

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS
RELATED TO DVRPC BOARD ACTION ITEMS

JANUARY 24, 2013

BOARD
AGENDA ITEM

2. DVRPC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Actions

a. PA13-12: Ardmore Transportation Center - Phase I (MPMS# 73214), SEPTA

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: January 14, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia = We support the project and recommend the inclusion of an attractive and highly visible bike shelter (covered bike parking).

Response: SEPTA includes bike racks in all railroad station projects. The Ardmore Transportation Center project is currently in the design phase. SEPTA and Lower Merion Township will review if sheltered bike parking can be incorporated into either Phase I or Phase II of the project.

From: Leonard Fritz

County: Gloucester

Zip Code: 08094

Date Received: January 14, 2013

Comment/Question: I would like to know how the passengers using this station will be affected (both parking and access) during this construction. Additionally, depending on the funding it is indicated that the Phase II parking garage will be built according to monies rather than it being designed AND built with future expansion(s) available so as to not restrict the facility due to current monies.

Response: Every effort will be made to minimize the impact of construction activities to passengers. The construction will be phased in a way that will allow the station to remain open and in service during construction and to maximize available parking. In addition, the township has developed temporary parking plans to accommodate both local business and commuter parking issues during construction. The availability and use of temporary alternate parking sites will be reviewed during the design phase. The Phase II Parking Garage portion of the Ardmore Transportation Center project will be designed and built based on the need of passengers at the site, stakeholder input, and codes and regulations. The design process will evaluate several options for maximizing parking at the location.

b. PA13-13: Gradyville Road (Bridge) (MPMS# 64821), Delaware County

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received:

Comment/Question: We support widening bridges to include shoulders. We are wondering if PENNDOT consulted with Delaware County Planning to determine if a 3 foot shoulder is enough to comply with the County Bicycle Plan. AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities recommends a minimum 4 foot shoulder for bicycle travel.

Response: The Delaware County Bicycle Plan provides recommendations to enhance bike riding conditions on roads, and does not mandate minimum shoulder widths. This bridge did not previously have shoulders, and the project also includes upgrading traffic safety features to include adequate guiderail at each bridge approach and adequate bridge deck width.

From: Leonard Fritz

County: Gloucester

Zip Code: 08094

Date Received: January 14, 2013

Comment/Question: The bridge improvements indicate the space for two (2) three (3') foot shoulders, however, will these "shoulders" be designated as bicycle lanes to include it in the "County Bicycle Plan"?

Response: Gradyville Road is listed as a tertiary road in the Delaware County Bicycle Plan. The project sponsor, Newtown Township, did not ask the designer to consider the bridge shoulders to be marked as bike lanes; there are no existing bike lanes on the road leading to the bridge. Bike lane designations would require the township to submit a Bicycle Occupancy Permit.

e. PA13-15: district 6-0 Bridge Maintenance and Surface Treatment Contracts (Various MPMS#), Various Counties

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: January 14, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia. The Bicycle Coalition is collaborating with PENNDOT District 6 and the County Planning Departments and together we have developed a list of 16 on road bicycle projects across the four suburban counties. We will continue to work with PENNDOT to further develop these concepts and hope that PennDOT will be able to develop striping plans and local support for those roads and bridges when they are slated to be resurfaced or rehabilitated.

Response: Thank you for your comment.

g. **NJ12-45: Route 130, Columbus Road/Jones Street (DB#02397), Burlington County**

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: January 14, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia = This is one of the many outdated intersections on US 130; rated as the most dangerous roads for pedestrians in NJ. We support pedestrian upgrades and encourage the modification of the median to create a pedestrian refuge. Bike travel on Columbus would be better accommodated by line striping the wide sweeping right turn lane from Westbound Columbus to Northbound 130. Columbus may also be defined as a bikeway in the Burlington County Bike Plan which will be complete in 2014.

Response: Burlington County supports a design which safely and conveniently accommodates both pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Columbus Road was reconstructed a few years ago and the County has no current plans for additional road widening. The current plan does call for the construction of an opening in the median that would provide a 4' refuge. Since the project calls for re-striping, consideration will be given to the Bicycle Coalition's suggestion regarding striping at the intersection along with a bike box, share the road signs and/or "sharrows" along the approach roads. If Burlington County does designate Columbus Road as a bikeway, any refinements to the design could occur during the final design phase of the project.

4. **Adoption of DVRPC Fiscal Year 2014 Unified Planning Work Program**

From: John Boyle

County: Philadelphia

Zip Code: 19102

Date Received: January 14, 2013

Comment/Question: Comments from the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia - The 2014 Work Program public comment period expired on January 14th, we believe that the 7 business days between the comment period and board approval is a very short period of time to consider recommendations or responses to Work Program Comments. We would like to see a final draft of the work program released to the public (that includes public comments and any program modifications) before board approval of the Work Program

Response: The public comment period for the draft Work Program typically begins at the December Board meeting when the draft is released by the DVRPC Board for comments. This meeting takes place the first week of December. During approximately the following 6 weeks after release of the draft DVRPC receives comments from its planning partners and the public. Those comments are all presented to the DVRPC Board, together with any changes to the draft Work Program, before they act to approve it in January.

R.R.T.S.

Residents for Regional Traffic Solutions, Inc.

PO Box 285
Newtown, PA 18940
RRTSbuckspa5@aol.com

Mr. Barry Seymour, Executive Director
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Regional Technical Committee Members
c/o ~~Stephen Buckley~~, Chair, *Michelle Webb*
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106

DVRPC Board Members
c/o Terence Farrell, Chair
190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106

January 8, 2013

RE: Critical Part of April 2012 Public Participation Plan Is Not Workable

Dear Mr. Seymour, Regional Technical Committee Members, and DVRPC Members,

I am president of Residents for Regional Traffic Solutions, Inc. (RRTS), a regional citizens group with members from Lower Makefield, Upper Makefield, Newtown, Wrightstown, and Northampton Townships. Our organization represents well in excess of 9,000 residents. We are concerned that a critically important part of the recently implemented Public Participation Plan (Plan) is not workable.

With the current Plan, it is NOT possible for the Public Participation Task Force (PPTF) members who sit on the Regional Technical Committee (previously the Regional Transportation Committee) to cast their votes by taking a "regional perspective", as they have been asked to do. The September 11, 2012 Regional Transportation Committee Meeting Highlights state, "John Ward began by welcoming one of the new Public Participation Task Force (PPTF) members, Harry Fox. Mr. Fox is from Burlington County, and is a civil engineer who has been involved in numerous Boards and Commissions in Burlington County and Gloucester Counties, including chairing the Delran, NJ Zoning Board. Mr. Ward explained that the PPTF members represent a county or community but have been asked, in their role at the RTC, to take a regional perspective in their thoughts and their votes. He anticipates that they will eventually be voting members. Because the PPTF will not be taking action on RTC or Board items, their views will be as 'citizens of the region', and not representing a consensus of the PPTF. They will provide their feedback regarding the PCC/RTC meetings to the PPTF."

It is a fallacy to think that a PPTF member can vote with a "regional perspective" when he/she has no prior opportunity to discuss RTC action items in an open forum with other informed citizens in the region. At the November 15, 2012 inaugural PPTF meeting, Candace Snyder (Director, DVRPC Office of Public Affairs and Communications) confirmed that PPTF members who sit on the Regional Technical Committee (RTC) would be receiving their packet of information for preparation for the RTC meeting just prior to the meeting. This process does not enable the voting PPTF representatives on the RTC to gather formalized public input regarding action items that they will vote on, thus the process is flawed.

We respectfully request that PPTF representatives on the RTC abstain from voting on action items unless they have followed a formalized process of obtaining public input on the proposed action. Without this, the Public Participation Task Force must rethink its approach or it will fail in its effort to have genuine regional public input.

We appreciate the opportunity to read this letter into the public record at today's RTC meeting. We ask that this letter be referenced and included in its entirety in the minutes of today's meeting. We respectfully ask that the RTC and DVRPC Board respond to our request.

Sincerely,



Susan Herman
President

CC: Candace Snyder; Director – Office of Public Affairs & Communications
Brigid Hynes-Cherin; Regional Administrator, Federal Transit Administration Region III
Ernest Blais; Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration N.J. Division
Renee Sigel; Division Administrator, Federal Highway Administration PA Division
Tony Cho; Community Planner, U.S. Dept. of Transportation, FTA, Region III
Jim Mosca, PennDOT
David Kuhn, NJDOT
R.R.T.S. Membership (mass e-mail)
Regional Citizens

January 16, 2013

Ms. Susan Herman
President, Residents for Regional Traffic Solutions, Inc.
P.O. Box 285
Newtown, PA 18940

Dear Ms. Herman,

I am writing in response to your comment at the January 8, 2013 Regional Technical Committee (RTC) meeting and letter of the same date concerning citizen representation on the RTC. To correct a quote attributed to Candace Snyder, the Public Participation Task Force (PPTF) members who serve on the RTC receive a packet of information at the same time as every other RTC member. They do not receive information "just prior to the meeting." Citizen representatives are tasked with bringing their knowledge as a citizen to the RTC and to participate in those discussions with the other RTC members. Their responsibility is not to gather formalized public input on action items. This has never been the responsibility of any citizen representative on the RTC, including past Regional Citizens Committee (RCC) members, as you will recall.

Since 2011, DVRPC has instituted a "Public Comments to Board Actions" web commenting feature that gathers public input to be delivered directly to Board members, planning partners, and DVRPC staff. Members of the public may also submit emails, letters, or faxes on DVRPC actions, and are invited to directly comment at Board meetings. The Board, after all, is the final vote on all action items.

Sincerely,



Barry Seymour
Executive Director

cc: Candace Snyder; Director, DVRPC Office of Public Affairs
Brigid Hynes-Cherin; Regional Administrator, FTA
Ernest Blais; Division Administrator, FHWA NJ
Renee Sigel; Division Administrator, FHWA PA
Tony Cho; Community Planner, FTA
James Mosca; PENNDOT
David Kuhn; NJDOT