

# TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

June 17, 2021

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, June 17, 2021, via video conference/conference call.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Gwinneth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington, and TAC Chair pro tempore, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

**2. TAC Members present:**

Ben Allen, Maryland State Highway Administration  
Ian Beam, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation  
Alexandra Brun, Maryland Department of the Environment  
Jennifer Callaghan, Cecil County Department of Public Works  
Marvina Cephas, DNREC  
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning  
Gwinneth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning  
Jeanne Minner, Town of Elkton  
Matt Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use  
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation

**TAC Ex-Officio Members present:**

**TAC Members absent:**

City of Newark  
City of Wilmington Department of Public Works  
Delaware Office of State Planning  
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism  
Delaware River and Bay Authority  
Maryland Transit Administration

**TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:**

Amtrak  
Diamond State Port Corporation  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

**Guests and Invitees:**

Nicholas Cannistraci, Town of Elkton  
Jolyon Shelton, DNREC  
Givvel Marrero

**Staff:**

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner  
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner

Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner  
Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner  
Dawn Voss, Administrative Assistant  
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Dawn Voss.

### **3. MINUTES**

Mr. David Dahlstrom requested a correction to the May 20, 2021 TAC minutes. He attended the May 20, 2021 TAC meeting via his cell phone and could not respond, so he is not listed as present.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Mr. Matt Rogers the TAC approved editing the May 20, 2021 TAC minutes

Motion passed. **(06-17-21-01)**

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Matt Rogers and seconded by Mr. Ian Beam the TAC approved the May 20, 2021 TAC minutes with revision.

Motion passed. **(06-17-21-02)**

### **4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES**

None

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

### **6. Report from Nominating Committee for TAC Chair**

Mr. Ian Beam said he, Mr. Matt Rogers, and Mr. Cooper Bowers were able to convene and can report that Mr. Mike Fortner was nominated and has agreed to continue in his role as TAC Chair. Mr. Matt Rogers has agreed to serve as vice chair.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Ms. Jeanne Minner the TAC approved the appointment of Mr. Fortner as chair and Mr. Rogers as vice chair of the TAC.

Motion passed. **(06-17-21-03)**

### **ACTION ITEMS**

None

### **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **7. Union Street Reconfiguration and Streetscapes Improvement Study**

Mr. Dave Gula said this study is in a very active community in the area of Union Street in Wilmington. The community was involved in a lot of earlier outreach to configure the roadway,

so it is important to the team that they receive a lot of community input. The stakeholders are also very committed. For the Advisory Committee, the project team contacted city and state officials, business and property owners on Union Street, neighborhood groups, and resident groups. The management committee will help make administrative decisions, but the team will be relying heavily on the Advisory Committee. The consultant team includes JMT, who have worked with WILMAPCO for years, and Interface Studio, who worked on Wilmington's comp plan.

This is really a community-driven process to reconfigure the street and add some streetscape to a street that was recently reconfigured. As of 2016, this was a three-lane road on the western side of Wilmington. It is very wide and the lanes themselves are wide. The traffic volumes are as expected but the speeding is little high. This project will look at everything that is in the right-of-way and how the multimodal network can be influenced by this project. Currently, it has narrow sidewalks in places and little to no street trees. These things will make it look better, but to make it a destination street for pedestrians, it needs to be comfortable for modes that are not car oriented. Since COVID some businesses have closed. So, they hope to make it a premier pedestrian experience to serve the surrounding dense and active neighborhood and bring it back economically.

Though some sections look very similar, each block is different. The team will work with common themes but look at each block to ensure it works for the people who use it most. It is one way southbound. Since the reconfiguration, it has two lanes instead of three with parallel parking on the right and alternating between parallel and back-in diagonal on the left. There is a bike lane. The study area is from Pennsylvania Avenue to Sycamore Street. At the southern end it becomes Kirkwood Highway. Lincoln Street is the paired, one-way street northbound. There is about eighty feet of right-of-way and about fifty-five feet of pavement curb to curb. There are eight bus stops. The sidewalks vary from three to nine feet along the corridor. There are overhead utilities and utility cabinets, but also planters and benches amongst garbage cans and signs. Along the eighty-foot right of way, there is a ten-foot parking lane alternating with sixteen-feet of back-in angled parking, which at times creates some dead space. People have complained that parking changes from block to block. Cyclists are concerned with the parking and that there is no buffer with speeding traffic. The drive lanes are twelve feet, which if reduced may help to calm the traffic.

The study area was broken into three parts. To the north there are some parking lots. Where there are no entrances, there are mixed back-in angled and parallel parking. There is a section along the railway viaduct where the sidewalk is three feet wide with utility poles in the middle. The residents of the new, large apartment complex around the corner cannot comfortably use this sidewalk. There are some off-loading areas for trucks and small parking lots. The middle section is pedestrian-oriented mixed use. It is mostly commercial. There may be some residential at ground level, but mostly above. There are the same parking issues, but the sidewalks are wider. Signalized crosswalks are located at 9<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets then at 4<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Lancaster Avenue. There is a fire station at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Residents say the parking signage is confusing as to where to back in or parallel park and how long you can park. There are crosswalks, but they have ADA challenges that need to be improved. The bike lane is not marked in full with green paint, and it would be nice if it could be buffered. Loading zones would be helpful. Some sections on the west side have new buildings. The southern section is from Lancaster to Sycamore and is landscaped residential with one section of commercial on the east side with some entrances, then there is transition to housing on both sides of the street. The sidewalks are narrow.

The needs of the area are focused on the multimodal. The roadway has room to accommodate moving the curb and widening the sidewalks. Wider sidewalks provide more gathering spaces for benches and café seating. Crossings need to be addressed and trees could help with traffic calming. The bike lane could be moved to the right side of street or behind the parking which would be more comfortable. Bike parking is very limited now. For transit, the study will look at bus shelters. Residents indicated that stops could be condensed if it would provide better amenities at the stops. Having enough parking may become a challenge for restaurants and events. Restriping reduced speeds of personal vehicles by three or four miles per hour, but physical changes are needed to bring the speeds down significantly. There have been complaints about both back-in and parallel parking, but back-in added nine parking spaces. It is possible that a parking lot is needed as events and the growth of new restaurants cause parking problems in the neighborhoods alongside Union Street. The team is considering more flexible management along the curb lines. Loading zones are not needed all day, so some could be flex. Stops from services like Uber and Door Dash need to be accommodated. Rain gardens are part of placemaking and the aesthetics of the community. There is an issue with flooding at Pennsylvania Avenue and Union Street. The city had a proposal that might help with drainage, but the problem is not necessarily right at the location but downstream. Green stormwater management at the viaduct may help with flooding at Pennsylvania Avenue. Transportation funding is not usually spent on undergrounding aerial utilities as, it is very expensive, but there are utility poles on both sides of the street so if the utility companies are willing to talk about it, maybe there could be only one pole line for aerial utilities. The pedestrian lighting is good. Crosswalk lighting will allow people to be seen and feel safe when they are crossing the street.

The visioning goes back ten years to the West Side Grows Together Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. Based on that, the Better Block Demonstration was begun, and what is there now is very similar to the Better Block Demonstration. When the city did their comprehensive plan, the idea that this street could be better utilized was mentioned frequently. The Wilmington Bike Plan has designated that this bike lane is part of the plan, so the question is not whether Union Street should have a bike lane, but how to make it part of a better network.

Union Street was cited as a great street. People would like to see it be more people oriented, more inviting, and have more festivals held there. The street is vehicle oriented, but a neighborhood that is looking for a main street needs it to be people oriented.

After the presentations at the workshops, there were breakout sessions using virtual sticky notes to capture comments about conditions today and what participants want to see in the future. People liked this format. The first Advisory Committee meeting was on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. There was a public meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>. There was a legislative briefing on April 26. Two city council members and State senators have been attendees. These are the people that will help find funding as the project still needs to be added to the CTP. That process takes time, so the hope is to have some improvements planned that can be done as soon as funding is available. The project team has been working on concepts. Before the next public meeting, the team will have an Advisory Committee meeting and work with Wilmington Initiatives. Then the concept will be brought to the public and then a final report will be completed.

The project website is [www.wilmapco.org/unionstreet](http://www.wilmapco.org/unionstreet) .

## **8. WILMAPCO Freight Studies Updates**

Mr. Dan Blevins said the objective of the truck parking study is to address the overall truck parking hotspots and in particular the undesignated truck parking spaces. The second focus

group meeting was in May and then the second technical memo was produced, which began the identification of the undesignated truck parking locations and describes strategies and recommendations. In Delaware there are three hundred and thirty-seven spaces, most are owned privately. Seventy-six spaces are owned publicly at the Biden Welcome Center and the Smyrna Rest Area. Not many spaces are scattered throughout Delaware. There are three hundred and seventy-four spaces at the two major centers in Elkton and around four hundred just across the Delaware Memorial Bridge in New Jersey. Not all of the locations have overnight parking. Some of the WAWAs and Royal Farms further south in Delaware have valid parking spaces, however, they do not authorize overnight parking.

Archived data from Trucker Path app was used to see how the parking spaces in Delaware function at different times of day. Most usage is overnight from midnight to 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. There are no issues with parking mid-day, but as evening approaches the lots start to fill, and at night constraints appear throughout the system. South of the C & D Canal, and through Kent and Sussex, there are many key constraints where there is very little overnight parking, perhaps one or two locations throughout the state.

Undesignated truck parking refers to locations where trucks are parking but should not. INRX data from 2019 was used so the data would be pre-COVID. Of 17 million waypoints, there were 119,700 instances where a truck was stopped more than thirty minutes. Throughout the state, it was shown where trucks were parked on shoulders, in pick-up and drop-off facilities, and in other clusters throughout the region. The focus is on the undesignated places to find out why trucks are parked there. In the state, thirty-two undesignated truck parking clusters were identified. They were categorized into six different groups: around a rest area when the lot is full, on/off ramps, shoulders, near final mile facilities, near a truck stop, or urban. The key question is, "Why are trucks stopping where they are?" The team is trying to determine if the trucks are stopping because they are over their hours of service or because they are staging for next day. For each of the locations the data was used to try to find how many trucks were there, the duration of the stay, and other factors to determine why they stopped where they did. This will lead to more of a solution for what is being found in those locations.

The second working paper has details on the SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) for truck parking in Delaware. Delaware has not reached full capacity at all of its facilities, though some have. In these facilities, the weakness is that they are not where they are needed. Delaware has the capacity in the southern part of the state, but some of the threats there include the public/private roll and resistance from residents. The focus groups had a very good cross section with a few professional truck drivers affiliated with the DMTA (Delaware Motor Truck Association), who were a wealth of knowledge and shared a lot of information and real experiences related to what truckers are and are not looking for, which helped shape this part of this analysis.

There are three key categories for strategies, how capacity expansion can help, how information and technology can be used, and how policies and programs can drive some of the solutions. In the report, the state was divided into four unique regions, northern Delaware, central New Castle, Kent, and Sussex. There is the urban character of the northern region, which functions differently from Kent and Sussex so the solutions may be a somewhat different. For each location there will be a breakdown of some of the regionally specific solutions. For example, can we leverage our park and rides? In the north it is better to coordinate with some of the neighboring states, but also perhaps work with land use. We have the port expansion at Edgemoor, and other possible developments in the Port of Wilmington area. Once these

clusters are identified, it is a good idea to coordinate with the development that is already happening.

The focus group just ended. A draft report will be done in the next few weeks which will be circulated in hopes of getting endorsement in July and August and brought to Council in September.

The second study is the First/Final Mile Freight Network Development. The first/final mile refers to the small roads that link truck trip origins or destinations with mainline routes of travel. They account for about 28% of the actual cost of delivery so they are meaningful when moving things in and out of the smaller distribution centers. The objective of this report is to find out where they are, find the needs and issues, and see how WILMAPCO and DelDOT can start to address those needs and issues. There have been two focus groups. One was in January and the other in June. Many of the people who attended the truck parking focus group attended. Looking at the final mile is not something many people across the country have done, but it continues to be a problem with residential communities and commercial traffic causing conflict. A Wikimap exercise was posted to allow the public to indicate where they experience final mile conflicts and about one hundred and twenty people posted entries. The Wikimap had a few facilities listed and people commented about land use conflicts, mobility issues, and safety. This provided good feedback to build the map of the first/final mile network in the State of Delaware. One of the challenges of this is generating the GIS file with numerous attributes and we identified this using some of the work that was done from Reference USA, Google Maps, and ESRI road analyst. Now that they have been identified, the needs and issues are sorted into one of these in five categories, land use conflict, safety conflict, institutional problems, roadway condition, and other mobility issues that are barriers to efficient freight operations.

The team looked at twenty-six different data sets and fifty-three different attributes to make this a living data set that will help us identify each of Delaware's first/final mile connections as we go into other planning practices. Some of the general findings include that many of them are in rural areas. There are larger AG facilities in the rural areas. There may be only one facility that trucks are going to, but they still have to travel three or four miles to get to there, and 45% of them are in Level 4 OSPC designations, which puts them in some of the rural areas of the state. The connections are slightly more concentrated in communities with low income and minority populations. A relatively small portion is at risk of sea level rise. 9% have zero or very little shoulder. The full analysis can be found in the working paper on the website.

A strategic lens on freight conflicts can be used to help balance these connections with other community needs. Policymakers have to be careful as these are direct conflicts, which require the choice between goods-producing truck facilities and local communities. The strategic framework will help in approaching these connections. The PMA framework (Protect, Manage, Accommodate) asks if we can protect that location, find ways to manage it, and try to accommodate them in areas of new constructions to prevent the major issues that we find right now. For each of the locations this is the approach being used. In the end, the team wants to have a prioritization of these locations using the data, but also using this framework to identify potential opportunities to balance the freight movements and community needs. It is challenging, as the industry and the jobs it provides may leave if operations become too difficult.

The remaining project work includes a site visit in a few weeks to look at locations more closely. The draft report and summary of the working papers will hopefully be presented to the TAC in August and the project will go into adoption in September.



The third study is the Impacts/Benefits analysis of Truck Access Improvements around the Port of Wilmington Area. In March there was a well-attended public workshop. Modeling efforts are currently underway. This study is looking at possible improvements that came out of several plans from the last few years to evaluate their viability, costs, and long-term options for inclusion in the CTP. There were three main alternatives that came from a series of studies that were done. At the public meeting, a lot of feedback was received about reducing the impact on community members, some adjacent land uses, police enforcement of the laws, better signs, and moving the industries.

The three alternatives being tested include extending Pigeon Point Road to 295 from the port, which was the most expensive option proposed. Extending Garasches Lane is another alternative. There is an existing section that was done near the 76er's Field House. This could be used to divert some trips away from the Southbridge area. Pyles Lane is the third alternative being tested. With the relocation of some of the residents, there is potential for some realignment there to move traffic away from some of the residential areas. These alternatives are being modeled to see what this is going to do for air quality and truck volumes on Route 9. There were a lot of performance measures available for each of them.

The team is currently going through the alternatives and will plan an Advisory Committee meeting in July and a public workshop in August.

Project pages,  
[www.wilmapco.org/port\\_analysis](http://www.wilmapco.org/port_analysis)  
[www.wilmapco.org/truckparking](http://www.wilmapco.org/truckparking)  
[www.wilmapco.org/finalmile](http://www.wilmapco.org/finalmile)

DeIDOT is updating the Statewide Freight Plan. The truck parking and first mile data will be complimentary to that. The link for that is:  
[www.freight.deldot.gov](http://www.freight.deldot.gov)

### **9. WILMAPCO Video: How an Idea Becomes a Project**

Ms. Heather Dunigan said this is the third of the series of five videos. Previously, the Route 9 Corridor Planning and Bicycle Planning videos were shared. They are now available on WILMAPCO's new YouTube channel. This video is "How an Idea Becomes a Project". These videos are funded by FHWA STIP Grant. *The video was shown.* Ms. Kaminsky said the video was really nice. Ms. Minner asked for a link to put on the town's website. Ms. Dunigan said staff is still finalizing some of the details and sharing it with the committees to get their feedback but will send the link to all TAC members so they can share it and hopefully it will help constituents understand how a project comes to fruition.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **9. Staff Report**

Ms. Dunigan reported the following updates:

- The Churchmans Crossing Plan Update will have their third public workshop on June 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- The Union Street Reconfiguration Project hosted a public workshop on May 19<sup>th</sup> with about forty-five people in attendance.
- Staff completed a series of five social justice training sessions, which are on video. If anyone would like to see them, staff can share them.

- The deadline for the RFP for the I-95 Cap Feasibility Study was yesterday. Nine proposals were submitted.
- Registration for the Freight Summit is open on the WILMAPCO website.
- Staff has been working with the Red Clay Valley Scenic Byway Alliance to update the corridor management plan. A workshop will be held on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Information can be found on the WILMAPCO website.
- The first Walkable Communities Workshop will take place on July 8<sup>th</sup> in Townsend's Park Pavilion.
- Work has begun on the FY 2022 Regional Progress Report. More information will be available at the next meeting.
- The Route 9 Corridor Monitoring Committee is meeting this evening.
- Staff continues to work with the coalition planning Open Street events in Wilmington. The first was held on May 15<sup>th</sup> on Market Street. The next will be June 19<sup>th</sup> in partnership with Reach Riverside and the Teen Warehouse.
- Staff is asking TAC members their opinion regarding having a picnic in September. This will be our first in-person committee meeting, so if there are any concerns about this, please contact Ms. Dunigan. Since this is a picnic there will be no option to Zoom into that meeting.

In the chat, Ms. Cathy Smith typed that she supports the picnic in September.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Ms. Cathy Smith of Delaware Transit reminded everyone that there will be a virtual public hearing for statewide services on Tuesday, the 22<sup>nd</sup> from 4:00-6:00 p.m. All the information is available on [www.dartfirststate.com](http://www.dartfirststate.com)

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. David Dahlstrom and seconded by Mr. Matt Rogers the TAC adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Motion passed.

**(06-17-21 - 04)**

The TAC adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

**Attachments (0)**