

Minutes
for the
June 27, 2018 Meeting
of the
Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Danville Regional Airport Terminal Building, Eastern Conference Room
Airport Drive, Danville, VA
at 5:30 p.m.

Attendees

Lee Vogler, City of Danville
Ken Gillie, City of Danville
Ron Searce, Pittsylvania County
Brian Dunevant, City of Danville
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County
Shawn Harden, Dewberry
Rick Youngblood, VDOT
Dave Hoback, Danville MPO Administrator
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

Mr. Vogler called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of minutes from May 9, 2018 MPO Meeting

Mr. Vogler asked for a motion to approve the May 9, 2018 MPO Policy Board Meeting minutes. Mr. Searce made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Dunevant. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

3. Review of Berry Hill Connector Road Property Owners Meeting on May 31st

Mr. Hoback opened the discussion by stating four of the seven property owners directly impacted by the proposed Berry Hill Connector road attended or were represented at the meeting including other family members. He stated the main issue the majority of property owners attending raised was fair compensation for their properties, and the desire for their properties to be purchased in total. With the exception of one property owner attending, the property owners did not express outright opposition to the project. Mr. Youngblood added that the meeting served as a cordial discussion, in which everyone had questions and we had answers.

4. Review of Berry Hill Connector Road Citizen's Information Meeting on June 21st

Mr. Hoback stated that staff learned a number of things from this meeting, one of those being that many area residents were not supportive of the project. He stated that he provided the MPO board with all of the comments that were received from attendees. He added that there were three general types of comments received. First, comments which expressed dissatisfaction for the project. Second, comments which questioned the need for the connector road based on the amount of development to date. Third, comments which suggested upgrading Berry Hill Road, as it provided direct access to the Berry Hill Industrial Park. Mr. Searce asked if the meeting attendees' addresses were located directly along the proposed connector road. Mr. Hoback replied that none consisted of the affected property owners, and their addresses were generally clustered around Rocky Knoll or Buford Road, with some property owners sprinkled around surrounding areas. Mr. Vogler stated he observed that many of the comments appeared to pertain to the Berry Hill Industrial Park in general. Mr. Youngblood stated that one meeting attendee appeared to be grandstanding, and he added that many of the issues he was raising had previously been addressed.

Mr. Searce asked if sound barriers would be included in this project. Mr. Harden replied that he investigated the need for such barriers, but noted that the closest home was over 1,500 feet away from the proposed alignment on Rocky Knoll, and that most homes were located more than 3,000 feet away, so the need for noise barriers would likely be slim to none. He noted, however, that there were two homes in proximity to Oak Ridge Farms Road and Bachelor Hall Road that were relatively close to the proposed alignment and would probably get a sound barrier. He added, however, that the NEPA study would shed additional light on the need for any noise

barriers. Mr. Vogler asked what the status was regarding the ramps coming directly off of Berry Hill Road, to which Mr. Harden replied that it did not meet VDOT spacing requirements. Mr. Youngblood added that VDOT conducted a \$210,000 Interchange Justification Report (IJR) study to consider an interchange at Berry Hill Road and Danville Expressway. He stated that a key takeaway was that the interchange would have been too close to an existing interchange, and that a nearby interchange would provide access to the industrial park. He added that, while constructing such an interchange was possible, it would involve a great deal of FHWA red tape. Mr. Youngblood noted that the IJR articulated that upgrading Berry Hill Road as the principal means of accessing the industrial park would have greater environmental impacts than would constructing the connector road. Mr. Harden added that the connector road would impact seven properties, whereas upgrading Berry Hill Road to serve as the principal means of access to the Berry Hill Industrial Park would require it to be seven lanes wide, which would impact more than 40 properties. He added that a main purpose of the connector road would be to provide a second access point for the industrial park; he noted that this was a huge selling point to potential industries considering industrial sites, since a crash or other incident on a primary access point could disrupt travel to and from the facility.

Mr. Vogler asked if a one-sheet frequently-asked questions (FAQ) document could be uploaded to the MPO's website, which could serve as a reference page for interested persons to navigate to on their own. Another question was raised as to how the connector road would be funded. Mr. Youngblood replied that it would be funded through multiple avenues. He added that Smart Scale would be the main source right now, which would involve state and probable federal funding, requiring the NEPA process to take place. Mr. Youngblood added that if the project was selected for Smart Scale funding, it would be funded on a six-year cycle in 2023, and construction would begin anywhere from 2025 to 2027. Mr. Vogler asked if there would be any local matches required, to which Mr. Youngblood replied that there would not. He added, however, that if Tobacco Commission funds were voluntarily used as match, the cost/benefit analysis score would be improved somewhat. He stated that if \$1.5 or \$1.7 million in Tobacco funds was used for PE and if additional funds were utilized to purchase right-of-way, that would improve the Smart Scale score, considering that the project total would range from \$26 to \$32 million.

Mr. Sides noted the fact that economic development interests generally would not like to hear that project construction would begin in 2025 or 2026, and added that the only way the connector road could get constructed earlier was if a large project committed to the industrial park and the governor subsequently pledged the funds to build the connector road. Mr. Sides added that residents he spoke with at the public hearing seemed upset with the idea of building the road and hoping investment took place. Mr. Youngblood added that the dialogue was not completely negative, noting that not everyone had an issue with the connector road. He added that the newspaper article written about the public hearing included feedback from some attendees who were supportive of the project. Mr. Hoback stated that 43 persons attended the hearing, and eight written comments were subsequently received. Mr. Vogler added that he believed some of the opposition tied back to the industrial park itself, noting that area residents had been hearing about the Berry Hill Industrial Park for years, but had seen little progress in its development. Mr. Youngblood stated that the MPO did a fantastic job with organizing the hearing, and that the hearing was a success in terms of participation and dialogue.

5. Consideration of a Resolution of Adoption for MPO Study: Southern Virginia Mega Site at Berry Hill Transportation Update: Connector Road, Vandola Drive, and Vandola Church Road prepared by Dewberry

A request was made for a motion to approve Resolution 2018-4, and a motion was made by Mr. Scearce and seconded by Mr. Youngblood. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

6. Comments/Updates from VDOT

Mr. Youngblood stated that the Smart Scale process was entering its final month, and that Pittsylvania County submitted four pre-applications, the City of Danville submitted three, and the MPO submitted one. He stated that VDOT staff worked through the process diligently, and that sketches would be finalized by July 16th. He added that work at this point should be focused on the economic development aspect of projects.

7. Other Business

Mr. Hoback directed the Board's attention to the Board packet, adding that the packet included two resolutions for the MPO Board to support Smart Scale projects in the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County. Resolution 2018-5 supported the City of Danville Smart Scale applications for:

- Construction of a roundabout on Mount Cross Road at the intersection of Dimon Drive and Parker Road at the entrance to the Averett North Campus (\$4 million estimated);
- Construction of an additional third lane on South Boston Road (US 58 Business) westbound from Airport Drive to Kentuck Road (\$800,000 estimated); and
- Pedestrian access improvements including sidewalk and traffic signaling along the commercial district road network in the Piedmont Drive area (\$950,000 estimated).

Mr. Hoback stated that the second resolution, Resolution 2018-6, supported Pittsylvania County Smart Scale applications for:

- Route 40 and McBride Lane intersection improvements to increase safety and support a growing healthcare and commercial development area in Gretna;
- Safety improvements/R-Cut at Shula Drive and US 29 to address a significant accident history; and
- Kentuck Road – Ringgold West Industrial Park – intersection and access management improvements to address a significant increase in truck traffic associated with an expanded distribution center.

A motion was made to adopt Resolution 2018-5 by Mr. Scarce, seconded by Mr. Dunevant, and was voted upon and approved unanimously. A motion to adopt Resolution 2018-6, was made by Mr. Scarce, seconded by Mr. Gillie, and was voted upon and approved unanimously.

Mr. Sides asked if a Planning District Commission resolution would be needed as well, to which Mr. Youngblood replied in the affirmative for the Smart Scale project at Route 40 and McBride Lane, since it was outside of the MPO. Some discussion took place regarding whether to submit the resolution on August 1st or September 1st, and Mr. Youngblood stated that he would get back to Mr. Hoback regarding that. Mr. Dunevant stated that all of the City's, as well as the MPO's, Smart Scale projects would be discussed at the City's work session the following week. Mr. Hoback asked Mr. Harden and Mr. Youngblood to put together some contents for an FAQ document for the MPO website. In reply to Mr. Hoback's suggestion, Mr. Youngblood stated that the connector road had been discussed for years, so it would be beneficial to list dates and times.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:58 p.m.



David R. Hoback
Danville MPO Administrator

