

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 17, 2009 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

Phil Yasnowsky
Mary Yasnowsky
Dave Beatty
Dick Brandes
Pete Longiotti
Robert Crothers
Barb Brown
Erin Wiley Moyers
Michael Deibert
Kathleen Rodi
Mariah Hanson
Mark Miller
John Zohoranacky
Diane Helbig
Mike Nashtock
Frank Gargiulo
Andrea Folkertsma
Vance Oakes
Ken Pochatko
Don Hall
Gary Hittle
Stephen Theiss
Marcia Hirschmann
Jeremy Coxe
Nancy Leone
George Elliott
Bill Petit
Christopher Engelsiepen
Shirley Cooper
Russell Jones
David Parket
Chad Reese
Matt Stewart
Daniel Gracenin

REPRESENTING

Shenango Township
Self
Liberty Township
Jefferson Township
Greenville Borough
Wolf Creek Township
Springfield Township
PennDOT
PennDOT, District 1-0
Eastgate
PennDOT
Mercer County
Mercer Borough
Representative Michele Brooks
COG/South Pymatuning Twp.
Farrell City
Grove City Borough
Grove City Borough
PennDOT
PennDOT
Hempfield Township
Mercer County Trails Assoc., Inc.
Hermitage City
Hermitage City
Representative Dick Stevenson
Pine Township
PennDOT
Wilmington Township
Self
PennDOT Bureau of Aviation
PennDOT Bureau of Aviation
WR&A
MCRPC
MCRPC

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING JULY 30, 2009

Ms. Hirschmann asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the July 30, 2009 meeting. There being none, Ms. Hirschmann asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Beatty so moved, Mr. Hittle seconded. The motion passed.

TIP MODIFICATIONS/ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Mr. Schultz from PennDOT, via phone conference, reviewed the TIP modifications/administrative actions, which is for informational purposes. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.) Ms. Hanson noted that a motion is needed regarding the Broadway Avenue project, which requires additional money to cover the estimated right-of-way costs. Money was moved from the construction funds to cover estimated right-of-way costs. Construction costs will be updated in the 2011 TIP update. A motion was made by Ms. Brown to approve the Broadway Avenue project, which is a TIP amendment. Mr. Gargiulo seconded. The motion passed. In discussion, Ms. Brown asked if we could map these highway/bridge projects for future meetings. Mr. Gracenin felt that with our GIS program we should be able to do this as long as we get the list prior to our meeting.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Mr. Stewart gave a brief update on the Transportation Enhancement Projects: 1) the contractor initiated construction for the **Mercer County Trails Association – Trout Island Trail Project** on November 17, 2009 and should be completed by Spring 2010; 2) the **Borough of Sharpville Retaining Wall Project – Streetscape Phase V (Walnut Street)** came in over budget for a double tier wall. A single tier wall is being re-designed for a bid letting in February 2010; and 3) PennDOT is reviewing the design for compliance for the **City of Sharon 2007 Streetscape Project**. A bid letting will be scheduled shortly.

ARRA PROJECTS UPDATE

Mr. Don Hall from PennDOT explained that the ARRA projects are done or are well underway except for the Lamor Road and US 322 projects, which were bid but not yet underway. He noted that there were bid savings in the first two rounds of stimulus dollars, roughly 10-12% under estimate on original projects. Since there was bid savings from the first two rounds, there will be a third round of stimulus dollars which would include the Route 258 (4024) bridge project, which is ready to go and will be let April 21st. He noted that this should expend the last of the stimulus money. In discussion, Ms. Brown asked where this bridge project is located. Mr. Hall stated that the bridge is in New Hamburg.

2011 TIP UPDATE

Mr. Don Hall gave an overview of the Preliminary Draft 2011-2014 TIP. He mentioned that the existing 2009-2012 TIP will convert the remaining projects to the new TIP. He also noted that Ms. Hanson and Ms. Wiley Moyers looked at what money we were expecting and what year it could be spent. They moved existing projects onto the new TIP, received new cost estimates and looked at new projects. Mr. Hall stated that this Draft 2011-2014 TIP is PennDOT District 1-0's version of a well balanced TIP. He also mentioned that there are no new projects on this Draft 2011-2014 TIP.

Mr. Hall next explained the changes from the 2009 TIP. He mentioned that instead of tracking the bridges on Page 1 individually, they have created a 2011 Local Bridge Reserve line item and put \$2.5 Million under each year. This would give the MPO more flexibility in managing these projects. Mr. Hall stated that while working on the last couple of TIPs in Erie, this local bridge reserve line item had been working fine; it gives them more flexibility and should work fine here. Ms. Brown asked if a modification would be needed when we want to take local bridge reserve line item into the individual project. Mr. Hall stated that this would be a management action. Mr. Petit mentioned that he could set up a spreadsheet showing how the money is moving through. Mr. Hall stated that all these bridges have funding in 2009-2010, but you will not see these on the final 2011 TIP. Ms. Hanson stated that she will send guidelines to Mr. Gracenin.

Mr. Gracenin asked if this Draft TIP includes Act 44 funds. Mr. Petit stated yes, but at a reduced rate starting July 1st, assuming that I-80 does not get tolled. He also mentioned that they would lose about \$3 million in Act 44 funds per year if I-80 does not get tolled. Mr. Hall also mentioned two big items on this TIP (Broadway Avenue and PA 60/PA 318 Interchange ramps). He explained that they are proposing to request spike funds for certain projects, specifically the West Middlesex viaduct. Mr. Hall noted that they added a new line item called "3R Line Item Reserve". He noted that PennDOT put this back in the TIP to do their paving projects.

US-19 CORRIDOR STUDY UPDATE

Mr. Stewart mentioned that the MPO received \$200,000 for a Corridor Study along US-19 from the I-80 exit 15 and all the way up through Mercer Borough. He noted that officials from Mercer Borough, PennDOT District 1-0, and MCRPC met to discuss the consultant selection process and mailed out an RFP. He noted that we received 21 responses, interviewed a few consulting firms and selected Whitman, Requardt and Associates to do this Corridor Study. He mentioned that the contract was executed last week and a kickoff meeting will be held very soon.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

Mr. Stewart explained that there has been some substantial work being done on the Congestion Management Processes and that work should be completed within the next couple of months. He introduced Mr. Chad Reese from WR&A who gave an overview of the CMP and explained the handout which was given to the members. He stated that the CMP will be an improved and modernized replacement for Mercer County's former congestion management system. Mr. Gracenin explained that this is a FHWA requirement and that this can be used as a tool to program projects into the TIP.

Mr. Petit explained that every year the District has to present a business plan to the Secretary of Transportation. Good planning tools like this CMP will help plan and program projects to improve congestion. Mr. Gracenin agreed that this really helps as TIP dollars get tighter. He felt that this leads to more logical decisions on how money gets divided. In the future, we may want to prioritize our highway projects.

I-80 TOLLING UPDATE

Mr. Gracenin explained that the Turnpike Commission resubmitted the application to the FHWA to toll I-80. He stated that he was involved in a conference call concerning the I-80 tolling. He noted that if this project is approved at the Federal level, the tolls will be in place by the end of 2011. The District hopes to hear from the FHWA before the end of December that they were approved for one of the three trial spots for I-80 tolling so that they can continue with the economic development issues and diversion studies.

Mr. Petit mentioned that revenues are way down (18.8%) and will not get better. He noted that the gas tax has been maxed out and the stimulus dollars did not get rid of all of our problems. He stated that we must acknowledge that our needs far outweigh our financial needs. In discussion, Mr. Gargiulo thanked the MPO for opposing to toll I-80 and encouraged municipalities to send letters to their Senator regarding the unfairness of tolling I-80. Ms. Cooper stated that in prior discussions, there was talk of leasing. Mr. Gracenin stated that the I-80 tolling would be run by the Turnpike Commission.

LINKING PLANNING AND NEPA EFFORT

Mr. Petit asked if we could leave about a half hour time slot at our next MPO meeting so he could discuss this. He did state that by linking planning, we would basically plan for projects and develop a process so projects occur in a fiscally construed manner.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary