

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WILMAPCO Conference Room, April 18, 2016

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Dave Carter, Southern New Castle County Alliance
Pat Folk, Cecil County
Joe Mitchell, Cecil County
Jeff Peters, Pike Creek Valley Civic League
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Peggy Schultz, League of Women Voters
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance
Vic Singer, Civic League of New Castle County
Francis Swift, GHADA
Javier Torrijos, Delaware Hispanic Commission
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington (Chair)

Absent:

Wes Avera, Centreville Civic League
Bruce Brunoizzi, City of Wilmington
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee
William Dunn, New Castle County Civic League
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County
Jim Lardear, DE State Chamber of Commerce*
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Brett Saddler, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation
Charles Shaw, AARP
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City

*** Reserve PAC Members**

Guests:

Andrew Emanuele, U.S. Federal Highway Administration
Kyron Robinson, Citizen

Staff Members:

Bill Swiatek, Senior Planner
Jacob Thompson, Transportation Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler

Antonio Valenzuela, PAC Chair, called the meeting to order at

7:00 PM

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

7:02 PM

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Carter seconded by Mr. Singer the PAC approved the February 29, 2016, meeting minutes.

Motion passed

(4/18/16-01)

2. Public Comment:

7:05 PM

3. Executive Director's Report:

7:10 PM

Tigist Zegeye said the WILMAPCO Council met on March 10, 2016. The nominating committee for the 2017 officers for Chair and Vice Chair included Mayor Spencer, Town of Newport; Lyn Erickson, MDOT; and Connie Holland, Delaware Office of State Planning. The Council adopted the FY 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Presentations and discussions by WILMAPCO staff included the FY 2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), SR 9 Corridor Master Plan, and North Claymont Area Master Plan.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff is coordinating with the City of Newark on activities for Bike Month in May.
- Staff is participating in the University of Delaware Campus Framework Master Plan Transportation and Accessibility Working Group.
- Staff presented at the Charlestown Commissioners meeting.
- Staff hosted the National Park Service Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route planning meeting at WILMAPCO.
- Staff is working on the North Claymont Area Master Plan and will attend the management committee meeting on June 1 and public workshop on June 6, 2016.
- Staff attended the American Public Transit Association Peer Exchange in Baltimore to discuss Environmental Justice (EJ) Analysis.
- Staff presented EJ and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning information at the National Safe Route to School conference in Columbus, Ohio.
- Staff is helping to select alternative fuel projects for funding as part of a DNREC grant.
- Staff is working with the Town of Elkton and SHA on an Elkton Pedestrian Plan.
- Staff has begun working on the Ardentown Pathway Plan.
- Staff continues to work on SRTS including Downes, Elbert-Palmer, Claymont, and Stubbs Elementary Schools.
- Staff is participating in five South Wilmington Planning Network community events in Southbridge that are targeting youth and include a cooking demonstration, bike safety, and financial literacy education.
- Staff will exhibit at the Wilmington Earth Day event on April 22, 2016.
- Staff will host the DART Public Hearing on April 26, 2016.
- Staff will exhibit at the Platinum Picnic on June 8, 2016.
- Ms. Zegeye distributed a sign-up sheet for PAC members to volunteer at WILMAPCO exhibits at various public outreach events.
- Ms. Zegeye introduced Andrew Emanuele, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), who is from Minnesota, and has been helping WILMAPCO with projects as part of a FHWA professional development program.

Dave Carter asked has anyone from the Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) tried to make Environmental Justice (EJ) efforts statewide. Ms. Zegeye said that

she is not aware of a statewide EJ effort, however the Congestion Management System (CMS) is being looked at statewide.

Bill Swiatek said Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) has received some funding for a health plan in Kent County, and a big part of it includes an EJ analysis. Mr. Carter said he is looking for a statewide map that shows where the EJ efforts are being conducted. Ms. Zegeye said she can ask DelDOT.

Vic Singer said he has attended WILMAPCO's CMS meetings, and the progress of the group is remarkable. It opens up such a breadth of activity and potential to increase the effectiveness of the capital plan we already have. Mr. Singer also said the CMS strategy of monitoring traffic and adjusting signal timing in real-time is such an effective and inexpensive tool. The same CMS strategy in Kent County could be useful too.

ACTION ITEMS:

4. Public Outreach Portion of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) 7:20 PM

Randi Novakoff said the UPWP includes the budget, and outlines the tasks and the studies that WILMAPCO will conduct in the new fiscal year. The public outreach portion of the UPWP includes public meetings and public outreach, which provides for staff to go to public meetings, workshops, and events to present WILMAPCO information. The public outreach strategy is two-fold, including a general philosophy, where we look for organizations that will spread our information and distribute our materials. The second strategy is a more targeted approach that tailors our efforts to a specific audience.

We also provide public information documents, brochures, and flyers, and we are currently updating the Transportation Planning Guide, which PAC will review soon. The TIP Quick Guide is another example for which PAC had provided feedback. We try to make sure our documents don't include jargon or too many acronyms. Our documents also show how people have an impact on the system.

Staff provides a printed newsletter, the Transporter, which goes out to 5,000 people, and a monthly E-news publication that goes out to 2,000 people. Our multi-media and Power Point presentations are provided to various organizations and groups, and we manage our own website. Meetings, projects, and plans are provided on the website homepage, and all the documents are linked to the page, which is up-to-date.

The School Children Education and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is another important aspect of WILMAPCO's public outreach program, which includes helping to coordinate programs for various schools, working on Delaware's teaching curriculum, and providing support for bike/safety programs. In addition, WILMAPCO supports The Newark Bike Project Youth Empowerment Program with some funding, which helps kids get involved in the WILMAPCO process. Mr. Carter asked if there are other bike projects in other areas. Ms. Novakoff said yes there is a Wilmington Bike Project. Mr. Carter asked if there is a program in Middletown, could WILMAPCO help. Ms. Novakoff said yes we would consider collaborating with another group on their program.

The Media Relations Coordination and Social Media aspect of public outreach includes working with radio stations on 30-second commercials; and reaching out to various newspapers and TV stations to promote our events and participate in the process. We are also writing press releases and sending them to the various news media outlets,

sending Wilmington News Journal e-mail (10,000) blasts, and posting information on facebook pages.

Mr. Carter asked if WILMAPCO has an inventory of facebook pages. Ms. Novakoff said there are some groups' facebook pages where WILMAPCO posts information like the New Castle Civic League page. Mr. Carter thought it would be a good idea to develop an inventory. Ms. Novakoff said it sounds like a good task for the Civic League.

Mr. Valenzuela suggested that WILMAPCO could use chatbox, which is a way to find out about a project, and when you type the words in the information comes back to you including relevant website addresses. Ms. Novakoff said she would look into that. Ms. Zegeye said we have an interactive map for TIP projects on the website.

WILMAPCO strives to coordinate with other agencies on public outreach, to make the best use of our limited funding, and the best use of all our resources. We also manage the Air Quality Public Partnership (AQP) of Delaware, which is a group of citizens, businesses, and agencies working together to inform citizens about air quality issues. The AQP has a Facebook page. In addition, the partnership includes the mascot, Tropo. This year we are piloting Tropo in elementary schools, and we have plans for an activity book and poster and will present Tropo statewide.

WILMAPCO conducts Environmental Transportation (EJ) and Transportation Justice (TJ) outreach, to make sure those who are hard to reach are involved in the planning process as much as possible. We also assist with the Urban Bike Project, which is similar to the Newark Bike project that teaches youth to safely ride and maintain their bikes. WILMAPCO provides some financial support for their program.

The Public Opinion Survey is conducted each year in Cecil County and every four years in New Castle County, to make sure the strategies of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update are in line with the citizens' transportation needs, and their knowledge of WILMAPCO and air quality issues in New Castle and Cecil counties.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Carter seconded by Mr. Singer the PAC approved the Public Outreach Portion of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Motion passed.

(4-18-16-02)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

5. Route 9 Corridor Master Plan

7:30 PM

Mr. Swiatek said the study area is located along Route 9 between the City of Wilmington and the City of New Castle, and runs east to west from Route 13 to the Delaware River. The management committee includes WILMAPCO; New Castle County Land Use and Community Services Departments; DeIDOT; Delaware Office of State Planning (OSPC); and Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO).

The scope of the SR 9 Corridor Master Plan encompasses the following initiatives: 1) Improve access to jobs, healthy foods, recreation, community services, and affordable housing; 2) Promote mixed-use and mixed-income redevelopment; 3) Mitigate environmental and health concerns; 4) Examine land use and recommend zoning adjustments; and 5) Recommend roadway improvements that promote the use of alternative transportation and manage truck traffic.

The public process is very important and will be a multi-pronged approach including the following traditional outreach methods: Two workshops, stakeholder meetings, and a project website/facebook page. Deeper engagement activities such as festival participation, engagement at food truck gatherings, bus exit polls, sidewalk/storefront comment boards, and others will also be used.

Additionally, an Advisory Committee has been set up includes eleven civic associations; the All Civics grouping; New Castle Prevention Coalition; Rose Hill Community Center; Public Safety; Colonial School District; Nemours/ DE HEAL, DRBA, and DNREC.

The following tasks and timeline have been developed:

Task 1 -- Identify issues, opportunities, and constraints (December, 2015 - February, 2016) and includes demographics, land use, transportation, environmental, community, and food access. A total of 27 different maps were produced, including 2015 zoning, population and employment change, vacancies and income, highway conditions, bus ridership, non-motorized transportation, food access, and flood risk adaptation maps.

Task 2 -- Develop a Real Estate/Economic Development Assessment (January 2016-April 2016) and includes understanding market realities and identifying opportunities for redevelopment. This will provide a set of redevelopment strategies for evaluating alternative land uses and development programs.

Task 3 -- Provide community visioning (January 2016-April 2016) and includes stakeholder meetings and a public workshop. This will help in understanding constraints and opportunities, outlines goals and objectives, and begins to identify a broad vision for the area.

Task 4 -- Draft corridor vision and development alternatives (May 2016-September 2016) and creates a range of reasonable development alternatives based on technical analysis and community vision. This will identify a base case scenario and three alternative scenarios for additional analysis.

Task 5 -- Provide a preferred alternative and final report (September 2016-December 2016) and includes a second public workshop, final preferred development plan, and final streetscape plans, street sections, and multi-modal improvements. This will provide a highly visual report detailing the public process, analysis of the plan alternatives, preferred development plan, and recommendations.

Mr. Swiatek also reviewed some of the following maps and information:

- Route 9 area is surrounded by industrial land, which leads to concerns with pollution, noise, and general quality of life/health deterioration.
- Employment and population projections indicate the area will lose approximately 700 people and gain 400 jobs in the next two decades.
- Neighborhoods are generally segregated by income and racial and ethnic makeup along the corridor.
- 16,000 vehicles travel north and south along Route 9 on a given day. Level of Service (LOS) counts, where available, indicate LOS A; this would seem to indicate that the highway can handle more development without capacity increases.

- Regarding non-motorized transportation, there are significant stretches of incomplete sidewalks.
- Much of the area is a food desert.
- Sea level rise will significantly impact communities just north and south of the corridor.

Mr. Singer said the north side of your study area is the existing Port of Wilmington and the south side is the Riverside project. Does your study reflect either, neither, or both? Mr. Swiatek said both. We have been monitoring the Port of Wilmington's planning effort and they have been identified as a key stakeholder.

Mr. Carter brought up the Coastal Zoning Act. He said the Route 9 area from Wilmington through New Castle is supposed to be limited, but there are some discussions about expanding the Route 9 Corridor. He added there will be major impacts from expansion. Mr. Swiatek said we have been talking with DNREC, and they also brought up the complexities introduced by the Coastal Zoning Act related to development.

Mr. Valenzuela asked how the foot-traffic needs are determined for the Route 9 Corridor. Mr. Swiatek said we look at the bus riders' usage; however, we don't have data for pedestrians. Mr. Valenzuela asked aren't there specific guidelines for sidewalks throughout the state. Mr. Swiatek said yes. There is a Complete Streets Policy in the State; however, it is not a requirement. Sidewalk gaps persist in the corridor.

Peggy Schultz said regarding mixed use and food deserts, to what extent would you like to see the mixed use component. Mr. Swiatek said we will be pursuing mixed-use development as a viable option, and looking at the issue of food deserts. These are issues we will talk about at the next public meeting, and we will see what the preferences are for redevelopment. Ms. Schultz also mentioned public safety. Mr. Swiatek said they will also consider lighting and other improvements to the built environment, which have been shown to deter crime.

6. Air Quality Public Outreach

8:00 PM

Ms. Novakoff said the Air Quality Partnership was formed 15 years ago, and WILMAPCO has chaired it for the last five years. She reiterated that it is a public/private coalition of businesses, agencies, and individuals working to raise awareness about practices that improve air quality and citizen health.

The partnership has been focusing on exhibiting at the following main events: 1) Delaware State Fair, 2) Delaware Coast Day, 3) Dover Days, and 4) Wilmington Earth Day, as well as coordinating kickoff media events. Additional promotions include the Tropo Air Quality Mascot Program.

Tropo is a custom character that engages kids and families in air quality education. In 2015, the partnership aligned the program with the Delaware Core Content Standards and Tropo has appeared at several events. In 2016, a pilot assembly will be conducted at three schools in New Castle County. Ms. Novakoff said the partnership will apply for a Community Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) grant to increase the program statewide and adopt the pilot program in the other schools.

Javier Torrijos said he knows of a school where 60% of the students are Latinos, which has a program where Tropo would be a perfect fit. Ms. Novakoff said that is very helpful because we are always looking for schools where we can introduce Tropo.

In 2013, Nemours was awarded the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) Asthma Grant, and developed the Wilmington Asthma Action Plan. One of the goals was to reduce idling around schools through bus driver education. In 2014, the Christina School District received presentations including the student produced video (DNREC); Asthma and Safe Cleaning (Am Lung); Health Impacts (NHPS), and Anti-Idling (WILMAPCO).

An anti-idling working group was formed that included WILMAPCO, NHPS, DNREC, and Am Lung. The following year presentations were made at Colonial School District to 70 bus drivers (2015); and Christina District to 190 bus drivers (2015). A menu of strategies was developed that included the American Lung Clean Airways Curriculum, students interacting with DNREC's mobile air quality monitoring equipment, a mock enforcement and encouragement of anti-idling, and schools adopting anti-idling policies.

The DNREC Driving to Cleaner Transportation Program is also being developed this year. It is intended to be a fun, engaging, and action-based learning program. The goal is to have all 96 Delaware elementary schools participate after five years. The program provides the following three-step process: Step 1: Implement a campus-wide anti-idling policy; Step 2: Implement one cleaner transportation pathway; and Step 3: Communicate the Clean Air message to students and staff. Phase I of the project includes: A Toolkit developed during the 2016 school year; Phase II: Initial Outreach during 2017-2018 school year, to 20 schools; Phase III: Second Outreach during the 2018 school year, to 40 more schools; and Phase IV: Stewardship during the 2016-2020 school years, to present the program to remaining schools.

Tropo is scheduled to appear at the following events: Wilmington Earth Day, April 22, 2016, Dover Days, May 7, 2016, Delaware State Fair, July 27, 2016 (Kids Day), and Delaware Coast Day, October 2, 2016. For more information, please visit www.wilmapco.org/aqp or www.troponose.org.

7. Other Business:

8:50 PM

Mr. Singer said two years ago at the WILMAPCO "Our Town" event the discussion centered on how federal money for transportation is diminishing; therefore, he asked how can we get the biggest bang for the buck; this also raises the question of when or whether the public is served by expenditures for payment and expenditures for transit; and is anyone studying that.

Mr. Singer added someone at the state level should be preparing responses for questions regarding the best distribution of funding. He asked if WILMAPCO would be best to do this study. Ms. Zegeye said that if this study was to be performed it would have to be done at the state level.

Mr. Carter said there is equity issues involved in distributing funding and it is really hard to quantify. Mr. Singer acknowledged that it is hard to quantify, but he said the difficulties are not solved by not trying. The Route 9 Corridor is a good example, because people don't have much money for cars and they need transit. An effective transit system that

runs up and down Route 9 would serve the potential well for economic development, and make it more livable.

8. Adjournment:

9:00 PM