

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 17, 2011 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Bill Petit	PennDOT
Scott Andrejchak	Greenville Borough
Mike Schultz	PennDOT
Jeff Dunlap	PennDOT
Deborah Gabriel	PennDOT
Russ Jones	PennDOT
Ron Faull	Liberty Township
Kathleen Rodi	Eastgate
George Hagstrom	Pine Township
Mariah Hanson	PennDOT
Mark Miller	Mercer County
Jim Carroll	PennDOT
Ken Robertson	Sharpsville Borough
Andrea Folkertsma	Grove City Borough
Bob Crothers	Wolf Creek Township
Steve Paxton	Findley Township
Wendy Campbell	Wilmington Township
Antoinette Combine	Combine Construction
Keenie Harrison	Shenango Township
David Mitchell	Governor NW Office
Barb Brown	Springfield Township
John Zohoranacky	Mercer Borough
Gary Hittle	Hempfield Township
Alex Kovach	Sharpsville Borough
Tom Tulip	Mercer County Regional COG
LaVon Saternow	Farrell City
David George	West Middlesex Borough
Robert Fiscus	Sharon City
Mark Longietti	State Representative
Sheila Sterrett	Senator Pat Toomey
Jeremy Coxe	Hermitage City
James L. Bartholomew	South Pymatuning Township
Matt Stewart	MCRPC
Daniel Gracenin	MCRPC

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 a.m. **A quorum was present.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING FEBRUARY 22, 2011

Ms. Brown asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the February 22, 2011 meeting. There being none, Ms. Brown asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Hittle so moved, Mr. George seconded. The motion passed.

2011-2014 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Mike Schultz from PennDOT explained the TIP modifications, which are for informational purposes. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.)

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Mr. Stewart gave a brief update on the Transportation Enhancement Projects: 1) PennDOT has bid the **Borough of Sharpville Retaining Wall Project – Streetscape Phase V (Walnut Street)** with the results over budget. The Borough is requesting additional STU funds to complete the Project; 2) there are still legal issues regarding the right-of-way clearance easement forms for the **City of Sharon 2007 Streetscape Project**; and 3) the **4th Street Project in Sharpville Borough** received STU funds back in February and is moving along. The right-of-way clearances and utility clearances have been submitted to PennDOT. This project is tentatively scheduled to advertise for bids on PennDOT ECMS website later this month, have a bid letting in June and commence construction in July of this year.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Stewart explained that the MPO has been updating their Long Range Plan and created new project ranking criteria on how projects are evaluated and prioritized. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.) He stated that an MPO workshop was held on February 23rd to look at the projects and finalize the ranking criteria. A LRTP work group meeting was held on March 30th after the projects had been run through the software model; the work group had a few comments and suggested changes. Mr. Stewart stated that the new project ranking method (using Decision Lens) is a good tool to program our projects and this will be the main part of updating our Long Range Transportation Plan. He noted that the trail projects and bike/pedestrian projects are shown at the bottom of the chart because some of the categories in which they were ranking the projects were not relevant, such as no daily traffic volume. He noted that these projects are numbered 23-29 on the chart and will most likely be looked at separately since they will have a separate pot of funding (TE funding).

In discussion, Mr. Gracenin mentioned that bridges are not on this project list. This list consists of capital highway-type projects. Mr. George mentioned that Council met last night to discuss the West Middlesex viaduct. Ms. Brown talked about why the bridges are not on the list. She noted that it has been the policy of the MPO for the last several years to allow Mark Miller and his bridge team to

prioritize the local bridges and PennDOT's Bridge Engineer to prioritize the State bridges because they have the technical expertise to know how bad the bridge might be. Mr. George questioned the status of the Route 60/318 project. Mr. Stewart stated that the Route 60/318 project is on the TIP and is scheduled to be let next year. Ms. Brown asked where air and rail information comes from. Mr. Gracenin mentioned that we receive the information from Russ Jones from the Bureau of Aviation.

STU FUNDING & REVIEW OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

Mr. Stewart explained that four applicants have requested STU funding for various projects. These four requests, in total, exceed the amount of STU funding available by almost \$50,000. This year, the amount of STU funding available, between remaining 2011 funds and 2012 funds, is \$728,000. Today, the MPO Committee will need to decide which, if any, project requests are funded.

Mr. Bob Fiscus, Acting City Manager for the City of Sharon explained the **Highland Road Resurfacing Project**. He noted that the City is requesting \$520,000 to mill and resurface roadway, install ADA-compliant curb ramps and replace curbing where necessary on Highland Road from Jefferson Avenue to Forker Boulevard. He noted that Highland Road is a local federal aid route and is in disrepair. The City is unable to fund the project on its own. Mr. Zohoranacky from Mercer Borough Council asked for budget breakdown. He said he supports money that is used for handicapped-accessible projects, safety issues and unfunded mandates, but the road surface should fall under the general responsibilities of the municipality. Ms. Folkertsma from Grove City Borough Council also agreed. Mr. Stewart noted that the milling and paving costs are roughly \$163,000 for this project.

In discussion, Mr. Petit explained that the Committee could vote on the project as presented or they could pull out sections that they would not want to fund. Ms. Brown stated that the Committee should hear all presentations and then vote.

Mr. Jeremy Coxe, City Planner for the City of Hermitage explained the **Route 18/Indian Run Pedestrian Bridge Project**. He noted that the City wants to construct a pedestrian bridge over a stream to complete a missing link in the City of Hermitage's network of sidewalks and trails; and to connect with developer built sidewalks to the north. He noted that the City recently completed a stream rehab project on Indian Run. DEP permits have been secured and the City is working on getting the HOP through PaDOT. He noted that the preliminary engineering has been done and started the final engineering. He noted that the City is requesting \$160,000 for the project.

In discussion, Ms. Rodi asked if we had a pedestrian count. Mr. Coxe stated no. Ms. Brown asked if there are sidewalks on the south side of State Street. Mr. Coxe explained where the sidewalks are in the area, and noted that they are sporadic. He stated again that this would complete a missing link in the City of Hermitage's network of sidewalks and trails. Ms. Harrison noted that there are a lot of overgrown weeds by Walgreens and it makes it difficult to pull out of the adjacent parking lot. Mr. Coxe noted that he is working with a landscaper to come up with a solution. Mr. Hagstrom asked if developers were approached for help. Mr. Coxe stated that they are aware of it. He noted that Walgreens had put money into the Indian Run stream restoration project last year. He noted that they will talk with the local developers to make sure that they make the proper connections when they put

in the sidewalks in front of their property on Route 18, which will go down towards the school.

Mr. Ken Robertson, Sharpsville Borough Manager explained the **Walnut Street Retaining Wall Project**. He noted that the Borough would like to construct a retaining wall and sidewalk on the east side of Walnut Street, between High and Shenango Streets. He noted that this has been an ongoing project since 2006 and will be a well-used connector for people looking to get to and from Buhl Farm Park, Sharpsville High School, downtown Sharpsville and South Pymatuning Township with sidewalks. He noted that the project is ready to go and local match has been met. He noted that this is a safety issue; we need to get the people off Walnut Street and onto the sidewalk. In discussion, Mr. Tulip asked what the length of the project would be. Mr. Robertson stated that there are 400' of sidewalk next to the retaining wall; and another 300' of sidewalk going towards the bridge. The Borough is requesting \$70,000 to complete this project.

Mr. Stewart mentioned that back in February at the MPO meeting; the Committee had approved roughly \$30,000 to do a Planning Study for Williamson Road. However, PennDOT decided to not fund any new Planning Studies under the UPWP across the Commonwealth. Therefore, the request for supplemental planning funds through the MPO UPWP will not be funded. Mr. Gary Hittle, Hempfield Township Supervisor explained the **Williamson Road Planning Study Project**. The Township is requesting funds to prepare a Planning Study along Williamson Road for 17 acres that may be built out on west side of road to outline future improvements along this developing corridor. Mr. Hittle stated that the Township is requesting \$24,000 to complete the planning study project. Mr. Stewart stated that MCRPC would provide the local match for this project since the Township is a member of the MCRPC. In discussion, Ms. Brown asked how long the length of highway is for this planning study. Mr. Hittle stated ½ mile.

Mr. Stewart stated that the Committee has heard all the presentations and will need to make some decisions regarding on how to spend the STU funds. Mr. Zohoranacky said he supports money that is used for handicapped-accessible projects and safety issues, but would not support funding the paving portion for the Highland Road Resurfacing Project. Mr. Stewart noted that the milling and paving costs are roughly \$163,000 for this project. Ms. Folkertsma stated that she would like to see the milling and paving pulled from the Highland Road Resurfacing Project. Mr. Stewart asked Mr. Fiscus from the City of Sharon that if they did not receive \$163,000 to do the milling and paving of this project, would the City still be able to get a loan or come up with the money to do this part of the project. Mr. Fiscus stated that he did not know. Mr. Hittle asked what STU stands for. Mr. Stewart stated it stands for State Transportation Urban.

Ms. Brown asked if there were any more questions regarding the projects. If not, she asked if there is a motion to obligate the remaining 2011 funds and 2012 STU funds. There was a question asked about taking a percentage out of all the STU projects. Mr. Petit noted that some of these cannot be reduced. Ms. Brown asked Mr. Coxe if they did not fully fund the Indian Run Project, would they still be able to do the project. Mr. Gracenin stated that you cannot build only half of a pedestrian bridge. Mr. Coxe stated that the amount requested was a conservative estimate; it could be lower or it could be higher. He noted that if the Committee would only fund \$140,000-\$150,000 instead of \$160,000 for their project, the City would be prepared to make up the minor difference. Ms. Folkertsma also questioned why the developer or other businesses around the site cannot pay for the Indian Run Pedestrian Bridge Project. Mr. Coxe stated that they are already working with the

developer in paying more for the project; but they already squeezed a lot out of them through the land development plan process. He stated that officials will be approaching businesses, but he did not think they would be able to get much.

After discussion, Mr. Zohoranacky made a motion that the 2011 and 2012 STU funds be allocated to these projects, provided that the project total is \$728,000 or less. Mr. Hittle seconded. The motion passed with Ms. Folkertsma opposed.

Next, Mr. Zohoranacky made a motion to fund the four projects as requested except cut the milling and paving portion in half for the Highland Road Resurfacing Project, about \$82,500, for a total award of \$438,500. Mr. Paxton seconded. The motion passed with Ms. Folkertsma opposed.

2013 TIP DISCUSSION/FUNDING ISSUES

Mr. Schultz talked about the revenues coming into PennDOT and noted that the funding is flat lining for 2013. He noted that they will no longer issue bonds after 2012 and because of that, PennDOT will lose about \$1.2-\$1.3 million on the TIP, or equivalent to 1 less bridge per year. Mr. Petit mentioned that material costs keep going up and Act 44 was reduced from \$500 million to \$200 million. Mr. Gracenin mentioned that there is a potential that the Federal funding bill can be greatly reduced, which would be devastating.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Stewart mentioned that he will be looking for MPO members to help our staff review the project screening forms for Linking Planning and NEPA for future projects. If anyone is interested in reviewing the project forms, they should contact him soon.

Mr. Stewart noted that the Route 18 Corridor Study is being finalized which runs north of Lamor Road in Hermitage to Edgewood Drive in the Transfer/Reynolds area. A final public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 26, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. at Reynolds High School.

Mr. Stewart stated that the STU hearings will be held on August 25, 2011 in Cranberry Township, Butler County. Mr. Gracenin mentioned that this is a great opportunity for a municipality to present their project, or the preferred way would be to electronically send it. He noted that he will be speaking at the STU hearing giving an overview of the TIP projects and needs.

Mr. Petit's presentation on PennDOT's District 1-0 Business Plan was tabled until the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Hittle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary