

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WILMAPCO Conference Room, February 12, 2018

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Mark Blake, GHADA
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP
Dave Carter, Southern New Castle County
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Pat Folk, Cecil County
Tom Fruehstorfer, City of Newark
Mario Gangemi, Cecil County Chamber of Commerce
Ken Grant, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance (Vice Chair)
Vic Singer, Civic League for New Castle County
Javier Torrijos, Delaware Hispanic Commission

Absent:

Robert Cameron, Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation
Darlene Cole, Elderly and Disabled Transit Advisory Committee
Maria Dziembowska, the Nature Conservancy
John Ford, Cecil Board of Realtors
Barbara Mobarak, League of Women Voters
Bill Osborne, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
Jeff Peters, Pike Creek Valley Civic League
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance
Frank Vari, Chesapeake City
Antonio Valenzuela, City of Wilmington (Chair)
Alison Windle, Neighborhood House

Staff Members:

Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager

Guests: Herb Inden, City of Wilmington

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler from recording

Barry Shotwell, PAC Vice Chair, called the meeting to order.

6:30 PM

Approval of Meeting Minutes

6:32 PM

The corrections to the October 23, 2017 PAC minutes include: 1) On page 2 delete the repetitive sentence, "The October 23, 2017 PAC minutes were approved with corrections." 2) On page 2 define Tropo as "AQP Partnership Mascot". 3) On page 3, in the last paragraph, delete the word "regarding", capitalize "p", and delete "by Christiana."

ACTION: On motion by Mario Gangemi seconded by Javier Torrijos the PAC approved the December 18, 2017 meeting minutes as amended.

Motion passed

(12/18/17-01)

2. Public Comment:

6:35 PM

Mr. Singer suggested a presentation be given on bus routes around Rodney Square including accommodating dispersion of buses be provided at the next PAC meeting. Ms. Novakoff said she would ask DART for a presentation.

3. Executive Director's Report:

6:40 PM

Ms. Novakoff reported that at the WILMAPCO Council meeting on January 11, 2018, the Council amended the FY 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to include member agency projects; amended the FY 2018-2021 TIP to include increased funding for the Area Wide Congestion Management project; released the FY 2019-2022 TIP for public comment; adopted the WILMAPCO Safety Performance Measures for Cecil County and New Castle County; and endorsed the 2017 Regional Progress Report. Staff presentations included the Elkton Pedestrian Plan and the Public Opinion Survey update.

Ms. Novakoff shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff has been coordinating Delaware Air Quality Awareness Week, April 30 through May 4, 2018, with the Air Quality Partnership (AQP) of Delaware. A Social Media Campaign will encourage people to take a cleaner mode of transportation to work one day during Air Quality Awareness Week. Individuals who post selfies of themselves using the hashtag #TryItDayDE will be entered into a raffle to win a \$25 gift card for Wawa, Target, or Walmart.
- The Elkton Pedestrian Plan public outreach included an appearance on the Elkton Chamber Radio Show on January 23, 2018, and a public workshop with 10 attendees on January 24, 2018. Staff will present Elkton pedestrian information to Elkton Middle School students on February 14, 2018, and middle and high school students and parents will be invited to participate in online surveys.
- The Claymont Elementary School held a walking audit to review Phase II of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program on January 25, 2018.
- Staff met with Cook Elementary School representatives to discuss SRTS programs on February 12, 2018.
- Staff attended Wilmington Comprehensive Plan meetings on January 11, 2018, and a Wilmington Focus Group meeting on connectivity on February 12, 2018.
- Staff attended the Newark Sustainability Plan Steering Committee Meeting.
- Staff attended a City of New Castle Truck Traffic Safety Public Workshop on January 29, 2018.
- Staff is presenting on the Intersection of Planning and Health at the University of Delaware, Academy of Lifelong Learning, on February 27, 2018.
- On February 26, 2018, the joint DeIDOT and WILMAPCO TIP Workshop will be held at the Newark Free Library from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- On February 28, 2018, staff will present Newark Area Transportation Planning information to the Newark Morning Rotary Club.
- Staff will attend a Route 9 Monitoring Committee meeting on February 20, 2018.

- Staff is conducting joint public outreach with the New Castle County Bike Plan and the Future Trails of Northern Delaware.
- Staff is meeting with East Coast Greenways regarding the September 11th Memorial National Trail to identify alternative routes between Newark and Baltimore.
- The APA State Conference will be held in October 2018 in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, and APA is accepting proposals for presentations.
- The Wilmington Initiatives Management Committee has been planning and coordinating Wilmington City projects in partnership with the City of Wilmington, DTC, DeIDOT, and WILMAPCO.

Ms. Folk asked what the presentation to Elkton Schools will be about. Ms. Novakoff said staff will be talking to students about the Elkton Pedestrian Plan and soliciting their feedback on areas in need of improvement.

Mr. Torrijos asked if LACC is involved with Wilmington Initiatives. Ms. Novakoff said she would double check to make sure they are.

ACTION ITEMS:

4. Approval of Public Outreach for FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 6:50 PM

Heather Dunigan said the TIP public outreach includes the public comment period from January 22 through February 28, 2018. A joint WILMAPCO and DeIDOT TIP public workshop will be held on February 26, 2018 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., at the Newark Free Library. The TIP Quick Guide was discussed at the last PAC meeting. Public outreach also includes Transporter and E-news articles and an interactive Facebook Page. Mr. Torrijos asked if the TIP flyer could be translated into Spanish. Ms. Dunigan said yes, we could do that.

Ms. Dunigan distributed the public comments for the FY 2019-2022 TIP to date. She said the first comment is from Mr. Ed Zielinski who does not understand what WILMAPCO does and does not like WILMAPCO. The second comment is from PAC member, Mark Blake, who requested that DeIDOT review all of the streets in unincorporated areas of Delaware's three counties and develop a priority list for redoing and repaving neighborhood streets that are more than 30 years old. He also requested that these repairs be done before any new roads or bridges are approved and/or budgeted. Mark Blake added we have seen neighborhoods that have just been patched and patched, but not fully repaired. However, one neighborhood in Newark just had all of its streets paved; and we would like to know why that neighborhood's streets were repaired, but others were not.

The next four comments were regarding the need for sidewalks. Randy Arm requested sidewalks along Grubb Road between Naamans and Marsh Roads; Frank Warnock requested sidewalks on Old Baltimore Pike, especially in the Iron Hill Apartments area; and Marj Johnson requested sidewalks on Shipley Road between Philadelphia Pike and Washington Street Extension to Route 141, and sidewalks to go to Weldin Road to access the East Coast Greenway.

Mr. Singer requested that the deadline for TIP comments should be extended longer than two days after the TIP workshop. Dave Carter added there should be at least seven

days after the TIP workshop for comments. Ms. Dunigan said staff takes comments up until the Council meeting date of March 8, 2018. She added staff will work harder in future to include more time for comments after the TIP workshop.

ACTION: On motion by Pat Folk seconded by Javier Torrijos the PAC recommended approval of the public outreach portion of the FY 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) with addendum of additional comments being accepted after close of the public comment period.

Motion passed

(2/12/18-02)

5. Approval of Public Opinion Survey Update

7:10 PM

Ms. Novakoff distributed the revised version of the WILMAPCO Public Opinion Survey. She said there have not been a lot of changes since the previous version that PAC reviewed at their last meeting. The survey was piloted and the average length of the survey was 20-25 minutes, so a few changes were made to reduce the length.

On page 2, question #4, the scale was changed, and the option “not too well” was taken out. On question #10 the scale of options regarding how often modes are used was revised because it was confusing and had to be repeated several times. There was also a change on question #31, where the choices were revised and “important” was taken out because “essential” and “important” are similar words. Ms. Novakoff expects these changes will save some time.

Mr. Blake asked what the caller I.D. says. Ms. Novakoff said NRC, or National Research Center. Mr. Blake also asked when the survey would continue to be piloted. Ms. Novakoff said the rest of this week. She added the calling should be completed within a few weeks.

Mr. Torrijos asked if the Public Opinion Survey is translated into Spanish. Ms. Novakoff said yes. Mr. Torrijos also asked how you get the survey to the Hispanic population. Ms. Novakoff said it is done through random calling.

ACTION: On motion by Mario Gangemi seconded by Bill Dunn the PAC recommended approval of Public Opinion Survey Update.

Motion passed

(2/12/18-03)

Mr. Carter discussed the need to reach a wider base of participants to help get more data and suggested an online survey could be conducted to compare to this survey. He said he wanted to know how people who are involved with WILMAPCO compare with the general public. Randi said we could create an online survey, but the results would not be statistically comparable according to the consultant.

Mr. Carter said he wants to know if WILMAPCO’s outreach efforts are paying off. Mr. Dunn said he thought the results would be very different. Mr. Carter said the survey should be sent to people who come to WILMAPCO’s meetings.

Ms. Novakoff suggested that the updated Public Opinion Survey could be sent to the E-News list of about 2,600 additional people. Mr. Torrijos asked the purpose of the second

survey. Mr. Carter said he wants to understand if we are just preaching to the choir or reaching new audiences. Mr. Singer said the base should be expanded to last year's and this year's workshops. Ms. Novakoff said it could be sent to our E-news list, but those people may not be attending workshops.

ACTION: On motion by Mark Blake seconded by Bill Dunn the PAC recommended sending the Public Opinion Survey to WILMAPCO's E-News list.

Motion passed

(2/12/18-04)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

6. City of Wilmington Comprehensive Plan

7:20 PM

Mr. Herb Inden, City of Wilmington Director of Planning and Development, said the City of Wilmington has conducted public outreach utilizing consultants from Interface Studio in Philadelphia. The public outreach plan includes interviews with stakeholders, public input summaries, public surveys, five community forums, and focus groups.

The team received 2,367 responses to the public opinion survey, which included participants who were city residents, commuters, and visitors. Some areas of Wilmington were overrepresented including wealthy participants on Delaware Avenue, while the poorer areas such as Browntown, Hedgeville, and Prices Run were underrepresented. Results areas were then weighted. There was a good age distribution; however, race representation did not match the overall racial distribution for the city.

When asked if the city was better or worse now, a majority of the people said worse, but also expressed optimism and confidence regarding future changes during the next five years. There was some variation across all groups, but safety was the biggest issue overall. Wilmington residents also tended to be more positive than commuters or visitors.

A total of 203 participants attended a total of five public forums and 33 people participated in virtual forums. A collaborative map was available at the public forums where the participants could choose hidden gems. Participants were also asked what they felt was a great street. Many answered having more room, amenities, and street festivals. People and pedestrian oriented were the most common descriptors.

Participants were also asked to play doctor and prescribe improvements for the "ailments" in the city. They discussed crime, violence, and blight as the worst ailments; and best attributes included Neighborhood Watch and Clean-up. Participants' collective vision for 2028 was to have a walkable and tight-knit community.

Next steps have included hosting eight focus groups on February 6, 7, and 12. The draft of the Wilmington Comprehensive Plan will be presented to the community, and the final plan will be available by the end of 2018.

Ken Grant asked if there has been any consideration regarding I-95 to re-create neighborhoods and get rid of urban blight. Mr. Inden said yes, however it is expensive.

Mr. Dunn asked what needs to happen to truly evaluate the potential changes that should occur in Wilmington. Mr. Inden said they are evaluated every five years; however,

he also hopes that they would be revisited often and become fine-tuned. He added if we do a good job the first time around, it should not be as difficult the next time.

7. Other Business

7:50 PM

None.

8. Adjournment

8:00 PM