

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2021**

The WILMAPCO Council meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. John Sisson, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members present:

Mike DuRoss, representing DeIDOT Secretary of Transportation, Nicole Majeski
David Edgell, Delaware Governor's Appointee
Rich Hall, representing New Castle County Executive, Matthew Meyer
Herb Inden, representing City of Wilmington Mayor, Michael S. Purzycki
Heather Murphy, Maryland Governor's Appointee
Stephen O'Connor, representing Cecil County Executive, Danielle Hornberger
John Sisson, representing Delaware Transit Corporation
Eric Thompson, Mayor of Elsmere, representing New Castle County Municipalities

Members absent:

Loucretia Wood, representing Cecil County Municipalities

Guests, Observers:

Cooper Bowers, DeIDOT
James Coverdale, DNREC
David Gilefski
Mike Kaszyski, PAC Co-Chair

Staff members:

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Sharen T. Elcock, Executive Assistant
Dave Gula, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner
Dawn Voss, Administrative Assistant
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by Dawn Voss.

3. MINUTES:

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Eric Thompson seconded by Mr. Rich Hall the Council approved the July 8, 2021, Council Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Dave Edgell abstained as he was not in attendance the July 8th meeting.

Motion passed.

(09-09-21-01)

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

None.

5. COUNCIL MEMBERS' AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Chairperson's Report:

Mr. John Sisson said the fall service change takes effect on September 12th. There are not many changes. The details can be found on the DTC website. DTC is still working on managing routes around the I-95 reconstruction to make sure they are running as well as possible.

Council Member's Reports:

Mr. Herb Inden said it is quiet in Wilmington, but they are cleaning up from the storm.

Mr. Rich Hall said they want the four subarea plans that WILMAPCO worked on to go through the adoption process to amend the current New Castle County Comprehensive Plan. This is happening while the county-wide plan is being updated. The four subarea plans, US202/Concord Pike, North Claymont, Route 9, and the Southern New Castle County Plan, are bundled into Chapter 13 in the Comprehensive Plan. It is going to the Planning Board for public hearing this Monday at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Stephen O'Connor said they have two large projects coming online in Cecil County. Great Wolf Lodge had their groundbreaking this summer. The Bainbridge project and some of those logistics centers will be getting building permits by the next Council meeting. Also, Cecil County will kick off their Comprehensive Plan review this fall. They are starting the review process in September to decide if they are going to continue with the plan, revise it, or write a new plan. Yesterday, they had their pre-tour meeting with MDOT. The tour meeting is scheduled for September 24th. There was a request from WILMAPCO staff to have a hybrid option for that group and the County is trying to work with them to accommodate that.

Mr. Sisson said on behalf of DeIDOT that the biennial CTP hearings are coming up for the draft FY 2023-2028 CTP for New Castle County. A virtual hearing will be on September 15th from 4-6 p.m. The process was made biennial a couple of years ago, so this is a chance to get comments on the Capital Transportation Program.

6. Executive Director's Report – Ms. Zegeye shared the following information:

- The Townsend Walkable Community Workshop was held on July 12th and on September 1st staff presented the workshop's results to the Town Council.
- A pop-up outreach event for the City of New Castle Transportation Plan was held in conjunction with a concert at Battery Park on July 28th. A Planning Partners meeting was held on August 30th. An online public workshop is scheduled for September 13th.
- A joint WILMAPCO-DeIDOT TIP and CTP virtual meeting will be held on September 15th.
- Staff will present to the University of Delaware Academy of Lifelong Learning on September 15th.

- WILMAPCO was to exhibit at Newark's Community Day on September 19th, but it was canceled.
- Staff will participate in the Air Quality Partnership Car-Free Week social media campaign the week of September 20th to 24th.
- The Upper Eastern Shore Pre-tour meeting was yesterday, and the tour meeting is the 24th. WILMAPCO is working with the county to have the option of attending virtually.
- A draft of the Churchman's Crossing Plan Update will be presented to the Advisory Committee on September 27th and then to the public on October 25th.
- Staff will be conducting a Walkable Communities Workshop in Middletown on September 29th.
- Staff presented the Transportation Justice Plan to the North Carolina Public Transportation Association Conference on August 27th. It will be presented to the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting on September 14th and at the FHWA EJ Screening Peer Exchange on September 21st.
- Staff is coordinating with CADSR on a new analysis of bus connectivity for TJ areas. The Transportation Justice Working Group has been reformed. If Councilmembers or their staff want to join, please contact WILMAPCO.
- Staff supported DTC on the submission for an Areas of Persistent Poverty FTA Grant.
- Staff continues to support the Southbridge Neighborhood Plan, which will be finalized later this month.
- Hargreaves Jones and JMT were selected to do the I-95 Cap Feasibility Study. The scope and contract were finalized with the firm. A kickoff meeting was held on August 30th and an Advisory Committee meeting is being planned for mid-October.
- APA Delaware will be hosting a walking tour and networking event in partnership with West Side Grows Together on September 22nd.
- On the August financial report, which is just the second month of the fiscal year, we have expended about 14% of the budget. Staff has begun tasks that were approved in the FY 2022 UPWP, which will include monitoring support for several projects that were endorsed or adopted by WILMAPCO Council.

7. Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Report:

Mr. Mike Kaszyski, PAC Vice Chair, said the PAC met on August 16th with no action items. There were four presentations. Mr. Dan Blevins presented the Churchman's Crossing Plan Update including the ongoing outreach process, workshops, and other community conversations. Mr. Blevins also went through the evaluation criteria that was used to process a number of projects in the area to further consider implementation. PAC members discussed north-south capacity, the ability to get between Kirkwood and Route 4 or Capital Trail and Route 273; and where there might be the addition of further capacity and upgrade to the existing grid. Members also discussed future development in this area and how TIDs in the area may help between TID and the County's Economic Opportunity Zone use in this area. Mr. Swiatek presented the South Wilmington Neighborhood Plan. PAC members questioned how this plan fits within the current Route 9 Plan and freight plans, and Mr. Swiatek mentioned that this plan will tie into those plans and their recommendations. Ms. Randi Novakoff presented the TIP outreach. DeIDOT in partnership with WILMAPCO had an in-person public hearing for the CTP planned, but now that has been converted to an online workshop on September 15th from 4-6 p.m. Ms. Novakoff presented the MPO video, "What is an MPO". These videos are being circulated through the library system and other venues. PAC members complimented Ms. Novakoff on the video and helped provide a contact to circulate it in Cecil County.

8. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Report:

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the TAC met on July 15th with no action items but had four presentations. Mr. Art Jenkins from DelDOT presented the 2022 Bond Bill. Mr. Bill Swiatek presented the Regional Progress Report. Mr. Dan Blevins presented the Churchman's Crossing Plan Update. Mr. Jake Thompson presented the Route 9 Paths Plan. TAC met jointly with the Air Quality Subcommittee on August 19th. The TAC and AQS recommended approval of the use of funds for the FY 2022. The TAC also recommended endorsement of the Route 9 Paths Plan. The two freight studies, the Delaware Statewide Truck Parking Study and the First and Final Mile Network Study, were reviewed and TAC recommended endorsement of them. TAC and AQS discussed the air quality conformity analysis for the 2050 RTP and FY 2023 TIP and reviewed draft in-service years that would be going into the model. That model run is currently underway and an update on that will be available when the model is complete. The TAC and AQS reviewed the transportation justice video that WILMAPCO has produced.

ACTION ITEMS:

9. To Approve the use of Federal STBG, CMAQ, FTA Urbanized Area, FTA 5310, and TAP Funds in FY 2022.

Ms. Dunigan said this letter is seen every other year in the development of the TIP in the appendix. With the new biennial process the TIP is not being done this year, and so the letter is before the Council separately. There are several categories of Federal funding in the DelDOT-WILMAPCO MOU that are approved by DelDOT and MDOT including the Surface Transportation Block Grant, which lists a number of projects listed for that use. It also included the FTA Urbanized Area funds, 5307, which goes towards a variety of transit centers, train station projects, as well as some bus replacement, preventative maintenance, and facilities. This also includes a CMAQ program, and these projects are carefully reviewed by the Air Quality Subcommittee, who has reviewed them and concurred with the use. It includes statewide bicycle and pedestrian improvements, which were reviewed by the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group, who concurred with the use. The Surface Transportation Management Improvements are grouped projects that were reviewed by the Air Quality Subcommittee. Also included are the 5310 FTA funds, which go towards transit vehicle replacement. The Transportation Alternatives Program is a grouped list of projects reviewed by the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group. In the remainder of the packet the grouped projects are listed. The use of the Statewide Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvement Program, which uses CMAQ funds, includes the Miller Road project in Wilmington. There are a couple of new projects including the Augustine Cutoff project and the School Lane project, which came directly out of priority projects from the New Castle County Bicycle Plan. The next project list is a list of the TAP projects. Most of these are ongoing projects in a second or third phase. There are a few new projects including Lovering Avenue and Dupont Street, which is a reconfiguration project to improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and provide an off-road location for movement in that area. Brandywine Village-Phase 3 and Southbridge-Phase 3 were also added. The last thing on the list is the use of the Transportation Management Funds, the ITMS funds.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski said as Ms. Dunigan was going through, she talked about the statewide rail fund and also projects like the SR 72 project, McCoy Road through 71. There is a rail crossing included in that project. Mr. Kaszyski asked if rail funding overlaps if you have a large capital project like that. Mr. Kaszyski said that there was one rail crossing just north of Route 71 on 72. A project that they did was tapped to provide contribution to that rail crossing and he wondered

if the statewide fund would fund something like that even if there was a capital project covering the corridor. Ms. Dunigan said it could, but she could not say what type of funding went to that project.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Herb Inden seconded by Mr. Stephen O'Connor the Council approved use of Federal STBG, CMAQ, FTA Urbanized Area, FTA 5310, and TAP Funds in FY 2022.

Motion passed.

(09-09-21-02)

10. To Endorse the Route 9 Paths Plan.

Mr. Jake Thompson said the latest draft of the Route 9 Paths Plan can be found online at <http://www.wilmapco.org/route9pathsplan/>. This plan is an expansion and refinement of the bicycle and pedestrian recommendations that were presented in the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan. This plan was requested by and guided by the Health Subcommittee of the Route 9 Monitoring Committee. The planning process began with collecting existing conditions data including transportation, demographic, and public health data. The team then took a closer look at the bicycle and pedestrian recommendations from the Master Plan and identified missing links in the study area where better connections could be made between neighborhoods. This data was then used to develop a technical prioritization process, which identifies the areas in the corridor that would benefit the most from these types of recommendations. The plan employed a thorough and extensive public outreach process. This included a public survey, which was available online, but also distributed door to door in a field survey to ensure that we heard from every neighborhood and especially from people who might not have access to the internet. The plan includes a thorough analysis of the public survey results, which were used to ensure the plan best meets the corridor's needs. Based on prior work on the Route 9 Corridor, technical analysis, and public feedback, the Route 9 Paths Plan proposes a network of walking and biking paths for the corridor. This network includes mixed use paths, off road paths, and neighborhood bikeways, and the recommendations are ranked based on the technical prioritization process and public feedback. The plan also includes general recommendations such as completing and repairing sidewalks, making path connections contiguous, improving lighting, and naming and signing the paths. The "Next Steps" section includes estimates of timeline and costs, as well as potential funding mechanisms to get the path network built. The Route 9 Monitoring Committee will continue to oversee the implementation of transportation projects within the Route 9 Corridor including the Route 9 Paths Plan. The draft Route 9 Paths Plan has been reviewed by the Route 9 Monitoring Committee, Route 9 Health Committee, the TAC, PAC, and this Council. The plan has also been recommended for endorsement by the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group and the TAC. This latest draft includes the edits received from each of those committees.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Stephen O'Connor seconded by Mr. Herb Inden the Council endorsed the Route 9 Paths.

Motion passed.

(09-09-21-03)

11. To Endorse the Delaware Statewide Truck Parking Study.

Mr. Dan Blevins said the Delaware Statewide Truck Parking Study was designed to cover both the Federal mandates required through Jason’s Law, and also delve into shorter-term truck parking and staging issues throughout the State of Delaware. The study was guided through a focus group consisting of many members of the trucking industry along with local planning agencies, businesses, and actual truck drivers. The PAC did not take any action on the item. The TAC recommended endorsement of this study. Currently the Delaware Statewide Freight Plan is being updated, and much of this information will feed into that effort, which Council will probably see later this year and into 2022.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Herb Inden seconded by Mr. Stephen O’Connor the Council endorsed the Delaware Statewide Truck Parking Study.

Motion passed. (09-09-21-04)

12. To Endorse the First/Final Mile Freight Network Development Study.

Mr. Dan Blevins said this effort was created to better understand first and final mile truck deliveries that are found throughout the state. This effort explored the smaller, local collector road network and how local trucking activity impacts local communities. This study was also steered by a focus group with many of the same members as the truck parking study. This is mainly a technical document but includes materials that will bring these smaller segments into the broader planning process. One of those is a proposed freight considerations checklist to see how freight fits into land use and other planning documents as land development activity happens. Delaware has been attracting some larger distribution centers, so these issues will continue to arise, but this checklist will help bring issues related to those who generate larger amounts of freight into land development activities. The PAC has seen many presentations on this but took no action. The TAC recommended to endorse this study.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Stephen O’Connor seconded by Mr. Rich Hall the Council endorsed the First/Final Mile Freight Network Development Study.

Motion passed. (09-09-21-05)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

13. Regional Progress Report

Mr. Bill Swiatek said the Regional Progress Report is done at WILMAPCO to track the progress of the RTP. Staff looks at some of the core trends in the region and then goes action by action using quantitative and qualitative measures of the progress of those actions. Red, yellow, and green light indicators are used to show where there was good progress or not as much. Some of the national performance measures required by the FHWA are also incorporated and expanded upon.

In terms of some sample core trends, one of the things that has overshadowed transportation over the past couple of years is the pandemic. Some of the results of lockdown during the last year will be reviewed and some of the work that was already documented will be in the progress report. During the lockdown, daily traffic dropped forty to fifty percent. Our regional bus ridership dropped seventy percent across New Castle County and Cecil County at the peak of the lockdown. Park and Ride and Park and Pool lots were down ninety-two percent if you exclude

the lots next to parks, which increased in terms of use. Other things that increased in a positive way include air quality, where there was some improvement in ozone. The air quality index improved between ten and fifteen percent with fewer cars on the road. Trail use almost doubled in the Delaware part of our region. Those are some trends that will be in the report, and as we get back to a new normal, we will have to see how much they rebound back to normal levels.

One of the other key core trends is our TIAs and how they are doing in terms of demographic change and investments in projects. Households and job growth and decline within center and core TIAs are measured. These are the areas along the I-95 corridor. In New Castle County, there has been a decline in the percentage of households within the center and core TIAs from eighty-four percent in the year 2000 to eighty-one percent today, and that is forecasted to go down to seventy-eight percent by 2050. Jobs are about the same with about ninety percent of all jobs located within the TIAs. In Cecil County the data is about the same in terms of jobs with sixty-eight percent in 2000 to seventy percent forecasted in 2050, and then a slight increase in households. So, Cecil County is a little more focused with that growth in center and core TIAs, increasing that percentage from 2000 to 2050.

Some historic VMT trends will be in the report as well as projected VMT. The forecast from 2020-2050 indicates a per capita rise in VMT growth in New Castle County from about 30,000 annual miles today all the way up past 40,000. Cecil County, which currently has a higher per capita VMT is projected to be below the New Castle County figures in the year 2040 and continue to fall.

In looking at the mode of transportation for people getting to work, the historic data from 1980 to the most recent data from 2015 to 2019 ACS shows the dominance of driving alone to work. This is going to be an interesting one to watch in the next few years as the impact of the pandemic will hopefully reduce some of that figure.

One of the main sections of the progress report is going action by action to see how each one is progressing. For example, there is an action to create and support the implementation of subregional plans, which is a real strength of WILMAPCO. Staff does a lot of community planning work, like the 202 Master Plan, which generates good projects within those communities, which are starting to be adopted into the New Castle County Comp Plan, so that went well and was a green light action. One of the challenging actions continues to be trying to maintain a safe transportation system. Looking at the fatal crash levels by VMT, they are not dropping as fast as we would like. Over the past decade or so, there has not really been a decline in the crash rate in either county, so that is something we need to continue to improve. One of the actions that is positive is looking at support of high-tech transportation projects. In 2000 at tolls on I-95 and SR 1, EZ-Pass was used twenty percent of the time and today it is seventy to eighty percent of transactions. An action that shows moderate progress is the population living near bus stops. Ensuring access to public transportation has been a challenge in New Castle County as the population continues to spread out. Since 2000, there has been a decline in the percentage of people who live near bus stops. That is measured by those who live a quarter of a mile from a bus stop. It went from fifty-five percent in 2000 to forty-five percent today. In Cecil County it increased slightly from three percent to eight percent in those years. Another challenge is increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of PAC membership. This is one of the equity initiatives that we have. We look at what the PAC membership is in terms of racial and ethnic minority makeup and compare that to the actual racial and ethnic minority population of the region. We are not hitting the mark of matching PAC membership to the regional demographics. Another action is supporting cleaner vehicle infrastructure. It has been interesting to watch the deployment of public EV charging stations in the region. There were

only two in 2012, and now, a decade later, there are more than thirty across the region. That is something that is being planned actively in New Castle County and many of the municipalities. It has shown some good progress.

The next steps include acquiring some missing data. The report is currently being drafted. The final draft should be brought to Council for consideration in early 2022.

Mr. Sisson asked if the charging stations were locations or number of charging ports. Mr. Swiatek said they are publicly available locations.

Mr. Hall said Land Use is working on an ordinance with County Council to require at least EV capable conduits in residential development for electric vehicle charging. There is a good chance something will pass in the fall, though something for commercial locations is further in the future.

14. WILMAPCO Video: What is an MPO

Ms. Randi Novakoff said this is the final of the series of five public outreach videos. This one is two and a half minutes long and focuses on what an MPO is. *Video was shown.* The videos are designed to explain transportation planning in a simple, easily understood way and encourage public involvement in the process. WITN has aired the videos and shared them via social media. WILMAPCO has been sharing them on social media and launched a new YouTube channel on which they can be viewed. Ms. Novakoff encourages everyone to subscribe to the channel. We are working with Cecil County and New Castle County Libraries to air them.

Mr. Sisson encouraged Council members to share the video on their organization's websites and social media accounts.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

15. DeIDOT's Administrative Modification Request Letters

ADJOURNMENT:

ACTION: On a motion by Mr. Stephen O'Connor seconded by Mr. Rich Hall the meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Motion Passed

(09-09-21-06)

ATTACHMENTS: (0)