

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
October 17, 2019

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, October 17, 2019, at WILMAPCO, The Tower at STAR Campus, 100 Discovery Blvd., Suite 100, Newark, DE 19713.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. TAC Members present:

Benjamin Allen, Maryland State Highway Administration
Tricia Arndt, Delaware Office of State Planning
Ian Beam, Maryland Department of Transportation
Cooper Bowers, Delaware Department of Transportation
Alexandra Brun, Maryland Department of the Environment (via conference call)
David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
Stacey Dahlstrom, New Castle County Department of Land Use
Mike Fortner, City of Newark
Gwinn Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning
Brian Mitchell, City of Wilmington Department of Public Works
Steve O'Connor, Cecil County Land Use
Jolyon Shelton, DNREC
Catherine Smith, DTC

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

TAC Members absent:

Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Delaware River and Bay Authority
Maryland Transit Administration
Town of Elkton

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:

Marvina Cephas, DNREC
Jane Dilley, League of Women Voters

Staff:

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner
Janet Butler, Administrative Assistant
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant
Dave Gula, Principal Planner
Jacob Thompson, Transportation Planner

Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Janet Butler

3. MINUTES

The September 19, 2019 TAC minutes were approved.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Ottinger and seconded by Ms. Kaminsky, the TAC approved the September 19, 2019 TAC minutes.

Motion passed.

(10-17-19 - 01)

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group (NMTWG)

The NMTWG met on October 1, 2019. Ms. Dunigan said Millcreek Neighbors for Safer Pathways presented Millcreek nonmotorized issues and ideas regarding local concerns for safer pathways in that area. Mr. Paul Moser, DeIDOT, presented the DeIDOT Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress and Connectivity Analysis. Ms. Dunigan led a discussion on the New Castle County Bicycle Plan, which also included a review of priority projects submitted by local governments.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

ACTION ITEMS:

6. To Recommend Use of Federal STBG, CMAQ, FTA Urbanized Area, FTA 5310 and TAP Funds in FY 2020

Ms. Dunigan discussed the letter from DeIDOT outlining FY 2020 federal funding using: 1) Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG); 2) Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG); 3) FTA Urbanized Area (5307) funds; 4) Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) (Z400); 5) FTA Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (5310); and 6) Transportation Alternatives Program (Z300, Z301, 5307).

The details are needed for the grouped projects. Ms. Dunigan noted that the Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS) has not yet reviewed use of CMAQ, but requires added details to assess CMAQ eligibility.

ACTION: On motion by Ms. Dahlstrom and seconded by Mr. Fortner the TAC recommended use of federal STBG, CMAQ, FTA Urbanized Area, FTA 5310 and TAP Funds in FY 2020, subject to receiving the needed details for TAP, statewide bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and congestion management projects, and a favorable review by Air Quality Subcommittee (AQS).

Motion passed.

(10-17-19-02)

7. To Recommend Amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Dunigan said that this amendment is to approve an increase in funding in the FY 2020 - 2023 TIP for the Rail Crossing Safety project. She does not anticipate that this will trigger a new air quality conformity determination, but staff will share this information with the AQS to confirm.

ACTION: On motion by Mr. Beam and seconded by Mr. Fortner the TAC recommended amendment of the FY 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for increased funds for the Rail Crossing Safety project.

Motion passed.

(10-17-19 - 03)

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

8. Southern New Castle County (SNCC) Master Plan

Mr. Gula said the purpose of the SNCC Master Plan is to establish a long-term, publicly supported vision for land use and infrastructure in Southern New Castle County (SNCC), which helps provide updates to key planning documents such as the WILMAPCO Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the New Castle County (NCC) Comprehensive Plan. It also captures some of the key points of previous efforts.

Progress on the SNCC Master Plan has included various public sessions and meetings that include an Issues and Constraints Information Session (October 2018), and Community Visioning Workshops in January and March 2019. Currently the team is working on Land Use Scenario Development (June 2019), and Scenario Modeling and Analysis “What Ifs” (October 2019), as well as a Preferred Alternative and report.

He said current conditions of the area include sprawling development patterns, lack of clarity regarding areas for planned sewer expansion and timing, growth versus preservation, lack of land preservation program, and many approved but, unbuilt subdivisions. There is lack of clarity regarding areas for planned sewer expansion and timing. Three scenarios are being reviewed: 1) Business as Usual; 2) Villages, Centers, and Hubs; and 3) Towns in Southern New Castle County.

The SNCC project team is interested in making the following improvements: 1) Better Quality of Life/Health for residents to have access to the amenities and services that help to have a high quality of life. 2) Better Environmental Protection and Farmland Preservation and access to trails, parks, and other natural spaces. 3) Better Community Characters including development and redevelopment to enhance the existing community character. 4) Better and more Diverse Transportation Modes including car, public transportation, walking, and bicycling to reach destinations in a safe, comfortable, and convenient manner. 5) Better Economy/Jobs for a strong and diversified economy.

Mr. Blevins said that scenario development has been informed by the issues and constraints data, which is built on the community vision, and developed and reviewed by the staff and advisory committee. It tries to answer questions such as “Can the towns take more growth?” and “What is the potential for employment growth in southern portion of the study area?” It further explores the capacity of the existing infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, etc.), and traffic congestion and transportation that are of concern for Scenario #3, which includes various towns in Southern New Castle County (SNCC).

Each of three land use scenarios went through the DelDOT Travel Demand Model. In addition, the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) data revealed that transportation was the same in each scenario. The TAZ-level households, population, and employment were adjusted to simulate changes made by the desired scenario outcomes. It assumed all transportation improvements are currently in the TIP/CTP and in the WILMAPCO RTP constrained project list. Transit Suitability Analysis (Portable Transit Scores) were used and other land-use based analyses including land consumed, wastewater produced, and units that were built in resource areas. Mr.

Blevins explained that the areas on the map such as Route 299, Route 301 Spur, Easttown/Westtown Transportation Improvement District (TID), and Central Core TID were analyzed. Mr. Blevins also discussed various scenario comparisons, and how well they support the Goals and the Objectives of the SNCC Master Plan.

Mr. Gula said that on October 7, 2019, WILMAPCO held a public workshop to review the three scenarios that had approximately 80 attendees. The workshop included a presentation and Visit Stations around the room, which featured topics such as 1) Scenarios, 2) Quality of Life/Health, 3) Environment, 4) Community Character, 5) Transportation, and 6) Economy/Jobs.

Participants viewed information, asked questions, and shared thoughts and ideas. Their comments were posted on the WILMAPCO website. In addition, DART has been working on concepts and ideas that were included in the workshop. The information on public transportation and better walking and bicycling set the stage for the next workshop that will be held on October 30, 2019.

Ms. Smith said Delaware needs more transit east-west connections along Route 299 and north-south along the Route 301/Route 896 corridors. A Park-and-Ride will be added to help bring people together in the Western Area. She also said that Route 47 successfully sustains itself regarding trip origins and destinations; and DTC is still developing the service proposals that require feedback.

Mr. Gula said people in SNCC are generally more interested in biking and walking south of the Canal. The New Castle County (NCC) Bike Plan is being updated, and this information was communicated at a public workshop. It shows where the gaps are in the existing network. He said Transportation Objectives support the Goals, Strategies, and Recommendations, and he referred to a chart that shows all of the actions regarding “Where we want to be,” “Where we are,” and “How to get where we want to be.”

He added details are listed for each category, for instance, there are challenges for the Economy and Jobs category, which was listed previously in this PowerPoint TAC presentation, such as bringing in an Amazon Warehouse that has many jobs, but it would be difficult to implement it in SNCC. However, adding density around Middletown, where there is a lot of land that is waiting to be developed, should not be a challenge. In addition, for the Quality of Life category, there is a goal of residents to have access to more amenities and services, have more walkability, village centers, and “place making.”

Next steps for the Southern New Castle County (SNCC) Master Plan include: 1) Create a Storymap from online feedback through October 18, 2019. 2) The Advisory Committee will meet to review the plan on October 23. 3) A rough draft is planned for November 1. 4) A public workshop to review the draft is planned for early 2020. 5) The plan should be completed by the spring of 2020.

Mr. Dahlstrom said there is a recent plan in Maryland to develop 3,000 acres that is reflected in an amendment in Millington, and in that plan they are trying to incorporate development into a future sewer area that would tie into sewer in Suddlersville, which is on the other side of the state line. He asked if SNCC Master Plan is looking at the potential development on the other side of the state line. Mr. Blevins replied in a way, yes. The traffic demand model for 2050 would include traffic assumptions and household and employment data that includes all of the Delmarva Peninsula travel information, and if that becomes the reality, then we would change the TAZ to reflect that.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

9. Staff Report

Ms. Dunigan reported on the following plans and events:

- Safe Kids has received Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grants to hold safety education events, and staff attended the SRTS event at Bayard School on September 24, 2019.
- On September 25, 2019, staff participated in the Newark Bike Central event.
- Staff presented information at a Safety Education Event at the Rosehill Community Center on September 28, 2019.
- Staff participated with the North East and Mid-Atlantic MPOs regarding how to best support the Transportation Climate Initiative.
- Staff attended the US IPA/Comprehensive Plan Meeting with DelDOT on October 1, 2019, in Elsmere, which includes complete streets discussion.
- On October 4, 2019, staff will attend a kickoff meeting for the Governor Printz Corridor Study, and on November 6, 2019, staff will attend the Advisory Committee Meeting that includes a bus tour.
- The Southern New Castle County public workshop on October 7, 2019, and the Advisory Committee will meet on October 23, 2019, to discuss feedback.
- The Route 9 Corridor Master Plan Monitoring Committee met on October 15, 2019; and the next meeting will be held on October 19, 2019.
- Staff participated in the MDOT CTP Tour held on October 11, 2019, which included Route 301 impacts on southern intersections.
- Staff attended the Northern Delaware Trails Coalition Steering Committee Meeting that included next steps and strategic plans on October 15, 2019.
- Staff presented The Route 9 Master Plan Implementation work to the Collins Park Civic Association on October 16, 2019.
- Staff will present a Drop-in Meeting for The Newark Sustainability Plan on October 17, 2019.
- Staff will attend The Delaware State Health Improvement event on October 23, 2019.
- Staff will attend an Urban Wildlife meeting in Chicago during the first week of November.
- The Delaware American Planning Association (APA) Annual Conference will be held on November 7, 2019, at the Newark Embassy Suites Hotel (a flyer was distributed to TAC).
- Staff participated in the Marilyn/Monroe Project Team Meeting with DTC on October 10, 2019, to discuss feasibility of the study.
- The Newport Transportation Plan project is tentatively scheduled for an Advisory Meeting followed by a Walking Tour on October 29, 2019.

OTHER BUSINESS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The TAC meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Attachments (0)