

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WILMAPCO Conference Room, June 17, 2019

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Katherine Caudle, Pike Creek Civic League
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Pat Folk, Cecil County
Tom Fruehstorfer, City of Newark (Chair)
Ken Grant, AAA
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance (Vice Chair)
Vic Singer, Civic League for New Castle County
Norman Wehner, Cecil Board of Realtors

Absent:

Mark Blake, GHADA
Kevin Caneco, SNCC
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP
Mario Gangemi, Cecil County Chamber of Commerce
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Givvel Marrero, Delaware Hispanic Commission
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance
Eugene Truono, Centreville Civic Association
Dwight Walters, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce

Staff Members:

Dave Gula, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Guests: Cooper Bowers, DeIDOT

Dave Warnick, Commissioner, Town of Rising Sun, MD

Minutes prepared by Janet Butler from recording.

Tom Fruehstorfer, PAC Chair, called the meeting to order.

6:00 PM

1. Approval of the April 15, 2019 Meeting Minutes

6:02 PM

Mr. Singer asked for clarification on page 4 of the April 15, 2019 minutes regarding the second full paragraph in the sentence that says, "We have to make sure that each project we add to the TIP does not make air quality worse." He asked how this is done.

Ms. Zegeye explained that we look at the TIP project list and run a conformity analysis against the air quality emission budgets that have been set by DNREC. If the emissions from those projects are under the budget, the TIP passes.

Mr. Singer said if the air quality analysis of a particular project is limited to the project itself and if you have a project that increases the capacity of the road, the project will lessen congestion and improve air quality. If the scope includes the region that contains the project, then it might be a better way. Ms. Zegeye said that the projects we analyze have to be regionally significant, such as road widening or capacity projects.

ACTION: On motion by Vic Singer seconded by Pat Folk the PAC approved the April 15, 2019 meeting minutes.

Motion passed

(6/17/19-01)

2. Public Comment:

6:05 PM

None.

Executive Director's Report:

6:10 PM

Ms. Zegeye reported that the WILMAPCO Council met on May 9, 2019. The Nominating Committee selected John Sisson, DTC, to continue as Chair; and Eric Sennstrom, Cecil County, to continue as Vice Chair. The Council adopted the State/Local Cash and In-kind commitment and the FY 2020 Unified Planning Work Program. Presentations included WILMAPCO Transportation Justice (TJ) Analysis Update, Newark Area Transit Study, and New Castle County Bicycle Plan Update.

Ms. Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- Staff attended the Mid-Atlantic Electric Vehicle (EV) Summit at DVRPC in Philadelphia.
- Staff assisted the City of New Castle with three Comprehensive Plan public workshops.
- Staff attended a kick-off meeting for the City of Newark Transportation Improvement District (TID).
- Staff assisted with Newark Bike-to-Work Day event.
- Staff attended the Delaware Clean Cities Coalition meeting.
- On June 3, 2019, the Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee Outreach subcommittee worked to create a video to highlight the plan including resulting projects.
- On June 10, 2019, staff held scoping meetings for Governor Printz Blvd. Corridor Plan and Newport Transportation Plan. Request for Proposals (RFPs) were posted to WILMAPCO's website and sent to consultants for both projects.
- Staff participated in the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Peer Exchange regarding public outreach.
- The Wilmington Initiatives (WI) Open House will be held on June 19 at the Wilmington Library.
- The Delmarva Freight Summit, hosted by WILMAPCO, will be held on June 19.
- The Southern New Castle County (SNCC) master plan public workshop will be held on June 24, 2019, in Middletown.
- Staff will participate in the Southbridge Weekend event.
- Staff will participate in the Claymont Safety event.
- The Newark Area Transit Study draft report is being reviewed by the advisory committee.

- The project team for the US 202 Corridor Master Plan is working on developing land use scenarios based on the March 20th public meeting.
- The Air Quality Partnership is working to partner with Clean Cities Coalition and started planning for next year's Earth Day event and AQ awareness week.
- Staff is working on the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) events for Eisenburg and McCullough schools and scheduling an SRTS meeting with Bayard School. Downes Elementary School also held a successful Bike-to-Work Week event and staff taught pedestrian safety at Elbert-Palmer's safety day.
- The FY 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Air Quality Conformity Determination was approved by FHWA and FTA.
- The FY 2020 UPWP was approved by FHWA and staff is waiting for approval from FTA.

ACTION ITEMS:

6:20 PM

None.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

4. Transportation Justice (TJ) Report

6:21 PM

Mr. Swiatek said the TJ Report is an update of the work WILMAPCO had done with Title VI and Environmental Justice (EJ). The study's three main chapters are: 1) Title VI/EJ, which includes the Low-Income and Racial/Ethnic Minorities; 2) Language Assistance Program, which includes Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Low-Literacy (LL); and 3) ADA/Mobility Challenged, which includes seniors, disabled, and zero-car households. These three chapters include demographic profiles, spatial analyses, and key recommendations.

Transportation equity concerns include: Transportation Access (low-income and Blacks); Housing and Transportation Costs (poverty); and Travel Time on public transit (Blacks). Additional equity concerns include pedestrian and bike crashes (Blacks); public electric vehicle stations (poverty, Blacks, and Hispanics), and Community Transportation Projects (Blacks).

One example analysis looks at transportation and housing cost affordability, using Center for Neighborhood Technology data on transportation/housing costs for lower-income households. Generally, neighborhoods within racial/ethnic and poverty concentrations are more affordable than the average for a lower-income household.

The Transportation and Housing Costs map shows areas of major concern. For instance, 6% of high poverty neighborhoods have affordable transportation costs; 58% of high poverty neighborhoods have affordable housing costs; and 25% of high poverty neighborhoods have equal or higher transportation costs than housing costs. Transportation costs are generally high in the WILMAPCO region, given its suburban, car-dependent character.

An analysis of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project spending within areas of ethnic/racial and poverty concentration indicated that black neighborhoods received 38% less spending than expected (based on the population size of those concentrations) on community projects since the FY 2002 TIP.

Total crashes were analyzed using 2016 data; however, expressway crashes were excluded. The number of total crashes was about what was expected as compared to the population of ethnic/racial and poverty concentrations. However, Black neighborhoods had particularly high pedestrian and bicycle crash rates.

The project team also created a Language Assistance Plan. This analysis included the following three Tiers with increasing levels of outreach support: Tier 3: Proactive Spanish LEP & LL (most intensity); Tier 2: Proactive Chinese LEP; and Tier 1: Responsive LEP & LL (least intensity).

The next steps for the TJ Equity Analysis are to complete a Connectivity Analysis and Mobility-Challenged Chapter, and finalize the Executive Summary. The team will work toward WILMAPCO Council endorsement, which is expected by November 2019.

Mr. Grant said he attended a meeting with City of Wilmington recently where they discussed the inordinate number of parking tickets and cars that are towed in at-risk communities. Mr. Swiatek agreed that these residents' costs for bailing out the cars are part of the cost burden of auto dependency that he would like to talk with Mr. Grant about solutions after the PAC meeting.

Mr. Wehner asked what is next. Mr. Swiatek said next steps are based on the recommendations. For instance, black neighborhoods are not getting equitable funding for transportation improvements, and WILMAPCO could try to help drive more funding there. Mr. Wehner said he had not heard of this process in Cecil County. Mr. Warnick explained that one big factor in Cecil County is that funding goes to the townships that are considered "sustainable communities" and that is all part of Plan Maryland, which is state funding.

Ms. Folk asked what method is used to get the information, because in Elkton there are senior and black populations that do not have access to equitable transportation. Mr. Swiatek said we use various Census data and Public Opinion Surveys to gather the data. She asked what percentage of the people are reached. Mr. Swiatek said we keep track of the percentages of the people we reach through the surveys and Census data.

5. City of Wilmington Transportation Studies

6:40 PM

Mr. Gula discussed the following City of Wilmington Transportation Studies: 1) 12th Street Connector Alignment Study; 2) East 7th Street Peninsula Roadway Improvement and Infrastructure Study; and 3) Five-Point Intersection, or Maryland/Monroe/MLK Blvd. Safety and Capacity Study.

These three studies are located near Environmental Justice (EJ) areas. An EPA Grant Areawide Plan that looks at brownfields is already in place there. This EPA project has helped the WILMAPCO team coordinate more outreach and hold more public workshops. The EPA study began approximately one month prior to the start of this study. The process has resulted in more public support and feedback.

The 12th Street Connector Alignment Study had enough public interest to support various transportation improvements such as better access to the waterfront, new

development, better sidewalks and crosswalks, better traffic operations and aesthetics, and maintaining truck access to industrial businesses.

Preferred improvement options include developing a traditional four-way stop intersection at Jessup, Pine, and 14th Streets; a roundabout at 14th, Church, and 12th Streets; traffic calming bump outs on Thatcher Street; signal timing modifications at Northeast Boulevard and Vandever Avenue; and an intersection configuration at Northeast Boulevard and 12th Street. The estimated construction cost for these improvements is \$7.72 million dollars.

The East 7th Street Peninsula Roadway and Infrastructure Study began in May 2018. The team gathered existing data and held a public workshop in June 2018. The team also developed alternatives and solutions, and then held public workshops in February and May 2019. The next steps for the study are to finalize the report by June 2019, and then secure funding for improvements.

Some of the workshop discussions included flooding issues in the area, environmental constraints/resources, land use/zoning issues, recreational amenities, and the existing transportation network.

The Wilmington Initiatives (WI) Safety and Capacity Improvement Study for the Five-Point Intersection (Maryland/Monroe/MLK Study) began because of heavy congestion that backed up onto the I-95 exit ramp and the highway. In 2008, Madison Street became a two-way street, which added a new signal phase and created even more congestion. The intersection of Maryland Avenue, MLK Boulevard, and Madison Street was studied in 2009 and 2011.

This intersection was improved in 2012 and right turn lanes were increased from two to three, which reduced congestion and improved efficiency. However, there were no bicycle facilities in this area, pedestrian crossings at the intersection were difficult, and ADA compliance was a challenge. As a result, the Wilmington Initiatives (WI) partners submitted a 2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) request to complete the study.

On May 20, 2019, a focus group was held that included representatives from Browntown, Hedgeville, Hilltop, West Center City, Quaker Hill, and Justison Landing. During that meeting, the importance of the area, how to evaluate alternatives, and how to test the evaluation criteria with existing alternatives were discussed.

Priorities for the Five-Point Intersection include: 1) Pedestrian Safety; 2) Land Use; 3) Bus Operations; 4) Wayfinding/Legibility; 5) Commuter Efficiency; 6) Economic Development; 7) Pedestrian/Bicycle Connectivity; 8) Stakeholder Support; 9) Public Support; and 10) Environmental Impact/Green Infrastructure. On June 19, 2019, the next

6. Public Participation Plan Update

7:10 PM

Ms. Novakoff said the 2019 Public Participation Plan (PPP) update process includes: reviewing plan examples, conducting the telephone public opinion survey, participating in the FHWA/FTA Peer Exchange focusing on how to develop a Public Participation Plan, a public participation online survey, presentations to PAC, TAC, and Council; a joint CTP/Public Participation Plan Public Workshop in September; and releasing the

draft plan for a public comment period in October. The draft document will be revised, based on public feedback received, and presented to the PAC, TAC, and Council for approval (November/December, 2019).

There were 140 respondents to the online participation survey so far and four were Spanish-speaking. The online survey was promoted in the WILMAPCO E-news, which was sent to 3,600 people and read by 860 (32%). There were 20 link clicks. The survey, which was available in Spanish, was also advertised through Facebook and sponsored posts in English and Spanish. The survey was also posted on Nextdoor.

More than 60% of participants were familiar with WILMAPCO. When asked what are your preferred methods of receiving information about opportunities to participate in transportation planning, more than 50% said e-mail. In addition, 69% said online surveys were effective.

When asked social media site preference, 60% said Facebook; while about 14% do not use social media, emphasizing the importance of not solely relying on social media. When asked how is WILMAPCO doing at informing people of opportunities to participate in transportation planning, more than 30% said I do not know or not very well; while 10% said WILMAPCO is doing a very good job.

When asked other suggestions for how WILMAPCO could reach out, the following are some of the responses that were gathered: broadcast on DeIDOT radio, publicize to civic associations, post on social media, more clearly describe the purpose of workshops, have more advance notice of workshops, post on Nextdoor, participate in community events, and present at Homeowner Association (HOA) meetings.

When asked do you currently receive WILMAPCO's newsletters and meeting announcements, more than 70% said no, however 90% signed up to receive WILMAPCO newsletters.

Anticipated changes to the Public Participation Plan (PPP) include minor changes to the Goals, Objectives, and Actions; enhancements to the public participation process sections; the addition of a "tools in the box" section, incorporation of TJ outreach recommendations; updates to the plan evaluation; and revisions based on feedback received.

Ms. Zegeye said WILMAPCO was selected for the FHWA/FTA Peer Exchange in Indiana due the agency being considered a best practice for public outreach and recognized nationally.

7. Other Business

7:25 PM

Mr. Dunn said more "slow traffic keep right" signs are need on Routes 13 and 1, while driving up to Delaware from Virginia Beach, VA.

8. Adjournment

7:30 PM

Attachments: (0)