

Minutes

for the
January 18, 2017 Meeting
of the

Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Danville Regional Airport, Eastern Conference Room
at 7:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Fred Shanks, MPO Chairman, City of Danville
Chris Winstead, Lynchburg District Administrator
Rick Youngblood, VDOT-Lynchburg District Planning Engineer
Ron Searce, Vice-Chairman, Pittsylvania County
Jessie Barksdale, Pittsylvania County
Lee Vogler, City of Danville
Ken Gillie, City of Danville
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County
Brian Dunevant, City of Danville
Kent Shelton, Danville
Bill Wuensch, EPR, P.C.
Matthew Rehnborg, EPR, P.C.
Drew Draper, EPR, P.C.
David R. Hoback, Danville MPO Administrator
Leah Manning, Danville MPO Staff

1. 6:00 PM – 6:30 PM Public Input Meeting to Receive Comments on Amendments to FY 2015-18 TIP/STIP and Development of FY 2018-2021 TIP/STIP

a. Opening of Hearing

Mr. Hoback opened the Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m. in the Danville Regional Airport Terminal Building, Eastern Conference Room, Airport Drive, Danville, VA. Mr. Hoback described the various advertisements, contacts/postings with libraries, community-based organizations, government agencies, committees, and private sector providers, plus press releases and general efforts to implement the public participation and public notification process.

b. Public Participants/Comments

No one from the public attended the hearing to make comments.

c. Hearing Closure

The public hearing was closed at 6:30 p.m.

2. MPO Policy Board Call to Order

The current Chairman, Mr. Shanks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., after establishing a quorum was present.

3. Election of MPO Officers for 2017

Mr. Hoback reminded the group that each year, an election of MPO officers is held – alternating chairman and vice-chairman between city and county members each time. With that, the floor was opened for nominations for the MPO Chairman. Mr. Shanks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Barksdale, to nominate Mr. Searce as Chairman. The Board voted unanimously to elect Mr. Searce as MPO Chairman.

Next, the floor was opened for vice-chairman nominations. Mr. Shanks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Barksdale, to nominate Mr. Vogler as Vice-Chairman. The Board voted unanimously to elect Mr. Vogler as MPO Vice-Chairman. With that, Mr. Searce presided as Chairman over the remainder of the meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes from July 25, 2016 MPO Meeting

Mr. Shanks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Barksdale, to approve the minutes as presented. Upon vote, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the July 25, 2016 MPO Policy Board meeting.

5. Update/Report on Mount Cross/Averett and River District Bike/Ped Studies – EPR, P.C.

Mr. Wuensch with EPR introduced his associates – Mr. Draper and Mr. Rehnborg - who would further review the two studies for Mount Cross/Averett and the River District Bicycle/Pedestrian study undertaken by the firm. Mr. Draper began with the Mount Cross/Averett study, providing background and site information with an overview of existing conditions and forecast assessments based on data examined and field observations. The purpose of the study was to analyze existing and future traffic conditions, provide recommendations to accommodate traffic, and provide multimodal recommendations. Further, Mr. Draper noted that EPR would

engage the community and stakeholders for input. A summary of existing conditions revealed: all intersections currently operate at LOS D or better, there is lengthy queuing on westbound Lowes Drive and at Piedmont Drive, there are no bicycle and pedestrian facilities, there are limited inter-connections between developments, and there is heavy outbound special event traffic.

Sources considered for future conditions included historical traffic demand, the Statewide Planning System, land use context with the growth of Averett University's Sports Complex, and a number of background studies and plans. Based on this analysis, a growth rate of 1.0% annual rate was recommended. Mr. Draper stated that two scenarios would be tested: 1) a regular scenario would apply the growth rate to background traffic, then overlay special event traffic as counted, and 2) a more intense scenario would apply the regular scenario, plus a 100% increase in special event traffic.

Mr. Gillie advised there was some construction underway near the project area, with a planned grocery store and medical office at one area and some additional outparcel expansions at the Danville Mall. These would contribute to traffic generation and potential congestion in some places. The EPR team took note of this information.

Mr. Draper mentioned that next steps would include completing the future conditions assessment once the growth rate was approved, identifying and testing recommendations, meeting with stakeholders and the community, and drafting a final report. There was discussion of a possible roundabout as part of the recommendations; specific recommendations and graphics would be provided at the next meeting by EPR.

Next, Mr. Rehnberg presented information regarding the River District Bicycle/Pedestrian Study, covering the study area and key issues, the study process, survey and public feedback, preliminary recommendation strategies, and next steps. He specified key considerations as pavement markings, wayfinding specifically for bicyclists, intersection designs, neighborhood connections, and other amenities. As part of the study process, the team had reviewed a number of plans, conducted site visits, researched traffic data (AADT and accident data), and held stakeholder and public meetings to garner input.

Mr. Rehnberg indicated that some topics discussed during the public input sessions were enhancing a bicycle and pedestrian culture; preparing for increased levels of activity; providing supporting infrastructure for bicyclists such as bicycle racks, maintenance stations, and bus accommodations; support and maintenance of the Riverwalk Trails; intersection crossing safety; and an interest in strategic "road diets." He stepped through ongoing, short-term, medium-term, and long-term recommendation strategies and next steps to include the creation of intersection, street renderings, and models; presenting draft recommendations at a public meeting in late February or early March; and development of the final draft study. Mr. Rehnberg also provided an overview of the suggested bicycle and pedestrian routes, road diet recommendations, and other planning aspects. Both routing and road diet concepts were discussed by the group in more detail. City officials expressed caution and concern in the consideration of reducing lanes.

Mr. Vogler informed EPR that the City would be launching a bike share program in the spring, starting with 25 bicycles at 5 bike stations. He asked if this effort could be tied in with the bike share program and input provided for suggested locations of those bike stations. The EPR team acknowledged this information and agreed to incorporate the project as part of the study recommendations.

Both studies are planned to conclude by May/June.

6. Consideration of Amendment to the MPO's Danville Riverwalk Trail & Ringgold Depot Trail Connector Study

Mr. Hoback briefed the group on necessary trail connector changes due to the FAA regulations regarding proximity of trails/pedestrians at airport runways. Mr. Gillie had received feedback from FAA in review of the proposed connector trail route, from the airport vicinity crossing to Cane Creek. The latest guidelines required a specified distance and prohibited close proximity to the airport via the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ). Mr. Gillie advised that the City had been successful in obtaining Transportation Alternatives grant funding to extend the trail; however, an alternative would need to be determined before attempting to apply for additional funds to extend the trail. Further, he noted that the FAA wants no recreational or other amenities to attract people near the airport/RPZ. Therefore, the Board recognized that an amendment to the route would be required.

Discussion ensued about the original study with options for the southern route versus the northern route, going toward Halifax or Kentuck Road. Mr. Hoback reported that the MPO had some funding available to amend the study. The Board weighed several options to conduct the amendment, with one being an addendum to the current scope of work with EPR.

Mr. Shanks made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vogler, for the MPO to take the necessary action to amend the plan and once known, consider the next course of action. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

7. Other Business

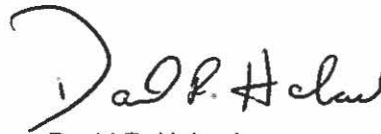
Mr. Hoback informed the Board that VDOT had just released the Smart Scale project rankings and pertinent scoring. Mr. Youngblood provided further details, adding that two projects in the MPO area had been recommended through the Smart Scale process for approval by the CTB. One project was the City's Arnett Boulevard proposal and the other was the MPO's proposal for Mount Cross Road and Whitmell School Road intersection improvements. He reminded the group that economic development was a big part of the scoring at 35 percent of the total score. He also advised that the cost estimates would project out to the Year 2021.

Mr. Youngblood also recognized that the PDC/MPO had undertaken a project priority process to assist in project proposals for funding through Smart Scale. The Board also discussed other scores such as the Berry Hill Road proposal as well as how to improve future scoring for such projects.

Mr. Winstead briefed the Board on next steps and the two-year cycle for the next round of Smart Scale funding opportunities to take place in 2018, noting the transition to the bi-annual cycle. He also referenced the new transparent online dashboard for Smart Scale projects available on VDOT's website. The Board discussed methods to boost scoring for future Smart Scale applications and other strategies for successful proposals.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Barksdale made a motion, seconded by Mr. Vogler, to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 p.m.



David R. Hoback
MPO Administrator