

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WILMAPCO Conference Room, October 23, 2017

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Carlos de los Ramos, AARP
Pat Folk, Cecil County
Tom Fruehstorfer, City of Newark
Mario Gangemi, Cecil County Chamber of Commerce
Joe Mitchell, Cecil County
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance (Vice Chair)
Vic Singer, Civic League for New Castle County
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance
Javier Torrijos, Delaware Hispanic Commission
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington (Chair)

Absent:

Mark Blake, GHADA
Bruce Brunozzi, City of Wilmington
Robert Cameron, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation
Dave Carter, Southern New Castle County
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Ken Grant, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Maria Dziembowska, the Nature Conservancy
John Ford, Cecil Board of Realtors
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Barbara Mobarak, League of Women Voters
Bill Osborne, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Peters, Pike Creek Valley Civic League
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City
Alison Windle, Neighborhood House

Staff Members:

Dave Gula, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Jake Thompson, Transportation Planner
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Guests:

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler

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

6:30 PM

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes

6:32 PM

The August 14, 2107 PAC Meeting Minutes were approved.

Pat Folk asked for clarification regarding the discussion from the last meeting about the Town of Elkton applying for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds, and if the town got the funds.

Tigist Zegeye said WILMAPCO went through the process to get the resources for the plan with Elkton, but the town decided it was easier to go through their own department.

ACTION: On motion by Mario Gangemi seconded by Dave Tancredi the PAC approved the August 14, 2017 meeting minutes.

Motion passed

(10/23/17-01)

2. Public Comment:

6:35 PM

None.

3. Executive Director's Report:

6:40 PM

Ms. Zegeye said at the WILMAPCO Council meeting on September 14, 2017, the Council amended the FY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with carry over tasks and with WILMAPCO and member agency tasks. The Council also amended the WILMAPCO FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), New Castle County/DE Statewide Elements; endorsed the Glasgow Avenue Planning Study; accepted the MARC/SEPTA Commuter Rail Service Ridership Analysis; and approved the Proposed Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Reappointments (Bill Lower, Dave Carter, and Darlene Cole). Presentations included Blueprint for A Bicycle-Friendly Delaware-Statewide Policy Plan by Andrea Trabelsi, Whitman, Requardt & Associates; New Castle County Bicycle Plan by Heather Dunigan; Regional Progress Report by Bill Swiatek; and Delmarva Freight Plan Addendum by Dan Blevins.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff participated in several Safe Routes to School (SRTS) activities including exhibits at Downes, McCullough, and Eisenberg Elementary schools. On September 18, 2017, staff participated in a SRTS public workshop during the Downes Elementary School Open House. Staff also coordinated Downes and Stubbs Elementary Schools' Walk-to-School Day events.
- Staff has been working with the Air Quality Partnership (AQP) on Air Quality Awareness Week 2018 activities, including a statewide Tropo (AQP mascot) Poster Contest, Social Media Contests, and Try It Day, to encourage public transit and ride share usage. Staff conducted the Tropo Nose Assemblies at Elbert-Palmer, Stubbs, and Mt. Pleasant Elementary Schools.
- Staff exhibited at Newark Community Day, Better Block Fourth Street, and Elkton Fall Festival.
- The Rt. 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee kick-off meeting was held on September 7, 2017.
- The Public Opinion Survey Committee met on the September 7, 2017, to revise the survey. Draft questions will be brought before PAC when they are ready.
- On September 11, 2017 WILMAPCO held a joint TIP and CTP workshop with DelDOT, which included the New Castle County Bike Plan.

- On September 12, 2017, staff participated in the Cecil County Strategic Highway Safety Plan Committee meeting.
- The Ardentown Paths Plan was endorsed by the Village of Ardentown in September, and staff expects it will be endorsed by Council at their November meeting.
- Staff attended the Maryland MPO Roundtable, on September 15, 2017, which included seven Maryland MPOs.
- Staff participated in the University of Delaware Institute for Public Administration (IPA) Complete Communities Enterprise District Workgroup.
- Staff attended the MDOT Cecil County Tour Meeting on October 13, 2017.
- Staff will attend the American Planning Association (APA) Delaware Annual Meeting at Buena Vista on November 1, 2017.
- Ms. Zegeye will attend the AARP Livability Conference in Texas from November 14-16, 2017 with Carlos de los Ramos.
- Governor Carney signed Executive Order No 14 creating an Advisory Council on Connected and Autonomous Vehicles. WILMAPCO Chair, John Sisson, will attend and Ms. Zegeye will serve as his alternate.
- The fifth SR10 Special Committee meeting on truck traffic on Routes 41, 48 & 7 will be held on October 25, 2017. The committee is working through eighty-eight approaches and ideas. They are meeting on the second Wednesday of each month through January 2018 and have added a few meeting dates.
- WILMAPCO has been working on the Wilmington Initiatives (WI) with the Mayor's Office and the Mayor sent a letter to DeIDOT Secretary regarding priorities for projects.
- Staff has been working with DTC and DeIDOT on the Claymont Regional Transportation Center project. The team is working on the preliminary design. The Commercial Development Company (CDC) will transfer the 12-acre property for the train station by 2018, construction is expected to begin in 2019, and the station is expected to be ready for service by 2021.
- Ms. Zegeye announced that Joe Mitchell is retiring from the PAC after 26 years. He has not only been active in WILMAPCO's PAC but he has also served as Chairman of Transportation Committee for Council of Civic Organizations of Brandywine Hundred (CCOBH) and on the Transportation Committee of Civic League of Cecil County. He was Executive Director of Delmarva Passenger Association for 16 years, and served on the Concord Pike Safety Improvement Committee and Transportation Study Commission, and the Governor's Clean Air Task Force Subgroup on Transportation. Mr. Mitchell was a member of Transportation Citizen Advisory Committee for Development and Implementation of the New Castle County Comprehensive Plan, served on local and state vocational and educational programs, and the board of directors. He was appointed in 1992 to WILMAPCO's Citizen Advisory Committee, and reappointed to the WILMAPCO PAC in 1993. He served on WILMAPCO's Steering, Management, Bike and Pedestrian Committees, and on the Congestion Management Subcommittee (CMS). Ms. Zegeye thanked Mr. Mitchell for his dedicated service and presented him with a commemorative gift and card. Mr. Mitchell said he was especially proud to serve on the CMS because Dan Blevins has done such a great job.

ACTION ITEMS:

None.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

4. MARC/SEPTA Commuter Rail Service Extension Ridership Analysis 6:50 PM

Before he began speaking about the MARC/SEPTA Project, Dave Gula said there were three properties that were put forth by the Delaware Governor for consideration by Amazon for a new headquarters location: 1) The new Claymont Train Station site, including the Commercial Development Corporation (CDC) property; 2) The Christina Riverfront, and 3) The AstraZeneca site on US 202. This was in response to an earlier conversation.

Mr. Valenzuela said the MARC/SEPTA Commuter Rail Service project is very important because it is the only stretch of rail in the Amtrak Northeast Corridor that is not connected by transit. Mr. Mitchell said he has been a member of the Delmarva Passenger Rail Association for 30 years, and one of its previous goals was to complete the rail gap extension.

Mr. Gula said the MARC/SEPTA Commuter Rail Service Extension Ridership Analysis was built on the following projects: Newark-Elkton Intermodal Transportation Plan, (1998); Track A Extension Feasibility Study, Phases I & II (Phase II October 2005); Track A Ridership Results (July 2006); Elkton TOD Plan (January, 2011); and Elkton Rail Feasibility Study (June 2014). The MARC/SEPTA rail extension would create a commuter rail connection from Philadelphia all the way to Washington, DC.

Through public outreach for the Newark Transportation Plan, the following improvements were identified in Newark residents' top three issues: 1) Reduce traffic congestion, 2) Improve traffic signal timing and coordination, 3) Commuter rail service from Newark to Perryville. The extension of MARC trains to Newark was also identified as a priority in major public outreach initiatives, which included the Newark Transportation Plan at Newark Community Day and at the Elkton Fall Festival.

Data was gathered from existing regional travel demand models, which included two trip types: Home-Based Work (HBW) and non-HBW. All personal trips other than HBW trips from each of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) models were combined to make up the other trips, using highway cost skims and transit cost skims. Mr. Gula explained that skims are simplified matrices of data that provide travel time and costs. For every trip there are costs that are part of the model. The transit skim matrices show what goes into the cost of using rail including between transfer zones.

Mr. Tancredi asked if the difference for transfers was because they would need to be coordinated with two different train schedules. Mr. Gula said yes. Mr. Gula said the proposal shows an overview of the data that includes population and employment growth. In addition, the ridership calibration of the model focuses on the overall mode split between auto and transit and boarding at the specific stations. Extra attention was paid to the suburban and rural stations where limited or no other transit service was available.

Mr. Gula said if the Perryville connection to Elkton Station is completed there would be additional riders generated. The benefits of the MARC and SEPTA service connection are that it would be a viable service that would provide increased ridership and could reduce the parking needs for Perryville and Newark stations. Perryville has 200 parking

spaces in four different lots; however, we are losing ridership now because there is not enough parking, and there is no available funding for expansion of parking.

Vic Singer said the comparisons are a bit fluky for Perryville parking. Mr. Gula agreed. He said that we need to show the State of Maryland that some investment will still need to be made for parking at Perryville regardless of the ridership numbers. Mr. Singer said at some point you need a cost estimate. Mr. Gula agreed. He said that is the next step is a working group with Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) and Delaware agencies.

Mario Gangemi asked what the reactions were to this presentation at the TAC meeting from Cecil County. Mr. Gula said Cecil County loves it; however, MDOT does not like it as much because they have not yet found funds for the MARC expansion. Perryville is very interested in the analysis because it can help reshape the town for Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

5. Elkton Pedestrian Plan

7:15 PM

Mr. Thompson said Elkton is the Cecil County, Maryland with a population of 15,443 as of 2010, located along the I-95 Corridor and Northeast Corridor rail line. Elkton is primarily a suburban town with an historic, walkable downtown. The ten-member Steering Committee for the plan includes Town of Elkton, Maryland State Highway (SHA) Administration, and WILMAPCO.

The project scope of the Elkton Pedestrian Plan includes a Geographical Information System (GIS) inventory of Elkton's pedestrian network completed; a review of previous studies completed; a sidewalk prioritization analysis completed; new recommendations for pedestrian improvements; and prioritizing recommendations.

The first priority of data collection is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance of sidewalks and curb ramps. Staff worked with the SHA to collect data. Sidewalks need to have a minimum width (60"), a maximum cross-slope (2%), and must be free of obstructions. In addition, the cross-ramps' width, slope, turning space, and detectable warning strips cannot be blocked by parked vehicles, and crosswalks need to be marked.

Mr. Thompson explained how to read the map of the Elkton Pedestrian Curb Ramp Evaluation (2017). He said green coding indicates all compliant curb ramps; yellow indicates one or more curb ramps are compliant, red indicates curb ramps exist, but none are compliant, and purple indicates no curb ramps exist. He also referred to a map of the Elkton Pedestrian Plan Sidewalk Evaluation (March 2017). Green indicates full compliance, yellow indicates partial compliance, red means none is compliant, and gray means no sidewalks or incomplete sidewalks.

He added there are some new sidewalks; however, about half are not compliant. There are several sidewalks along Route 40, but many are not connected, which means Elkton has a disconnected pedestrian network.

The Interactive Google Map shows specific location points. You can click on them and they list the data for each one. Examples of locations include North Street and East High Street.

A public survey is being completed to gauge residents' interests, which included residents' age groups and questions such as how often do you walk in Elkton, top destinations, opinions on walkability and safety, suggestions for improvement, and a chance to win a \$25 Visa gift card as an incentive.

The first public workshop was held in the parking lot of the Elkton Acme in the summer, where staff gave out free water ice. During the following week another public workshop was held at the Elkton Central Library. Flyers were distributed to citizens and to Main Street businesses. WILMAPCO staff also exhibited at the Elkton Fall Festival.

Locations of survey respondents were also indicated on an interactive map. Staff sent a random mailing to 150 neighborhoods and placed an ad on Facebook. As of today, there were 135 surveys completed. The results have indicated 83% of the respondents live in Elkton and 70% of the age group is between the ages of 31 and 64.

When asked how often residents walk to get around Elkton, the majority said sometimes, and many reported that they do not walk to get around Elkton because they fear homeless people and drug users. When asked what are your top destinations most residents responded the shops on Main Street, Big Elk Mall, Wal-Mart, Cecil Library, and the Elkton Municipal Park. In addition, 56% would like to see the town become more walkable.

The Elkton Pedestrian Plan's ongoing and completed tasks include: 1) Base data collection and analysis (July 2016-2017); 2) Review of previous studies (April 2017); 3) Prioritization analysis (May 2017); 4) Draft recommendations and Public Workshop (July 2017); 5) Draft Report (September 2017); Finalize Report (December 2017); and 6) Town and Council adoption (January 2018).

6. Regional Progress Report

7:35 PM

Mr. Thompson said the WILMAPCO Regional Progress Report tracks the progress of projects and sets the stage for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). In the report, the staff looks at actions-by-actions to track how well the work is progressing. WILMAPCO uses quantitative and qualitative measures. Methods include red, yellow, or green light indicators for levels measuring poor, partial, or good progress. WILMAPCO also incorporates some of the national performance measures into the report.

Mr. Thompson reviewed general, core trends, in the region. He said the region continues to experience suburban sprawl. The City of Wilmington comprised 65% of the region's population in 1920, whereas today it is only to 11%. The number of people who drive alone to work continues to increase. These numbers went from 70% to over 80% since 1980.

Examples of actions that are measured in the report include:

- 1) Apply a Complete Streets Policy in all WILMAPCO studies. For instance, the Claymont Area Master Plan and Glasgow Area Plan have this focus and WILMAPCO is doing a very good job incorporating Complete Streets into all of our studies (green light).
- 2) Maintain a Safe Transportation System. — Crash rates are down from decades ago, but have increased in recent years. Therefore, this action is not going well (red light).

3) Ensure Access to Public Transportation. — The population within walking distance to a bus stop has improved in Cecil County, while it has generally fallen in New Castle County (yellow light).

4) Support Cleaner Vehicle Infrastructure such as establishing Public Electric Vehicle Charging Stations — This effort has increased in step with WILMAPCO's support for clean fuel grants and technology; therefore, this action is also going well (green light).

5) To Realize an Inclusionary Participation Process — Readership of the WILMAPCO newsletter within low income and minority areas has begun to outpace the general average due to targeted outreach; therefore, this action is going very well (green light).

6) Achieve an open dialogue in all studies has some gaps (yellow light).

The WILMAPCO Progress Report next steps include: 1) Acquire missing data, 2) Draft the report, 3) Present the report to TAC for action in December 2017, and 4) present the report to Council in January 2018.

Mr. Singer asked where the revenue comes from and if it is good or bad, regarding the following statement: "The 2040 RTP 10 major projects south of U.S. 40 alone total \$1.1 billion, which is 60% of planned spending in New Castle County." Mr. Thompson said the majority of the spending is from the Route 301 Project. Ms. Zegeye said we are looking at the TIP projects during a year. It is bad because the funding is being spent where we do not have the infrastructure and we are not investing in the existing communities.

8. Other Business

7:55 PM

None.

9. Adjournment

8:00 PM