usage and the installation of left turn lanes.**

**PA09-42: Programming of Low-Bid Savings on SEPTA Recovery Act Projects (MPMS #s: 60585, 77190, 77187, and 60557), Various Counties**

SEPTA has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by shifting funds and adding projects to the TIP using funds made available from low-bid savings on projects initially selected for funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and recommended for DVRPC Board approval in February, 2009. SEPTA has experienced a 19% reduction in cost due to low bids on 20 projects to date, and requests that funds be programmed accordingly (see attachment in "Supporting Documentation" at the end of this package for further details on each project listed below, in addition to minor cost increases or decreases on other ARRA projects):

- (1) Frazer Yard Wood Catenary Poles (\$4,118,100 – MPMS #60585 – Track, Signal, Catenary and Bridge Renewal / Infrastructure Safety Renewal Program (ISRP))
- (2) R7 Chestnut Hill East Station Amenities and Improvements (\$1,903,760 MPMS #77190 – Station and Loop Renewal / ISRP)
- (3) R8 Chestnut Hill West Retaining Walls (\$683,700 – MPMS #77190 – Station and Loop Renewal / ISRP)
- (4) Overhaul of the Norristown Substation (\$5,162,200 – MPMS #77187 – Shops, Yards, and Support Facilities / ISRP)
- (5) Replacement of the R3 Langhorne Station Building (\$2,319,174 – MPMS #77190 – Station and Loop Renewal / ISRP)
- (6) Rehabilitation of Morton, Folcroft, and Clifton-Aldan Station Buildings (\$2,617,765 – MPMS #77190 – Station and Loop Renewal / ISRP)
- (7) Norristown Route 100 Fiber Optic Cable (\$4,197,600 – MPMS #60557 – System Improvements / Engineering and Construction (EC))

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-42, SEPTA's request to modify the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by shifting funds made available by low-bid savings on ARRA projects and program accordingly in FY09 the following:

- **Decrease MPMS #60585 (Track, Signal, Catenary and Bridge Renewal/ISRP) by a total of \$2,796,000 (\$2,171,000 5307ER/\$625,000 5309ER) for (1) Frazer Yard Wood Catenary Poles and other administrative adjustments;**
- **Increase MPMS #77190 (Station Loop Renewal/ISRP) by a total of \$6,752,000 (\$3,720,000 5307ER/\$3,032,000 5309ER) for (2) R7 Chestnut Hill East Station Amenities and Improvements, (3) R8 Chestnut Hill West Retaining Walls, (5) Replacement of the R3 Langhorne Station Building, and (6) Rehabilitation of Morton, Folcroft, and Clifton-Aldan Station Buildings and other administrative adjustments;**
- **Decrease MPMS #77187 (Shops, Yards, and Support Facilities Renewal / ISRP) by \$915,000 5309ER for (4) Overhaul of the Norristown Substation and other administrative adjustments;**
- **Increase MPMS #60557 (System Improvements) by \$2,062,000 5309ER for (7) Norristown Route 100 Fiber Optic Cable and other administrative adjustments.**

**PA09-43: Route 232 Corridor and Intersection Improvements (MPMS #57625), Bucks County**

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by programming a final design phase for Route 232 Corridor and Intersection Improvements (MPMS #57625), in FY09 (\$500,000 Highway Safety Infrastructure Program (HSIP)). This project is already programmed for \$2.560 million for construction, but final design has not yet been started and needs to be programmed in order to advance. It was expected that design would be completed in-house by District 6, but it will now be done by a consultant.

The purpose of the project is to improve the functionality and safety of the intersection, as well as relieve some traffic concerns due to the heavy truck traffic in the area. This project involves the reconfiguration of the Second Street Pike/Swamp Road intersection, the addition of left turn lanes at all approaches, upgrade the intersection to be signalized, and the addition of a lane on Second Street Pike northbound to accommodate heavy truck volumes.

*Discussion: There have been issues of speed on this roadway, as well as significant truck traffic from area quarries.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board NOT approve TIP Action PA09-43, due to safety concerns and strong neighborhood opposition to this project.

**PA09-44: Pottstown Business District Pedestrian/Bicycle Promenade (MPMS #61709), Montgomery County**

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by removing the FY09 construction phase (\$502,000 STE) from the Pottstown Business District Pedestrian / Bicycle Promenade project (MPMS #61709); thereby deleting the project from the TIP per the sponsor's request. The priorities of Pottstown Borough have changed.

This project included the construction of a pedestrian promenade connecting the Pottstown Business District, the waterfront, and the Montgomery County Community College. Improvements covered under this project included bituminous trail, pavement reconstruction, drainage facilities, installation of a pre-fabricated bridge structure, lighting, concrete curb, landscaping amenities, pavement markings, and signage.

*Discussion: It was noted that the TE funds not used for this project will go toward another TE project.*

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-44, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by removing the FY09 construction phase (\$502,000 STE) from the Pottstown Business District Pedestrian/Bicycle Promenade (MPMS #61709); thereby deleting the project from the TIP. The RCC noted that it was disappointed that Pottstown Borough was no longer pursuing this project.**

**PA09-45: Bethlehem Pike Streetscapes (MPMS #74801), Montgomery County**

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, Bethlehem Pike Streetscapes (MPMS #74801), and programming an \$800,000 SAFETEA-LU earmark (Fed ID# 1153, PA ID# 377) in FY09 for construction, acknowledging a toll credit match.

The goal of the project is to complete streetscape improvements in the central business districts of Flourtown and Erdenheim to create a pedestrian oriented "main street" atmosphere, improve pedestrian safety and enhance commercial activities. The project includes streetscape enhancements including stamped crosswalks, sidewalk reconstruction at the corners of prominent intersections, ornamental street lighting, ornamental signal poles, and installation of street trees. This project will be broken up into two separate portions of Bethlehem Pike. The Flourtown area will be along Bethlehem Pike from Springfield Avenue heading south to Wissahickon Avenue. The Erdenheim area of Bethlehem Pike will start at Yeakel Avenue and head south past Gordon Lane to the entrance of the Cisco Park.

*Discussion: There was some discussion and one "no" vote to this project due to its earmark status. It was also noted that the local environmental action committee (EAC) is in favor of the project.*

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-45, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new DEMO project to the TIP, Bethlehem Pike Streetscapes (MPMS #74801), and programming an \$800,000 SAFETEA-LU earmark (Fed ID# 1153, PA ID# 377), in FY09 for construction, acknowledging a toll credit match. The RCC hopes that the streetscape improvements provide traffic calming benefits in this area.

*Springfield Township response to RCC:*

*The Bethlehem Pike Streetscape Project will not negatively impact the existing parking situation along Bethlehem Pike in Flourtown and Erdenheim. In fact, Springfield Township views the streetscape project, and the construction of the Flourtown-Erdenheim Community Gateways (already a TIP project) as the first two phases of improvements planned to enhance Bethlehem Pike in our community.*

*The next phase of work will include the implementation of the road diet plan and other recommendations contained in the DVRPC "Taming Traffic" study completed in December 2008. The road diet plan proposed in the study will replace the current four-lane travel alignment (two travel lanes each direction, parking permitted at certain times in curbed travel lane, left turns from passing lane) with a single travel lane in each direction, together with a center left-turn lane and single lane of dedicated on-street parking. The travel lanes will also include share the lane markings for bicycles. Funding was recently requested from Congresswoman Schwartz's office to complete the land realignment work, and was also the subject of a TCDI application submitted in 2008.*

**PA09-46: PA 611 over Cooks Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86860), Bucks County**

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new project into the TIP, PA 611 over Cooks Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86860), and programming a total of \$3,482,000 for preliminary engineering (\$400,000 Bridge/\$100,000 State), utility (\$40,000 Bridge/\$10,000 State), right-of-way (\$40,000 Bridge/\$10,000 State), and final design (\$480,000 Bridge/\$120,000 State) phases in FY10, and construction in FY11 (\$1,826,000 Bridge/\$456,000 State) for the total replacement of the Cooks Creek Bridge.

This project includes replacing the superstructure of a 72 foot long, 37 foot wide, single span bridge due to the cracking and bulging of the abutments. The bridge, located in Durham Township, currently has two lanes in each direction with eight foot shoulders on each side. Additional details for the planned improvements will be available after the scoping field view has been completed.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action PA09-46, PennDOT's request to amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding a new bridge project into the TIP, PA 611 over Cooks Creek Bridge Replacement Project (MPMS #86860), and programming a total of \$3,482,000 for preliminary engineering (\$400,000 Bridge/\$100,000 State), utility (\$40,000 Bridge/\$10,000 State), right-of-way (\$40,000 Bridge/\$10,000 State), and final design (\$480,000 Bridge/\$120,000 State) phases in FY10, and construction in FY11 (\$1,826,000 Bridge/\$456,000 State). The RCC**

**recommends that the shoulders on the bridge be preserved and that sidewalks be added as part of the reconstruction.**

**NJ09-26: Guiderail Inventory and Management Program in Gloucester County (DB #TBD) and Burlington County (DB #TBD)**

Gloucester and Burlington Counties have requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding 2 new projects to the TIP and programming a total of \$1,600,000 STP-STU for a new Guiderail Inventory and Management Program in both counties. These funds must be authorized in Federal Fiscal Year 2009, or the project will not be able to advance with this funding source. The project will not be carried over to the FY10 TIP for New Jersey.

1. Gloucester County Guiderail Inventory Program (DB #TBD) - \$800,000
2. Burlington County Guiderail Inventory Program (DB #TBD) - \$800,000

Both Gloucester and Burlington Counties are interested in using STP-STU funds to create and maintain a Guiderail Asset Management System. The counties have been aggressively maintaining the roadways through various improvement projects, but realize that guiderail management has not been directly examined to identify the needs that exist. To that end, the counties are interested in having an extensive inventory conducted of existing guiderail on county-maintained roads and at county bridges; the inventory will include location points, conditions of the rail, pavement/vegetation it is on, and a video log viewing system of the guide rail and surrounding environment which will enable the counties to view as well as read the comments of the specific location point. In addition to the data collection phase, a consultant will procure and configure hardware and software components necessary to implement the management system. This approach and creating this type of database will allow staff to more efficiently identify faulty or damaged guide rail and determine the needs for maintenance or replacement.

The intent of this project is to develop a guiderail management system and database using GIS that will be compatible and comparable to the Sign Management System. The counties will request an inventory of all guiderail located on county maintained roadways and at all county bridges, as well as the creation of a GIS compatible database, and an assessment of the guiderail to determine the needs for maintenance or replacement. The counties will also request a video log during the inventory process that will link to the server database, which will allow staff to view existing conditions at pointed locations.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-26, Gloucester and Burlington Counties' request that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding 2 new projects to the TIP and programming a total of \$1,600,000 STP-STU (\$800,000 for Gloucester County (DB #TBD) and \$800,000 for Burlington County (DB #TBD)) for a new Guiderail Inventory and Management Program in both counties. These funds must be authorized in Federal Fiscal Year 2009, or the project will not be able to advance with this funding source. The project will not be carried over to the FY10 TIP for New Jersey.**

**NJ09-27: CR 630 Egg Harbor Road Resurfacing, CR 603 to Salina Road (DB#TBD), Gloucester County**

Gloucester County has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new project to the TIP and programming \$1,050,000 STP-STU in FY09 for construction of CR 630 Egg Harbor Road Resurfacing, CR 603 to Salina Road (DB# TBD), in Washington Township to provide for milling and overlay of this section of roadway. The CED is complete, but can not be submitted to NJ DOT Local Aid until a DB number has been assigned. This project was originally a part of the Stimulus project candidates submitted by Gloucester County, but was removed from the list due to constraint.

These funds must be authorized in Federal Fiscal Year 2009, or the project will not be able to advance with this funding source. The project will not be carried over to the FY10 TIP for New Jersey.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-27, Gloucester County's request that DVRPC amend the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by adding a new project to the TIP and programming \$1,050,000 STP-STU in FY09 for construction of CR 630 Egg Harbor Road Resurfacing, CR 603 to Salina Road (DB# TBD), to provide for milling and overlay of this section of roadway. These funds must be authorized in Federal Fiscal Year 2009, or the project will not be able to advance with this funding source. The project will not be carried over to the FY10 TIP for New Jersey. The RCC further requests that shoulders be added to this project if there is available right-of-way.**

**NJ09-28: Mercer County Roadway Safety Improvements (DB #D0412), Mercer County**

Mercer County has requested that DVRPC modify the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by increasing the FY09 construction phase of the Mercer County Roadway Safety Improvements Project (DB #D0412), by a total of \$455,000 STP-STU.

- \$305,000 STP-STU will be used to address a guiderail improvement project that was previously downscoped in order to fit within the limited \$500,000 programmed in the FY2009 TIP. The additional \$305,000 STP-STU will enable the county to address all locations that were part of the original package;
- \$150,000 STP-STU will be used to provide for raised pavement marker installation on county roadways.

As we approach the end of the federal fiscal year, there are STP-STU funds available which need to be obligated within a short time frame.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Action NJ09-28, Mercer County's request that DVRPC modify the FY2009-2012 TIP for New Jersey by increasing the construction phase of Mercer County Roadway Safety Improvements**

**Project (DB #D0412), by \$455,000 STP-STU in FY09, of which \$305,000 STP-STU will be**

used to address a guiderail improvement project that was previously downscoped in order to fit within the limited \$500,000 programmed in the FY2009 TIP, and \$150,000 STP-STU will be used to provide for raised pavement marker installation on county roadways. These funds must be authorized in Federal Fiscal Year 2009, or the project will not be able to advance with this funding source. The project will not be carried over to the FY10 TIP for New Jersey.

**DVRPC 2010 Work Program Amendment: Competitive Program and Project Management Cost Increase**

This amendment is to increase the amount of funding for the Competitive Program and Project Management project. NJDOT has requested that DVRPC assist them in managing the implementation of the Transportation Enhancement projects and other Local Lead types of projects by acting as an adjunct project manager. DVRPC has been working in this capacity for PennDOT over the past 9 years and this increase in funding will allow DVRPC staff to provide this assistance to NJDOT. The following narrative describes the type of work we have been doing for PennDOT and will now begin to preform for NJDOT.

SAFETEA-LU, the federal authorizing legislation for highways and transit, includes funding for non-traditional transportation projects such as multi-use trails, streetscapes, historic restorations, alternative fueled vehicles, and travel demand management, as well as projects that contribute to the attainment of the Clean Air Act by reducing emissions from highway sources. Four categories of federal funding that provide broad eligibility for these non-traditional transportation projects are: Transportation Enhancements, Earmarks, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, and the Surface Transportation Program.

Funding from the TIP enables DVRPC staff to assist with the implementation of these non-traditional projects by serving as adjunct project manager on behalf of the state DOT. This assistance generally involves the facilitation and coordination among the project applicant, the DOT district office, DOT central office staff, and FHWA. TIP funds are also provided to the sub-regions through the Local Scoping Programs for PA and NJ. The scoping program goal is to advance projects through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and preliminary engineering, thereby developing a solution to a defined problem and making the project eligible for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for Final Design, ROW, and Construction funding. DVRPC administers both of these Local Scoping Programs, performing consultant selection, contract administration, and assistance to member counties and cities on project definition.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include the cost increase, for the current Competitive Program and Project Management project, of \$100,000.**

**DVRPC FY2010 Work Program Amendment: Integrating Historic Preservation and Planning**

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has awarded DVRPC a \$30,000 matching grant to incorporate historic resources planning into different aspects of transportation planning and on-going DVRPC projects, contingent on an approved scope of work.

DVRPC will work closely with both PHMC and the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office to find “success stories” within the Delaware Valley, and partner with historic preservation organizations, such as the Preservation Alliance and Preservation New Jersey, and heritage marketing organizations, such as the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, to create an online educational toolbox of historic preservation techniques available to the region’s municipalities.

DVRPC staff will also present at various conferences around the region, and coordinate, at minimum, two meetings or workshops that highlight the measurable economic development benefits of historic preservation and showcase local success stories.

The grant award is technically an 18-month contract; however, most work will be completed in FY 2010. The work will officially commence on November 2, 2009 and officially conclude on June 30, 2011.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include the Integrating Historic Preservation and Planning project.**

**DVRPC FY2010 Work Program Amendment: Supplemental Route 55 Deptford Traffic Study**

NJDOT has been requested by Deptford Township and Gloucester County to re-examine the need to improve the existing partial interchange at Rt. 55/Deptford Center Road. Currently the Deptford Center Road Interchange only serves traffic to/from the western quadrants; Deptford Mall and Almonesson Road (CR 621).

Under this supplemental work program, DVRPC will prepare updated 2035 forecasts for the No-build and Build alternatives for the NJ 55/Deptford Center Road Interchange. The new 2035 traffic forecasts will incorporate the effects of updated DVRPC socioeconomic forecasts, recent development proposals, and current traffic growth trends. These forecasts will be transmitted to NJDOT and its consultants for use in the project level planning, evaluation, and design studies.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include the Supplemental Route 55 Deptford Traffic Study. The RCC further requests that the forecasting include scenarios of different interchange configurations, the potential for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), the potential for nearby rail service, and the future price and availability of fuel, affecting vehicle miles traveled (VMT).**

**DVRPC FY 2010 Planning Work Program Amendment: Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)**

The Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) was created by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) in 2002 to support local development and redevelopment efforts in the individual municipalities of the Delaware Valley that implement municipal, county, state, and regional planning objectives. While the region continues to grow and prosper, there are still communities that face ongoing challenges and have lagged behind.

TCDI provides a mechanism for these municipalities to undertake locally-directed actions to improve their communities, which in turn implements their local and county comprehensive plans and supports the goals and vision of the regional plan. Pennsylvania and New Jersey, as well as a number of counties within the region, have programs now underway to support community revitalization. The regional TCDI seeks to support and leverage those programs, by providing funding of up to \$125,000 in selected municipalities to undertake planning, analysis or design initiatives for projects or programs which enhance development or redevelopment and improve the efficiency or enhance the regional transportation system. To date, over 100 planning projects have been funded in all nine counties to support local revitalization efforts. A significant number of those projects have since leveraged additional public or private investment to implement the recommendations of those plans.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board amend the DVRPC Fiscal Year 2010 Planning Work Program to include Round 6 of the TCDI program that includes \$1 million for New Jersey projects and \$775,000 for Pennsylvania projects.**

**Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) Funding Requests in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties**

PENNVEST is an independent agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania managed by a 13-member Board of Directors and chaired by the Governor, which provides funding for drinking water, wastewater treatment, stormwater management, and brownfield assessment and remediation projects. The Program provides long-term loans through a revolving loan fund to municipalities, authorities and some private entities at below-market interest rates. Due to the influx of funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), and in particular, the Green Project Reserve (GPR), PENNVEST has forwarded 47 applications to DVRPC for review for consistency with regional and county plans. A minimum of 20% of the \$220 million total available must go to the Green Project Reserve, which EPA defines as specific activities related to water efficiency, energy efficiency, green infrastructure and environmentally innovative projects. PENNVEST is targeting \$70 million toward the GPR.

On June 2, 2009 PENNVEST submitted 47 applications to DVRPC to review by the PENNVEST Board meeting on July 21, 2009. By county, 11 projects are located in Bucks, 17 are in Chester, eight are in Delaware, 10 are in Montgomery, and seven are in Philadelphia. The total number of projects is greater than the number of applications because several applications cover more than one county. Ten applications are for wastewater, eight are for drinking water, and 29 are for stormwater management. The projects range in cost from \$20,000 for the construction of a 4,000-gallon cistern at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education in Roxborough, to \$29 million for technical and financial assistance for implementation of agricultural best management practices addressing runoff flowing into the Chesapeake Bay from Chester County. The total amount requested is \$143 million. The applications indicate that all projects are in the construction project stage.

A summary of the applications, including DVRPC's review for consistency with the 2030 Plan policies and county reviews for consistency with county plans, is provided in the attached table. The attached map shows the approximate locations of the projects compared with the 2030 land use plan.

All of the projects contain at least one aspect that makes them consistent with one or more policy outlined in the *Destination 2030* plan. The Destination 2030 policies supported by the applications are noted below:

- Improve the surface water quality of all watersheds - 31 applications
- Restore and maintain existing infrastructure systems, services and capacity to support existing development as well as attract new population and employment growth - 27 applications
- Preserve critical natural resources, agricultural lands and key recreational landscapes -16 applications
- Increase public awareness and involvement in water related issues - three applications
- Protect existing riparian buffers and reforest barren areas to improve water quality, lower stormwater costs and improve air quality - 3 applications
- Promote the planting and stewardship of shade trees in suburban and urban areas - three applications
- Maintain the safety and abundance of drinking water derived from groundwater sources - three applications
- Promote good air quality - two applications

The map showing approximate locations of the June 2009 PENNVEST applications compared with the 2030 Land Use Plan shows that most projects are located in areas of existing development or designated future growth area, making the projects consistent with 2030 policies. Some projects appear to be located in the greenspace network or rural areas assumed to not be appropriate for infrastructure investment. In reality, rather than encroaching on conservation areas, most of these projects are engaged in retrofitting or replacing existing infrastructure serving existing development, or are a green infrastructure project promoting stormwater best management practices.

Two projects involve the construction or expansion of facilities to enable increased capacity of either water or sewer, which may facilitate growth in areas designated as Rural Conservation Lands in the *Destination 2030* plan. The Oxford Area Sewer Authority - Oxborne Lagoon project involves the construction of a 90-day storage lagoon that would enable the authority's sewer moratorium to be lifted, enabling increased sewer capacity for redevelopment projects and proposed developments in the Oxford area. Although extending sewer within and in the area immediately surrounding the Borough of Oxford is consistent with the goals of the *Destination 2030* plan, new sewer service should not be extended to outer areas designated for rural and agricultural preservation on regional, county, and local plans. Another project, the Pennsylvania American Water Company Rock Run Water Treatment Plant Expansion in West Caln Township, involves upgrading and expanding this plant, which would allow for increased capacity to meet projected growth within the service area over the next 12 years. Again, new service should be extended to portions of townships that have been designated for growth, but not to those areas designated for rural and agricultural preservation.

In summary, the 47 applications are determined consistent with the goals and policies of *Destination 2030, the Year 2030 Plan for the Delaware Valley*.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board authorize the Executive Director to send a letter notifying PENNVEST that the Funding Requests in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties are consistent with the *Destination 2030* plan**

**and county plan reviews. The RCC submitted additional comments on the PENNVEST applications (attached), which were forwarded to the project manager.**

### **DVRPC Annual Self-Certification of the Regional Transportation Planning Process**

Federal regulations for metropolitan planning (23 CFR 450 and 49 CFR 613) require the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to annually certify to the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration that its transportation planning process addresses the major issues facing the area and is being conducted in accordance with all applicable requirements.

The regulation lists specific requirements which must be addressed. DVRPC's compliance with these requirements is outlined below:

1. Improvements to the transportation system in the region have been the result of continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process carried out by state and local officials.
2. The transportation planning process, including the adoption of the TIP, is consistent with the Clean Air Act and is in conformance with the applicable State Implementation Plans.
3. Private citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agency employees, other affected employee representatives, private providers of transportation, and other interested parties were provided with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the TIP and planning process.
4. The TIP includes a financial plan that demonstrates how the TIP can be implemented, indicates resources from both public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available, and recommends innovative financing techniques.
5. DVRPC's planning process is administered in accordance with FTA Circular 4702.1, Title VI, and DVRPC employment practices comply with FTA Circular 4704., Equal Employment Opportunity Guidelines for Grant Recipients.
6. DVRPC's programs are conducted consistent with Title 49 CFR Part 23 as implemented by FTA Circular 4716.1A regarding disadvantaged business enterprise programs.
7. The Region's public transit operators have certified that they are making special efforts to provide transportation services which can be utilized by elderly and handicapped persons.
8. Congestion Management System phase-in requirements for non-attainment Transportation Management Areas have been met.
9. Environmental justice for low income and minority populations is being addressed.
10. The provision of 49 CFR part 20 regarding restrictions on influencing certain activities has been met.

*Discussion: Aissia Richardson addressed the issue regarding DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise) and ARRA projects and funding, particularly in the current economic climate, and the effects on vulnerable businesses, particularly minority and women-owned businesses.*

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**The RCC recommends that the DVRPC Board approve the DVRPC Annual Self-Certification of the Regional Transportation Planning Process. The RCC notes that it is deeply concerned about the effects of the economic downturn on vulnerable businesses, particularly minority and women owned businesses, and requests that stimulus funding and majority contractors and municipalities implement strategies with fidelity that support the growth and development of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs).**

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION: R6 NORRISTOWN LINE SERVICE EXTENSION STUDY:**

Leo Bagley, Assistant Director of the Montgomery County Planning Commission, presented an overview of a study of traffic, transit and tolling along the Route 422 corridor in Pennsylvania. Traffic volumes on US 422, as well as other major roads in the corridor, have increased considerably over the past 20 years. Bumper-to-bumper traffic is a daily occurrence on the roadway, and congestion on the mostly two lane roads that intersect with US 422 are also sites of daily traffic misery.

Mr. Bagley briefly described earlier studies, such as the Schuylkill Valley Metro (SVM) Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Impact Study from 2005 and the Governor's SVM Task Force in 2005. Mr. Bagley also mentioned the DVRPC US 422 Corridor Multi-Modal Master Plan study, currently underway.

The current study's purpose is to identify a lower cost passenger rail alternative for the US 422 corridor that would be financed with a combination of public and potential private funding. The goals for this alternative would be to provide an additional transportation option for the congested US 422 corridor, contribute to and support downtown revitalization efforts and transit supportive land uses, and to explore funding mechanisms to improve rail and highway transportation infrastructure.

Study recommendations include exploring the general tolling of US 422 to support needed highway capital improvements to the highway and for capital costs to extend the commuter rail service from Norristown to Wyomissing. The type of tolling recommended would be mileage based and be high speed EZ pass, as opposed to toll plazas. As a result of tolling, roadway capital improvements would have certainty, and rail capital improvements would be achievable if operating plans/costs are agreeable to Montgomery, Chester and Berks County, as well as PennDOT. Next steps include securing remaining SVM earmarks at FTA, conducting a preliminary traffic and revenue study of US 422, deliver an extensive public outreach and education campaign on the use of tolling for roadway improvements, and to conduct sufficient preliminary engineering on the rail alternative to better develop construction costs, liability issues, and access fees.

Going forward, a consultant team will be retained this fall, with the completion of the study scheduled for late 2010/ early 2011. Two websites have been set up for additional information and comment: [www.R6extension.com](http://www.R6extension.com) and [www.422corridor.com](http://www.422corridor.com).

*Discussion: Tom Cooper asked what would be happening this summer in moving the project forward. Mr. Bagley responded that a Request for Qualifications will be released this summer, followed by the release of a Request for Proposals (RFP). He also noted that two public meetings for the DVRPC US 422 Plan will be held in late June for public information and input.*

## **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

### **Long-Range Plan Task Force**

John Pawson remarked that he had prepared comments regarding the DVRPC LRP draft.

A special meeting for RCC members to discuss the LRP, as well as the other DVRPC documents currently under public review, is scheduled for Monday, June 29, 2009 in the Pennsylvania Room at DVRPC's office.

### **Action Task Force**

John Boyle announced that there had been some discussion regarding to RCC proposals to the DVRPC FY 2011 Work Program. Attendees discussed submitting a proposal for Board consideration to study hydropower in the Delaware Valley region, and a proposal to study jitney service to Regional Rail stations, primarily in Bucks County and in Jenkintown. Jitney service would provide service where there is currently no bus service.

## **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Tom Cooper wished to document that wording in his copy of the project summary for modeling on US 422 doesn't address scope changes in the proposed R-6 study.

Ajay Creshkoff recommended a visit to the City of Philadelphia GreenWorks website as an illustration of performance measurement and outcome. Mr. Creshkoff also referred to his earlier resolution and feels that the Board should adopt the resolution in setting goals and devising performance measurement.

An RCC meeting has been scheduled for August 11. There will be an orientation/refresher session regarding RCC policies, discussion on how the RCC can be more effective in reaching its goals, and an opportunity for members to develop Work Program proposals for consideration.

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## **RCC comments re: June 2009 Penn Vest Applications**

Many of these speak to an obvious problem with widespread lack of respect for riparian zones and the rights of others who must hope someone takes reasonable stewardship upstream. Yes, ALL of these projects address this is to be applauded, however many also do not go deep enough to the root of the problem, putting only a band-aid on a gaping hole and passing the issue on to those downstream. The last project in West Rockhill Twp clearly illustrates that not addressing the true problem brings only temporary fixes.

A tremendously laudable project requested by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation leaves a feeling that the "Best Practises" will remain purely voluntary. Without immediate and serious water quality oversight and enforcement we will still trade a fragile, yet tremendously valuable food, riparian buffer and recreational zone for an open sewer despite how much hard work this group is doing. This needs to be right up front in our deliberations. Land use, road building & economics all come down to quality of life and are contributory to clean water, without which we have NO LIFE at all.

Two Farms are noted in Chester County, one a mushroom farm which seems self contained and that is fantastic. The other @ Big Elk Creek needs a waterway diversion and leads one to be somewhat less enthusiastic. We need farms and we need them near urban areas, but we need to give more attention to facility placement during the building process so we are not making remediations later. After all, even farmers know the illogic of putting the cart before the horse - our local planners need to step up during the proposition phases of farmland usage and assist them and we (the public) need to support them all the way in doing so.

An extremely troubling 20-30 year old development area is back to haunt us in Northampton Twp. There is no way public funding should be more than a loan to remediate damages they had countless chances to avoid and many protests to remind them of this long term outcome. There were serious problems with percolation affecting potable water sources as well as sewage disposal. The homes were touted as affordable living and now the price is being passed on to the public - unacceptable!

In rating these projects, there are several main issues:

A) Public funding used as a solution to inappropriate rural transformation/suburban growth or grand municipal planning - It would be far more comforting to know that municipalities which made huge mistakes, ignored public protest and allowed certain barely viable tracts to be developed into (or in the case of large public projects which contribute to that municipality's) new tax basis, be given LOANS. These should be paid back as these are projects for which these places have profited (or will profit) from. It is probable that to control the long term effects of sprawl that we must work towards an accepted level of build out and create a sliding scale that can be based upon long-term viability because one more ton of auto/home heat/electricity generation carbon waste or soil loss costs EVERYONE. Furthermore, ANY of these sewer projects being used to foster population growth OUTSIDE of current urban centers should cause funding to revert to loans as again this would be in reaction to local profit paid for by public funding otherwise. This is something that Environmental Justice is supposed to address, but it is not being applied where it really counts. We must look forward to that day where civics becomes an important part of our lives and fostering better land usage (ie keep open space open) is a key building block.

B) Some of the problems addressed by these projects are caused by over use of lawn, crop fertilizers and or factory type animal farming. Recent studies point out where the line moves from adequate to over use and these have reduced rapidly over the last few years. Farms housing thousands of animals are like small cities and should be sewerred. Aerators solve local problems but also pass a great deal more downstream, these should not be looked at a long term solutions. Phosphate based cleaning products were found in the 1970's to be present in the majority of drinking water in Long Island's sandy soils and were banned about 30 years ago.

Nutrients should be regulated in a way that sets limits so that slow moving water does not accumulate them in excess. If they are greening a pond, they will absolutely kill the Chesapeake Bay which is facing deadly pressure, right now as we speak. Seriously, we need fishing industry way more than we need an extra green lawn and we need to recognize that limits we thought gave optimum results in the farm/lawn (and cleanliness) objectives have been re-evaluated, found harmful and in need of serious reduction.

C) Other issues are being caused by soil erosion. Soil erosion is one of the PRIMARY concerns for us as a species, right behind drinking water and they are closely linked. Without an adequate means of holding onto our top soil where the majority of prime growing medium occurs we will NOT be able to maintain either our food sources OR our drinking water. Disturbing the soil of primieval forests (not even close to clear cut logging) also releases a tremendous amount of carbon - tree removal for any reason should be a last resort AND should NEVER happen in East Coast Parkland (we are too far out of compliance). Since some turning over of cropland is necessary (until "no-til" methods evolve a bit more for large crop production) it is of paramount importance that any disturbed soils be seeded immediately with a cover or food crop and be mulched to hold the loose soil from wind and rain damage until the crop takes hold.

D) Altering the flow of waterways is of questionable value due to the brute force of mother nature now and then. Many ponds and lakes were created for hydropower use and their day has gone by. We will not be using some of these smaller volume flows for electric generation as they do not have enough to create a viable source of electricity. They represent a slowing of the normal course of events which take place naturally to create wetlands which become a dynamic filtration system for local aquifers. Deepening of ponds kills a hideous amount of wildlife and should not be looked at as a long term solution either and only delays the inevitable if soil erosion is not properly controlled. If man-made water bodies do not have any historic designation, they should be let run back to thier original course. Furthermore, in the EU where waterways have been turned into canals and in US along many beaches, there is often massive flood damage due to the loss of riparian buffer zones, now held in concrete. These changes should have thier expense borne soley by the responsible parties and flood zone "insurance" should be turned into re-build LOANS, not public support for questionable land use.

E) Attempting to control upstream riparian zone soil erosion damage - sure do wish we could get to the source. The EPA is supposed to regulate this and the South East PA representative is hugely motivated to work on this. DVRPC has many studies concerning sprawl as a cause for alarm, yet we are supporting new tract development? Sadly, the erosion is only the beggining of the downstream problems associated with new residences - there is a feeling of disconnect between objectives and implementation...

Jeannine Admits personal conflict w/ interest in NKCDC project, but wonders if A should nor apply or if exempt due to age of neighborhood and misguided 19th century sewer concepts

caused the problem and that this is an inexpensive and holistic way to address this? Do we make certain exemptions to urban centers which become one of our most important carbon reduction methods for the future?

Some of the more troubling projects are below rated, using the letters as above.

Phoenixville Boro - retrofit for 14 Sub Projects - are we talking subdivisions with inadequate wells? if so: A

Magnolia Lake, Bucks County: A, B, C & D

Chester City Soccer Stadium: A

Chester County Conservation District Big Elk Creek: B, C & D (Exemption from A due to farm use)

Mont Co, Deep Creek Lake: B, C, D & E

Hatboro Stormwater Projects: A, D & E

Horsham Stormwater Projects: A, D & E

Bucks, International Salt Co: A, D & E (the SALT is clogging the soil, what is being done about that?)

Landsdowne Storm Water Projects: A, D & E

New Britain Twp Storm Water: A, D & E

Phila, New Kensington CDC: A?? - exempt due to cause (change of waterway) considered great planning over 150 years ago, though not now????

Bucks, Northampton Subdivision water & Sewer: A!, B, C, D & E

Mont Co, Upper Moreland School Project: A, C, D & E

Ches Co, Shyulkill Twp, Pascuale Pond: A, C, D & E

Phila, University City: A, C & D

Ches Co, West Grove Boro: A, B, C, D & E

Bucks, West Rockhill Twp: A, B, C, D & E

Despite that many of these projects begin to address obvious problems, with so many sewer plant upgrades aren't we encouraging suburban development? Shouldn't there be established guidelines as to how many homes can be built without sewers given soil type, current road system and build the appropriate capacity in the first place? Then hold the townships financially accountable for any additional building? This way we know what we're in for (as far as holding townships to some sort of universally beneficial planning standards), instead of dumping cut and run plan profiteering on the public to build

more sewage and road capacity when downstream water and air quality end up litterally in the crapper?