

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday – July 12, 2016 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices  
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

Tom Tulip  
Jim Carroll  
Bill Petit  
Stephen Theiss  
Kevin McCullough  
Dennis DeSilvey  
Ken Robertson  
Steve Paxton  
Darrell R. Chapman  
Josh Jones  
Dan Whetzel  
Brent Kimmel  
Ron Faull  
George Hagstrom  
Sue Smith  
Jasson Urey  
Bill Klumph  
Cindy Black  
John R. Miller  
Gary L. Lowers  
Jim Morton  
Laura Moore  
Lyndsie DeVito  
Brian Yedinak  
Marcia Hirschmann  
Brian McNulty  
Joe Pinchot  
Gary Hittle  
Mark Miller  
Wilma Torres  
Janet Thomas  
Erin Houston  
Ken Sympson  
Matt Stewart  
Dan Gracenin

REPRESENTING

Mercer County Regional COG  
PennDOT  
PennDOT  
Self  
PennDOT  
Shenango Township  
Sharpsville Borough  
Pine Township  
PennDOT, Mercer County 1-4  
PennDOT, Mercer County 1-4  
PennDOT, Mercer County 1-4  
PennDOT  
Liberty Township  
Pine Township  
Northwest Commission  
Greenville Borough  
South Pymatuning Township  
Wilmington Township  
Pymatuning Township  
Pymatuning Township  
Wolf Creek Township  
Representative Tedd Nesbit  
PennDOT  
PennDOT  
Hermitage City  
PennDOT  
The Herald  
Hempfield Township  
Mercer County  
Community Action Partnership  
Sharon City  
Shenango Valley Urban League  
Eastgate  
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 MAY 17, 2016

Mr. Hittle asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the May 17, 2016 meeting. There being none, Mr. Hittle asked for a motion to approve. Mr. DeSilvey so moved, Mr. Faull seconded. The motion passed.

## 2015-2018 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Brian McNulty 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.)

## APPROVAL OF MOU FOR 2017-2020 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Stewart, Senior Planner, presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which is an agreement between Eastgate Regional Council of Governments and Mercer County Regional Planning Commission. The purpose of this agreement is to define the roles and responsibilities of the two MPO's as they work to improve the economy, environment, transportation systems and quality of life for the citizens within their respective planning areas.

This agreement provides the procedures for how the federally mandated continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process will be conducted between these MPO's within the tri-county area. Programs and activities where coordination will occur between the two agencies include state and regional Transportation Plans (TPs), state and regional Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs/TIPs), Transportation Planning Work Programs, Air Quality Maintenance and Conformity, and other federal, state and regional planning activities, including Congestion Management Processes (CMP) and certification review.

There being no discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Klumph to approve the MOU for the 2017-2020 TIP modifications. Mr. DeSilvey seconded. The motion passed.

## APPROVAL OF FINAL 2017-2020 TIP

Mr. Stewart, Senior Planner, mentioned that he has been working the past few months with PennDOT in putting the TIP together for Mercer County which includes highway, bridge, transit and rail projects; and deciding what projects would be carried over and using projects from our Long Range Plan to advance onto the TIP. The draft TIP was available for public review and comment from June 6<sup>th</sup> to July 6<sup>th</sup> with a Public Hearing held on July 6<sup>th</sup>. The TIP can be found on MCRPC's website, [www.mcrpc.com](http://www.mcrpc.com).

After brief discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Faull to approve the final 2017-2020 TIP. Mr. DeSilvey seconded. The motion passed.

## APPROVAL OF SVATS MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, TITLE VI PLAN AND LIMITED-ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN

Mr. Stewart, Senior Planner, gave a quick summary of three existing documents, which the MPO is required to have. Since these documents were all due to be updated using current demographic information, they were all rolled into one document. He stated that the Public Participation Plan looks at how we are engaging with the

public and different agencies and making sure it is as effective as possible and there are Federal regulations that dictate on how we are to do that. The Title VI Plan spells out how to deal with complaints, if they would ever arise and to make sure we have a plan in place. The Limited English Proficiency Plan would improve access to develop and implement a system to ensure meaningful access for Limited English Proficiency persons to information and services provided by the MPO. There being no questions on these documents, a motion was made by Mr. Petit to approve the SVATS MPO Public Participation Plan, Title VI Plan and Limited-English Proficiency Plan. Mr. Tulip seconded. The motion passed.

### PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

---Transportation Alternatives and STU Project Status Reports - Mr. Stewart mentioned that he had six Transportation Alternative and STU Projects, which he reviewed briefly: 1) the **SR 208 Multimodal trail project in Springfield Township** is anticipating a let date for mid September. The Environmental Clearance is very close to being obtained as well as obtaining right-of-way agreements; 2) the **Kidds Mill Bridge Repair Project** has a project let date for September 15<sup>th</sup> and the Notice to Proceed for construction is scheduled for December 12<sup>th</sup>; 3) the **Clarksville Road resurfacing project in the City of Hermitage** received some STU funding earlier this year. The project is scheduled to advertise on July 21<sup>st</sup> with a let date of August 11<sup>th</sup> and Notice to Proceed on September 26<sup>th</sup>. The City is working through some issues, and hoping to get a waiver, regarding the mandatory wait time by reducing the standard 12-week time frame between the letting and Notice to Proceed; 4) work has not yet started for the **City of Farrell Hamilton Avenue project**. After talking with Michael Ceci about this project, hopefully he will have an update at our next meeting; 5) **Mercer Borough** received some STU funding to do a one block, streetscape project along **South Diamond Street**. There have been discussions about the lighting requirements, more detailed discussions about ADA and working on the design of the building entrances; and 6) the **City of Sharon** has looked at various bicycle lane options along Sharpville Avenue/Thornton Avenue. It was determined that the bike lane will only be along the western side of the roadway. Mr. Theiss questioned if it would be a 2-way bike lane? Mr. Stewart thought it was going to be 2-way bike lane. The **City of Sharon** will soon be obtaining a survey regarding new sidewalks and curbing along East Silver Street, behind the Buhl Club.

---Major Road/Bridge Projects - Mr. Yedinak explained the status of the **Broadway Avenue Phase 3 Project** is scheduled for letting in September 2016; will probably be a two year construction project which will improve the intersection (roundabout) at Connelly Boulevard and Broadway Avenue in the City of Sharon. Next, the **West Middlesex Bridge Replacement Project** has a proposed let date of November 2, 2017 with construction in 2018. They are finalizing the revisions to the right-of-way plan. The **State Street Streetscape Improvement Project in the City of Sharon** from the hospital to Forker Boulevard has a proposed let date of September 29, 2016. This project will include paving, drainage, sidewalks, ADA access and traffic signal timings. Mr. Yedinak noted that the other **State Street Project** will improve State Street from Forker Boulevard to Route 18. This project will include paving, drainage, ADA access, and traffic signal replacements at Ellis Avenue and Kerrwood Drive in the City of Hermitage and has a proposed let date of September 2017 with construction in 2018. A meeting is scheduled with the developer of the plaza to discuss the proposed changes to the plaza entrance at the Ellis Avenue intersection. Lastly, the **Rapid Bridge Replacement Project; P3 Public Private Partnership Project** will replace 558 bridges statewide with three bridges scheduled for replacement in Mercer County during the summer of 2017.

---Planning and Data Collection Project Updates – Mr. Stewart mentioned that the traffic counts are continuing and we are about half way done.

## PLANNING PROJECT UPDATES

---Long Range Transportation Plan Update – Mr. Stewart stated that the Long Range Transportation Plan Update is going very well. He noted that this LRTP is the best document he has worked on in his career because it helps identify transportation concerns and needs over the next 20 years in Mercer County. Mr. Stewart stated that there is a new Federal rule under consideration that could shift or change the direction on how people perceive transportation and what is important in respect to how it affects the community, transit needs, sidewalks, bicycle and pedestrian needs and desires. Mr. Stewart mentioned that we received a lot of good information regarding the LRTP update, which will be wrapped up by mid November.

---Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Plan – Mr. Stewart mentioned that not too many updates have been done since May. A meeting will be held tomorrow to meet with the consultants and they hope to have this plan completed by early Fall. A lot of this plan is basically looking at planning for transit and what are the gaps in the system. Also, a lot of this same information gathered is the same information that we are looking at for the LRTP.

---SR 208 Access Management Study in Springfield Township – Mr. Stewart mentioned that Springfield Township obtained funding to conduct a study that will consider access management along the commercially-zoned section of SR 208 corridor, both the section in front of the outlet mall and then going all the way east toward Pine Township, which could potentially have future development. A draft report has been completed and John Trant, from Springfield Township, and himself will be talking to the consultant later today to hopefully address the comments that were made and to wrap up this Study within the next few weeks.

## OTHER BUSINESS

---FHWA and FTA Conduct Public Review/Certification of the SVATS MPO - Mr. Stewart, Senior Planner, mentioned that every four years the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration are required to conduct a review of federally designated Transportation Management Areas. The primary purpose of the certification review is to evaluate the MPO's compliance with Federal regulations. As part of this process, two meetings will be held. The first is a public officials meeting on July 27<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. and a public meeting to follow on July 27<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. If you are unable to attend the public meeting, you can provide your comments via e-mail to Mr. Stewart.

---Summary of Planning Partners Conference – Mr. Stewart mentioned that the Planning Partners Conference was held about 2 weeks ago with other MPO and RPO staffs and other officials from around the State. He stated that Ms. Leslie Richards has been the PennDOT Secretary for about a year and a half, and she laid out her vision for the future, which is a more community-based transportation system and she is very aggressive about implementing this type of system. Mr. Petit talked about Secretary Richards' administration's top three priorities: 1) County transformation—making county maintenance offices' operations more efficient and fiscally sound; 2) Funding—particularly that state police are funded through the same channels as state transportation funding and how we aren't realizing the full benefit of Act 89, and 3) Influential Planning—the idea that PennDOT needs to be more directly engaged with the community. PennDOT needs to be considering factors beyond road repair (bicycles, pedestrians, transit, etc.), and conversations about accommodating communities need to occur up proactively, not when a project is ready to be let. Changing PennDOT culture from fixing roads to more community-oriented is a major initiative of Secretary Richards. Mr. Petit then talked a bit more on the importance of creating better links between community planning and the transportation system. Linking the Long Range Transportation Plans to community comprehensive plans and other planning efforts is needed. Holistic conversation about needs, between all organizations, need to occur. Metrics that make sense for community plans need to be developed. Mr. Gracenin highlighted his impressions Secretary Richards and agreed that she is very committed to moving PennDOT toward better planning, and that this will

benefit communities and the MPO. Mr. Petit then talked about innovations at the district level and being more creative about how limited dollars are spent.

---Proposed Change to FHWA FTA Rulemaking – Mr. Gracenin mentioned that FHWA/FTA on proposed changing how MPO's operate and are organized. Notification of the proposed Federal Rulemaking occurred on June 26, 2016 and MPO's such as ours have thirty days to offer comments. This would deal with a map planning area, even across State lines, which may lead to less autonomy in how we run the MPO.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Petit made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,  
MPO Secretary

DMG/ew