

# **PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

WILMAPCO Conference Room, December 15, 2014

## **ROLL CALL**

### **Members Present:**

Wes Avera, Centreville Civic League  
Dave Carter, Southern New Castle County Alliance  
Bill Dunn, New Castle County Civic League  
Pat Folk, Cecil County  
Bill Lower, Committee of 100  
Jeff Peters, Pike Creek Valley Civic League  
Roy Podorson, City of Wilmington  
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association  
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council  
Victor Singer, Civic League of New Castle County  
Francis Swift, GHADA  
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington

### **Absent:**

David Bird, City of New Castle (vice Chair)  
Paul Bielewicz, City of Newark  
Bruce Brunozzi, City of Wilmington  
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee  
Anthony Collins, Latin American Community Center  
Ken Davis, Neighborhood House, Inc  
Mathew Eskridge, AAA Delaware  
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County  
Jim Lardear, DE State Chamber of Commerce\*  
Joe Mitchell, Cecil County  
Brett Saddler, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation  
Charles Shaw, AARP  
Peggy Shultz, League of Women Voters  
Lisa Snyder, 7/40 Alliance  
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance  
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City

*\* Reserve PAC Members*

### **Guests:**

### **Staff Members:**

Tamika Graham, Senior Planner  
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler

David Bird, Vice Chair, was absent; therefore, Tom Posatko volunteered to chair the meeting and called the meeting to order at **7:03 PM**.

## **1. Approval of Meeting Minutes 7:05 PM**

Mr. Posatko asked for approval of the PAC Minutes.

- Dave Carter asked for a correction on page 6, regarding the Port of Wilmington expansion, which should say: Sub Aquias Lands Act.
- Vic Singer asked for the following corrections: page 6: should say, "Coastal Zone Act;" "is" should be between "that" and "authorized," and after authorized, it should say "by"; the seventh line from the top: should say, "The regulation states"; and on Page 7, the correct numbers are: (10/20/14-03).

**ACTION:** On motion by Vic Singer seconded by David Carter the October 20, 2014 PAC meeting minutes were approved with the corrections (above).

Motion passed **(12/15/14-01)**

## **2. Public Comment: 7:05 PM**

Mr. Singer had a question regarding performance measures. Mr. Singer has been looking for an overall measure for congestion, which indicates if it is increasing or decreasing. He said there should be something for a weighted average. Ms. Zegeye said that WILMAPCO has been developing Congestion Management System reports since the adoption of the first long range plan in 1996. Staff also developed the 2014 Intersection Operations Analysis, as an outgrowth of the Congestion Management System process. Staff will forward the analysis to Mr. Singer as well as other interested PAC members.

Mr. Carter said there was a good front page article in the Sunday News Journal paper regarding the nuclear power plant and the evacuation plan in Southern New Castle County. He will send the link to Ms. Novakoff for the PAC, and requested a Delaware briefing at a PAC meeting on this issue. Ms. Novakoff said staff will follow-up and see what information is available.

## **3. Executive Director's Report: 7:10 PM**

Ms. Zegeye said the WILMAPCO Council met on November 13. Action items included releasing the draft 2040 RTP 2015 Update for public review and comment; releasing the draft 2040 RTP and FY 2016-19 TIP Air Quality Conformity determination for public review and comment; amending the FY 2015-18 TIP Cecil County element; endorsing the Wilmington Transit Moving Forward Report; and approving the proposed Public Advisory Committee (PAC) reappointment. Presentations included the Delmarva Freight Plan by Bobbie Geier and Mike Du Ross, DeIDOT.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff attended a ribbon cutting for the City of New Castle Route 273 Trail.
- On November 5 and 19, staff exhibited at community dinners held at Fraim Boys and Girls Clubs and the Neighborhood House.
- Staff helped organize a flooding open house in Southbridge on November 18.
- Staff met with the City of Wilmington on November 25 regarding livability initiatives.
- Three sets of RFP interviews were held. WILMAPCO selected consultants for the Glasgow Avenue Planning Study, Red Clay Scenic Byway Design Standards Overlay, and SR 141 20-Year Transportation and Land Use Plan.

- The Tri-State Mall Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Analysis will be completed in-house.
- On December 5 staff attended the Mid-Atlantic Sustainable Transportation Funding meeting, regarding using a mileage based user fee to generate funds.
- Staff attended the EPA's Building Blocks Training Academy in Washington, DC, which is helpful to the region regarding walkability and parking audits, green streets strategies, and growth areas.
- On December 9 staff attended the DE/MD APA Regional meeting.
- Ms. Zegeye thanked Roy Podorson for his contributions to the PAC since he will no longer be serving on the PAC and presented him with a large cookie.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**4. Approval of the PAC Chair Nominating Committee Appointment 7:20 PM**

Mr. Carter nominated Mr. Bird to serve as PAC Chairperson and Mr. Valenzuela as Vice Chairperson. The PAC approved the nominations. Mr. Posatko thanked Mr. Carter for chairing the PAC Nominating Committee.

**ACTION:** On motion by Vic Singer seconded by Roy Podorson the PAC approved the appointments.

Motion passed (12/15/14-02)

**5. Approval of the Public Outreach for the Draft 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update**

Ms. Zegeye distributed the WILMAPCO 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) schedule. She said we are asking the PAC to recommend to the Council the public outreach of the RTP. The TAC will review the draft document at their December 18 meeting and Council would adopt the RTP at their January 8 meeting. Staff will then submit the draft RTP to Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in January for final approval, which is expected in March 2015.

Ms. Zegeye also distributed the 2040 RTP Update public comments that have been received. She said the list includes the organization, how many people attended, and the comments received. Staff has contacted 38 organizations in Cecil and New Castle counties, and presented the RTP to 30 organizations. Overall, there were not many comments regarding the RTP, but there were comments regarding specific projects.

In addition to the list of comments, there is a letter from Christine Whitehead about Route 141 and issues regarding trucks going through neighborhoods including the speed and damage they are causing to the roadway; the need for sidewalks as a priority; and the need to have more crosswalks. There are also comments from Robert Hicks, which were submitted at the Our Town event on September 3. His comments included requesting Newark Railroad Station improvements, before other transit projects are completed such as Newark to Elkton, or SEPTA extensions. He also suggested the need for more Fairplay Station parking.

An e-mail addressed to Mr. Blevins from Ms. Denise Brush, was received regarding needed funding for sidewalks on major arterials, especially to accommodate Safe Routes to School programs in developments; bridging the gaps of DART bus routes to

run east to west in northern New Castle County; the Wilmington Transit Center as a priority; suggestion for an underground transit center like at Jefferson Station formerly Market East in Philadelphia; a suggestion to conduct a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) study around Trolley Square; the need for connecting the Newark-SEPTA rail tracks with the Baltimore MARC train in Perryville; and promote carpooling in the region including talking to New Jersey transit agencies about operating a joint bus route with DART because of commuters travelling to New Jersey.

There is a form for public comments on the WILMAPCO website. The form has been on the website since November 17 when the public comment period began, and the public comment period will run until January 5. Therefore, there is still time to submit comments. Mr. Venezuela commented that Ms. Brush's comments were comprehensive.

Mr. Dunn said Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance had a lengthy discussion at WILMAPCO's RTP presentation during their meeting on sidewalks and resurfacing efforts by DeIDOT. One issue is there seems to be interest in resurfacing at regular intervals instead of using more high quality asphalt that is more durable used by subcontractors. Mr. Dunn will forward a copy of the Civic Alliance Minutes so WILMAPCO can include the comments in the RTP.

Mr. Carter emphasized how important the evacuation zone is in Southern New Castle County, which is a problem because more reinvestment and training are needed. He feels the citizens are not being informed. He said the requirement of education and outreach are part of this issue. Ms. Novakoff said staff will follow up on the issue.

Mr. Singer commented that in the list of public outreach issues, what is missing are the attendees at the public forum. Ms. Zegeye said we held the Our Town public forum at the Embassy Suites in September, and that number was 75 people.

Ms. Zegeye said there were 189 web hits on the RTP page, and meeting attendees included approximately 716 people. Therefore, staff reached out to a total of about 900 people. Staff also sent a press release to its Delaware and Cecil County media list, the TAC, PAC, and Council. The RTP press release states that the WILMAPCO RTP was highlighted as a National Model for a new nationwide guidebook being produced by Transportation for America, a professional organization in Washington, DC.

Mr. Posatko said the PAC is asked to advise and approve what WILMAPCO has already done. He asked if there are any questions regarding what the PAC is supposed to do. There were none.

Mr. Carter suggested increasing WILMAPCO's efforts for considering the evacuation routes in the RTP. Mr. Singer suggested adding radio spots to the list of public outreach conducted. PAC members asked what the best public outreach methods are for the RTP. Ms. Novakoff said the best methods were public meetings where staff has face to face interactions with residents. Mr. Carter commended WILMAPCO on its public outreach efforts.

**ACTION:** On motion by Vic Singer seconded by Roy Podorson the PAC approved the Public Outreach Portion of the Draft 2040 RTP Update.

Motion passed **(12/15/14-03)**

**6. Release FY2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Public Comment: 8:00 PM**

Ms. Graham distributed a flyer for the WILMAPCO Open House Public Workshop regarding the FY2016-2019 TIP, which is available for public comment from January 12 through March 3. The TIP workshop, coordinated with DeIDOT, will be held on Monday, February 23, from 4:00 p.m-6:30 p.m., at the Newark Library.

She also distributed a TIP brochure called the TIP Quick Guide, which was developed to help the public understand the TIP process. The TIP has seen a slight decrease in funding, and eight new bridge projects were added. The TIP process is summarized on the front of the brochure; in the middle there are maps and a list of the draft major projects in the FY2016 TIP; and how the TIP projects are funded is found on the back.

Mr. Carter asked if the funding chart in the brochure for Delaware statewide is only for Kent and Sussex counties. Ms. Graham said the TIP information is broken down by projects in New Castle and Cecil counties and by Delaware statewide projects which cover all three counties. Mr. Carter suggested adding a parenthesis stating, "Statewide projects such as."

Ms. Graham also distributed a TIP spreadsheet that compares the proposed FY 2016 projects with the approved amended FY 2015 TIP. One minor change on the last page is that staff has broken out the projects that will be removed from the document versus projects that do not have funding but will remain in the document.

Mr. Dunn asked if the bridge on Greenbank Road is really in disrepair. Ms. Zegeye said it wouldn't have made the list unless it needed repairs. Ms. Folk asked about the projects that were eliminated, and if that means they will come up again, or were they eliminated because of lack of funding. Ms. Zegeye said they were eliminated because of lack of funding, and they won't come back unless there is additional revenue in the FY2016 TIP. Ms. Folk asked about the total cost of the additional bridge projects. Ms. Graham said she would provide the total figure representing new bridge projects as a follow-up.

Ms. Graham said, in addition to the workshop, there is a virtual workshop on the website. You can click on the project on google maps, and see the information that is also in the TIP document. You can also download the entire document from the website, which is broken down by county and project category.

Mr. Singer requested that staff leave a message at their phone extensions that indicates if they are in.

**ACTION:** On motion by Dave Carter seconded by Roy Podorson the PAC recommended to release the FY2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Public Comment.

Motion passed (12/15/14-04)

**PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**7. Other Business: 8:50 PM**

Mr. Podorson distributed follow-up information about the Pennsylvania Avenue and Union Street intersection. Mr. Podorson referred to page 7 of the October 20 PAC minutes regarding the red light under the railroad tracks.

He said a new traffic directional signal is needed before the trestle going westbound on Pennsylvania Avenue, when you make a left turn on Union Street. While going westbound on the right side, when the traffic signal turns red, the traffic light facing the drivers going eastbound stays green for a period of time, and the westbound drivers don't see the green signal on one side. All they see is a red light.

Mr. Podorson said he had suggested to Dave Blankenship, City of Wilmington, that a flashing light be put on that corner. Mr. Blankenship responded to this inquiry and said you can't put a light on the trestle because it belongs to the railroad. However, Mr. Blankenship also communicated to him that this whole corridor is being looked into. Mr. Podorson reiterated that he has seen a number of near-misses there, because you can't see the light on the other side of the trestle when you are turning there. Mr. Singer suggested that a phone call could be made to the railroad to see what it would take to get the light put on the trestle.

#### **8. Adjournment: 9:00 PM**