

Minutes
for the
May 11, 2017 Meeting
of the

Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization

Danville Regional Airport Terminal Building, Eastern Conference Room
Airport Drive, Danville, VA
at 6:35 p.m.

Attendees

Ron Scearce, Pittsylvania County, Chairman
Fred Shanks, City of Danville
Brian Dunevant, City of Danville
Lee Vogler, City of Danville
Kent Shelton, City of Danville
Marc Adelman, City of Danville Transit
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County
Jessie Barksdale, Pittsylvania County
David Cook, VDOT
Kevin Jones, Federal Highway Administration
Dave Hoback, Danville MPO Administrator
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

Mr. Scearce called the meeting to order and welcomed Mr. Kevin Jones, of the Federal Highway Administration.

2. Approval of minutes from April 12, 2017 MPO Meeting

Mr. Scearce asked for a motion to approve the April 12, 2017 MPO Policy Board Meeting minutes, and Mr. Shanks made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Barksdale. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

3. Public comments on the proposed FY 18 Unified Transportation Work Program (UWP)

It was acknowledged that no public comments were received regarding the FY 2018 Unified Transportation Work Program.

4. Presentation and consideration of proposed FY 18 Unified Transportation Work Program (UWP)

Mr. Hoback stated that the MPO was required to annually develop and adopt a work program which lays out the MPO work program for the year. He stated that for Fiscal Year 2018, the UWP comprised \$139,774 in new funding, and that \$13,000 in unexpended funds were being carried over from the current FY 17 UWP. He stated that in comparison to this year's funding, the FY 2018 funding would be down approximately \$36,000 due to the fact that in 2017, the MPO carried over \$59,000 in funding to complete the Mount Cross Road and River District studies. He noted that the bulk of the funding would be dedicated to consultant studies and MPO staff time. He noted that, as was discussed at the April 12th Policy Board meeting, the MPO was proposing to use \$77,276 for a consultant-led study to examine the proposed Berry Hill connector road in conjunction with Vandola Road, as this road served as a shortcut from U.S. Route 58 Business to the Bypass, thereby impacting traffic.

Mr. Hoback stated that another process the MPO must keep abreast of would be the adoption of performance measures as a requirement of the FAST ACT, which would require the Long-Range Transportation Plan to be amended to incorporate these performance measures. Mr. Hoback asked Mr. Cook if VDOT would determine performance measures, to which Mr. Cook replied that VDOT would learn what the performance measures would be later in the year and that VDOT would provide that information to the MPO. Mr. Hoback stated that when that information was available, it would determine what the MPO's level of effort and cost would be to update the Long-Range Plan. He added that the remaining funds in the UWP, aside from consultant led studies, would consist of a variety of ongoing tasks on the part of the MPO required by VDOT or the FHWA. He also added that Mr. Adelman stated that verbiage in the UWP would need to be changed pertaining to Danville Transit, and Mr. Adelman stated that the funds were now federal and state funds, but the State approved the federal funds. Mr. Hoback asked if there were any questions, but no questions were asked.

5. Resolution 2017-5 to Amend FY 17 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UWP)

Mr. Hoback stated that agenda items 5 – 7 were resolutions concerning the UWP which would have to be acted upon by the Board. He stated that Resolution 2015-5 would authorize the carryover of \$13,147 from the FY 17 UWP to the FY 18 UWP. Mr. Shanks made a motion to approve this resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Barksdale. The motion was voted upon and was approved unanimously.

6. Resolution 2017 – 6 Adopting FY 18 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UWP)

Mr. Hoback stated that Resolution 2017-6 authorized the approval of the 2018 UWP by the MPO. Mr. Shanks made a motion to approve this resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Barksdale. The motion was voted upon and was approved unanimously.

7. Resolution 2017-7 Statement of Certification for 2017

Mr. Hoback stated that Resolution 2017-7 was a statement of certification that activities of the MPO were carried out in compliance with Title VI requirements to provide opportunities for disadvantaged business enterprises and persons with disabilities, and he added that the MPO was in compliance to the best of his knowledge. Mr. Barksdale made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Mr. Shanks. The motion was voted upon and was approved unanimously.

8. Comments/Updates on Federal Transportation Issues: Kevin Jones, Planning and Environment Specialist, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Mr. Hoback stated that Resolution 2017-8 was to amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He noted that at the previous MPO Policy Board meeting, on April 12th, the MPO adopted the new TIP. However, he stated that he was contacted by VDOT, which informed him that due to Smart Scale and the State of Good Repair safety funds, the TIP, which would expire on June 30th, would have to be amended. Mr. Hoback added that attached to the resolution, the Board members would find reports that either categorized new funding for highways, bridges, and some safety programs, however, he noted that no current projects would be affected, nor would any projects be added or removed; he noted that this was basically a housekeeping item to enable VDOT to access and use those funds for maintenance projects. Mr. Shanks asked if Mr. Hoback was referring to projects at the District or State level, to which Mr. Hoback replied that the TIP revisions referred to projects in the MPO. Mr. Hoback added that Mr. Youngblood, of VDOT, had advised him that this TIP amendment would not have any impact on projects, that the MPO was authorized to expedite the amendment by Board vote, and that no advertisements or other public notice procedures were necessary. Mr. Shanks made a motion to approve Resolution 2017-8, which was seconded by Mr. Barksdale. The motion was voted upon and was approved unanimously.

9. Mr. Jones: Updates from USDOT at national level

Mr. Jones stated that “Local Places” was an EPA event held in Martinsville one week ago, and he noted that the transportation element of this program was something that local and regional entities wanted to promote so as to change the perception of walking in smaller MPOs; he noted that this was on the wish list in Martinsville. Transitioning to another topic, Mr. Jones stated that the public comment period for performance measures was open until May 20th. He stated that safety performance measures were ahead of the curve, and that FHWA’s office was working with VDOT to create and implement these measures. He added that because of a federal hiring freeze and recent personnel changes at FHWA, there has not been much movement recently, and that the agency was waiting to hear about any changes from the new administration. Mr. Bonanno asked whether the program Mr. Jones mentioned was promoting walking in MPOs or in rural areas in general, to which Mr. Jones replied that walking was being promoted in rural areas in general, and that this initiative was a collaboration between the EPA and the USDA.

Mr. Hoback stated that the City of Danville had been involved with a Complete Streets initiative, and asked Mr. Dunevant to confirm that, which Mr. Dunevant did. Mr. Hoback asked if there had been any involvement on the part of the EPA and USDA with regard to Complete Streets and whether it was geared toward rural areas, to which Mr. Jones replied that he believed the focus was on smaller communities such as Danville. Mr. Shanks asked Mr. Jones if he was based in Richmond, to which Mr. Jones replied that he was, adding that he was replacing Mr. Cheng

Yan who was reassigned at FHWA's central office. He stated that he planned to be in regular attendance at MPO Policy Board meetings.

10. Comments/Updates from VDOT

Mr. Cook stated that Mr. Hoback was in attendance at the Commonwealth Transportation Board's spring public hearing, and that he voiced support for the Danville MPO. Mr. Cook stated that VDOT's corridor preservation initiative held its first steering committee meeting in Lynchburg, which included local stakeholders, planners, and the Transportation Mobility and Planning Division (TMPD). He stated that the effort was focused on conducting pilot studies on Routes 29, 460, and 220, and that this effort would be expanded statewide. Mr. Cook briefly mentioned the role and accomplishments of this meeting as it regarded the establishing responsibilities of each of the parties involved in the effort, project scope, needs, historic studies, and study areas. He noted that the goal of the initiative was to maintain and enhance the throughput capacity of regional networks, major corridors, and the National Highway System. He added that implementation strategies would include increased crossover and driveway spacing, alternative intersection treatments, the prevention of traffic signal proliferation, and the provision of guidance in adopting strategies in comprehensive plans; he noted several examples of designs put forth to realize this vision.

Mr. Cook transitioned the discussion and noted that the Mount Cross Road and River District MPO studies were close to concluding. He stated that the Mount Cross Road public input meeting was well-attended, and that the recommended improvements included a roundabout at the intersection of Mount Cross Road and Dimon Drive, a multi-use path, transit improvements, and turning improvements from Lowes Drive onto Mount Cross Road.

Mr. Cook stated that the River District Bicycle/Pedestrian public meetings had more robust attendance than the Mount Cross Road meeting. He added that recommended improvements in the River District included road diets, and the addition of bike lanes and sharrow arrows, as well as improved lighting and signage. He stated that people were in favor of improving Danville's bicycling culture, and added that a bike share program was pending in Danville's downtown area.

Mr. Cook raised the topic of Smart Scale, emphasizing that it was not too early to begin to consider projects for the next submittal period, which would be in 2018. He stated that economic development and safety would be the highest-weighted factors in this region of the state.

Mr. Jones asked about the bicycle culture in Danville and inquired as to whether it was growing, to which Mr. Vogler replied that the bicycle culture was, in fact, growing, as was the mountain biking component, given that mountain biking trails in the city were ranked the best in Virginia. Mr. Hoback added that Mr. Vogler's comment was interesting, given that the study report noted several meeting attendees were bicycle advocates and were passionately in favor of more bicycle improvements and an enhancement of the city's bicycle culture. Some discussion took place.

11. Other Business

Mr. Hoback stated that the MPO studies were scheduled to be presented to the Danville City Council on May 16th by EPR Consultants. He advised the Board to provide comments with regard to anything members believed needed to be revised. Some discussion took place, and Mr. Hoback stated that he and Mr. Bonanno were impressed with the consultant's products, particularly with regard to the bicycle/pedestrian study.

12. Adjourn

Mr. Scarce adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

David R. Hoback
Danville MPO Administrator