

MINUTES

SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING/TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 10, 2015 – 10:30 A.M. - MCRPC Offices
Hermitage, PA

PERSONS PRESENT

Garth Falkner
Matt McConnell
David George
Mark Miller
Ken Robertson
Gary Hittle
Kathleen Rodi
Ron Faull
Tom Tulip
Joe Holmes
Tim Engle
Rick Dillaman
Jim Knight
Stephen Theiss
Bill Klumph
Walter Darraugh
Jim Carroll
Brenda Tomko
Cindy Black
Dennis DeSilvey
Vance Oakes
Adam Hoisington
Jeremy Coxe
Sam Bellich
Vicki Leap
Laura Moore
Brian Yedinak
Jasson Urey
Denise Anthony
Mike Ceci
Joe Pinchot
Deborah Gabriel
Bob Fiscus
Dan Keane, via phone
Matt Stewart
Dan Gracenin

REPRESENTING

Jefferson Township
Mercer County
West Middlesex Borough
Mercer County
Sharpsville Borough
Hempfield Township
Eastgate
Liberty Township
Mercer County Regional COG
Pine Township
Pine Township
Springfield Township
Springfield Township
Private Citizen
South Pymatuning Township
Coolspring Township
PennDOT
Representative Mark Longietti
Wilmington Township
Shenango Township
Grove City Borough
PennDOT
Hermitage City
Mercer County Area Agency on Aging
Representative Park Wentling
Representative Tedd Nesbit
PennDOT
Greenville Borough
Senator Brooks
Farrell City
The Herald
PennDOT
Sharon City
PennDOT
MCRPC
MCRPC

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hittle, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. **A quorum was present.**
APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Mr. Hittle asked for any additions, corrections or deletions to the Minutes of the November 18, 2014 meeting. There being none, Mr. Hittle asked for a motion to approve. Ms. Falkner so moved, Mr. DeSilvey seconded. The motion passed.

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Mr. Hittle mentioned that annually we appoint or reappoint a Chair and Vice-Chair. He noted that he has served as Chair for the past year and Jeremy Coxe has served as Vice-Chair; and they are both willing to serve again. The floor was open for nominations. Mr. George made a motion to re-nominate Gary Hittle as Chair and Jeremy Coxe as Vice-Chair for 2015. Mr. Robertson seconded. There being no other nominations, the motion passed.

2015-2018 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Mr. Dan Keane, via telephone, mentioned that there was a handout at the front table which he briefly reviewed; 5 Statewide TIP Administrative Actions, and 5 Highway/Bridge TIP Administrative Actions with no TIP Amendments and is for informational purposes. (A copy is attached to and made a part of the permanent record of Minutes.)

PROJECT STATUS UPDATES

--Transportation Alternatives and STU Project Status Reports - Mr. Stewart mentioned that things have been fairly quiet this past month, and then gave a brief update on the Transportation Alternative Projects: 1) project construction was completed in the Fall of 2014 for the **City of Hermitage Trout Island Trail Project** and the **Borough of Sharpville Regional Trail Walkway Project-High Street Sidewalk Improvement Project**; 2) a scoping field view meeting was held in December 2014 to review and discuss the **Borough of Sharpville Ridge Avenue Improvement Project**. The engineer is preparing the construction plan drawings which will be sent to PennDOT for their review and approval; 3) the **SR 208 Multimodal trail project in Springfield Township** received funding to begin Phase I to build a walkway along SR 208 to the outlet mall. Mr. Stewart stated that he and the Township were waiting to hear from the State for guidance regarding this project. Neither have heard anything so Mr. Stewart will follow-up with the State regarding this project; 4) the **Grove City-Pine Street Streetscape project** had a pre-construction meeting with Energy Services, the successful bidder on the project. They provided their air schedule and intend to start work on March 9th.

--Major Road/Bridge Projects - Mr. Yedinak explained the major road/bridge projects. 1) **Broadway Avenue-Phase 2** – this is the continuation of the widening project that was completed at the lower end, and will continue up towards the Budd Street intersection, which was rebuilt in that area. Lighting was not installed in that area, which will be included in the next phase of this project. PennDOT is finalizing the Plans Specifications & Engineering Package and the proposed let date is May 7th and it will take a couple of construction seasons to finish the project; 2) **Broadway Avenue-Phase 3** – this is the continuation of the widening project coming up from the Budd Street intersection towards the Connelly Boulevard intersection where the roundabout is going to go. Discussions have been continuing in order to resolve some issues regarding the right-of-way acquisitions and the access for The Herald; 3) **West Middlesex Viaduct** – work is progressing to acquire the right-of-way and the proposed bid letting is scheduled for December 2015 with construction in 2016; 4) **State Street Streetscape (hospital zone improvements) project** – the consultant is working on the design and the let date will be spring 2016 and they are finalizing the right-of-way plan currently. Mr. Yedinak mentioned that the **RBR (Rapid Bridge Replacement) Project** is a Statewide P3

(Public-Private Partnership) Initiative to replace the 558 bridges Statewide. A Statewide contract has been executed with a firm to design and build the 558 bridges; and maintain those 25 years afterward. He noted that Mercer County has 3 bridges under this project and they will not be addressed until 2016-2017.

In discussion, Mr. Stewart questioned that since Broadway Avenue-Phase 2 was postponed a few months and will run into 2016, will Phase 3 which goes up towards the roundabout be concurrent. Mr. Yedinak stated that Phase 2 & Phase 3 will be going on at the same time, but Phase 2 will be finalizing up.

---Planning and Data Collection Project Updates - Mr. Stewart mentioned that there were 3 special planning studies that were funded last year; the **Route 18 Signal Study**; the **County's Local Bridge Closure Study** and the **Sharpsville Borough Feasibility Study for the Unit Car Rail Siding**. He noted that the draft study was submitted for the Sharpsville Unit Car Rail Siding Project; MCRPC office reviewed it and is waiting for comments and/or modifications. At last month's meeting, Patrick Zoccole was present at which time the MPO Committee approved a more technical feasibility study to understand the possible economic benefit to PennDOT if bulk highway materials were to be transferred to the unit car rail siding site. He mentioned that a kickoff meeting was held a couple of weeks ago; which went very well. He noted that Mark Miller will give a presentation on the County's Local Bridge Closure Study later in the agenda. Mr. Coxe next gave a summary of the SR 18 Signal Retiming project. He noted that the results show an average 21% improvement in travel time. Also there were approximately 40% fewer stops along Route 18 and an average 55% decrease in signal delays. He stated that on an average day, 23,300 vehicles travel this corridor for a total benefit of over \$3 million or 62:1 benefit cost ratio/year.

PENN DOT PROGRAMS DISCUSSION

---Green Light Go – Mr. Stewart mentioned that this is the 2nd funding round for the Green Light Go Program. He strongly encourages communities that have signals, to consider this program. He explained that traffic signals are municipal property and it is up to the community to operate and maintain those signals. Now, there is a funding source that will subsidize that by 50% to help pay for updating to LED signals, retiming or removal of signals and other traffic signal improvements.

---Federal Lands Access Program – Mr. Stewart explained that this program only applies to a few communities that are located on, or adjacent to a public highway, road, bridge, trail or transit system that provides access to Federal lands. In Mercer County, the only qualifying area is the area surrounding the Shenango Reservoir, which is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Funds that would be made available under the access program would improve transportation facilities that provide resources for public roads such as provisions for bicycles and pedestrians; vehicular parking areas and other appropriate public road facilities. Applications should be submitted by April 17th with a 20% match. He noted that \$1 million is available per year in Pennsylvania, but they are funding out 4 years now. Typically the projects in the past have ranged from \$200,000 - \$1 million.

PRESENTATION: MERCER COUNTY BRIDGE CLOSURE AND REMOVAL STUDY SUMMARY

Mr. Mark Miller, Mercer County Bridge Engineer, stated that last year they were approved for a UPWP transportation planning funds to undertake a Mercer County Bridge Closure and Removal Study. The purpose of that study was to identify redundant bridges so that the County could make decisions about how to prioritize future funding and make decisions whether to replace structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges. Trans Associates was the consultant hired to undertake this study. The study evaluated all 266 County and locally owned bridges. He noted that 23 structures were identified as candidates for possible closures. Of these 23 structures, 3 were municipal-owned bridges; 1 was owned jointly between Mercer County and Crawford County; and 1 was owned jointly by Coolspring and Mercer County. The remaining 18 bridges are

owned by Mercer County. Three public meetings were held around Mercer County to present the study and receive input. A final report was presented to the Mercer County Commissioners the week of January 19th and established 3 priority levels. Bridges with priority level 1 were recommended to begin plan preparation within the next year for removal of those structures. Bridges with priority level 2 were recommended to keep in service until the remaining life of the structure is reduced to 5 years or less and then begin the process of evaluating those for their removal. Bridges with priority level 3 were to have further discussions with local officials to see what the dispositions of those bridges would be because some of those bridges should remain in service. He noted that there were 6 bridges that were assigned priority level 1; 7 bridges were assigned priority level 2 and there were 6 bridges that were assigned priority level 3. All final decisions will be addressed by the Mercer County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner McConnell spoke and explained some discussions they held with various municipalities and about transfer of ownership for a bridge back to the municipality. Discussions ensued about rising costs and the quickness of replacing bridges.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Falkner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 a.m. Mr. DeSilvey seconded. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary

DMG/ew