

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

WILMAPCO Zoom Virtual Meeting, April 18, 2022

Minutes prepared by Dawn Voss from recording.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski, PAC Chair, called the meeting to order.

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Tracy Chamblee, Southern New Castle County Alliance
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Patricia Folk, Cecil County
Tom Fruehstorfer, City of Newark, and PAC Chair
Mike Kaszyski, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Ken Potts, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Anna Quisel, League of Women Voters of New Castle County
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance

Absent:

Serene Abiy, University of Delaware
Mark Blake, GHADA
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP
Mario Gangemi, Cecil County Chamber of Commerce
Ken Grant, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Deanna Murphy, Cecil County Board of Realtors
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance
Vic Singer, Civic League for New Castle County

Staff Members:

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner

Guests:

2. Approval of the February 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Tom Fruehstorfer and seconded by Ms. Patricia Folk the PAC approved the February 7, 2022 meeting minutes.

Motion passed

(04-18-22-01)

3. Public Comment Period:

None.

4. Executive Director's Report:

Ms. Heather Dunigan shared the following public outreach information:

- The Council met on March 10th. Council voted to approve a TIP amendment to correct the construction funding for the Route 72 project from McCoy Road to SR 71 and the release of the Draft TIP for public comment. Council endorsed the Regional Progress Report, which can be found on the WILMAPCO website. Mr. Mike Kaszyski asked if the Route 72 project included the utility relocation that was completed. Ms. Dunigan said that it did, include utility work, but that phase is finished so the construction will begin.
- WILMAPCO partnered with the City of Wilmington, DeIDOT, and DTC to apply for a RAISE grant for the 12th Street connector. The April 14th deadline was met.
- The Union Street Reconfiguration project advisory committee met for the third time on February 28th. A public workshop was held on March 16th with about sixty attendees. The draft report is available on the website for public comment.
- The second I-95 Cap Feasibility Study advisory committee meeting was on March 8th. Initial ideas were presented. An in-person public workshop will be held April 19th at Lewis Elementary School. Mr. Bill Dunn asked if the I-95 Workshop and the Old Capitol Trail Meeting were both tomorrow. Ms. Dunigan said DeIDOT had a workshop for Old Capitol Trail and an update for I-95. As they are not WILMAPCO meetings, they can be found on the DeIDOT website.
- The first Newport Transportation Study Monitoring Committee meeting was March 2nd.
- The second Concord Pike Master Plan Monitoring Committee meeting will be May 11th.
- The Port Circulation Study had a public workshop on March 23rd.
- Staff will attend the DeIDOT Marshallton Workshop on April 19th.
- WILMAPCO is partnering with Open Streets Wilmington. There will be a series of events through the summer. The first one will be April 23rd on Market Street in conjunction with Wilmington Earth Day and the Air Quality Partnership.
- A public workshop for the 4th Street Project will be on May 3rd.
- Downes Elementary School will have a Bike to School Day on May 4th and WILMAPCO is partnering with the City of Newark on a Bike to Work Day on May 20th.
- Staff will be presenting the Transportation Justice Plan to the University of Delaware Academy of Lifelong Learning on April 19th.
- The Route 9 Monitoring Committee will meet on April 21st.
- Staff presented the Transportation Justice Plan to the Delaware Chapter of Women Leading Government Conference on March 16th.
- A TIP public workshop was held on April 6th.
- Staff participated in Newark's Planning Charrette from March 21st to 25th.
- WILMAPCO partnered with DeIDOT for their public workshop for the Augustine Cut Off Project on March 2nd.
- Staff attended the Cecil County Strategic Highway Safety Plan Executive Committee meeting on April 6th.
- Staff will attend the North East Comprehensive Plan Kick Off Meeting for the transportation section on April 19th.

Mr. Dunn asked what time the I-95 workshop at Lewis will begin. Ms. Dunigan said it is at 6:00 p.m. at Lewis Elementary School. Mr. Dunn said there is one from 4:00-7:00 at DeICastle. He asked if WILMAPCO is participating. Mr. Swiatek said he would be at the Marshallton workshop.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski asked about the Augustine Cutoff Project. Ms. Dunigan said that project came out of the New Castle County Bicycle Plan and the Wilmington Bicycle Plan. DeIDOT is doing public outreach. They did a feasibility study for a bikeway along there. Now, that is concluding with public outreach. Mr. Dunn asked if it calls for the rebuilding of the bridge. Ms. Dunigan said the hope is to fit something into the existing bridge.

Mr. Ken Potts asked what if anything has been developed on the 12th Street Connector. Ms. Dunigan said a copy of the study that was done by WILMAPCO with the City of Wilmington and DeIDOT is on the WILMAPCO website. It has a series of bicycle and pedestrian plans and connections, and roadway improvements geared toward economic development and connectivity to that area.

ACTION ITEMS:

5. Public Outreach Portion of the Draft FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program

Ms. Randi Novakoff said the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) outlines the tasks the staff will undertake in the upcoming fiscal year. PAC members are encouraged to review the document on the WILMAPCO website and share their comments through May 3rd. The Outreach section begins with the description of the intended audience. The goal is to reach as many people in the general public as possible, using a wide variety of methods, including workshops, conferences, seminars, and events. We also target outreach to different audiences, and the method of outreach is based on who we are trying to reach. Staff has identified the Transportation Justice communities who are most adversely impacted by transportation decisions and outlined extra measures to reach this audience.

One strategy is developing public information documents that summarize the work we do in easily understood ways, minimizing jargon and acronyms to make it easy for the public to understand. Success stories and real-work examples are highlighted to show where the public has made a difference. About ten thousand people are on the list to receive the monthly e-newsletter and/or the quarterly newsletter, and we are always working to grow these lists. The quarterly newsletter was transitioned from print to digital, but printed copies are mailed upon request.

Staff are available to attend civic groups or other organization's meetings and present about current work. Videos were developed for outreach use. Last year, five videos were created to explain who WILMAPCO is and some of our processes. Staff is working with Safe Kids Delaware to create pedestrian and bicycle safety videos to share with schools in the county.

The website houses all of WILMAPCO's studies and documents including the TIP, the RTP, the Public Participation Plan, and the UPWP. Information about meetings can also be found on the website. Staff keep it up to date and it is a good source of information for people.

Staff do pedestrian and bicycle safety education for school children through a number of different means including work with Safe Kids Delaware, which is a statewide group consisting of about thirty organizations working to increase safety for kids. The Safe Routes to School Program works to improve infrastructure in the immediate vicinity of schools and develop education strategies in the schools. We support the Newark Bike Project and the Urban Bike Project, which educate youth on bicycle safety, riding skills, maintenance, and repair.

Staff coordinate with other agencies to leverage what they are doing and cross promote WILMAPCO events with them to expand our reach as much as possible.

Air quality outreach is done primarily through the Air Quality Partnership of Delaware, which is a statewide partnership of public and private organizations and individuals who educate Delawareans about simple strategies to improve air quality like walking and riding a bike. We help coordinate the Wilmington Earth Day events. WILMAPCO's mascot, Tropo, will be attending that event. Staff are currently working on converting Tropo's assembly program into a video that can be more easily shared amongst the schools.

For Transportation Justice outreach, strategies are developed in partnership with the community to ensure that outreach methods that work best for each community are used. When possible, people are compensated for their time to attend meetings or to conduct surveys.

Social media is an important tool for reaching out. Areas can be targeted with advertising down to the mile within a project area. Social media events are easily shared and go into people's calendars as a reminder. WILMAPCO is on many of the social media channels so members are encouraged to share and like our content.

Mr. Dunn asked if WILMAPCO tried to get independent funding for air quality study work and how much WILMAPCO participated in the funding the Route 9 Corridor is asking for through DNREC. Ms. Novakoff said the Air Quality Partnership has applied for a few grants in the past to conduct some air quality education and WILMAPCO has partnered with DNREC, hosted events, and did some exhibit tables in the Route 9 corridor. Mr. Dunn said right now they are applying for additional funding because of what opened up through the EPA. He asked if WILMAPCO and DNREC, besides the Route 9 Corridor, reached out to get funding for additional instrumentation or other things that might come into play. Mr. Swiatek said he brought Angela Marconi, who is the DNREC Lead Air Quality Planner, together with the residents and had a couple of meetings with them. Then, he let the community figure out what they wanted from there. Mr. Swiatek has been getting updates at the monitoring committee meetings and health subcommittee meetings.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Tom Fruehstorfer and seconded by Mr. Dave Tancredi the PAC approved the Public Outreach Portion of the Draft FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program.

Motion passed

(04-18-22-02)

6. Draft FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the TIP has been out for public comment since March 18th. The TIP is how our region's transportation plan gets implemented. It represents the first four years of our long-range plan. It needs to include all federally funded projects as well as other regionally significant projects. It documents the priorities of the region and includes all types of transportation projects including roadway projects, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian improvement, and multimodal projects, which incorporate multiple forms of transportation. This TIP contains \$2.8 billion in projects, which is three percent less than the last document that was developed in September of 2019. This is normally presented for adoption at the February PAC meeting, but it was pushed back a cycle. In November, The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was passed, which provided more money for infrastructure, most notably transportation, so the TIP process was delayed to give the state DOTs time to absorb the infrastructure act and incorporate it into the documents. DelDOT recently moved to a biannual process for their TIP and CTP so we are matching their process and will do this biannually instead of annually.

In the Delaware Statewide Element new projects include a Carbon Reduction Program, which provides funding for projects that reduce air pollution. The Electric Vehicle Program helps to install EV charging infrastructure throughout the state. There is a Resiliency and Sustainability Program, which has a number of initiatives, including more funding for EV charging infrastructure and funding to help low-lying areas at risk of flooding and sea level rise. Not entirely new, but new to the document is the STIC Incentive Program, which is funding for the implementation of innovative practices including outreach techniques and innovative development of things such as pop-up infrastructure to help test out new projects.

In the New Castle County section of the document there are a few new projects. Not new, but changed, is the South Walnut Street Bridge over CSX, which includes \$967 thousand for preliminary engineering and right-of way for bridge replacement. This was a bridge rehab project, but the whole bridge needs to be redone. A new project is the Edgemoor Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, which will add a connection between Governor Printz Boulevard and Hay Road to provide employee access to the Newport facility and a connection to Fox Point State Park. This includes \$1.5 million for construction. The connection between S. Church Street and S. Walnut Street in Wilmington will be just south of the Wetlands Park and includes \$2.6 million for construction. The SR 1 at Tybouts Corner project, which includes interchange improvements and to corridor widening, is \$6.6 million for preliminary engineering plus \$1 million for right-of-way. Currently no money is shown for construction. There is a series of pedestrian safety improvements on US 13 including a bus-bike-right-turn lane from I-495 to Boulden Boulevard with \$2.3 million for preliminary engineering and construction.

In Cecil County, there are School Zone and Crosswalk Improvements near Elk Neck Elementary School to address speeding traffic and provide safer walking and bicycle connections for the students. This project is \$85,000 and the County recently received a grant for this.

Looking at funding by mode, multimodal projects are emphasized. About 45% of the funding is in the multimodal category. With the emphasis on Complete Streets by both state DOTs, some projects that were in the roadway category were shifted to the multimodal category. These include the intersection improvements category, the highway safety improvement category, as well as the I-95/896 project, which now incorporates a pedestrian/bicycle pathway over I-95. There is some decrease in transit funding, which reflects the completion of many of the phases of the train station projects in Newark and Claymont. In funding by category, preserving existing infrastructure has always been emphasized as a top priority and about half of the funding goes into the preservation category. In funding by source and location, 52% of funding is coming from Delaware and Maryland, 46% is federally funded, and 2% is other funds, which may be municipal support or developer funded projects. The Delaware Statewide category funds 64%. The New Castle County element has 30% and 6% is in Cecil County.

WILMAPCO put out a TIP Quick Guide, which can be found on the website. It gives a summary of what's new in the TIP and has a map of projects. PAC members are encouraged to share this with their groups. A virtual public workshop was held April 6th. It began with a presentations from WILMAPCO, DeIDOT, DART, MDOT, and Cecil County. The second part had virtual breakout rooms, one for DeIDOT and Dart staff, one for MDOT and Cecil County staff, and one for WILMAPCO staff. Attendees could go from room to room to ask questions or make comments. This workshop was lightly attended, but in-person workshops were lightly attended in the past. People do not tend to come out for projects that are region wide. The information has been on our website since March 18th and two hundred people visited the TIP page, making it the 3rd most popular page on the site after the I-95 page and the home page. The workshop was advertised on Facebook where it reached 3,600 people. We are asking PAC to approve the

public outreach portion of the TIP. The public comment period will extend to the end of April. Then it will be brought to Council for adoption on May 12th.

Mr. Bill Dunn asked if the 2% from New Castle County is representative of developer contributions to road improvements that are demanded by new development. Ms. Dunigan said the 2% is not exclusively from New Castle County, so that includes some developer-funded projects which are primarily in the New Castle County portion, but there is also funding that is part of that 2% from Cecil County as well as municipal funding.

Mr. Bill Lower asked what has been found over the years to be the best channel through which the public does engage on this topic and if that has shifted like so many things during COVID. Ms. Dunigan said this is the first TIP developed since COVID, so we did not know what to expect from the workshop. The workshop format was good, because it is difficult to make virtual meetings interactive, so allowing people to go from one room to another worked well. It is hard to get people excited about something regional. If you are talking about something in someone's neighborhood, like the I-95 Cap project, it is easier to get people to grasp the importance of attending. With TIP workshops, the only times meetings have been well-attended is when there is an organized effort to get a project into the TIP. Occasionally a meeting is well attended where people are organized in opposition to a project. It has not happened for a while, but when it has happened it was very effective in making changes to the TIP. Mr. Lower said it is similar to the DeIDOT adage, you do not hear public outcry until you try to put a traffic light in someplace.

Mr. Tracy Chamblee asked how new projects were chosen. Ms. Dunigan said last year a priority list of projects was submitted to DeIDOT. WILMAPCO's prioritization process looks at things like safety, environmental justice, air quality, economic development, congestion, transit use, and pedestrian accessibility. It takes into consideration a lot of the technical analysis done across the region to prioritize projects. That is approved by our Council and submitted to DeIDOT and MDOT for use in selecting projects. DeIDOT strongly considers our guidance and also looks at things like what economic development projects might need assistance.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Bill Dunn and seconded by Mr. Tom Fruehstorfer the PAC approved the Draft FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program.

Motion passed

(04-18-22-03)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

7. Port Circulation Study

Mr. Dan Blevins said there have been many other studies through this area, like the Route 9 Corridor Master Plan, Southbridge, another port study, and the Wilmington Comp Plan. Each highlighted ideas of how to improve truck traffic. This study took those ideas and did modeling studies to see how much each option would affect truck traffic. The main goal of this study is to determine how to move truck traffic off of New Castle Avenue in a safe manner. This study also determined the cost of each option and if these ideas are feasible. This study began a little over a year ago. A workshop was held in March of 2021 to highlight the ideas and see if the community had anything else they thought should be evaluated. After the benefits were assessed, a second workshop was held to share the results with the community.

Five alternatives were analyzed. Alternatives 1 and 2 are different options for a Pigeon Point Extension to connect Pigeon Point Road to Cherry Lane south of I-295. Alternative 3 is not a direct connection to the port, but improvements at Pyles Lane, where houses are being purchased. Alternative 4 makes a two-way road connection at Garasches Lane over CSX. Alternative 5 examines signage and rerouting to keep trucks on the interstate system until they reach Terminal Avenue. Each alternative was run through Synchro and a few other models to evaluate changes in travel time, fuel usage (and corresponding air quality improvements), peak hour intersection levels of service, and truck reductions at those intersections.

Average travel time and total fuel consumption from Cherry Lane to D Street were calculated. Alternatives 1 and 2, Pyles Lane, did pretty well. Alternative 4, Garasches Lane, also did well. Alternative 5, rerouting, would make a significant difference. In looking at the reduction of truck traffic along the corridor, Alternative 1 and 2 are similar as they have the same origin and destination with the roadway extension. None of the alternatives will solve all of the issues, but some cost more than others, and some may be more feasible. Alternatives 1, 2, and 5 are effective at removing truck traffic from the core area from Pyles Lane to Cherry Lane. Alternative 4, however, has traffic going to the north to access the Garasches Lane improvements. Weekday peak hours benefits were scored and Alternative 5 scored the best, but from a technical standpoint, there were a lot of impedance factors added to the model to force trucks to take the longer route. Alternatives 1, 2, and 4 also scored well.

A detailed cost estimate was created. Alternative 1, which goes directly from Pigeon Point to Uniquema Boulevard is \$25 million. Alternative 2, from Davidson Lane, is \$23 million. Alternative 3, Pyles Lane, is not very expensive, but does not directly connect to the port and so does not do much to address truck traffic on New Castle Avenue.

Mr. Dunn said when they had previously discussed Pyles Lane, he suggested a one-way-on, one-way-off in each direction of 495 to New Castle Avenue, then a five-hundred-yard drive to get on Pyles Lane and head to the port. Mr. Dunn asked if that was ever discussed at all. Mr. Blevins said he does not believe it came up and it was not one of the things that was analyzed. Mr. Dunn said he knows it would bump up the cost significantly, probably about \$5 million, but the idea was to get truck traffic to flow all in one direction, so southbound 495 onto New Castle Avenue, make a left turn, then a left turn onto Pyles Lane. Subsequently northbound 495 would go right off the connection and onto Pyles. Mr. Blevins said it keeps the truck traffic to the north, but the trucks still use a significant piece of New Castle Avenue. Mr. Dunn said you are using a quarter mile of New Castle Avenue instead of two or two and a half miles. That is twenty percent of what it might use otherwise. Mr. Blevins said that was not analyzed, but the Garasches Lane alternative fit in terms of cost, though there are some challenges with traffic turning north onto New Castle Avenue. However, it does remove trucks from a significant portion of New Castle Avenue, and to access Heald Street trucks would not have to go over CSX and make the u-turn into the area of Southbridge. They could make a left turn. This one has some other benefits for a big piece of the corridor.

It is almost impossible to estimate cost for Alternative 5, which is rerouting. There are many challenges related to the level and type of enforcement that would be used on this corridor. Some recent bills have been signed into law regarding how truck restrictions are published, but it is still unclear what monitoring systems are allowed. There is a law about denying reasonable access to trucks within one mile of the national network which includes I-95 and I-295. This will be brought to TAC this coming week for adoption, then to the Council in May.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski said there was a figure about time savings and fuel savings, and it looked like an average figure of about two gallons per hour and asked if that was based on a certain type of vehicle or operating speed. Mr. Blevins said within the model it would be based on a certain speed and it might go link by link. So, it is an accumulation of everything from D Street to Cherry Lane. Within the Synchro model, speed may not be the same for every segment. Mr. Kaszyski also asked if there was anything correlating that to NOx and similar pollutant levels. If you are saving so much fuel, he would think that would also correlate to release of hydrocarbons and similar pollutants. Mr. Blevins said that is not evaluated. That would be done more on-sight at any given location.

8. Health Risks & Conditions Data Report

Mr. Bill Swiatek said this data report looks at health behaviors and outcomes and how health data is used at WILMAPCO. Then it looks at correlations between that data and transportation and land use data to ensure our Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Index is as strong as possible. The SDOH are socio-economic conditions that people are born into and live in that impact their health. It was the subject of a 2019 data report, where an index was developed to show which parts of our region are of concern when it comes to health. It is also a factor in the project prioritization process. Additional data has recently become available at the Census tract level. Historically, data like obesity, physical activity, asthma, and reported health has been available at the zip code level or at the county level, but not at a Census tract level.

Healthy Communities Delaware, who have a license for PolicyMap, pulled the data for Cecil and New Castle Counties for us. This report compares that data to the SDOH Index. It also looks at the SDOH Index versus the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), which was developed by the Centers for Disease Control. Finally, it looks at that health data compared to transportation and land use conditions to see where there are correlations. Five of the eight factors in the SDOH are also housed in the SVI, including poverty, education, minority segregation, employment, and single parent households. SDOH also measures homeownership, time-in-residence, and food deserts, while SVI looks at income, children, people with limited English proficiency, seniors, disabled people, multi-unit homes, mobile home units, crowding, no vehicles, and group quarters. SVI tries to look at vulnerability across the population to natural and man-made disasters, where SDOH is focused on health outcome data. Both indices do not have any weighting so each of these factors is equally weighted.

When looking at maps of the census tracts that are of most concern and least concern for SDOH versus SVI, there are many similarities. The main differences are in the areas of concern as the SDOH is much more focused in and around Wilmington. With SVI the areas of concern are more scattered and include suburbs along Route 40. Areas just west of the Pike Creek and Route 41 corridor are of less concern in both cases, and parts of the City of Wilmington and Elkton are of more concern. SVI shows a couple of census tracts in Elsmere and also some of the suburban poverty clusters along Route 40, whereas the SDOH is concentrated more in the City of Wilmington and the Route 9 corridor.

Related to correlations, R^2 values measure the strength of correlations with different health conditions and behaviors. A score of 1 is a complete correlation and a score of 0 is the total lack of a correlation. With asthma, poor mental health, obesity, and physical inactivity, each is correlated to some degree with both SVI and SDOH, but the strength of correlation is much stronger with SDOH. It is often double the score of SVI. Other factors like high blood pressure and poor reported health had no correlation at all. This indicated something else may be driving those things rather than something predicted by either of these indices. Age is better correlated

with those. Another way of looking at this, is to compare census tracts that are places of highest concern and least concern for SDOH and look at the median percentages of people who have these conditions. For example, in Census tracts of highest concern 41% of people are obese versus only 33% in areas of least concern. When you look at this compared to SVI they match up pretty well, but the ranges are a slightly wider with SDOH than SVI.

The Census tract with the least asthma in our region had 8.6% of adults reporting to have asthma, while the one with the most has 12.7%. The City of Wilmington and Route 9 Corridor have the most asthma. Areas along Route 52 and Route 202 have some of the least asthma. There are some very wide differences between the places that have a lot of asthma and those without when SDOH factors like minority segregation, single parent households, and poverty are considered. In areas with high rates of asthma, 22% of households are in poverty versus only 3% in areas with low rates of asthma. Related to transportation factors, we looked at houses within a quarter of a mile of roads with twenty thousand or more average annual daily traffic and found a difference there between places that had the most and least asthma. The spread was even wider in areas near the freight network. Housing near industrial areas show 100% of areas with the most asthma were near industrial zoned land. Looking at sites that were given air violations within a one-year period showed Census tracts with one hundred and fifteen air violations within them had high asthma versus only twenty-eight violations in census tracts with the least. Placing all the data on a scatter plot, does not show a correlation between asthma and being near a busy road. There is slightly better correlation with the freight network, with an R^2 score of 0.08. Areas with higher rates of asthma tend to be near the freight network. There is some correlation between asthma and homes near industrial zones, and even better correlation with nearby air violations.

Physical inactivity and asthma were both included in this report because they are most related to transportation in the data that we had. The Census tract with the least amount of inactivity has 24% versus the most inactivity with 41%. The lowest amounts of physical inactivity stretch from Rising Sun to Port Deposit, into the City of Newark. The most physical inactivity is found along Route 13, Route 9, and into the City of Wilmington. Looking at the SDOH factors, 22% of people in the most inactive tracts live in poverty versus 7% in the most active tracts. In the places that had the most inactivity, 55% of households had good walk connectivity versus 0% for the most active tract. Nearby parks was also an inverse relationship. About 100% of people in the least active places were near a park versus 17% in the most active places. This gets to causation. It appears there are other factors like income or having the time to exercise. On scatterplots, physical inactivity and obesity are strongly correlated. Physical inactivity and proximity to a busy road did not show correlation. The places with the most amount of physical inactivity had better walking connections than those that did not. This does not get into lighting or safety, which are also important factors.

After looking at this data, we can have confidence in our SDOH Index. It has been a solid resource for WILMAPCO and for public health partners. Wilmington's COVID-19 group used the SDOH Index to plan and focus interventions and preventions around testing and the vaccine. On a map, areas of SDOH concern overlaid with areas with the lowest amount of booster uptake is almost an exact match. So, this data set that was developed a few years ago predicted where public health issues exist today. Delaware Guidance Services, which is a mental health provider, is using the SDOH Index to find a site that is central and near a bus route for one of their locations. The index can be further strengthened by looking at these correlations and adjusting the data, so we will work on that over this next year.

Mr. Bill Dunn asked if this has been reviewed with the Route 9 Corridor people. Mr. Swiatek said no. Mr. Dunn said they would be thrilled to look at this. Then he pointed out that on the SVI map of areas of high and low concern, a triangle in the Route 9 area has a middle school, a hotel, and Gracelawn Cemetery. He asked if Mr. Swiatek knew how that area was deemed problematic by the CDC's approach to evaluating it versus the approach in the SDOH. Mr. Swiatek said it may have scored pretty well in the SDOH but not make the top fifteen. The SVI Index is broader than the SDOH in looking at the number of children and multi-units. SVI is interested in looking at vulnerability from a wider swath of needs. Mr. Dunn said kudos to the SDOH evaluation.

Ms. Anna Quisel said she is really interested in the intersection between air pollution and health. Regarding the highest and lowest rates of asthma being so close, all of Delaware is in a cloud of asthma-causing pollution due to the small size of the state and the major roadways that are passing through. Ms. Quisel asked if the data would be available. Mr. Swiatek said he could send it to her. It has not been published yet. We are working it through the committees.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski said in some of the comparisons made in this presentation, they seem to be the single comparison of two items. He asked if there were any combined comparison of say, age factors and industrialized areas and asthma or age factors and busy roads and so forth. Mr. Swiatek said not at all. We were looking at the behavior and condition data versus some of the land use and transportation factors and did not get into any deeper correlations or other factors, but that would be great for a follow up study.

8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Tom Fruehstorfer and seconded by Mr. Bill Dunn the PAC adjourned.

Motion passed

(04-18-22-04)

Attachments: (0)