

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

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

PERSONS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Robert McGhee	Coolspring Township
Wendy Campbell	Wilmington Township
Tom Tulip	Mercer County Regional COG
Shirley Cooper	Self
Mary Yasnowsky	Self
Phil Yasnowsky	Shenango Township
John Zohoranacky	Mercer Borough
Dave Beatty	Liberty Township
Kathy Zook	Eastgate COG
Mirta Reyes-Chapman	Eastgate COG
Ron Faull	Liberty Township
Dick Brandes	Jefferson Township
Jim Morton	Wolf Creek Township
Robert Crothers	Wolf Creek Township
Marcia Hirschmann	Hermitage City
James F. Rowe	Pymatuning Township
Andrea Folkertsma	Grove City Borough
Vance Oakes	Grove City Borough
Mark Miller	Mercer County
Ken Pochateo	PennDOT - Mercer
Kim A. DiCintio	Shenango Valley Shuttle Service
Denise Anthony	Senator Robbins
Jill Boozer	Shenango Valley Shuttle Service
Brenda Tomko	Representative Longietti
Erin Wiley Moyers	PennDOT
Don Hall	PennDOT
Scott Thompson-Graves	WR&A
Chad Reese	WR&A
Tim Scott	PennDOT
Stephen Theiss	Mercer County Trails Assoc., Inc.
Joe Pinchot	The Herald
Jeremy Coxe	Hermitage City
Mike Wilson	Sharpsville Borough
Pete Longiotti	Greenville Borough
Diane Helbig	Representative Brooks
Elliott Lengel	Findley Township
Nathan Clark	Self

Gary Hittle
Ryan T. Eggleston
Patricia LaRocca
Bob Lucas
Matt Stewart
Daniel Gracenin

Hempfield Township
Greenville Borough
Clark Borough
Sharon City
MCRPC
MCRPC

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:34 a.m. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING OCTOBER 16, 2008

Ms. Hirschmann asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the October 16, 2008 meeting. There being none, Ms. Hirschmann asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Brandes so moved, Mr. Longiotti seconded. The motion passed.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Mr. Gracenin mentioned that our current Chair is Marcia Hirschmann from the City of Hermitage and our Vice-Chair is Tom Tulip from Mercer County COG. Mr. Brandes made a motion to retain the current Chair and Vice-Chair for 2009. Mr. Hittle seconded. The motion passed.

2009 TIP MODIFICATIONS/ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Mr. Stewart mentioned that Michael Schultz will be our new rep from PennDOT. He will be replacing Kristin Egresits, who was reassigned to a different area. Mr. Stewart introduced Mr. Adam Grimes from PennDOT, via phone conference. Mr. Grimes reviewed the administrative actions taken. He noted that no formal action is necessary and are for informational purposes only. (A copy of the Administrative Actions is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes).

APPROVAL OF 2009-2010 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Mr. Gracenin explained that we need to annually approve the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP Budget Summary Sheet (copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes) outlines the work program for the MPO. He noted that there were no major changes to the UPWP and funds are the same. Mr. Theiss asked what the difference is between highway and transit. Mr. Gracenin explained that the only difference is where the funding would be coming from. There being no further questions, a motion was made by Mr. Longiotti to approve the 2009-2010 UPWP. Mr. Wilson seconded. The motion passed.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Mr. Stewart gave a brief update on the Transportation Enhancement Projects: 1) PennDOT is still waiting for the executed USACOE Lease Agreement for the **Mercer County Trails Association – Trout Island Trail Project** and the reviewed construction plans were received from PennDOT last

month and are being revised. Updated drawing will be submitted to PennDOT next week. 2) The **Shenango Valley Bikeway/Pedestrian Walkway Project** is under construction and is approximately 75% complete and work has been suspended until the spring of 2009 when the weather conditions become suitable for construction. 3) PennDOT is still reviewing the revised project plans that were submitted in the summary of 2008 for the **Borough of Sharpsville Retaining Wall Project – Streetscape Phase V (Walnut Street)**. Winslow Engineering has been contacting PennDOT weekly regarding the final approval and bid letting date. 4) The **Borough of Sharpsville – Streetscape Phase VI (Milliken Avenue – Devil’s Way to Third Street & Fourth Street – Hazen to Koehler) Project** has been completed and the Contractor was paid in full. 5) PennDOT has reviewed the preliminary lighting layout plan and photometric design, which was approved for the **City of Sharon 2007 Streetscape Project**. The City has decided to upgrade the entire State Street electrical branch circuitry and power distribution system, which delayed completion of the final drawings and final construction plan drawings will be submitted to PennDOT next week. 6) The **Greenville Streetscape Phase II Project** should be finished by late spring or early summer of 2009.

In discussion, Mr. Theiss stated that the Lease Agreement with the Corps of Engineers was signed last month for the Trout Island Trail. Mr. Wilson asked PennDOT if they could check into the Borough of Sharpsville Retaining Wall Project and see if there is anything that can be done to move it along.

PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE APPLICATION UPDATE

Mr. Stewart mentioned at our last meeting that there was \$60 million in Federal and State Transportation Funds available for projects that are basically strong in SMART Transportation. He noted that there were 2 applications submitted in Mercer County. The City of Hermitage submitted an application for Lamor Road for \$200,000 to add a center turn lane, curbing, storm water improvements and widen the shoulders of the road. The other application was for a \$200,000 Corridor Study in Mercer Borough and East Lackawannock Township along U.S. 19. Mr. Stewart noted that we should know if these applications are approved in about 3-4 weeks.

CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESSES PLAN DISCUSSION

Mr. Stewart introduced Scott Thompson-Graves and Chad Reese from WR&A, consultants who were hired to prepare a more complete Congestion Management Processes Plan. Mr. Thompson-Graves stated that they have started to work on Phase I of this plan and are looking for direct input from the members. Mr. Thompson-Graves gave a brief slide presentation of the project which he noted will be broken up into three Phases. He noted that back in the mid-90’s, the MPO Committee had previously identified congested corridors or intersections in Mercer County. He reviewed the list with the Committee and asked if there would be any congested corridors or intersections which might need to be added or removed.

Mr. Brandes suggested that Route 62 from the Ohio line to Route 18 should be extended. Mr. Hittle suggested that Route 358 in Hempfield Township is congested from Township line to Baker Road. Ms. Hirschmann suggested that Lamor Road in Hermitage is congested from Route 18 to Keel Ridge Road. Mr. Theiss suggested that Stambaugh Avenue/East State Street is congested. Mr. Stewart mentioned that State Street is already included as part of the existing corridor. Ms. Cooper suggested

Route 18 north – East Lake Road exit is very hazardous. Mr. Gracenin stated that the East Lake Road and this list are two different things. The list we are reviewing is for congested corridors or intersections and East Lake Road is more of a safety issue. Mr. Gracenin mentioned that there will be a Pymatuning Township meeting on March 12th, which is when PennDOT will be present to discuss the East Lake Road project. Mr. Wilson from Sharpsville Borough suggested the intersection of Walnut and Mercer Avenue and Mercer Avenue to Hazen Road be checked out. Mr. Longiotti from Greenville Borough suggested extending Route 358 through Borough to Baker Road. Mr. Lengel suggested Route 258 from Mercer Borough to the outlet mall. Someone suggested looking at Route 418 east through FM Corners because of congestion. Mr. Lucas suggested adding Sharpsville Avenue in Sharon. Mr. Clark suggested realigning Route 718 from State Street to Aqua to eliminate a very dangerous curve/railroad crossing. Someone suggested Route 62 under tunnel to eliminate sharp curve.

Mr. Thompson-Graves asked the individuals who commented above to send him a follow-up e-mail explaining the specifics of their project and contact name and number so that it can be added to the list.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS UPDATE

Mr. Gracenin explained the economic stimulus issue. He mentioned that a draft economic stimulus list was put together at the District 1-0 office. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes) Mr. Don Hall from PennDOT explained the house version of the bill and presented the list of projects based on the assumption that 50% of the funds would need to be obligated within 90 days and the other 50% would need to be obligated by August 1, 2010. He noted that their list includes approximately \$15M in projects (even though the proposed amount of stimulus funding for Mercer County is around \$13M). This overrun is needed in case some projects run into problems in the future. Shovel ready projects were listed in a prioritized order.

The floor was open for discussion. There were a few questions from MPO members and the audience about the process. Mr. Hall from PennDOT answered these questions. Mr. Dan Gracenin expressed his frustration that most of the identified projects are resurfacings. Given that half the funds do not need to be let for more than a year, he would have really liked to have seen one of our larger projects such as the MLK/Broadway Corridor or the Rt. 318/PA 60 interchange advance with this stimulus. Mr. Jeremy Coxe from the City of Hermitage noted that the City has a few projects that are nearly ready and that they would still like to be considered for this stimulus. He expects that these projects would be ready for obligation in just a few months.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Longiotti to approve the draft list of projects that was written by PennDOT District 1-0 Office with the understanding that the final bill could change. Approving the list now would allow for minor alterations, but would also ensure that the MPO would not lose any time in hastily organizing a phone vote. Mr. Lengel seconded. The motion passed.

PRESENTATION FROM BILL PETIT ON SMART TRANSPORTATION PRINCIPLES

Mr. Don Hall mentioned that Mr. Bill Petit was not able to be here to give a full presentation. Mr. Hall briefly spoke on Smart Transportation. He noted that every project in the future will now have

to go through Smart Transportation analysis. Mr. Hall briefly discussed the state of funding. He mentioned that the State Transportation Hearings will be in August 2009 in Erie, PA. At that time they may just take a look at Smart Transportation principles and look at projects on the TIP. Mr. Gracenin added that the TIP update may be difficult given that we do not have any Federal legislation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary