

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WILMAPCO Conference Room, August 24, 2015

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Dave Carter, Southern New Castle County Alliance
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee
William Dunn, New Castle County Civic League
Matthew Eskridge, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County
Pat Folk, Cecil County
Jeff Peters, Pike Creek Valley Civic League
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Brett Saddler, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation
Peggy Schultz, League of Women Voters
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Javier Torrijos, Delaware Hispanic Commission
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance
Victor Singer, Civic League of New Castle County
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington (Chair)

Absent:

Wes Avera, Centreville Civic League
Bruce Brunozzi, City of Wilmington
Jim Lardear, DE State Chamber of Commerce*
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Joe Mitchell, Cecil County
Charles Shaw, AARP
Francis Swift, GHADA
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City

* Reserve PAC Members

Guests:

Dave Blankenship, City of Wilmington

Staff Members:

Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Bill Swiatek, Senior Planner
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

Victor Singer said second paragraph on page 4, regarding the Public Opinion Survey that Dave Carter said from a design perspective the survey was done from two different points of view, which are valid. Mr. Singer said this doesn't make sense to him, and asked what is valid. Ms. Novakoff said she will listen to the tape and clarify that.

Mr. Carter clarified there are two different questions that require different interpretations. One argument is do we need random sampling, the second one is do we need to represent other groups that are underserved. If you want to know how transportation issues impact a certain group we will need to keep calling to get the sampling of that group.

Mr. Singer also asked about a question in the survey where response choices included: Overall 15% walk in their area because they don't feel safe. Mr. Singer asked do they not feel safe due to the amount of traffic or is it because they are afraid of assault. Randi Novakoff said we don't have that level of detail.

Mr. Singer asked what NMTWG means. Ms. Novakoff said Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group (NMTWG).

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Singer seconded by Javier Torrijos the PAC approved the June 15, 2015 minutes with changes and clarifications.

Motion passed (8/24/15-01)

2. Public Comment:

7:05 PM

None.

3. Executive Director's Report:

7:10 PM

Tigist Zegeye said the WILMAPCO Council met on July 9, 2015. Action items included amending the WILMAPCO FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Cecil County element; approving the FY 2017 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Project Prioritization; releasing the FY 2016-19 TIP Amendments for public comment; and endorsing the Locust Lane Sidewalk Feasibility Study. Presentations included the Public Opinion Survey: Responses by Race, Ethnicity, and Income; SR 141 20-Year Transportation and Land Use Plan Update; Glasgow Avenue Planning Study; and Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay Project.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff participated in the SR 141 20-Year Transportation and Land Use Plan public workshop on June 17, 2015.
- Staff participated in the 4th Street Walkable Community Workshop on June 24, 2015, and 30 people attended.
- Staff attended the Southbridge Weekend Community Dinner on July 16, 2015.
- On August 3, 2015, staff participated in the Better Block Union Street project.
- Staff met with Elbert-Palmer Elementary School representatives to discuss Safe Routes to School (SRTS) and Anti-Idling on August 6, 2015.
- Staff exhibited at the 55+ Healthy Lifestyles Expo at Elkton High School, and Pat Folk helped staff the exhibit.

- Staff presented Sea Level Rise Transportation Assessment at Mid-Atlantic Transportation Sustainability Center Annual Meeting.
- Staff met with the Co-chair of Delaware Hispanic Commission regarding WILMAPCO public outreach strategies.
- Staff exhibited at Henrietta Johnson Medical Center Community Dinner on August 13, 2015.
- Staff participated in Colonial School District anti-Idling training on August 19, 2015, and 100 people attended.
- Staff hosted the public workshop along with DeIDOT's Capital Transportation Program (CTP) Hearing regarding the FY2016 TIP amendments this evening at Newark Library.
- Staff will present anti-idling training to school bus drivers at Christina School District.
- The Cecil County Tour is scheduled on September 17, 2015, at 10:00 a.m., at the Cecil County Administration Building, which is held on the same date and time as the next TAC meeting.
- On September 15, 2015, DART public service information session will be held at WILMAPCO.
- On September 23, 2015, Staff will help set up a South Wilmington Wetlands Restoration public workshop at Elbert-Palmer Elementary School.
- WILMAPCO is hosting the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Roundtable on October 29, 2015, at the Chase Center in Wilmington. Registration is open on the WILMAPCO website.
- The Request for Proposals (RFP) for the North Claymont Area Master Plan was sent out and submissions are due to WILMAPCO by September 3, 2015.
- WILMAPCO is working with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and partners on the Newark Regional Transportation Center (NRTC) to utilize the TIGER Grant funding.
- Wilmington Transit Moving Forward (WTMF) Phase II has begun and WILMAPCO has identified corridors for improvement.
- The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects will be submitted to DeIDOT.
- The Glasgow Avenue Planning Study recommendations are being finalized and will be ready to go to the public in early September, 2015.

Mr. Valenzuela asked if there was a recent transportation conference held at the Chase Center and if WILMAPCO had attended. Ms. Zegeye said yes. It was a consortium of universities, and there is an EPA Grant on sustainable transportation, which several universities had applied for including the University of Delaware. They are looking at innovative sustainable transportation strategies. Ms. Folk said the 55+ Healthy Lifestyles Expo at Elkton High School in August was a lot of fun, and there are a lot of really nice people who attend. She suggested PAC members volunteer.

ACTION ITEMS:

4. PAC Chair Nominating Committee Appointment

7:20 PM

Ms. Novakoff asked for three volunteers to be on the committee to nominate the next PAC Chair. She explained the PAC Chair is rotated annually; Mr. Antonio Valenzuela is finishing up Mr. David Bird's term; and the next PAC meeting would have been Mr. Bird's

last meeting. Mr. Singer suggested the PAC dispense with the nominating committee and elect Mr. Valenzuela as Chair.

ACTION: On motion by Vic Singer seconded by Gail Seitz, the PAC approved Antonio Valenzuela as the new PAC Chair.

Motion passed (8/24/15-02)

Mr. Carter said that PAC will still need to elect a Vice-chair. Mr. Valenzuela asked for three volunteers for the nomination committee. The three people who volunteered to serve on the nomination committee are Bill Dunn, Brett Saddler and Javier Torrijos. The nominating committee will meet separately to decide on the nomination for PAC Vice-chair. Ms. Dunigan said the TAC nominating committee usually meets directly after the TAC meeting.

5. Draft Amendments to the FY 2016-19 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) public outreach component **7:30 PM**

Ms. Dunigan distributed the TIP Quick Guide developed with the help of the PAC. She said we are updating the FY 2016-19 TIP based on the Delaware Bond Bill. This year, the Delaware general assembly passed new transportation revenue measures, which allowed us to add funding to some projects. There is a 25% increase in the funding compared with the version of the TIP that was approved in March for a total of about \$2.2 million.

The public comment period runs from August 3 through September 10, 2015. She added it was great timing that the DelDOT CTP Hearing and TIP Public Workshop coincided this evening at the Newark Library. The TIP was advertised through the website, e-news, transporter, and press releases and DelDOT also advertised the workshop in a similar way. The website shows all of the projects.

Additional public outreach measures include the WILMAPCO website, which features interactive mapping, press releases, radio spots, newsletter articles and e-news articles. We also appreciate other organizations spreading the word and she invited PAC members to do so, since there is still time left in the public comment period.

Mr. Valenzuela asked if the I-495 bridge problem that happened a few months ago was paid for out of emergency funds or is it part of this bucket of TIP money. Ms. Dunigan said some of it is out of the same bucket of money. However, the bulk of it came out of federal emergency funds. In the TIP there is also an I-95 project over the Brandywine Creek that is directly related to it. Mr. Valenzuela also asked about federal funds, when there is a need for a project a contractor is hired, the contractor knows how the federal government works and may exaggerate the cost; therefore, where does the funding come from. Ms. Dunigan said the bid often comes in higher than it actually costs, and it often gets completed for less money. When the project amount changes significantly, the implementing agency needs to come back to WILMAPCO for an amendment.

Mr. Carter asked why we don't have more outreach on the trail that connects to Delaware City and the area developing south of it for bike and pedestrian interconnections. He asked are there restrictions for recreational trails. Ms. Dunigan said by the end of the summer the section of the trail from the branch canal to Chesapeake

City will be done. They had hoped that the section of the branch canal to Delaware City would be done, but they are running into issues such as with soil, that will delay completion by a construction season.

Mr. Singer said the four-page TIP Quick Guide is good, but he doesn't see the web address. Ms. Dunigan said it is on the front page. Mr. Singer suggested that next year the guide should include web links to individual projects, and also include that details of the individual projects can be accessed on the website. Ms. Novakoff said if you go to www.wilmapco.org/tip you'll find the guide and links for all the projects.

Mr. Peters said he believes the Road A/SR 7 project is nearly a dead issue. Ms. Dunigan said that DelDOT is required by a lawsuit to complete the project. She noted that she heard a lot of concerns from the public regarding this area because of the congestion around the Christiana Mall.

Peggy Schultz complimented staff on the improvement of the TIP Quick Guide. She also said there are islands of bike lanes around schools and they are not connected. Ms. Novakoff said we are working with the schools to make it easier to walk and bike to school. Mr. Valenzuela agreed that the islands are an issue. Ms. Dunigan said we don't have dedicated funding for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) now but we can work with the schools to raise awareness, educate children and have SRTS be part of the curriculum.

Javier Torrijos asked how we are reaching the Latino community and if the media resources are being used. He said there is a Transportation Subcommittee meeting on Thursday where they can discuss public outreach and what can be translated into Spanish. He said he and his wife were the only Latinos at the Fourth Street Workshop, and there is a large Latino community there. Ms. Dunigan said we would be happy to work with you to make sure we are reaching the Latino media and all of the Latino community. Ms. Novakoff said we are planning to attend the upcoming meeting and are working to translate press releases into Spanish for inclusion in Spanish media. We worked through LACC to reach out to 4th street area residents.

Mr. Shotwell asked if the website provides all the information you need. Ms. Dunigan said yes, all WILMAPCO information shown at the public workshop are posted. The interactive map is being improved to add full descriptions of the projects. Ms. Novakoff added when you sign up for the e-news, you'll get information about our upcoming events sent to you each month. Ms. Dunigan said our interns will help us to improve the website.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Valenzuela seconded by Ms. Folk, PAC approved the public outreach portion of the FY 2016 TIP amendments.

Motion passed (8/24/15-03)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

6. Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay Project: 7:50 PM

Ms. Dunigan said the guiding principle of the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay project is to protect and enhance the intrinsic qualities of the byway. The vision ensures the preservation and conservation of the resources that form the

byway; and develops strategies to support enhancement and restoration efforts to improve the value of the byway, such as scenic, natural, and historic qualities.

The consultant team conducted extensive research, which involved advocacy and professional organizations, federal agencies, technical journals, state enabling documents, regional planning authorities, counties, local municipalities, townships, and villages. In addition, codes were researched that had scenic and/or view protection, rural, exurban and/or suburban codes, scenic roads and corridors, scenic links with environmental protection, historic preservation, and scenic links with greenway and open space planning.

Residents' hopes for the byway included requests for protection of Red Clay Creek, establishing trails and off-road bikeways, getting public access to Hoopes Reservoir and pull-offs, maintaining road character and road widths, maintaining existing vegetative screens, buffers in new development, encourage traffic calming, preserve rock outcroppings, retain stone walls, eliminate jersey barrier bridges, and maintain historic character.

Residents' fears included too much development, loss of historic structures, unprotected view sheds and land, short-term land protection, forest removal and tree cutting, excessive signage, flooding, creek environmental contamination, and road issues, such as widening, congestion, speed, and safety.

Recommended improvements for the byway include development that protects view sheds and vistas; architecture that blends with the landscape, height restrictions, context sensitive landscapes, screening and buffering of homes, historic conservation, scenic resource and water protection. The consultants looked at 1,300 different documents. Emphasis was on looking at those with scenic preservation, such as the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The following draft menu of potential tools and techniques were developed:

- 1) Preserving scenic view sheds, including multi-point vista controls; development transfer program; general (open space) protection goals; and minimum buffer and distance (setback).
- 2) Regulating scenic roadways, including scenic roads commission; context sensitive design for roads, other non-road infrastructure, and architecture and landscaping.
- 3) View protection, including environmental; agricultural; historic resources; rural character protection and/or enhancement; and signage/billboard regulations.
- 4) Implementation tools, including overlay zoning; protective/restrictive easements; and planning, review, monitoring, and management protocols.

At the second public workshop visuals were used to explain what the tools and techniques mean; a planning exercise featured hypothetical parcels; and a sticker survey focused on the preferred tools and levels of regulation.

Next steps for the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay Project include incorporating input from the public meetings; refining the menu of strategies, drafting design standards; and preparing a draft and final report. A final public meeting will be scheduled in early fall; and recommendations will go through the New Castle County public hearing process.

Mr. Singer asked is there any hope for finding the threshold for covering the cost. Ms. Dunigan said not as a scientific measure. New Castle County is part of the process. New Castle County is looking closely at what the administrative burden is and they don't want to see recommendations that aren't feasible for them. They won't create a whole new branch of New Castle County Land Use just to monitor it.

Mr. Carter said you need to off-set the strategy with incentives. The incentive process is under Title VII, Chapter 75 of The Land Protection Act, which requires the state government to set standards and criteria for land protection in the state. He added for 20 years the state hasn't followed that law, and under the law they must comply. However, the citizens, the communities, the counties, and the cities need to make sure to be engaged in public meetings regarding how the standards and criteria should be set Mr. Carter said he will send his white paper to Ms. Novakoff regarding his current complaint. In addition, he will send a copy of the law to her.

Bill Dunn said the title, Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay, is an absolute falsehood. Thirty to forty percent of the red clay basin has been disregarded. You could call it the Upper Red Clay Socioeconomic Independent Protection Zone. The whole lower end is disregarded, which includes Fells Lane on Faulkland Road; Brandywine Springs Amusement Park; Newport Gap Pike; a portion of the Wilmington Western Railroad; Greenbank Mill; all of Marshallton; and three of General Washington's encampments at Cooches Bridge. The plan disregards this historic area completely, which also needs to be preserved.

Ms. Dunigan said the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay is building on the Corridor Management Plan that completed ten years ago and established the boundaries through a public process. She encouraged Mr. Dunn to attend the Red Clay Scenic Byway Alliance meetings. Mr. Dunn said he can't attend them because they are in the middle of the day during the week.

Jeff Peters asked if WILMAPCO has addressed the issue with New Castle County. Ms. Dunigan said she can't speak for New Castle County, but Delaware State Parks is part of the project team.

Mr. Dunn suggested a motion be made that the Red Clay Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan needs to be expanded to include the entire corridor. Ms. Dunigan clarified that the PAC is voting on a recommendation to expand the Red Clay Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan that was completed ten years ago, not the current Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Design Standards.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Janey seconded by Mr. Singer PAC recommended the Red Clay Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan be expanded to include the entire corridor.

The PAC vote was 8 in favor and 9 opposed; therefore, the motion did not pass.
(8/24/15-04)

7. SR 9 Walkable Community Workshop (WCW):

8:20 PM

Mr. Swiatek said the Route 9 WCW study area includes a small segment of Route 9 between I-295 and I-495, and a segment between Lambson Lane and Hillview Avenue.

The elements of the three-hour WCW include: 1) Background of walkability in the community; 2) Walking audit with participants, to identify bike and pedestrian trouble spots and provide potential solutions; 3) Mapping exercise, which indicates where problems are located, and possible solutions; and 4) A summary of feedback, which is put into a report.

The project was requested by New Castle County Community Services. A new library is being built in this area along Route 9. Access and connections to that library and the surrounding community are desirable. A project team was assembled consisting of New Castle County, DelDOT and WILMAPCO.

The WCW was held at the Rose Hill Community Center on May 5, 2015. Since the resident attendance was low at previous workshops held in coordination with Community Services, staff conducted additional public outreach. The Route 9 WCW attracted 33 attendees, and about half were residents.

This stretch of Route 9 is auto-oriented and key issues include safety, connectivity between neighborhoods and community centers, enhancing design, and improving old/non-Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) infrastructure.

Improvements discussed at the workshop included adding pathways to the new library, improving sidewalks on Hillview Avenue, adding bike lanes, improving the crossings and bus stops and adding a new road near the new library to connect Lambson Lane and Hillview Avenue. Five people were hit by cars at the intersection (crossing) between 2011 and 2013.

Other ideas for improvements include providing better lighting and sidewalks and adding a pathway near the Community Center; addressing illegal truck traffic in the area; realigning Lambson Lane and redesigning the commercial space on Route 9. Additional suggestions include reorienting shops along Route 9; enhance the green space next to the Dunleith community; include traffic calming along Route 9; provide school zone signage at Lambson Lane/SR 9 and provide some historical references on signs.

A post workshop survey indicated that 100% of the participants felt the WCW was useful to the community. They commented the workshop was important because the team recognized the everyday safety concerns, and just being there, having input, and knowing something might happen to make the area safer was helpful. Some of the next steps include: 1) Draft WCW report; 2) Compile ideas; 3) Identify potential implementation funding; and 4) Build ideas upon the Master Plan, beginning fall 2015.

Ms. Schultz asked if there are any flooding issues on Route 9. Mr. Swiatek said no, not near Rose Hill. Ms. Schultz also wondered why the pathways weren't put there previously. Mr. Swiatek said it is the nature of midcentury auto oriented development.

Mr. Carter asked what the scope of the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan will be and where the request came from. Mr. Swiatek said it was a submission by New Castle County Land Use Department and we haven't fully determined what the scope will be. Ms. Seitz asked what is the potential for a master plan to be done. Mr. Swiatek said it is very good. Ms. Zegeye said WILMAPCO would like the study to go from New Castle to Wilmington. The proposed study is going before the WILMAPCO Council in September.

8. Other Business:
None.

8:50 PM

7. Adjournment:

9:00 PM

