

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 16, 2017 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

Dan Walston
Jim Ritzman
George Hagstrom
Bill Klumph
Ken Robertson
Brian McNulty
Sam Bellich
Ron Faull
Cynthia Byers
Gary Byers
Stephen Theiss
Mirta Reyes-Chapman
Ken Sympson
Don Morrow
Gregg Chiappini
Gary Hittle
Dan Keane
Kim A. DiCintio
Robert F. Lark
Walter Darraugh
Brian Yedinak
Jasson Urey
Brad Elder
Sue Smith
Jeremy Coxe
Deborah Gabriel
Marcia Hirschmann
Michael Ceci
Matt McConnell
Matt Stewart
Dan Gracenin

REPRESENTING

FHWA
PennDOT – Central Office
Pine Township
South Pymatuning Township
Sharpsville Borough
PennDOT
Mercer County Area Agency on Aging
Liberty Township
Citizen of Sharon
Citizen of Sharon
Citizen of Sharon
Eastgate
Eastgate
South Pymatuning Township
Wolf Creek Township
Hempfield Township
PennDOT
Mercer County Regional COG
West Middlesex Borough
Coolspring Township
PennDOT
Greenville Borough
Mercer County
Northwest Commission
Hermitage City
PennDOT
Hermitage City
Farrell City
Mercer County
MCRPC
MCRPC

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hittle, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. **A quorum was present.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING FEBRUARY 14, 2017

Mr. Hittle asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the February 14, 2017 meeting. There being none, Mr. Hittle asked for a motion to approve. Ms. DiCintio so moved, Mr. Lark seconded. The

motion passed.

2017-2020 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Dan Keane, explained the Highway/Bridge TIP Management Actions, which are all administrative actions and are for informational purposes. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.)

PROGRAM – PennDOT Connects

Mr. Stewart introduced Mr. Jim Ritzman, Deputy Secretary for Planning, PennDOT. Mr. Ritzman noted that PennDOT Connects is a really basic approach. Ultimately it's about listening to people who know what is going on in an area and looking around, getting all the information from elected officials to ensure safe and reliable form of transportation either by air, rail, bike, boat and pedestrian modes. This information can be incorporated into each project, based on making the best judgment for your community. Partnerships are an investment and are entirely about collaboration with local governments. Timing really matters, especially conversations about the scope of work early on, in order to get the best bang for their buck. Planning does matter, since we want to know what your priorities are in each community and where to properly invest the money for a particular project since transportation impacts everybody's way of life.

Mr. Gracenin questioned about the \$2 million program to help with bridges. Mr. Ritzman noted that about a month-and-a-half-ago there was a press release from PennDOT that talked about PennDOT's maintenance and preservation road map. What this meant was last State fiscal year, the legislature passed a Fiscal Code Adjustment which passed the amount of motor license funds that go from PennDOT to the PA State Police. This current year the amount is \$802M of motor license funds that could be used for roads and bridges that are going to the PA State Police for their costs. Over the next 10 years, the State Legislature is going to drop the amount from \$802M to \$500M, in incremental steps each year; which will give PennDOT \$2.1B more to help with bridges; \$1B will go to the County maintenance organizations; \$600M will go thru the programming planning process, similar to the TIP; and \$500M for the interstate program. Also in the press release it mentioned that 14 counties passed resolutions for a \$5.00 vehicle registration charge to residents, which in turn gets returned to the County for transportation purposes. In order to appreciate Counties who have made hard decisions in investing in their communities, PennDOT said that they are willing to bring up the \$2 million, for each County, to match the dollars that a County would bring for local bridges. Mr. Ritzman noted that the \$2 million is out there, but no one has applied for it yet and would only be available for the 14 counties that passed the \$5.00 vehicle registration fee. Also, this money can only be used for bridges 20 feet or over. He mentioned that the money is set aside for the 14 counties and they should try to submit their request by September/October of this year in order to plan their project.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

---Transportation Alternatives and STU Project Status Reports - Mr. Stewart mentioned that we have six Transportation Alternative Projects, two of which are underway: 1) the **Kidds Mill Bridge Repair Project** began on March 20, 2017; work is progressing on the project and is approximately 30% complete and the anticipated completion date is May 31, 2017; 2) the **Clarksville Road Resurfacing Project in the City of Hermitage** will take place in June with pre-work starting this week; 3) the **SR 208 Multimodal Path, in front of the outlet mall, in Springfield Township** has all SR 208 trail easements secured and the project is planning to be let on July 13, 2017; 4) the **City of Sharon Project along Silver Street/Sharpsville Avenue/Thornton Avenue** submitted the PS&E package and is in the Districts' hands for their review. The project let date has been moved to next year due to waterline work being completed by Aqua along Sharpsville Avenue. The project will be awarded in Spring of 2018, with construction to start that summer; 5) the **South Diamond Street Project in Mercer Borough** does not have the PS&E package, but the project manager has

been coordinating with the Engineer and the Borough; and 6) the **City of Farrell Hamilton Avenue Project** had another scoping meeting about two weeks ago and noted that the City has hired another engineer firm to guide him along. Mr. Don Morrow questioned the status of the SR 718 roundabout project in the City of Sharon. Mr. Stewart noted that PennDOT is currently working on Dock Street up to the future roundabout, with the roundabout to take place in 2018. Mr. George Hagstrom questioned if there is a schedule for the SR 208 project (George Junior Road) in Pine Township. Mr. Yedinak noted that it was bid about a month or two ago and they should get a notice to proceed anytime soon, probably starting the end of May and work should continue throughout the summer.

--Major Road/Bridge Projects - Mr. Brian Yedinak noted that under the P3 **Rapid Bridge Replacement Project**, 558 bridges will be replaced statewide with three bridges in Mercer County scheduled for replacement in the summer of 2017. The three bridges are SR 318 over Little Neshannock Creek, SR 173 over Mill Creek and SR 3020 Lamor Road over Lackawannock Creek. The **US 19 Bridge over Munnell Run in Mercer Borough** are working on the right-of-way settlements, 4 out of 6 plans have been resolved and are on track with a proposed let date of September 14, 2017, with construction to follow in 2018. The **State Street Project from Forker Boulevard to Route 18** is currently in the design phase and will be bid this fall with construction to follow in 2018. The **West Middlesex Bridge Replacement Project** (currently a 9 span structure to be converted to a 1 span structure) is on schedule and has a proposed let date of December 21, 2017. Lastly, the **US 62/State Street Improvement Project** will involve intersection improvements at the Shenango Valley Mall entrance on US 62 in the City of Hermitage. They plan on bidding this in 2018 and will probably be a design-build project with construction in 2019, and very likely they could put a roundabout in at this intersection. In discussion, Mr. Don Morrow talked about major issues caused from rain on SR 718, just north of the Orangeville Road intersection. Mr. Yedinak stated that he will follow up on this issue. Also, someone questioned when the work would be started on the bridge in Coolspring Township, tributary to Otter Creek. Mr. Yedinak stated that he would check into this and find out when this project would begin.

---Planning and Data Collection Project Updates - Mr. Stewart mentioned that when they wrapped up the Long Range Transportation Plan late last year, we had several study recommendations that we would like to do in the next few years such as corridor safety studies, a study regarding what to do with the tunnel on Route 62 and various bike/pedestrian studies. One of those studies was the Grove City Bicycle/Pedestrian Circulation Study, which Springfield and Pine Township's were tied into this study. He noted that we received approval to do this study and amend the UPWP. Meetings have been held with those communities to fine tune what should be included in the study. An RFP will be forthcoming for this project, a consultant will be hired and hopefully the study will start in June of this year. In discussion, it was noted that the tunnel on Route 62 is of critical importance for repair. Also, Mr. Yedinak noted that work is expected to begin August 7th to replace the 12-foot long bridge on Route 19 over a tributary to Otter Creek. Detour signs will be posted prior to construction, with work expected to be completed by late August.

FEDERAL CERTIFICATION REVIEW OVERVIEW

Mr. Dan Walston from FHWA mentioned that the SVATS MPO certification review meets the requirements of the Metropolitan Planning Rule and the findings (corrective actions/recommendations) from January 23, 2017 are attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes. Mr. Walston noted that this is the 4th certification review that has been completed for Mercer County and thanked Mr. Gracenin and Mr. Stewart for doing such a great job. Two corrective actions regarding Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and the Public Participation Plan (PPP) were found to be insufficient. The MPO must revise its LEP and PPP plans within 180 days of the report to the FHWA and FTA for review. Mr. Walston noted that he met with Mr. Gracenin and Mr. Stewart prior to this meeting regarding the certification review findings and course of action. Once finalized, it will be posted on the MPO's website.

Mr. Walston stated that the review team commends the MPO and PennDOT for strengthening the continuing, cooperative and comprehensive (3-C) planning process in the MPO. Program and project level communication and information, such as scopings, have improved over the last several years; Scoping Field Views during the NEPA process and for providing useful information during those Scoping Field Views. The review team also commends the MPO for initiating a STU project prioritization process, allowing the local jurisdictions to complete a project application with a signed letter of acknowledgement for STU funding opportunities; and commends MCRCOG, WRTA and the SVSS for keeping the regional interagency MOU updated on an annual basis.

Mr. Walston noted that the review team had four recommendations: 1) recommends SVATS and Eastgate MPO review and update the 3 C's of Transportation Planning/Agreements and Contracts; 2) recommends that the MPO develop a CMAQ and determine whether the intended benefits of the CMAQ program meets the requirements and advances the goals of the Clean Air Act; 3) recommends that the MPO take a more comprehensive look at integrating freight in the transportation planning process and congestion management process; and 4) recommends that the MPO review its laws and regulations pertaining to Title VI and Non-Discrimination-General.

In discussion, Commissioner McConnell questioned the status of a project from about 3-4 years regarding Norfolk Southern railroad double stack project in the Pittsburgh area. Mr. Walston noted that if it is not completed, it should be soon. Ms. Sue Smith from Northwest RPO asked about Norfolk Southern bridge through the City of Sharon. PennDOT met with Norfolk Southern over various bridge issues, but was informed that NS is aware of these issues, but is not sure when they would be addressed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Stewart mentioned that there is a new round of Transportation Alternates Program (TAP), which the application period begins on July 10th and applications will be due on September 22nd. The TAP program provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives. Next, he mentioned that if anyone is interested in receiving their MPO meeting packet/information to them by email instead of mail to let him know. Mr. Stewart introduced Mr. Brad Elder, new Mercer County Bridge Engineer who replaced Mark Miller. He wished Mr. Elder much success and hopefully a long tenure.

Mr. Dan Walston mentioned that he had a few recent publications, for handout, regarding bicycle/pedestrian planning and safety practitioners with engineers and planners. Also, on Friday, May 12, 2017 the President did sign the repeal of the MPO consolidation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Morrow made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary

DMG/ew