

# **PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

WILMAPCO Conference Room, December 12, 2016

## **ROLL CALL**

### **Members Present:**

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  
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council  
Peggy Schultz, League of Women Voters  
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance  
Vic Singer, Civic League of New Castle County  
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance  
Javier Torrijos, Delaware Hispanic Commission  
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington (Chair)

### **Absent:**

Wes Avera, Centreville Civic League  
Bruce Brunozi, City of Wilmington  
Robert Cameron, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation  
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee  
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County  
Joe Mitchell, Cecil County  
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association  
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle  
Francis Swift, GHADA  
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City

### **Staff Members:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager  
Jake Thompson, Transportation Planner  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

**Guests:** None.

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler

Mr. Vic Singer, PAC Vice Chair, called the meeting to order.

**7:00 PM**

### **1. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**7:02 PM**

The October 17, 2016 Meeting Minutes were approved with the following revisions:

- Mr. Singer asked what the term "road diet" means on page five. Ms. Zegeye said it means making the road thinner. For instance, instead of having five lanes the road could have two lanes and also have room for parking or a bike lane.

- Mr. Singer said on page eight, on the top line, the last word should be “is” not “are.”

**ACTION:** On motion by Ms. Folk seconded by Mr. Tancredi the PAC approved the October 17, 2016, meeting minutes, with revisions.

Motion passed

**(12/12/16-01)**

**2. Public Comment:**

**7:05 PM**

Ms. Schulz commented that California Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are in charge of keeping the carbon emissions down according to California’s laws. One law states that sub-areas cannot consider Level of Service (LOS) as part of their plan. Instead, their preference is for multi-modal transportation, which includes planning for pedestrians and bicycles. Mr. Carter said LOS is outdated.

**3. Executive Director’s Report:**

**7:12 PM**

Ms. Zegeye said at the Council Meeting on November 10, 2016, the Council endorsed the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Corridor Overlay Standards. Presentations included the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Membership Update; Transportation and Housing Cost Data Report; and Cecil County Public Opinion Survey.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- MDOT conducted an audit of WILMAPCO’s Title VI Program to make sure it is consistent with federal law.
- The Claymont Master Plan held a public workshop, and 130 people attended.
- Staff attended Title VI Diversity Training at MDOT.
- “Our Town: The Future of Transportation” forum was held at the Wilmington Chase Center on November 2, 2016. About 80 people attended.
- The Ardentown Public Workshop was held on November 14, 2016.
- The Walnut Street Public Workshop was held in Wilmington on November 15, 2016.
- The second Route 9 Master Plan Public Workshop was held on November 29, 2016. About 70 people attended.
- The Union Street Reconfiguration Public Workshop was held on December 6, 2016.
- The Winter Freight meeting will be held in Dover on December 13, 2016.
- Downes and Claymont Elementary Schools’ infrastructure projects are moving forward.
- Staff is working on the 2017 WILMAPCO Regional Progress Report.
- The WILMAPCO FY 2017 TIP and Air Quality Conformity were approved by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- The Newark Regional Transit Center (NRTC) is moving forward and staff expects construction to begin in spring, 2017.
- Staff expects to hold a public workshop for the Wilmington Transit Moving Forward (WTMF) project during the spring, 2017.

Mr. Antonio Valenzuela, PAC Chair, arrived.

**7:15 PM**

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**4. PAC Chair Nomination**

**7:20 PM**

Mr. Singer reported that the nominations include Antonio Valenzuela to continue to serve as PAC Chair and Barry Shotwell, to serve as Vice Chair.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Lower seconded by Mr. Torrijos the PAC approved Antonio Valenzuela as PAC Chair and Barry Shotwell as PAC Vice Chair.

Motion passed

**(12/12/16-02)**

Mr. Valenzuela said he is honored to continue as PAC Chairman. He is trying to learn more about Robert's Rules of Order for meetings. Mr. Singer said he doesn't believe Robert's Rules of Order are included in the PAC Bylaws. He added with a small group like this one the chairperson should be able to participate in the discussion.

Mr. Valenzuela said he would like to see more diversity in PAC membership including more African Americans and women. Mr. Valenzuela also said he was late to the PAC meeting because on Route 273, the left-turning traffic signal didn't change from red to green for a long time, and he would like to report that to someone. Ms. Zegeye said WILMAPCO will provide DelDOT's contact information to Mr. Valenzuela.

To report problems, please contact DelDOT Transportation Management Center at 302-659-4600, #77 on your cell, through e-mail at [deldottmc@state.de.us](mailto:deldottmc@state.de.us), or visit <http://deldot.gov/ReportRoadCondition/>.

**5. Release of the FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Public Comment**

**7:30 PM**

Heather Dunigan said the FY 2018-2021 TIP contains all the federally funded projects anticipated for the next four years. Pending WILMAPCO Council approval, staff is suggesting the draft TIP be released for public comment from January 16 through February 28 and we hope the PAC members will share the information with their respective organizations. A WILMAPCO and DelDOT joint public workshop will be held on February 1 in the Newark Free Library.

The draft TIP Quick Guide was distributed. Ms. Dunigan explained the front of the TIP Guide provides an overview of the draft TIP changes, including listing the seven new projects. A map of major projects is included on the inside of the Guide, and summary of funds broken down by mode, by category, and by other criteria is found on the back.

The current amount is \$2.1 million over the four years. The draft FY 2018-21 TIP project spreadsheet was distributed. New projects include: BR I-295 on Providence Drive over Tributary to Christina River (Line 45), Denny Road and Lexington Parkway Intersection Improvements (Line 74), Middletown Park and Ride (Line 87), Old Capitol Trail, Newport Road to Stanton Road (Line 92), SR4 and Harmony Road Intersection Improvements (Line 104), SR4 and Ogletown Stanton Road/SR 7, Christina Stanton Road Phase I, Stanton Split (Line 105), and SR896 and Bethel Church Road Interchange (Line 109). The projects that are not funded are highlighted in peach.

Ms. Schultz asked why state money is being used for the Hockessin Tweeds Mill Park Athletic Club Parking. A sign indicates that this is open to members only. Ms. Dunigan

said it is her understanding that public access to the park was given in exchange for state support including parking.

Mr. Pusey asked why some of Line 34 was highlighted in red. Ms. Dunigan said it is because scope has changed and now will include two bridges, BR 111 and BR 599, instead of one.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Carter, seconded by Ms. Folk, the PAC recommended the release of the draft FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program for Public Comment.

## **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **5. 2050 Demographic Projections**

**7:50 PM**

Dan Blevins said the 2050 Demographic projections were released by the Delaware Population Consortium (DPC). The WILMAPCO Data and Demographic Subcommittee (DDS) developed the Planning/Election District and Transportation Analysis Zone (TAZ) figures. WILMAPCO assists DeIDOT in maintaining the Peninsula Model, and breaks down the data into vehicles, workers, median income, and mode split (auto, walking and transit).

The Delaware Population Consortium (DPC) was formed in 1975, with the goal of providing a continuing forum for debate and discussion of matters relating to state and local population growth, which produces population, household, and employment projections for Delaware in all three counties and the cities of Wilmington, Newark, and Dover. This data will soon be projected for all the municipalities and a draft document was completed.

The projection process begins with the 2010 age-race-gender distribution obtained from the US Bureau of Census for the jurisdiction. This distribution is comprised of 102 separate age cohorts beginning with the 0 age group and ending with the 100-and-over - age group. Factors considered include mortality, birth/death rates, fertility rates, migration that includes the total number of people moving into the area less the number of persons leaving the area, and labor force participation, which include jobs by place of work including the number of jobs held by civilians working in the area for the projected period. Jobs by residence are also included, which is the number of jobs held by the employed including the jobs of people who hold more than one job.

By 2030 the State of Delaware will reach the breaking point where there are more deaths than births, and population growth will be due to migration. The Year 2010 Age Distribution Chart indicates the increased baby boom population and in 2011 the baby boomers turned 65. After the Baby Boom period (born 1946-1964) the Baby Bust (born 1965-1976) occurred, when birth rates declined.

He said we are seeing modest growth in population from 2015 to 2050 in New Castle County, from 556,000 to 601,000 people. In 2040, the population will decrease from 603,000 to 601,000 in 2050. Sussex County has already hit the high mark where births are less and deaths are significantly higher because of the higher senior population. The White population of 355,000 has decreased to 260,000, with some growth in the Black population and some dwindling down of the Hispanic population.

Changes in transportation choices by age show Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) has declined since the 2000s, due to the aging of population and transportation by millennials. The economy is partially to blame. Between 2001 and 2009, 19-34 year-olds took 15% fewer trips by car; 16% more bike trips; and travelled 40% more by public-transit. In 2001, 19-34 year-olds drove 10,300 more miles per year; in 2009, they drove 2,900 miles per year, which was 46 miles a week fewer miles. In addition, fewer people were getting their drivers' licenses from 1983 to 2014, which included 47% fewer 16-year-olds; 16% fewer 20-to-24 year-olds; and 10% fewer 30-34-year-olds.

Reasons for not getting licenses included too busy (37%), the cost of owning a vehicle (32%), the ease of getting a ride (31%), preferred biking or walking (22%), public transportation (17%), concerns for the environment (9%), shop/talk online (8%), and disability (7%). As a result, fewer people made decisions to purchase automobiles.

Mr. Shotwell asked if the projections are somewhat accurate during a 10-year period. Mr. Blevins said yes. The projections are probably decreasing each year by about 4 to 5%. For more details, or to view the full set of Delaware Population Consortium (DPC) projections you can visit the Delaware Office of State Planning website: [stateplanning.delaware.gov/information/dpc\\_projections.shtml](http://stateplanning.delaware.gov/information/dpc_projections.shtml).

Mr. Singer added you are always at the mercy of the new things that are coming in, and what you have to do is keep an eye on the new things that are becoming influential so that you will have a warning of what is coming up to prepare for making data projections.

## **7. Ardentown Paths Plan**

**8:10 PM**

Jake Thompson said Ardentown was founded in 1922. The Ardens include Ardentown, Ardencroft, and Arden. The residents are leaseholders and do not own the land. Ardentown is approximately .2 square miles, and the population is 264.

The Village of Ardentown Planning Committee developed a "Report and Recommendations from the Planning Committee Regarding Village Paths." They identified paths and unofficial path names and assessed conditions. Ardentown has functional as well as recreational paths, and some paths are impassable or indistinguishable.

The three top priorities include all bridges in the glen; mulching, clearing, and marking paths; and creating pedestrian access. The additional priorities include re-establishing paths, and preserving initiatives.

The project scope has included a review of the previous work and a GIS inventory of Ardentown's existing paths and researching best practices and conducting outreach at the town meetings and online, which were completed. Tasks also include reviewing feedback from outreach (in progress), completing steering committee draft recommendations (in progress), holding a second public workshop in February 2017, and completing a summary of prioritized recommendations, final maps, and identification of funding sources.

Mr. Thompson showed examples of paths between leaseholds, "invisible paths", mulch paths, steps, bridges, and signage. He said the first public workshop was held at an Ardentown Town Meeting on Monday November 14, 2016, with 25 attendees, and 22 surveys were completed, which gleaned positive responses. The public survey was

available online and on paper. It included questions on residency, familiarity with paths, path usage, suggestions for improvement, paving, safety, lighting, naming, and signage. Public Survey results included 65 responses and revealed that 92% are familiar with paths; 85% use paths “often” or “sometimes;” recreation was emphasized more than transportation; the most common suggestion was clearing paths; most prefer natural paths, signage and no lighting; 74% are not concerned about personal safety; and some say the roads are safe for bicycling. Other results include need for better access to woods; and safe connections to Wilmington Montessori School and the Town of Ardencroft.

Recommendations include keep paths cleared, based on priority, name, and sign paths; consider opening historic paths; improve crossing at Sconset Road; improve crossings at Millers and Veale Roads; and improve access to Sunnyside Tract from the steps at the Harvey Road entrance and the creek crossing under the railroad bridge.

The project schedule consists of a base data collection and analysis (Oct-Dec 2016); study feedback from public outreach (Nov. 2016-March 2017); develop draft recommendations (January 2017); complete the study (Feb-April 2017); final endorsement from the Town (April 2017); and present the study to WILMAPCO Council (May 2017).

Mr. Valenzuela asked how to provide signage for the invisible path. Mr. Thompson said it could be a sign indicating the direction of the path, and it could also include some stones marking the path. Ms. Folk asked why the town does not have lights. Mr. Thompson said the residents prefer to maintain the natural feel of the town and lack of light pollution.

## **9. Transportation and Housing Data Report**

**8:30 PM**

Mr. Thompson said housing costs are often a factor in making housing decisions, and transportation costs depend on location. In addition, location efficient communities provide a variety of transportation choices, such as walking and biking, and they typically have higher densities with mixed uses, and access to amenities.

The data from the Housing and Transportation Affordability Index developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) measures data at the block group level. The first map series indicates costs as percentage of Area Median Income (AMI) of \$72,250 per year, and the second map series indicates costs for lower income households, which measures at 80% of AMI of \$57,000 per year.

The national trends and benchmarks are established by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) that include households considered burdened by housing costs, which exceed 30% of income in 42% of block groups in New Castle County, and 58% in Cecil County. The average household spends 18% of its income on transportation (gas, parking, and tolls, transit fares, etc.), with a 48% benchmark for combined housing and transportation costs. Elkton has the lowest housing costs in Cecil County of 19%.

The lowest is in downtown Wilmington at 15%; Churchman’s Crossing is 18%; and Downtown Newark is 19%, while surrounding areas are 20%-25%. Combined costs for transportation and housing are 52% in New Castle County, and 16% in Cecil County. Data also indicates costs in Wilmington are 25% to 35%, in Newark’s costs are 34%, and in Elkton costs are 41%.

In addition, housing costs are lower in the metropolitan areas, and lowest in densely populated areas. Elkton's are the lowest costs in Cecil County at 19%. On the other hand, transportation costs are lowest in downtown Wilmington at 15%, 18% at Churchman's Crossing, and 19% in downtown Newark, with surrounding areas at 20%-25%. Combined costs for transportation and housing are 48% or less in New Castle County, and Wilmington's are 25% to 35%, Newark's are 34%, and Elkton's are 41%.

Lower income households make up 34% of New Castle County, and 16% of Cecil County, which are considered affordable. Wilmington's lower income households; however, range from 18% to 30%. Transportation costs in lower income households make up 51% of New Castle County and 7% of Cecil County is considered affordable. Costs are as high as 32% in New Castle County and 31% in Cecil County, while combined costs for transportation and housing in lower income households are the lowest in Elkton at 48%, and combined costs exceed 50% in the rest of the county. Wilmington ranges from 23% to 50% and 42% in Newark.

Overall observations include:

- ✓ In the WILMAPCO region, both housing and transportation costs are lowest in densely populated areas.
- ✓ Compared to the national average, the region has lower housing costs but higher transportation costs.
- ✓ There are very few location-efficient communities in the region.
- ✓ Both nationally and in this region, transportation costs are higher in auto-dependent areas, which are highest in rural areas.
- ✓ For lower income households, location efficient communities are the only places considered affordable. Auto-dependent areas place a greater burden on lower income residents.

Recommended strategies are 1) Involve affordable housing advocates; 2) Enhance transit; 3) Encourage coordination of housing and transportation policy; 4) Support redevelopment in central urban areas; and 5) Promote location efficient communities as an affordability measure. The WILMAPCO Transportation and Housing Costs Data Report will soon be available at <http://www.wilmapco.org/data-reports/>.

Ms. Schultz said there was a study that said it is also important to locate jobs closer to transportation. Mr. Thompson agreed with Ms. Schultz. He said this study is strictly looking at housing.

**9. Other Business**

**8:50 PM**

None.

**10. Adjournment**

**9:00 PM**