

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, July 15, 2008 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Dan Walston	FHWA
Kathy Zook	Eastgate COG
Mirta Reyes-Chapman	Eastgate COG
Dave James	Self
Donald E. & Linda Patterson	Self
Jennifer L. Meiss	Self
John & Phyllis Stoner	Self
Mary Yasnowsky	Interested Citizen
Phil Yasnowsky	Shenango Township
A. J. Giancola	PennDOT
Greg McCullough	Mercer County PennDOT
Jeff Dunlap	PennDOT
E. Don Marshall	Hempfield Township
Pat Lorenzo	Self
Lois Seidle	Self
Shirley Cooter	Self
Barry & Christine Nelson	Self
Matt Stewart	MCRPC
Marcia Hirschmann	Hermitage City
Stephen Theiss	Mercer County Trails Assoc., Inc.
Parke Wentling	Mercer County Trails Assoc., Inc.
Tom Lally	Sharpsville Borough
Dave Beatty	Liberty Township
Beth Mason	Mercer County Regional COG
Ron Faull	Liberty Township
Diane Helbig	Rep. Michele Brooks
Dennis James	Self
Kathy Williard	Self
Tom Paxton	Pine Township
Jim Morton	Wolf Creek Township
Deborah Gabriel	PennDOT
Melissa Osborne	Delaware Township
Wendy Campbell	Wilmington Township
Denise Anthony	Senator Robbins
Roberta Welsh	Delaware Township

Robert Willaman	Delaware Township
Mike Bolt	Delaware Township
Gary Ceremuga	Self
Pete Longiotti	Greenville Borough
Ryan T. Eggleston	Greenville Borough
Barb Brown	Springfield Township
Andrea Folkertsma	Grove City Borough
Deborah Casadel	PennDOT
Mark Williams	Jefferson Township
Lee McCoy	Sandy Creek Conservancy
Bill Petit	PennDOT
Vance Oakes	Grove City Borough
Kristin Egresits	PennDOT
Robert Hannigan	PennDOT
E. Mariah Hanson	PennDOT
Erin Wiley Moyers	PennDOT
Daniel Gracenin	MCRPC
Mark Longiotti	State Representative
Jeremy Coxe	Hermitage City
Frank Gargiulo	Farrell City
Mark Williams	Jefferson Township
Joe Fragle	Sharon City

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. A quorum was present.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Hirschmann explained that we have a number of individuals in attendance regarding the East Lake Road discussion item which is at the end of the agenda. She noted that we are moving that item to the beginning of the agenda.

Mr. Gracenin explained that East Lake Road is a local road and is not eligible for Federal or State monies. He noted that it is the responsibility of the Township to maintain the road. He explained that about a month and a half ago, the MPO Committee forwarded a letter to PennDOT; PennDOT sent the letter to FHWA requesting that a certain section of East Lake Road be turned into a “local Federal aid route”. If that is approved, the \$100,000 that is earmarked would be eligible to be spent on the road.

Mr. Dan Walston from FHWA explained that they received the letter requesting that a certain section of East Lake Road be turned into a “local Federal aid route” and the FHWA decision is still pending.

Mr. Jim Rowe, Supervisor from Pymatuning Township wanted to make sure that the road still needs to be approved as a “local Federal aid route”. Mr. Petit stated yes and if it is approved as a “local Federal aid route”, then FHWA would talk with Pymatuning Township about the local match to that \$100,000.

In discussion, a resident of East Lake Road questioned if it would be better to go back to the Corps of Engineers and petition that the road wasn't done right in the first place. Mr. Petit agreed it would be a good idea to open, but might be difficult. Mr. Rowe explained that the Township has documentation from the Corps of Engineers washing their hands of this issue. Mr. Rowe stated that the road was turned over to the Township in 1967 and problems started occurring in 1973. Another resident recommended that a meeting be held with the Corps of Engineers to determine who has liability and could this be an emergency issue.

Mr. Rowe asked if there is any way to speed up the process, since the Township has considered closing the road. The Township would like an answer as to whether this road is feasible to fix and if it isn't then the Township would need to make a decision. Mr. Walston stated that a determination will be made in a month or two depending on availability of engineering staff. A resident asked if the \$100,000 could be used for litigation. Mr. Petit stated no, money has to be spent on an improvement. A resident asked if PennDOT could help with material. Mr. Petit stated that PennDOT could assist with help under an agility agreement; can trade resources if Township is willing. A resident asked if our Federal or State legislators are doing anything about the problem. Mr. Petit stated that if the Federal aid is approved, then legislators can begin helping. Representative Mark Longiotti mentioned that he testified this issue at a STC hearing; and the challenge is that it is a local road. Mr. Longiotti stated that this issue has been going on for years and the Township has been trying to find ways to resolve this issue. A resident suggested that the road should be re-routed to Round-about-Road. Another resident suggested that another meeting be held to discuss this issue with as many people as possible from PennDOT, Corps of Engineers, MPO, Legislators (State/Federal). Mr. Petit mentioned that he will be meeting with representatives and he will mention this. Mr. Walston asked if there is any future economic development planned in this area. Mr. Rowe stated no, it is all residential in this area of Pymatuning Township.

Ms. Hirschmann closed discussion on this item. She asked that Pymatuning Township get in contact with their legislators and other representatives to schedule another meeting regarding this issue. A 5 minute recess was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING MAY 15, 2008

Ms. Hirschmann asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the May 15, 2008 meeting. There being none, Ms. Hirschmann asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Faull so moved, Mr. Hannigan seconded. Mr. Pete Longiotti abstained, since he was not at the last meeting. The motion passed.

2007 TIP MODIFICATIONS/ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Ms. Egresits from PennDOT distributed a handout which shows the highway/bridge TIP modifications from May to July 2008. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.) Ms. Egresits explained that there is one amendment that will need a vote. She explained that under the Highway/Bridge Line Item Reserve they swapped local funds with Franklin County. She mentioned that we gave Franklin County Highway State Funds; and in return received Highway Bridge Funds and the Highway Bridge Funds were moved into the Group 1-07 Bridge Preservation. A motion was made by Mr. Paxton and seconded by Mr. Longiotti to approve this TIP

modification. The motion passed. Ms. Egresits next explained that there are three administrative actions. The first administrative action was a TE project which moved remaining funds from the 2008 line item and the remaining portion of the funds from the 2009 line item into the Shenango Valley Bike/Pedestrian System Phase I project. The second administrative action was moving money from the Highway/Bridge line item reserve into the PA 208/I-79 Interchange construction phase. The third administrative action was moving the remaining funds from the 2009 TE line item and the additional balance from the 2010 TE line item into the Jamestown Borough Safe Routes to School project.

APPROVAL OF SELF CERTIFICATION RESOLUTION

Mr. Gracenin explained that the Self Certification Resolution is an annual document which the MPO is required to adopt through the draft TIP amendment. The resolution certifies that the MPO's planning process is being implemented in conformance with all Federal requirements and certifies that the local process to enhance the participation of general public including the transportation disadvantaged, have been followed in developing all plans and programs. There being no questions, a motion was made by Mr. Oakes and seconded by Mr. Hannigan to approve the Self Certification Resolution. The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AIR QUALITY RESOLUTION

Mr. Gracenin explained that the Air Quality Resolution is an annual document which the MPO is required to adopt through the draft TIP amendment. This resolution states that Mercer County is in a maintenance area with the Youngstown, Ohio area and certifies that the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan and TIP contribute to the achievement and maintenance of the ambient air quality standards and are consistent with the final conformity rules and subsequent amendments. There being no questions, a motion was made by Mr. Longiotti and seconded by Mr. Faull to approve the Air Quality Resolution. The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF TIP MODIFICATION MOU

Mr. Gracenin distributed a handout which explained the procedures to be used for making modifications to the TIP. There being no discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. Hannigan to approve the TIP Modification (Memorandum of Understanding). The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF 2009-2012 TIP

Mr. Gracenin explained that nothing has changed to the 2009-2012 TIP handout which was also distributed at the May 15, 2008 MPO meeting. There being no questions or discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Brown and seconded by Mr. Hannigan to approve the 2009-2012 TIP. The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF SVATS MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Mr. Stewart mentioned that the Public Participation Plan explains how the MPO engages the public with meeting notices, public comment period and explains the extra efforts which are taken to engage facets of the population that normally do not participate as often, such as low income, minority, senior citizen, etc. He stated that the document is still under a 45 day public comment period, which will expire on July 19, 2008. Mr. Stewart mentioned that he would like to get approval of this document, contingent upon there not being any negative comments. In discussion, Ms. Brown asked if this document should reference the Sunshine Law and should we ask legal counsel. Mr. Hannigan explained that it is not necessary. A motion was made by Ms. Brown and seconded by Ms. Folkertsma to approve the Public Participation Plan contingent upon there not being any negative comments received under the 45-day public comment period. The motion passed.

APPROVAL OF 2008 COORDINATED PUBLIC TRANSIT-HUMAN SERVICES PLAN

Ms. Reyes-Chapman gave a brief overview of the Coordinated Services Plan, which was a joint effort between Trumbull, Mahoning and Mercer Counties to coordinate transportation services to benefit low income, elderly and handicapped riders. She also handed out a sheet showing the breakdown of JARC and New Freedom funds for the three counties. She noted that the funding must be competitively selected. Mr. Gracenin further explained how JARC and New Freedom Funds are being used.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Mr. Stewart gave a brief update on the Transportation Enhancement Projects: 1) Construction plans are underway for the **Mercer County Trails Association – Trout Island Trail Project**. PennDOT reviewed the Millcreek Easement Agreement and had no comments to date and they have not yet reviewed the USACOE Agreement. 2) The **Shenango Valley Bikeway/Pedestrian Walkway Project** has been awarded under budget (\$426,445) and construction should begin in August. 3) The project is under construction and should be completed by the third week of July for the **City of Farrell Mercer Avenue Sidewalk Phase II – Safe Route to School Project**. 4) PennDOT is scheduled to review the revised project plans at the end of July with final approval and bid letting for the **Borough of Sharpsville Retaining Wall Project – Streetscape Phase V Project** on Walnut Street. 5) Construction is approximately 50% complete with the completion date around the middle of August for the **Borough of Sharpsville Streetscape Phase VI (Milliken Avenue – Devil’s Way to Third Street & Fourth Street – Hazen to Koehler) Project**. 6) PennDOT is reviewing the preliminary plans for the **City of Sharon 2007 Townscape Project**.

FEDERAL SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL FUNDING UPDATE

Mr. Stewart reminded those in attendance that the Federal Safe Routes to School applications are due August 1st. He stated that there is \$12.6 million available statewide. All projects must be within 2 miles of a school and improve the safety of pedestrians walking to school. Mr. Stewart also stated there is no local match for this program.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Petit discussed several items. First, he discussed changes to the curb cut program, specifically that all ADA regulations must be met. PennDOT will be discussing the specifics with the municipalities. Mr. Petit then discussed PA's accelerated bridge program. He mentioned that 411 bridges are to be replaced or rehabilitated this year, 48 of which are in District 1-0 and 13 in Mercer County. Mr. Petit then spoke about the dramatically rising costs of materials such as asphalt. He mentioned that there is a statewide shortfall of \$119 million in revenue for maintenance and that projects may need to be scaled back.

Mr. Coxe asked a question about the Congested Corridors Improvement Program.

Mr. Wentling of the Mercer County Trails Association had a few items for discussion. First he noted that they received a \$20,000 donation to be used for the Greenville-Jamestown trail. His organization would like to apply for STU funds. Ms. Hanson and Mr. Gracenin explained that about \$270,000 in STU funds is available and that the request should probably come from a municipality. Mr. Gracenin stressed that a complete outline with cost estimates should be given. Mr. Wentling also requested TE funds for the Sandy Lake/Stoneboro trail, noting progress on the project including the granting of easements. Ms. Hanson noted that no TE money is available for them. Even though the Shenango Valley Bikeway project came in under budget, money will still be needed to pay for inspections. Mr. McCoy of the Sandy Lake Conservancy mentioned that the delay in funds may actually be beneficial to the project. He also requested a letter from the MPO about what happened and what will happen with the project.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary