

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 8, 2021**

The WILMAPCO Council meeting was held virtually via Zoom.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. John Sisson, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:03 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Members present:

Marc Coté, representing DeIDOT Secretary of Transportation, Nicole Majeski
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
Andrea Trabelsi, representing New Castle County Executive, Matthew Meyer

Members absent:

David Edgell, Delaware Governor's Appointee
Herb Inden, representing City of Wilmington Mayor, Michael S. Purzycki
Loucretia Wood, representing Cecil County Municipalities

Guests, Observers:

Cooper Bowers, DeIDOT
Tyson Byrne, MDOT
Tom Fruehstorfer, PAC Chair
David Gilefski
Valerie Gray, DNREC
Robert Hicks
Art Jenkins, DeIDOT
Teresa Lord, Pennoni

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. Stephen O'Connor seconded by Mr. Marc Coté the Council approved the May 13, 2021, Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion passed.

(07-08-21-01)

4. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

None.

5. COUNCIL MEMBERS' AND DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Chairperson's Report:

Mr. John Sisson said DTC received the fourth Low-No grant to purchase six more electric buses and two on-route charging stations. DTC has sixteen electric buses in service now, four more coming this summer, and these additional six will bring the total to twenty-six, which is about 10% of the fleet employed in New Castle County. The two on-route charging stations will be located in New Castle County. The buses are being purchased for use statewide so they can be moved to other places such as the beach for the summer. DTC staff are very excited about the great progress being made with the conversion of the fleet from diesel to more energy-efficient and cleaner-burning, or in this case, no-burning buses.

Council Member's Reports:

Mr. Marc Coté said the bond bill for FY 22 is \$771.2 million, which is an increase of \$88 million over last year. The State of Delaware received \$63 million in grants. Increases include \$20 million for suburban street repair and \$10 million for the CTF Subdivision Paving Pilot Program. Municipal street aid remained at \$6 million, and the TIP remained at \$5 million. Transit systems was funded at \$54 million to continue construction at the Newark Regional Transportation Center; Claymont and Middletown Park and Rides; and Churchmans Crossing Fairplay project. Transit vehicles was funded at \$28 million statewide for additional low-floor buses and some cut-away buses. Support systems was funded at \$67.9 million. Road systems was up \$90 million to \$586 million for various projects around the state, and particularly in New Castle County, DelDOT received an INFRA grant for the I-95 and 896 project and was able to advance that project's schedule as a result of that grant. Bridge preservation and maintenance was \$1 million. One notable change is the south Wilmington infrastructure improvements are funded at \$40 million, which is coming from the general fund instead of the transportation trust fund. \$152 million in funding will be spent in New Castle County for FY 2022 for various projects including Route 141, I-95 and Jay Drive, Route 40 and 896, Route 40 and 72, and other highway safety improvement projects. \$13 million was provided for Urbanized Surface Transportation Block Grants, which are allocated to Denny Road and Lexington Parkway. Bridge preservation and bridge painting is funded at \$17.1 million from FTA urbanized funds, and \$3.6 million was provided for CMAQ. An additional \$210,000 of FTA elderly and persons with disability funds was provided for transit vehicle replacement.

Andrea Trabelsi said next Thursday, New Castle County will have their second public forum for their comprehensive plan, NCC@2050. So, she hopes to see many of the Council members there. The American Recovery Plan Act efforts are underway, and the County has a number of committees that are gathering with representative stakeholders to discuss use of those funds that are coming from the federal government.

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

- Staff has completed the five social justice outreach training sessions that were coordinated in partnership with the University of Delaware and Delaware APA.
- The Union Street Public Workshop was held with forty-five attendees.
- The I-95 Cap Feasibility Study requests for proposal were due on June 15th. Nine proposals were received and shortlisted to four firms. Staff conducted interviews on July 1st. Hargreaves Jones and JMT were selected to complete the study.
- The Delmarva Freight Summit was held on June 16th with fifty attendees.
- Staff is working with the Red Clay Scenic Byway Alliance to update the corridor management plan. The public meeting was held on June 22nd.
- Staff is working with the coalition to plan a series of open street events in Wilmington. The first one was on May 15th on Market Street. The second was on June 19th at Riverside and the Teen Warehouse. The next will be on July 17th on Union Street.
- The City of New Castle Transportation Plan is working on an outreach pop-up event in conjunction with a concert in Battery Park on July 28th with a rain date of August 4th.
- Staff supported New Castle County as a session moderator at the NCC@2050 joint Interagency Working Group and Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting on June 3rd.
- On June 22nd staff presented at the AMPO and FHWA peer exchange on measuring social equity.
- The Churchmans Crossing Plan Update Public Workshop was held on June 23rd. Staff expanded the public outreach for the workshop by targeting EJ, minority and low English proficiency communities as well as contacting local and state elected officials for assistance.
- Staff will be conducting a Walkable Community Workshop in Townsend on Monday, July 12th.
- Staff will be participating in NCC@2050 Public Forum on July 15th.
- Both Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration approved the FY 2022 UPWP. Regarding the May financial report, WILMAPCO has expended about 82% of the budget. We are well under budget and preparing the June billing and year-end report.
- WILMAPCO staff return to the office on September 7th. The next Council meeting, which will be on September 9th, will be an in-person meeting.

7. Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Report:

Mr. Tom Fruehstorfer said the June 21st PAC meeting agenda contained no Action Items. The presentation and discussion items included the Union Street Reconfiguration Study, which was presented by Mr. Dave Gula. There was discussion about the angled, back-in parking and the availability of parking in the area in general. There was discussion of other problems in general, including speeding, sidewalk width in some places, and the need for additional bus benches. There was also discussion about the possibility of raised crosswalks. Mr. Gula shared that the City of Wilmington is not in favor of these due to snow plowing. A PAC member who lives in the area commended staff efforts on the plan. The WILMAPCO Freight Study Update was presented by Mr. Dan Blevins. There was discussion about where trucks park overnight and a suggestion that the Christiana Mall lots be used for truck parking seasonally. The Route 9 Paths Plan was presented by Mr. Jake Thompson and there was discussion of timelines to implement the plan's recommendations. Mr. Thompson explained that they are unfunded at this time. The "How an Idea Becomes a Project" video was viewed, and the PAC applauded the video and commented that it was well done.

8. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Report:

Ms. Heather Dunigan said at the May 20th TAC meeting there were no Action Items. Ms. Gladys Hurowitz from MDOT presented on the Maryland Freight Plan. Mr. Paul Moser from DelDOT

presented an update on progress in the priority projects from the New Castle County Bicycle Plan. There was a lot of information in the freight plan presentation that was used to guide our freight plan within the region, and it is good to see progress on some of the bicycle projects from the bicycle plan. At the June 17th meeting, there were no Action Items, however the TAC voted to extend Mr. Mike Fortner's term as chairperson for another year and added Mr. Matt Rogers as vice chair. Presentations at the June meeting included the Union Street Reconfiguration, the freight studies, and viewing the draft video, "How an Idea Becomes a Project". The TAC will be returning to in-person meetings in September, which will be held as the usual July picnic, and the Council is invited to that meeting. Ms. Zegeye added that the picnic is on September 16th.

ACTION ITEMS:

None.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

9. Churchmans Crossing Plan Update

Mr. Dan Blevins said the second workshop for the Churchmans Crossing Plan Update was on March 3rd with ninety-nine people registered. That workshop was largely a continuation of the discussion of land use and transportation scenarios that will be used in the analysis of the corridor. Some of the initial modeling results were shared, and the team started to propose performance metrics that will be used to score the projects in the corridor. There were a lot of projects in the 1997 plan that were not built, so it needs to be determined if those projects and others that have come up in the corridor should be continued in this plan. The team presented to the DeIDOT Resource Agency Meeting on March 12th as part of the PEL process to meet the resource agencies about the project's impact on wetlands and things of that nature. The Advisory Committee met on May 3rd to review the workshop, get additional feedback, and discuss the project evaluation criteria and implementation strategies. There are a few new tools available for applying to complete projects in the area. On June 23rd, the third workshop was held with fifty-nine people registered. There were fewer in attendance, but it is not clear if it was due to content or the nice weather. The outreach process is nearly complete, and hopefully this will be brought back to the Council for approval in January.

The June 23rd workshop was a much more technical workshop than in the past. The modeling results and analysis were reviewed. The team used the DeIDOT Peninsula Model and the land use scenario forecast option chosen is the balance land use forecast. Results are based on project performance in twelve criteria, and how these projects ranked within the project criteria. At this point some projects were removed from consideration., because as they were scored for the criteria some were not worth pursuing. Implementation strategies were introduced, and input was received. There are the traditional methods, but new tools include the CCEDs and the TIDs.

The balance land use forecast was used for the modeling. In November, December, and January, the team had a few studio sessions with Urban3 as a consultant, who was working with New Castle County. A lot of time was spent on land use to look at different options and scenarios. Balance land use forecast is more robust than what was seen in the trend projections and was used as part of the analysis for modelling. A list of projects was on the RTP financially constrained list. These were part of the list of projects that were going to be used in every scenario. Several projects were on the RTP aspirations list, some of which were in the 1997 plan and also a few more. A few that were not mapped, but still part of this were micro transit and automated transit vehicles. Additional projects for evaluation included Route 273, which

was added toward the end, but also the new Route 273/I-95 reconfiguration, which is happening now. There were few other bike/ped projects as well.

The criteria had twelve categories with which to rank each project. The criteria were measured to reflect what is most beneficial, neutral, or most adverse. The projects were evaluated to see if they were good for connectivity; improvement in person miles traveled; and congestion, considering how much traffic is the right amount. Projects were evaluated to see if they enhance transit, help with mode share, bicycle level of stress, economic development, safety, and constructability. This process also looked at the potential legal challenges, environmental impacts, culture, and noise and property impacts. Until recently, not much time was spent on bicycle/pedestrian level of service. DelDOT, particularly Mr. Paul Moser, developed a tool to score bicycle and pedestrian projects. All the projects related to bicycle or pedestrian pathways were mapped, and this tool evaluates how well they are connected to schools, community centers, employment centers, transit, and parks. It provides a very good scoring mechanism to see what projects give the best benefit. This analysis was used to score these projects. The analysis results are available on the WILMAPCO website including the scoring and costs.

The project team identified seven projects that can be removed from consideration as part of the analysis that was done. Many of these are I-95 ramp projects that were in the old plan prior to the I-95/Route 1 interchange, whose purpose was to eliminate the weave that was happening on I-95. A northbound I-95 ramp to Chapman Road, and both northbound and southbound I-95 ramps from Churchmans Road did not score well as they create weave on I-95, on top of lower volumes and redundancy. A couple of projects around Christiana Mall including the Brownleaf Road Extension, and the Eagle Run Road Connector, were redundant.

The CCEDs and the TIDs were introduced as possible implementation tools for the projects along the corridor. A lot of detail was presented to the public including what the TIDs and CCEDs are and how they are applicable to all or a portion of the study area. As CCEDs are limited by size, it is not applicable to the entire area, but could be applicable in sections.

There are one hundred and one signalized intersections throughout the entire study area. To evaluate all of them at once within the budget was not feasible, so the team will look at nine major intersections. This evaluation of intersections will be done soon.

With the projects that were removed from the list, the rest still need to be evaluated to see if they are a benefit to the area. There will be one more public meeting in the fall. Then the final report will be brought back to Council in January. A final model run will be done including just the retained projects to confirm that improvements keep the arterial LOS D, which is the right amount of congestion. That will be used as a standard as one of the measuring tools. Some of the bicycle/pedestrian improvements will be refined as some of those may come off the list as the result of removing of other projects, and implementation strategies will be recommended.

10. Union Street Reconfiguration and Streetscape Improvement Study

Mr. Dave Gula said the advisory committee needed to be comprised of groups that are interested and involved in this city street. The advisory committee is currently comprised of five state elected officials including the mayor's office and three City Council members, seventeen business and property owners, and residents representing four neighborhood groups.

The scope of work for the project is to make this a community-driven reconfiguration and streetscape study. This study follows a quick reconfiguration done in 2017, which was pushed

through by grass roots efforts, the city, and DelDOT. It was a restriping effort to make the road safer, add a bike lane, change the parking configuration, and make some crosswalk improvements, but it did not address streetscapes. The configuration went from three lanes to two. The goal of this project is to make it a great Union Street that is inviting to all users and invite economic revitalization. It has to have some urban design and beautification improvements for both businesses and residents. It is posted twenty-five miles-per-hour, but the speeds are generally higher. So, the goal is to make it more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly for residents to walk or bike more safely. Some blocks have bus stops, but not all.

The project area is on Union Street from Pennsylvania Avenue to Sycamore Street. There is an eighty-foot right-of-way and fifty-five feet of pavement from curb to curb. This does vary in some spots. The two travel lanes run one-way southbound. A southbound bike lane is on the left, but switches to sharrows at Maple Street. There are eight bus stops. The sidewalk widths vary. On-street, diagonal, back-in parking on the left side was instituted in 2017 to mixed reviews. The project team needs to work with the community to find a solution for parking. There is parallel parking in spots on the right. There are overhead utilities and utility cabinets. Removing the overhead utilities is not anticipated however, if possible, the team would work with the utilities to consolidate those operations to one side of the street. There are planters, signs, benches, but also garbage cans on the street. Street improvements must take into account that this is a working street where people also live. The unbuffered bike lane is a challenge. The back-in parking requires sixteen feet, but in some places parallel parking is ten feet wide on the same side of the street, causing six feet of gap. Wilmington Initiatives is working with the city on lane widths. The travelling lanes here are twelve-feet wide, but eleven feet or maybe ten and a half feet would be wide enough. Bus operations need to be considered, but there is a lot of pavement there. Sidewalks vary in width to allow café-style seating for restaurants in some areas, but not others.

The study area is divided into three different categories. Pennsylvania Avenue to 9th Street is auto oriented with auto dealerships at Pennsylvania Avenue and an auto dealership maintenance section near 10th Street. There are some pull-in parking lots on the left side. It is very wide, which allows speeding. The middle section, between 9th and Lancaster, is more pedestrian oriented. It is mixed use and there are a few crosswalks. The ground floor on the left side of the street is commercial. On the right is a mix including the back side of some residences. At 3rd Street on the left is a fire station, which requires access and signals. The bottom portion of the study area is between Lancaster Avenue and Sycamore Street. It is mostly residential with very little commercial. There are crosswalks and landscaping.

Regarding issues and opportunities, pedestrian needs are very high. This whole street is ADA challenged with both the condition of the sidewalks and a clear path. There are planters, but additional street trees and greenery should be factored in. In an urban environment, street trees help to keep it cooler and absorb carbon dioxide. There are no gathering spaces along the street, so wider sidewalks could provide for parklets and create space for some socialization along the corridor. The bike lane is unprotected and unbuffered. Bike parking is lacking in some areas. Union Street is part of Wilmington's bicycle network in their bicycle plan that was adopted a year and a half ago, so the team needs to figure out the best configuration for a bike lane and facilities. For transit, there are eight bus stops, but not many amenities. There are a couple of benches, but there is a want for shelters. DTC is on the project team, so the team will work to find the best solutions. Moving the bike lane may impact how the bus stops are configured. Improvements are not needed for personal vehicles, but traffic calming is needed. Narrowing the lanes is important. Crosswalks need to be safer, and narrowing the crossing is important as fifty-five feet of pavement is a lot to cross. There has been consideration of a raised crosswalk.

Public Works was not factored into that discussion yet, but generally they would not support that. Because this is going to be a featured commercial street, they might consider different treatments here. There is on-street parking, but with back-in parking being loved and hated almost equally, the team will have to find a solution to that.

There is some flooding at the intersection at Pennsylvania Avenue. Green stormwater management is being considered because that intersection gets inundated. There are some downstream problems that cause that intersection to flood, but if a solution could be found to remove any water getting in there from storm events, that would be a benefit.

Curb zone management is being considered, because there are deliveries and buses during the day, but it is possible to create some flexible areas. Wilmington has other places where a travel lane serves as parking in off-peak times, so maybe there is a way to assign parking areas to have adequate loading zones when needed then and also have more parking when needed. There are also services like Uber and Uber Eats, so there are a lot of things to consider. Since this is a twenty-year plan, EV charging stations in the area also need to be considered.

As part of placemaking and aesthetics, a rain garden treatment may mitigate some of the flooding as there is a significant downhill stretch of Union Street that comes from 10th Street to Pennsylvania Avenue. If some of that water could be caught with a rain garden that would certainly help with some of the problems in that intersection.

Much of the visioning work began in 2016 when West Side Grows Together organized a better block event. They blocked off one travel lane and put in a painted bike lane. It was just for a couple of days, but it showed how the road would function with two-lanes instead of three. They did this a couple of times before the 2017 reconfiguration. Wilmington just finished its comp plan, which has some sections that talk about Union Street. Union Street is also in the Wilmington Bike Plan, so it has to be maintained as a bike-friendly street. In the comp plan, when the outreach was done, Union Street was listed as one of the great streets in Wilmington, but that does not mean that it is done. Some of the desired characteristics for Union Street is to have it be more people-oriented and to beautify it. This is a commercial, neighborhood street. There is a lot of population in the surrounding neighborhoods, even more than in the downtown business district, so Union Street is not competing with the downtown streets like Market. The infrastructure improvements that it needs will hopefully make it more inviting.

The first Advisory Committee meeting was on April 22nd. A legislative meeting for a couple of legislators was held on April 6th. The virtual public workshop held on May 19th was well attended for this area with about forty-five attendees. After that workshop, online activities and surveys were available through June 2nd. Much of the feedback related to the street needing to be more friendly for pedestrians. The concepts will be developed based on a purpose and need that will be used in a Planning Environmental and Linkage (PEL) study. Part of that purpose and need is this street should function better for pedestrians. When the reconfiguration was done, the average speed was closer to 35 mph than 25 mph. After the reconfiguration, speeds were reduced two to three miles per hour, but the goal is to get closer to 25 mph overall speeds. While looking at crash data, the team is also looking at speed data. It has been difficult to collect new traffic data because of COVID, but from previous work and the consumers in the community, it is clear that traffic speeds need to be reduced. One of the other things that has come out is parking. The challenge is that even now with no events, people park in the neighborhoods. People on Bancroft say that in the evening, they are not able to park near their homes because people are parking there to use the restaurants. It is a bit of a regional draw so a parking facility may need to be considered near here. If the back-in, angled parking is

removed, that will cost about nine spaces, which does not seem like a lot, but if there is already a shortage than that is a bigger problem.

Concepts are under development now. The next step is to take concepts to the Advisory Committee and then back to the public. Then the preferred concept will be developed based on the analysis of those concepts and public feedback. A final public meeting will be held later this fall and then a final report will be completed hopefully by the end of the year.

Mr. Marc Cote said some people love the back-in parking, and some hate it. When compared to head-in parking, do more people just hate head-in parking? Mr. Gula replied with slower travel speeds head-in parking might work, but with traffic at 35 mph and higher the decision was made by DelDOT and the City to do back-in parking. People are complaining about back-in parking, but technically it requires less maneuvering than parallel parking. One of the problems is the back-in parking is currently on the left side, so as a driver it is a little awkward, but pulling out is worse, because the driver is looking back over their shoulder to see what is coming and if it is coming at 30 miles per hour, there is less time to react. Also, since the travel lane is adjacent to the bike lane, drivers back across the bike lane to get into a space, which is awkward. When talking about concepts, the team considered what it would look like if there was back-in parking on the right side, where drivers go from a travel lane directly into a space, then when pulling out drivers have a better view of oncoming traffic. The mayor in particular is not a fan. The business owners like it because it adds more parking. We already know that there is a bigger parking problem. If we have to put in some kind of a parking area, we may ask the Woodlawn Library, which is a block off Union if there could be overflow parking there in the evenings. The city will need to make some decisions about the future of parking in this area, because it is going to be a regional entertainment center and they might need to have structured parking

Mr. Coté said the ability to provide designated spots for services like Uber Eats and Lyft has a much higher turnover than a regular parking space. It seems like that would be a better use of the space and promote further economic development through the restaurants' ability to serve customers faster through delivery. Mr. Gula said that flex zone is a major conversation for them. These parking spots are not policed, especially in the evening. There are no meters in these areas, so parking does not necessarily turn over quickly. Even if it is signed "2 Hours" if no one is checking and there is no meter a car could be left there for hours. There may be even residents and employees parking there. To encourage turn over in the area metering might help so people do not park there all day.

Via chat, Mr. Robert Hicks said, "I think there are more pros than cons in this back-in angle parking than parallel and front-in parking. This is especially true for Delaware where most drivers are poor at parallel parking. Delawareans just do not get enough parallel parking practice."

11. WILMAPCO Freight Studies Update

Mr. Dan Blevins said there are three freight studies currently underway. The Delaware Statewide Truck Parking Study is a two-part approach. One is addressing the federal mandates required for Jason's Law regarding truck parking in the state, but also addresses more localized truck parking and staging that has been seen throughout the State of Delaware. Since January when this was last discussed with Council, a second focus group was held with members of the trucking industry and the third technical memo was created. Delaware has three hundred and thirty spaces. Most are in the private sector. There are very limited overnight parking locations, and there are many rules about where trucks can park overnight in these locations. There are

about eight hundred spaces nearby in Elkton and southern New Jersey. This report tapped into a lot of newer data sources including an app used in the trucking industry called TruckerPath which was used to look at truck parking utilization. With the analysis of this data, it was found that throughout the state, parking midday is available, but begins to fill in the evening, then overnight is the peak period. Then the data was used to get a geographic sense of where there are truck parking problems overnight.

One of the major areas of concern is undesignated truck parking. Tapping into big data resulted in finding about 17 million truck waypoints throughout the months analyzed. All of this work used 2019 data, because 2020 is going to be an anomalous year. Then, places were identified where trucks parked for more than thirty minutes outside of designated truck parking areas. In the end, thirty-two undesignated truck parking clusters were found. These are places where trucks congregate for more than thirty minutes outside of the designated facilities. These clusters were then classified by type based on location such as near a rest area, off ramps, shoulders, last mile, or near a truck stop. Once identified, the team was able to research key questions, such as why they are stopping where they are, the duration of their stay, and whether or not they are stopping for hours-of-service regulations or staging themselves for the morning. For each of those locations, the team built a dataset that talks about the duration, and other key factors that help in figuring out possible solutions for each of these areas. This led to a traditional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis for truck parking in the state. One of the strengths is that parking is not at full capacity even during the peak hours. One of the opportunities is proximity to New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, which makes coordination and exchange of information possible. There are three categories of recommendations including expansion of existing facilities; use of information and technology; and policies and programs. It is possible a land use change or different policies about where trucks are allowed to park can help.

The report should be out in the next week or so. In the report, the state is divided into northern New Castle County, the central part of New Castle County, Kent, and then Sussex. The report looks at these areas to start to identify possible solutions based on those clusters and where they were found. The report examines the parcels, mostly owned by the State of Delaware, with the idea that if they are near some of these clusters perhaps those could be leveraged for additional parking. Working with new development is also possible so they have some staging areas available on their properties for the early pickups to get ahead of the need at some of these locations, or as businesses are moving in perhaps have that as part of the process of approval for land use development. The full draft report should be done very soon. This should come back to Council in September for adoption.

The second study is the First/Final Mile Freight Network Development Study. First/Final mile refers to the local collector roads that are off the interstates and major arterials and carry of the final pick up or the first part of the delivery. These go through, usually, residential areas or roads that are not quite designed for carrying the movements that they are. They represent a little more than a quarter of total freight deliveries, so when they are inefficient or there are difficulties, the cost is passed on to the consumer. The overall objectives of this study are to identify where these connections are, the needs and issues of these connections, and how to address those needs.

There were focus group meetings in January and June. The focus group included many people from the industry, as well as city and county planners, which led to a good dialog. Wikimap was used as a tool for members of the public and those who work in the industry to pinpoint where there are issues with mobility, safety, road condition, or land use conflicts throughout the state.

With about one hundred and twenty entries, this helped the team build those minute details into the report that is being generated. The draft final mile network is in a GIS file with numerous attributes that were sorted into five different categories including land use, mobility, condition of the road, institutional and safety. The intention is for this to be a living data set that that can be used throughout much of the planning practices for WILMAPCO, Dover-Kent MPO, and DeIDOT as time goes on. It could help with looking at potential development activity to see if it is within a final mile, then some of these considerations could be brought into the planning process.

Many first/final mile roads appear to be in areas of low population density, particularly south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. Many are in level 4 designations on the Office of State Planning Coordination's state strategies map. Fortunately, few are in areas with potential sea level rise issues. About ten percent of them have no shoulder, indicating very small, low-classification roads. There is a full analysis in working paper two on the website.

Many of these roads run through residential areas, so freight movement needs to be balanced with the community needs. If freight movement is restricted in one place, it will happen elsewhere, which is the trade-off when a decision is being made. A strategic framework was developed for these situations to look to protect, manage, or accommodate. Each conflict has a different mix of needs which will determine if we protect or manage them, or try to accommodate them with, for example, turning radii or truck aprons. So, there is a way to find a balance that brings that movement in consideration when improvements are being made.

Some of the final work to be done includes a sight visit, work on the final draft reports, and taking a closer look at case studies the consultant team, CPCS, has found throughout the country that could be applied as part of a tool kit for this area.

The third study is the Impacts/Benefits Analysis of Truck Access Improvements around the Port of Wilmington Area. A workshop was held on March 24th with about fifty-three attendees. The modeling efforts are underway. This has a significant technical element, so the workshop was held much earlier. Good feedback was received. There were many ideas that were put into the Route 9 Study, Southbridge Study, and Wilmington's most recent Comp Plan. It really came down to three main alternatives to address truck parking in and around the Port of Wilmington. This report explores those alternatives with different performance measures to see how they are going to impact the efficiency of freight movement without community conflicts. The public is looking for better enforcement of existing laws, more fines, or to move the businesses out of the area. The impact in the community is one key purpose of the study which was heard from the outreach efforts.

The three major projects that the team is looking to analyze include the Pigeon Point Extension, which allows access from the port to I-495. This would divert a lot of traffic off of Route 9. It is expensive, but the team wants to see the impacts of that. An extension of Grarasches Lane would potentially divert trips from the Southbridge area, and possibly give access to Heald Street. The reconfiguration of Pyles Lane would add truck access directly to Route 9, but it might make a smoother transition in and out of the port area.

The schedule is to continue the current modeling effort. An Advisory Committee meeting is planned for August and a public workshop in late August or early September. The project pages can be found on the WILMAPCO website. DeIDOT is working on the 2022 Statewide Freight Plan Update. The state plan must be submitted to the FHWA by October 2022. Information about that can be found at <http://freight.deldot.gov>.

Mr. Tyson Byrne said regarding truck parking, one of the major findings when Maryland did their truck parking survey was to also look at the facilities available around truck parking such as restrooms and showers. He asked if the Delaware study was looking at any of those as they are vital components to truck parking. Mr. Blevins replied yes, as part of the focus groups the Delaware Motor Truck Association introduced a couple of professional truck drivers, who were able to provide some of the details of what truck drivers are looking for at stops. Royal Farms in the southern part of the state have large truck parking areas and truckers like to stop there for the bathrooms, to get coffee, and things of that nature, so they do want to see those amenities. This effort helps to draw the conclusion of where there should be more long-term facilities with those types of amenities. The urban areas around Wilmington with average stops of 1.8 hours is where truckers are staging, but other places with much longer stops are areas where those amenities would be something sought after by the truckers. So, it helps to geographically locate where that is more appropriate.

Mr. John Sisson said we are starting to transition our fleet to electric. On the horizon, whether tractor trailers go electric or use some alternate fuel, does that play a part in the long-term look at these studies? Mr. Blevins replied there are many brands that are working on electric vehicles and the like. Natural gas is another major option. Maybe not tractor trailers, but many trash companies are going to those, because they are going out and coming back to the same location. Throughout the industry there is a push to get electric vehicles and automated vehicles, especially for the mundane activities. We are not sure how quickly it will happen. The range is a problem. Shorter distances are one thing, but cross-country runs can do it only after there is enough infrastructure for frequent stops. They are moving at roughly the same pace as the companies putting electric cars on the road. This study is more looking at the amenities and the stops, not what they are driving at the moment. Mr. Sisson said he knows it is probably further out, but they will want to charge when they stop if it is electric. Mr. Blevins said the staging runs are more local as in one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles. They would be able to make those runs a single charge. Long haul would be more of a concern.

12. Route 9 Paths Plan

Mr. Jake Thompson said the first draft of the Route 9 Paths Plan is completed. The Paths Plan is a new plan that is branching off the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan, which proposed a network of walking and biking paths for the corridor. The Paths Plan expands and refines those pedestrian and bicycle recommendations as well as develops new recommendations for a network of paths in the Route 9 corridor. The Paths Plan includes an executive summary; background information on the Master Plan, the Monitoring Committee, and the purpose of the Paths Plan; existing conditions, data and maps; recommendations from recent plans, which looks at recommendations from the Master Plan; our technical prioritization process; our public outreach process and results; the recommendations of the Paths Plan; and the next steps for implementation. The Existing Conditions sections covers a variety of transportation data on the percentage of commuters that walk, bike, or take transit to work; zero car households; walking and biking crashes; bus ridership; bicycle level of traffic stress (Bike LTS); low-stress bicycling islands; as well as data from the Social Determinants of Health data report; the locations of workplaces; and criminal activity. The Recommendations from Recent Plans section includes a revised map of bicycle/pedestrian routes from the Master Plan. This is not shown as recommendations for the Paths Plan, but this is a starting point for the Paths Plan, and everything in this plan is building off of this prior work. In this section we also took a closer look at those prior recommendations, put together a missing links analysis which looks at specific sections of those recommendations that could make crucial connections between neighborhoods. Those missing links were then scored based on the population they connect,

and that score is factored into the prioritization. Our technical prioritization process was used to determine which areas of the corridor would benefit the most from bicycle and pedestrian improvements. This uses data from the Existing Conditions section and missing links analysis to give a score to each segment in the study area. The highest scores are near the center of the corridor around Dunleith, Oakmont, and Rosegate. These neighborhoods would benefit most though all neighborhoods would benefit. In this section the prioritization score of the road segments was applied to past recommendations. This is followed by a detailed chart of each of the proposed route segments and their scores.

Our Public Outreach Methods included an online public survey that was active from August through February. That included a drawing for a \$25 Visa gift card to encourage participation and that has been awarded. We promoted the plan through Facebook ads, the WILMAPCO newsletter, and Colonial Clippings, which is the school district's newsletter. Our website, which is now showing the draft report, previously had the public survey as well as an overview presentation including all the maps and data that was put together for this plan. Spanish translations of everything including the survey were available. In December staff had a class session with an AP Human Geography class at William Penn High School and those students also took the survey. A paper version of the survey was distributed door to door to make sure we reached our quota of at least five responses per neighborhood, which we did, and especially hear from people who might not have access to the internet. The field survey was completed by Ms. Dora Williams of the New Castle Preventions Coalition. One hundred and eighty-one responses to the public survey were received, the majority of which were from the field survey, and five of those were taken in Spanish. The majority of respondents were ages 18-64. The majority were female, and 77% of respondents live in the corridor.

The first couple of questions of the survey ask how often you walk and how often you bike for transportation and 44% never walk for transportation, while a fair amount do at least occasionally. 70% never bike. People who answered less than once per month to either of these questions received a follow-up question asking the main reasons they do not walk or bike for transportation. Many of those reasons have to do with saying they prefer to drive, they are concerned about a lack of infrastructure, they do not own a bike, they are concerned about safety, and distances to destinations. When asked if they agree with the statement, "Creating a better network of pathways will result in more people walking and biking", the average agreement level was 73%, which suggests that most people are on board with the idea of the Paths Plan. We asked for any destinations you would like to bike or walk to if there was a safer way to do so, which locations would warrant better connections. Most frequently mentioned was Route 9 itself, followed by neighborhood parks, the Cities of Wilmington and New Castle, local businesses, the Markell Trail, and the Route 9 Library. When asked if walking and biking conditions need to be improved in your neighborhood, 60% said yes, while only 19% said no. So, most people would like to see improvements at the neighborhood level. We asked in your neighborhood which roads present the greatest physical safety concerns, and respondents could list up to three locations. We counted up each time each location was mentioned and put them on a map to show the most dangerous locations based on public survey feedback. Route 9 itself was mentioned the most times, followed by Route 13, intersections on Route 9, Memorial Drive and Lambson Lane. We then asked people to rank the prioritization criteria and also asked in a non-technical manner, which of the following are most important in considering where limited funding should be spent on walking and biking projects, and these could be ranked in any order. People walking to work came out on top, followed by criminal activity, and indicators of public health concern. We then picked seven high-scoring recommendations from the draft recommendations and asked how beneficial it would be to add walking or biking improvements to the following locations, and each of these could be rated individually with their

own slider from 0% to 100%, being very beneficial. Looking at the average percent beneficial, Route 9, where it crosses I-295 came out on top, followed by Rogers Road, Boulden Boulevard, and Lambson Lane. Then, for each of the seven locations from that question, we asked how those connections should be made and gave a few examples of types of infrastructure to get the ideas going. We counted up the number of times each of these were mentioned in relation to each location. So, for all seven of them, mixed-use paths and off-road trails were mentioned frequently, as well as improving sidewalks. Answers from open-ended questions were captured and factored into our final recommendations.

The Recommendations section includes a map of the proposed path network that is followed by a detailed chart of each of those proposed route segments. It shows three different path types that are proposed in the plan with examples, and general recommendations, which are not mapped. There are three path types proposed in the plan with a general description of which type of infrastructure would make the most sense for each route in the path network. The mixed-use paths can be built on or alongside roads, are fully separated from traffic, paved, can accommodate two-way walking or biking traffic, can be built on one or both sides of the road, can take the place of a sidewalk or exist alongside of one. Off-road paths do not follow an existing right-of-way; can be built in parks, on undeveloped land, or between buildings where land and funding are available; this is a great way to close gaps between neighborhoods that do not otherwise have a road connection. Neighborhood bikeways are the lowest-cost solution. They are upgrades to already low-stress neighborhood streets consisting of paint and signage and are a great way to calm traffic and encourage biking on streets that are already very safe. These should be accompanied by sidewalk upgrades as needed for people walking as well.

The Proposed Path Network is a refinement of the map of the proposed routes from the Master Plan based on all of our technical analysis and public feedback. The path types for each individual route were determined based on public feedback for what people would like to see on each route, the existing right of way as wider streets can accommodate mixed-use paths, and Bike LTS analysis as low-stress streets are good candidates for neighborhood bikeways. They were then ranked based on the technical prioritization process. The higher score would lead to a lower rank number. These were adjusted based on public feedback. Some of them have letter suffixes which means they have multiple sections with different path types. Route 9 ranked first, and this had a design that was proposed in the Route 9 Master Plan consisting of two sections, which would have mixed-use paths on both sides of the Route 9 for the majority of the route from Wilmington to New Castle as well as other streetscape improvements with the exception of where it crosses over I-295, which would be a single mixed-use path on the median. This would be to reduce conflicts with the on and off ramps. These two different designs would be connected by roundabouts at Memorial Drive and Cherry Lane so path users in that median could navigate around the roundabouts to the outsides of Route 9 and the rest of the corridor. Next is number 11, Boulden Boulevard, which was identified as the most impactful missing link in our missing links analysis, connecting over 9000 people in the immediate area. This would consist of a mixed-use path connecting Moores Lane as well as the entire Route 9 corridor, to the Markell Trail. Number 6 consists of an off-road path behind the Route 9 Library, connecting two major destinations, the library and the Rose Hill Community Center. This would serve as a car-free alternative to Route 9 between these two destinations and connect Lambson Lane to West Avenue. Number 16 consists of connections to Simonds Gardens Park, which was frequently requested in public outreach. There are a few different parts here. Subsection 16a would be a couple of short connector paths within the park to connect to the surrounding roads. 16b would be a neighborhood bikeway on Simonds Drive to get people in and out of the park. 16c is an off-road path that currently is on private but undeveloped land that may be possible through easement or if that land goes up for sale and if that is built it could connect to a

neighborhood bikeway on Thorn Lane. These would connect to mixed-use paths in the surrounding areas along Dock View Drive, Rose Lane, and Lambson Lane. Number 42 is a crossing either over or under I-295. Currently the only way to get between neighborhoods that are divided by this highway is on Route 9 itself and as of now there is no bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure, which is very unsafe. Even if those mixed-use paths are built, we would really benefit from another connection across the highway. So, this would be either an elevated path or a tunnel. It would be a long-term, high-cost project that would require further study. It would be dependent on neighboring paths being built, particularly number 40, which would be an off-road path behind McCullough Middle School, which would also be a great way for students to get to school, and on the other side, number 47 would be a mixed-use path on Lander's Lane and Lander's Spur. The plan also includes a few general recommendations. Those include completing and repairing sidewalks and making sure they are continuous, free of obstructions and meet ADA standards; making path connections contiguous to ensure smooth and safe transitions and enable complete trips from origin to destination; improve lighting, especially pedestrian-scale which is better at lighting up sidewalks and paths to ensure the safety of all users and deter crime; and name and sign the paths so people are aware of the paths, where to find them, and they have an identity. These names could be based on roads and destinations they connect, or they could be decided through a community outreach process.

The next steps get into implementation. The paths should be implemented in order of priority. DelDOT, the County, and other agencies will design, engineer, and construct each segment in the path network. There are few different funding opportunities to build these paths including the Capital Transportation Program, the Community Transportation Fund, and the Transportation Alternatives Program which includes Safe Routes to School. Neighborhood bikeways would be the lowest cost solution and could be implemented within five years if funding is available. Mixed-use paths and off-road paths would be medium to high-cost and can be implemented within ten years. The elevated path or tunnel under I-295 would be a high-cost project and would require further study, which should be implemented in less than twenty years if funding is available.

The Paths Plan has been reviewed by the Route 9 Monitoring Committee and the Route 9 Health Subcommittee as well as the PAC. Those committees did suggest some minor edits, and we will continue to revise the draft. A final draft should be ready this fall. The draft is available on the WILMAPCO website.

13. WILMAPCO Video: How an Idea Becomes a Project

Ms. Randi Novakoff said this is the third in the series of five outreach videos. This video focuses on how an idea becomes a project and the TIP and RTP process. The video is five minutes long and these videos are intended to be a way to explain transportation planning in a fun, easily understood way. *The video was shown.* The completed videos are currently being housed on the WILMAPCO YouTube channel, to which everyone is encouraged to subscribe and share. Staff is working with the New Castle County Library System, some of the local school districts, and some local T.V. stations to play the videos. We welcome you to share any of the videos with your connections.

From the chat, Mr. Cote said "Cool video"; Ms. Trabelsi said, "Yes, nice video!"

Mr. Sisson said the next Council meeting is September 9th and we hope to have that in-person at WILMAPCO.

Mr. Marc Coté said that he is retiring at the end of the month and Ms. Pam Steinebach will be the new Director of Planning on August 1st. Mr. Sisson thanked Mr. Coté and wished him well in his retirement.

From the chat, Ms. Trabelsi said, "Best wishes, Marc!"

INFORMATION ITEMS:

14. DeIDOT's Administrative Modification Request Letters

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

ATTACHMENTS: (0)