

Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS) Meeting Notes

November 9th, 2017

Attendees

Gregory Becoat, EPA (teleconference)
Alex Brun, MDE (teleconference)
Deanna Cuccinello, DNREC (teleconference)
Heather Dunigan, WILMAPCO
Jay Gerner, DelDOT (teleconference)
Ujjval Shukla, MDOT (teleconference)
Cathy Smith, DART (teleconference)
Bill Swiatek, WILMAPCO
Colleen Turner, MDOT (teleconference)
Tigist Zegeye, WILMAPCO

Acceptance of the notes from the August 10th Meeting

- See: www.wilmapco.org/aqs
- The notes were accepted without corrections or clarifications.

Draft FY 2019 TIP New Projects - B. Swiatek

- Mr. Swiatek began by stating: “projects from the Delaware Department of Transportation’s (DelDOT) Capital Transportation Plan (CTP) are being reviewed as potential conformity triggers”. The entire CTP list, available on DelDOT’s website, has been reviewed for projects that WILMAPCO already has in their model to see if they crossed any horizon years. The projects did not cross any horizon years, but there are four new projects on the CTP list. WILMAPCO’s plan is to look at these four new projects to see if they are regionally significant. If they are, determine if they have been modeled/should they be modeled.
- The definition of regionally significant can be found here: www.wilmapco.org/aqs
- Mr. Swiatek informed everybody that projects that serve a regional transportation facility and are located on a large highway are more likely to be modeled due to their impact on air quality.
- The first new project from the CTP was: I-295 Northbound from SR 141 to US 13. Engineering funding will be in the years 2023-2024, construction will be estimated at \$8 million but is not shown in the CTP as being spent there. The project is about 1 mile in length, and in on an expressway making it a regionally significant project.

- WILMAPCO believes that the project has been modeled already and is in the CTP as: the I-295 improvements eastbound SR 141 with the addition of a 3rd lane. This project is modeled for 2040 in service. WILMAPCO points out that DelDOT is not showing construction for this project after 2024. This would lead to a potential concern that construction could take place and be in service before 2030. Without construction shown, however, Mr. Swiatek's recommendation is to leave this project alone and look for further descriptions from the Transportation Implementation Plan (TIP) when it comes out.
- Mr. Swiatek then discussed the next project, SR 9, which is listed as New Castle Avenue Lander's Lane to A Street planning study. This project can be described as a placeholder for projects coming out of the Route 9 Master Plan. WILMAPCO requested revised language describing the project title and the project itself. This project is one that would not involve any capacity increases. Instead, road diets will be looked at along Route 9 where lanes will be taken out and intersections will be rebuilt. Studies for Pigeon Point Road and Garasches Lane will be done before extensions are considered. SR 9 project is another project that WILMAPCO recommends be left alone.
- Ms. Cuccinello asked what kind of further initial study is needed for the SR 9 Lander's lane project? Mr. Swiatek listed two recommendations: the first one is to link Garasches Lane in Wilmington to Terminal Ave, and the second recommendation is to extend Pigeon Point Road further south to link up with I-295. Both recommendations were brought up in the plan, but were not studied as feasible ideas that may potentially help freight movement.
- The third new project is: the Otts Chapel Road and Welsh Track Road Intersection Improvements. Mr. Swiatek stated: "for the project they are looking at adding turn lanes to improve operations and reduce delay at the intersection. They also plan on adding bike amenities in accordance with their complete streets policy". \$150,000 dollars in construction funds will be used; making it a rather small rebuild project. Mr. Swiatek stated: "This project will not be a conformity trigger because it isn't regionally significant".
- The fourth and final project is: the Shallcross Lake Road Relocated, Graylag Road to Boyds Corner Road. The proposed alignment will shift the Shallcross Lake Road and Boyd's Corner Road intersection east to align with Milford Drive (Grand View Farm). The realignment was proposed in DelDOT's Southern New Castle County Improvements program. The construction funds will cost about \$1.5 million in the 2019 Fiscal Year (FY); possibly all developer funded. Although it is a big project, Mr. Swiatek believes that it isn't regionally significant and should be kept out of the model.
- The Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS) agreed with everything Mr. Swiatek said.

Revised Summer 2018/2019 Conformity Schedule – B. Swiatek

- Mr. Swiatek began by referencing the chart on the back of the packet. He claimed the issue was that the requirement to meet the Ozone standard was placed back on the books. Therefore, a conformity determination needs to be done before 2018. Originally, WILMAPCO was just expecting to do conformity for the long-range plan, which is set for adoption in March in 2019. WILMAPCO still must do conformity for the long-range plan because with any long-range plan you must do a conformity determination. This places WILMAPCO in the position of having to do two conformity plans back to back; one due in October 2018 and the other in March 2019.
- Mr. Swiatek proposes that one single analysis be done and take place over the summer of 2018; from June 7th, through July. The intention is to use this analysis for both conformity determinations. The only difference over the summer would be that WILMAPCO would model 2050 as a year. 2050 would be the last year of the long-range plan. But in the first determination document, the information from 2050 wouldn't be shown because WILMAPCO would still be working under the 2040 long-range plan.
- Mr. Swiatek informed everybody that he has talked to Mr. Becoat about it and believes that it is okay. Mr. Swiatek is waiting on a final confirmation from them to see if it can be done. From a cost and ease perspective, this is the most optimal schedule that WILMAPCO recommends using.
- Ms. Turner asked about the October 2018 conformity deadline saying: "it's my understanding that the designations weren't final yet and that the conformity clock starts when it'll be one year after the designations are final?". Ms. Brun answered by saying: "the designations for the 2015 Ozone standards are final for attainment areas; the implementation rules and the non-attainment designations have not been finalized yet.". Ms. Brun said: "that I would have to check and see what effects they had on conformity, but I do know that the designations that were released earlier were just for attainment.".
- Mr. Swiatek said that WILMAPCO was working under the assumption that there was a deadline for October 2018; Ms. DeVore, of DNREC, was under the same impression. Ms. Brun informed Mr. Swiatek that she would double check the conformity timeline for him.
- Ms. Zegeye pointed out that WILMAPCO would prefer to not do conformity and public outreach during the summer months. Ms. Zegeye hopes that the designation would be a little bit later so that it could be done in the December timeframe.

- Mr. Becoat joined the call and said that the EPA is still getting guidance on the exact date of the conformity timeline. Essentially, the EPA has yet to complete the designations; they're not sure what the areas are going to look like and if conformity will be necessary. Until designations are finalized, the conformity clock won't start. October 2018 was the original date, but as of now nothing is finalized. Mr. Becoat informed everybody that the likely deadline for the designations will be in the spring; conforming to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) schedule.
- Mr. Becoat assured the committee that he would share the information as soon as he received it. The standards that are in place are for the 2015 Ozone, but as of now the designations are not in place.
- Mr. Swiatek informed everybody that the revised summer conformity schedule will be revisited during the next meeting where a different version will be created.

Other

- There was no other business addressed.