DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD COMMITTEE

Draft Minutes of Meeting March 25, 2021

Location: This meeting was held via remote webinar

Membership Present

New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
New Jersey Department of Transportation
New Jersey Governor’s Appointee
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Pennsylvania Governor’s Appointee
Pennsylvania Governor’s Policy & Planning Office
Bucks County

Chester County
Delaware County
Montgomery County

Burlington County
Camden County

Gloucester County
Mercer County
City of Chester
City of Philadelphia

City of Camden
City of Trenton

Non-Voting Members
Federal Highway Administration
New Jersey Division
Pennsylvania Division
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Region III
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III
Federal Transit Administration, Region III
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

Representative
Sean Thompson
Andrew Swords
Jamera Sirmans
Larry Shiflett
Jim Mosca
Gina Burritt
Nedia Ralston
Robert Harvie
Rich Brahler
Marian Moskowitz
Brian O’Leary
Christine Reuther
Linda Hill
Val Arkoosh
Scott France
Matthew Edmond
Tom Stanuikynas
Lou Cappelli
Andrew Levecchia
Theresa Ziegler
Leslie Floyd
Peter Rykard
Mark Squilla
Chris Puchalsky
June Morton
Jeffrey Wilkerson

(not represented)
(not represented)
(not represented)
(not represented)

Jody Holton

3/25/2021
Call to Order - Chair's Comments

Board Chair, Mark Squilla, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Chair Squilla asked if there was any press in the meeting and noted that DVRPC would be recording the meeting.

Public Comments on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items

Public Comments were submitted by Reverend Glen Benson of Delaware County thanking PennDOT officials, Commissioner Kevin Madden, Pennsylvania state officials, and the DVRPC Board for ensuring that funding is set aside and things are moving forward to repair the damage to his home as a result of vibrations from I-95.

ACTION ITEMS

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Mr. Shifflet, seconded by Mr. Swords, to approve the minutes of February 25, 2021.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

2. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Actions

Jesse Buerk, Manager, Capital Project Development, presented the following TIP actions to the Board:

a. PA21-26: Stone Bridge Road (Bridge) (CB #45) (MPMS #13249), Bucks County

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Construction (CON) phase of the Stone Bridge Road (Bridge) (CB #45), MPMS #13249, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $1,758,000 ($1,406,000 State 183/$352,000 Local). The total estimated cost of this project is $1,992,000 for the pre-construction and construction phases.

This project was programmed for construction in the previous FY2019 TIP. It was expected to be obligated/encumbered during the FY2021 TIP Update and was subsequently not programmed. However, this project was not obligated/encumbered under the previous TIP due to a delay in obtaining structure and traffic control approvals. Final traffic control approval clearance was issued on December 15, 2020. The project is proceeding towards letting and is now required to be added back into the TIP for the construction phase to advance.

This project involves replacement of the bridge carrying Stone Road over Deep Run in Bedminster Township, Bucks County. The bridge has deteriorated to the point where replacement is necessary. This project will replace an existing single span reinforced concrete box beam bridge with a prestressed adjacent box beam. The existing bridge is less than 16 feet wide. The proposed structure will have 12-foot lanes with four-foot shoulders on each side for a total of 32 feet. There are no existing pedestrian or bike accommodations and none are planned in the project scope.

Financial constraint will be maintained by making adjustments to other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

b. PA21-27: PA 372, Lower Valley Road Bridge Over Officers Run (MPMS #69919), Chester County
PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Preliminary Engineering (PE) and Construction (CON) phases of the PA 372, Lower Valley Road Bridge Over Officers Run, MPMS #69919, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $3,512,000, including $12,000 STU/Toll Credit for the PE phase and $3,500,000 STU/Toll Credit for the CON phase. The total estimated cost of this project is $4,452,000 for the pre-construction and construction phases.

This project was programmed for construction in the previous FY2019 TIP. It was expected to be obligated/encumbered during the FY2021 TIP Update and was subsequently not programmed. However, this project was not obligated/encumbered under the previous TIP. As a result of a delay in the right-of-way clearance due to COVID-19 and complications with the negotiations, construction funds could not be obligated. Final right-of-way clearance was issued on December 23, 2020. The project is proceeding towards letting and is now required to be added back into the TIP for the construction phase to advance. The Preliminary Engineering phase is being added back into the TIP for $12,000, in order to address Accrued Unbilled Costs.

This project involves replacement of the bridge carrying Lower Valley Road (PA 372) over Officer’s Run in Atglen Borough, Chester County. The Bridge has deteriorated to the point where replacement is necessary. This project will replace an existing two span reinforced concrete slab bridge with a single span prestressed concrete composite adjacent box beam. The existing bridge lane widths are 12 feet with four-foot shoulders for a total of 32 feet. The proposed structure will have 12-foot lanes with five-foot shoulders on each side for a total of 34 feet. There are no existing pedestrian or bike accommodations and none are planned in the project scope.

Financial constraint will be maintained by making adjustments to other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

   c. PA21-28: Valley Forge Granite Block Restoration (MPMS #110884), Montgomery County

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Construction (CON) phase of the Valley Forge Granite Block Restoration, MPMS #110884, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $600,000 STU/Toll Credit. The total estimated cost of this project is $600,000.

This project was programmed for construction in the previous FY2019 TIP. It was expected to be obligated/encumbered during the FY2021 TIP Update and was subsequently not programmed. However, this project was not obligated/encumbered under the previous TIP due to delays associated with right-of-way clearance and
coordination of final design details with the National Park Service, including trail access. Coordination with the Park Service has been completed, final design is nearing completion, and it is anticipated that the Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) package will be submitted to the District Contract Management unit within the coming weeks to meet the anticipated May 6, 2021 let date.

This project involves the full depth restoration of approximately 180 linear feet of the existing granite block roadway on Gulph Road in front of the National Memorial Arch within the Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP) in Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County. The current riding surface of the granite block section of Gulph Road is inadequate and in need of full depth restoration. The District Maintenance Unit has indicated that continued maintenance of the existing subbase and granite block road surface is no longer viable. The Park administration requires the continued use of granite block for this section of Gulph Road. The granite block was installed around 1921. In 1997, some of the 1921 granite block was replaced with new block.

Financial constraint will be maintained by making adjustments to other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed. All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint.

- **PA21-29: PA 41 & SR 926 Improvements (MPMS #102709), Chester County**

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Final Design (FD) phase of the PA 41 & SR 926 Improvements project, MPMS #102709, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $450,000 STU/Toll Credit. The total estimated cost of this project is $2,731,000.

The project's Final Design phase was programed in the previous FY2019 TIP. It was expected to be obligated/encumbered during the FY2021 TIP Update and was subsequently not programmed. However, the Final Design Phase was not obligated/encumbered under the previous TIP due to the lengthy Section 106 process and delays related to COVID-19. The Categorical Exclusion Evaluation (CEE) has since been approved and the Final Design phase must be programmed on the FY2021 TIP in order for the phase to begin.

This project involves replacing the existing PA 41/SR 926 intersection in Londonderry Township, Chester County with a roundabout to eliminate the existing skewed 4-way intersection. The roundabout design will reduce travel speeds and congestion, improve sight distance and safety, while accommodating future traffic demands. Work will also include horizontal and vertical alignment adjustments along PA 41 and SR 926, embankment grading, wetland mitigations, stormwater management facilities, roundabout lighting, curb, and guide rail installation.
Financial constraint will be maintained by making adjustments to other existing TIP projects whose schedules or costs have changed.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

MOTION by Ms. Moskowitz, seconded by Mr. Harvie that the Board approve TIP actions:

PA21-26, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Construction (CON) phase of the Stone Bridge Road (Bridge) (CB #45), MPMS #13249, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $1,758,000 ($1,406,000 State 183/$352,000 Local).

PA21-27, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Preliminary Engineering (PE) and Construction (CON) phases of the PA 372, Lower Valley Road Bridge Over Officers Run, MPMS #69919, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $3,512,000, including $12,000 STU/Toll Credit for the PE phase and $3,500,000 STU/Toll Credit for the CON phase.

PA21-28, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Construction (CON) phase of the Valley Forge Granite Block Restoration, MPMS #110884, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $600,000, STU/Toll Credit.

PA21-29, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC amend the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania by adding the Final Design (FD) phase of the PA 41 & SR 926 Improvements project, MPMS #102709, back into the TIP in FY21 in the amount of $450,000 STU/Toll Credit.

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

e. PA21-30: 2020-2021 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Fund Projects (Various MPMS #s), Various Counties

PennDOT has requested that DVRPC accept the listed 2020-2021 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Fund projects, as well as their additional funds into the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania. These funds are additional to the region and are outside the Core Funding distributions. Four projects with the total amount of $6,347,000 ($3,582,000 State 411/$2,765,000 Local) will be added to the TIP for construction.

The Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) is a competitive statewide program established by Act 89 of 2013 to provide grants to ensure that a safe and reliable system of transportation is available for the residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The program is intended to provide financial assistance to municipalities, councils of governments, businesses, economic development organizations, public
transportation agencies, rail/freight entities, and ports to improve transportation assets in order to enhance communities, pedestrian safety and transit revitalization.

The following is the list of four new Statewide Multimodal Transportation Fund projects awarded funding in the DVRPC region:

**Bucks County**

Morrisville Borough Pedestrian and Traffic Signals (MPMS #TBD) - $228,000 State 411 for improving the pedestrian and traffic signals at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Trenton Avenue.

**Montgomery County**

Horsham Township LED Street Lights (MPMS #115757) - $1,379,000 State 411 for the design, siting, and installation of 87 fifteen-foot-tall modern high-efficiency LED street lights in the township’s Pennsylvania Business Park.

**City of Philadelphia**

Bridesburg Park Access (MPMS #115759) - $4,180,000 ($1,415,000 State 411/$2,765,000 Local) for the Riverfront North Partnership (formerly known as Delaware River City Corporation) trail and road access to the new 10-acre Bridesburg Riverfront Park as it connects to the I-95: Delaware Avenue Extension (BS5) MPMS #103563, a multi-use road and bicycle pathway.

Holy Family University Multi-Modal Corridor Improvements (MPMS # 115758) - $560,000 State 411 for multimodal corridor improvements along the eastern side of SR 0013 and the southern side of SR1018 to enhance network connections, calm vehicular traffic, and improve campus circulation.

Please note that there are three additional 2020-2021 Multimodal Transportation Fund awards for the region that are not included in this list because they are air quality significant and/or are regionally significant. These three projects need to be added to the next round of Conformity and/or the 2050 Long-Range Plan (LRP) Update. Once the LRP Update and Conformity Determination are adopted by the Board these three projects will be presented for their acceptance into the TIP.

All projects listed contribute to fiscal constraint. These are additional funds to the region.

Favorable recommendation was received from the Regional Technical Committee.

The Board adopted the following motion:

**MOTION by Mr. Harvie, seconded by Ms. Moskowitz** that the Board approve TIP action:
PA21-30, PennDOT’s request that DVRPC accept the listed 2020-2021 Statewide Multimodal Transportation Fund projects, as well as their additional funds into the FY2021 TIP for Pennsylvania. These funds are additional to the region and are outside the Core Funding distributions. Four projects with the total amount of $6,347,000 ($3,582,000 State 411/$2,765,000 Local) will be added to the TIP for construction:

**Bucks County**

Morrisville Borough Pedestrian and Traffic Signals (MPMS #TBD) - $228,000 State 411

**Montgomery County**

Horsham Township LED Street Lights (MPMS #115757) - $1,379,000 State 411

**City of Philadelphia**

Bridesburg Park Access (MPMS #115759) - $4,180,000 ($1,415,000 State 411/$2,765,000 Local)

Holy Family University Multi-Modal Corridor Improvements (MPMS #115758) - $560,000 State 411

Motion passed. All votes were cast in favor of the motion.

**PRESENTATION ITEMS**

3. **Ruti Bicycle Routing and Trip Planning Service**

Cassidy Boulan, Senior Planner, Office of Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Planning, gave an introduction and update on the development of a text-message based bicycle trip planning and routing service, in partnership with consultants, AG Strategic. This new tool is built using DVRPC’s Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress. The tool and the engagement that has been done so far along with next steps for a Spring release were discussed.

Andrew Swords, NJDOT, thanked Ms. Boulan for the presentation and asked if the tool looks at striped shoulders or lane width. Ms. Boulan responded that she is not sure but that lane width is probably not in there and noted that the team was limited with what data was available in both states. Leslie Floyd, Mercer County, asked if the tool covers the entire DVRPC region. Ms. Boulan responded that it does. Ms. Floyd noted that Mercer County is implementing a new bike plan and she asked about the process for getting information into the tool and how often the data set is updated. Ms. Boulan responded that it is hard to stay on top of everything that is going on but the hope is to update it every several months. DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour asked if the tool is available for road testing. Ms. Boulan said that it is still being tested so it is not completely ready for wide use.
4. CEDS Regional and County Employment Subsector Analysis

Brian Carney, Demographic and Economic Analyst, explained that as part of the 2019 Growing Greater Philadelphia CEDS, staff will briefly present the regional and county subsector analysis which highlights the top 10 most competitive industries at the regional and county level, including average weekly wages, total employment change from 2010 to 2017, and regionally significant subsectors based on employment and Location Quotient (LQ).

Christine Reuther, Delaware County, commented that she is surprised that Delaware County is called out in the report as having significant employment in the mining industry. There was a refinery in Delaware County or at least part of Delaware County which probably accounted for very high wages relative to other jobs but it is not there anymore. Ms. Reuther asked how that was the takeaway from Delaware County. Mr. Carney responded that the limits of using the high county location quotient is that there were only about 40 employees in that sub sector and activities for mining are such a low share of total employment in the US, so overall, it really stands out. It is not necessarily indicative of what is really going on in Delaware County.

DVRPC Executive Director Barry Seymour noted that the full report has more detail with full employment by county and it also looks at the subsectors that are competitive in the region and how those play out at the county level.

Ms. Reuther noted that it is important to be able to see the numbers that you're talking about because a lot of time is spent talking to our economic development people and mining activities are not even on our radar so to have that pop up in this report as being a top line item in terms of regional competitiveness is a bit shocking.

Mr. Seymour noted that he had the same reaction when he saw that list so it is important to see the bigger picture in terms of the full data. Staff will share the full report and data with the Board.

DISCUSSION ITEM

5. One Minute Reports

Larry Shifflet, PennDOT, reported that about two weeks ago the Governor issued an executive order establishing a Transportation Revenue Options Commission and the first meeting is today at 1:00 p.m. The Commission is made up of 40 members and has far reaching representation from transit to township supervisors to construction.

Rich Brahler, Bucks County, reported that the county will be wrapping up construction on the Newtown rail trail sometime this summer.

Marian Moskowitz, Chester County, reported that on March 30 the county will be hosting a Planners Forum that will focus on long term impacts of the pandemic. On
April 29 the county will be co-hosting an open space summit that will highlight actions municipalities can take to improve their open space preservation.

Christine Reuther, Delaware County, reported that the county has recently gotten responses and is going through the RFP process to look at solar technology initiatives for charging electric cars in the county. The county also just had the first meeting of our new Green Space Task Force this month and it is a really diverse group of people from around the county. There will definitely be an emphasis on looking for ways to repurpose some properties in our densely populated areas.

Valerie Arkoosh, Montgomery County, reported that the Planning Commission has announced its programming for the Planning Smarter series. This initiative provides important planning information for local leaders and citizens to better plan their communities. There are four events planned beginning on April 29 at 4 p.m. on Zoom and the first one is Happy Trails; planning and designing trails for all users. The next one is Hot Topics and Emerging challenges in our communities and that is on June 30 at 4 p.m. That will focus on things like social equity, multifamily housing construction impacts, commercial vacancies, and sustainable housing. There is also one on soaking up stormwater and we will be partnering with businesses and homeowners for that session. The Planning Commission is partnering with the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute to provide three virtual planning courses for elected officials and planning Commission appointees and anyone interested in planning. These courses will feature instructors and content geared to Montgomery County, but they are really applicable to anyone in the southeastern Pennsylvania region. Last month Matthew Popek, one of Montgomery County's planners and the American Planning Association of the Pennsylvania southeast section had a Planner Office hours on Zoom. That event was well attended and there is a second one tonight.

Mark Squilla, City of Philadelphia, reported that the Safe Routes Philly transportation and safety education program will launch on April 12. The program includes lesson plans, activities, and resources to get students excited about safety. More information on that can be found on OTIS.'

Jody Holton, SEPTA, reported that the SEPTA Board adopted a strategic business plan that establishes a clear mission, core values, and overarching vision for supporting SEPTA's goals and strategies. The plan identifies the challenges that are disrupting the transportation industry and sets some goals and strategies to respond to those new challenges. A microsite was created for the plan on SEPTA's website and it will continue to be updated. Septa continues to work with transit agency partners in the region on Mask Force events and a successful event took place last month focusing on 30th street station. SEPTA also recently hired more security contractors and 60 security guards were added to augment our police department at various stations throughout Philadelphia, primarily the Market Frankfort line. These are unarmed security officers and SEPTA continues to face a fair amount of challenges on the system in terms of safety and security.
Lou Millan, NJ Transit, reported that NJ Transit is also involved in Mask Forces and has been undertaking similar efforts as SEPTA. NJ Transit is continuing to monitor ridership on various modes and is coordinating with other transit agencies on strategies and data collection, especially as times are changing, and people are eyeballing some semblance of a reopening in the coming months.

Rohan Hepkins, PATCO, reported that ridership is around 25 percent right now and that the numbers on the bridges are around 80 percent. PATCO is also dealing with the issues around the homeless population and safety and that has increased on both sides of the river.

Donna Rendeiro, NJ Office for Planning Advocacy, reported that in about three weeks our rule update process will be introduced. We will be presenting the topics we are looking to update in a timeline to the subcommittee of the State Planning Commission. It will go to the State Planning Commission in May and we will formally notify the Governor’s office of the rule updates. This is a long process and will probably take until about the end of the year to update the rules but we have two objectives. One is to incorporate resiliency and equity requirements into the process, the other is to modernize both the plan endorsement process and to update the state plan. The Plan Implementation Subcommittee of the SPC approved the endorsement of the proposal for Millstone in Somerset County which is not part of the DVRPC area. That endorsement is one that will be presented to the State Planning Commission out of the 95 municipalities.

6. Executive Director’s Report

a. Transportation Revenue Options Commission

Mr. Seymour noted that the Transportation Revenue Options Commission’s local representatives include Senator Vincent Hughes, Representative Tim Hennessey, Leslie Richards from SEPTA, Jerry Sweeney of the Southeast Partnership for Mobility, and Sarah Clark Stuart of the Pennsylvania Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

b. Federal Earmarks

Mr. Seymour reported that DVPC was contacted by a couple of representatives from Congress. The House Committee on Transportation Infrastructure has been actively looking to bring back earmarks. Our experience with them is mixed and we want to support and welcome additional federal money to help advance projects, but there were some projects that came out of left field. Or, an earmark put a small amount of money into a bigger project that really was not able to advance and so we wind up having to reassign or redirect that money over time. The committee is now looking to put more controls around future earmarks, for example, requiring that any request has to document whether a project is in a state or a regional TIP. They are also asking that the full source of funding for a project is identified which is great as opposed to putting 10 cents on the dollar.
for projects that never really are able to advance. Additionally, they need to show a letter of support either for the state or local sponsor or presumably the regional agency. We had requested that projects also identified the ability to advance performance measures. A few different Congressional offices contacted us about projects, and we tried to direct them to projects that are already in the TIP so that hopefully we will be seeing additional funding. Congress is also engaging in discussions now around a potential new infrastructure bill, as well as talking about reauthorization of the Fast Act, which is due to expire in September.

Chris Puchalsky, City of Philadelphia, asked whether there is a sense of how the new rules might affect some of the major plans that might not be on the TIP but have been on the Long Range Plan for a while, like some of the rail extensions, trolley modernization, or more programmatic things like safety or non-motorized initiatives.

Mr. Seymour responded that we tried to advocate that it specifically identify not just TIP projects but Long Range Plan projects that could advance. The direction and the language from the House Committee asked for documentation of whether the project is on the TIP but it does not have to be on the TIP. Some of the examples that you mentioned that are clearly moving through the process or are identified in the Plan would be welcome.

c. Staff Recognition and Appreciation

Mr. Seymour called the Board’s attention to the fact that DVRPC recently held an employee appreciation exercise at a recent staff meeting in honor of Employee Appreciation Day. Mr. Seymour asked DVRPC staff members Renee Wise and Elizabeth Schoonmaker to provide the Board with a sample of their employee appreciation messages.

d. Staff Transitions

Mr. Seymour reported that two DVRPC staff members will be retiring soon. Deputy Executive Director, John Ward, and Associate Director of Transportation Programs, Elizabeth Schoonmaker will be leaving the Commission. Mr. Seymour thanked both staff members for all of their dedication and expressed how dearly they will be missed.

The following committee reports were provided for the Board’s review:
(1) Regional Technical Committee
(2) Central Jersey Transportation Forum
(3) Information Resources Exchange Group

OLD BUSINESS

No old business was stated.
NEW BUSINESS

No new business was stated.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:23 a.m. on a

MOTION by Mr. Lawson, seconded by Mr. Levecchia.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice, and related nondiscrimination statutes and regulations in all programs and activities. DVRPC’s website, www.dvrpc.org, may be translated into multiple languages. Publications and other public documents can be made available in alternative languages and formats, if requested. DVRPC public meetings are always held in ADA-accessible facilities and in transit-accessible locations when possible. Auxiliary services can be provided to individuals who submit a request at least seven days prior to a meeting. Requests made within seven days will be accommodated to the greatest extent possible. Any person who believes they have been aggrieved by an unlawful discriminatory practice by DVRPC under Title VI has a right to file a formal complaint. Any such complaint may be in writing and filed with DVRPC’s Title VI Compliance Manager and/or the appropriate state or federal agency within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory occurrence. For more information on DVRPC’s Title VI program, or to obtain a Title VI Complaint Form, please call (215) 592-1800 or email public_affairs@dvrpc.org.

I certify that this is a true and correct copy.

_____________________________

Renee Wise, Recording Secretary