

Minutes
for the
September 13, 2017 Meeting
of the
Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Danville Regional Airport Terminal Building, Eastern Conference Room
Airport Drive, Danville, VA
at 6:00 p.m.

Attendees

Ron Searce, Pittsylvania County, Chairman
Lee Vogler, City of Danville
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County
Jessie Barksdale, Pittsylvania County
Chris Winstead, VDOT
Rick Youngblood, VDOT
David Cook, VDOT
Brian Bradner, Dewberry
Dave Hoback, Danville MPO Administrator
Leah Manning, Danville MPO Staff
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

Mr. Searce called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes from May 11, 2017 MPO Meeting

Mr. Searce asked for a motion to approve the May 11, 2017 MPO Policy Board Meeting minutes, and Mr. Barksdale made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Sides. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

3. Presentation: Brian Bradner, Associate Vice-President & Shawn Hardin, Associate, Dewberry Engineers, Berry Hill Connector Road Study

Mr. Bradner stated that the proposal for the update of the previous Berry Hill Road Connector Study was, in general, an effort to advance the process as the Regional Authority worked to develop the Berry Hill Industrial Park. He stated that the new study would include updated traffic counts and several other items, and that the heart of the study would include various alternatives for the connector road, phasing-in approaches, and cost estimates. He added that the study would also evaluate Vandola Drive and Vandola Church Road, and present alternatives for those. Mr. Searce mentioned that in a previous meeting, there was discussion of a power line being installed in the area of the proposed connector road. Mr. Searce asked Mr. Sides if he was familiar with this, to which Mr. Sides replied that there had been discussions about a power line, but he was not sure if it related to this area. Mr. Sides added that the main power line would extend northward, but the connector road would be oriented in an east-west alignment, and that the objective would be to minimize conflicts between the power infrastructure and the connector road. Mr. Barksdale asked how the connector road would advance with regard to VDOT standards, to which Mr. Bradner replied that the road would be constructed in accordance with these guidelines, that there was a desire to advance such a concept via a Smart Scale application in 2018, and that the updated study would position the MPO to do that. Mr. Hoback suggested that a phased approach to the roadway construction should be discussed. Mr. Sides stated that the progression of this process came at a fortunate time because RIFA had been involved with discussions concerning the connector road and agreed that the roadway concept needed to be re-evaluated, and that the MPO's desire to update this plan was very timely. Mr. Bradner noted that the updated study would evaluate the connector road vis-à-vis a phased approach, that the original study analyzed levels of employment, and that the new study would update those figures. He concluded by stating that the end product would indicate what the phased approach would look like, and that a cost estimate would be included for each phase of the project.

Mr. Hoback stated based on previous discussions he believed a Smart Scale application for the connector road in the interest of being competitive should be under \$20 million for a two-lane design which could be expandable

as future needs dictated. Mr. Youngblood stated that following the original study, RIFA along with the City and County had a good understanding of what steps would need to take place in order to provide infrastructure to the industrial park. He noted that VDOT provided funds to investigate the feasibility of an interchange, but that a determination was made that a connector road was a less expensive viable option that would create access in different directions. He added that this would be a good time to update the original study to support RIFA in decision-making as well as a future Smart Scale application and other revenue source applications, if needed. Mr. Youngblood suggested utilizing the most recent information available, which would likely result in a strong Smart Scale application in 2018. He acknowledged a very strong partnership between the MPO and Dewberry, and added that such a strong relationship would be valuable with regard to reducing costs and producing a better product. Mr. Bradner added that the connector road would be instrumental with regard to the industrial park's recruitment efforts. Mr. Winstead added that round three of Smart Scale would require a resolution of support for a project's scope of work. Mr. Bradner acknowledged the importance of this study and stated that his team would execute it expeditiously, and Mr. Hoback added that the timeline would be conducive to a Smart Scale application. He asked Mr. Youngblood when the 2018 Smart Scale process would open, to which Mr. Youngblood replied that the portal would open in March or April, and that he would keep the MPO updated with regard to that. Mr. Sides lauded the MPO's on-call services with Dewberry because of the ability of the MPO to accomplish things quickly, as well as the availability of engineer on duty who had done similar work in the past. Mr. Hoback briefly discussed the MPO's contractual relationship with Dewberry, stating that the arrangement was the vehicle the MPO would utilize to execute the study.

4. **Consideration of Dewberry Proposal**

Mr. Hoback asked the Board for a motion to accept Dewberry's proposal to conduct the Berry Hill Industrial Park connector road study, to which Mr. Vogler made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Barksdale. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

5. **2018 Smart Scale Overview, Rick Youngblood, VDOT Lynchburg District Planner**

Mr. Youngblood brought the Board's attention to several documents pertaining to the Smart Scale process. He acknowledged that changes to Smart Scale would occur during round three of the process. He noted that the VDOT Lynchburg District's fall public hearing would take place on October 4th, and that its format would be that of a town hall. He brought the Board's attention to items within the handouts and stated that funded projects from the first and second rounds of Smart Scale were included in one of the handouts. Mr. Youngblood added that the funded Mount Cross Road/Whitmell School Road project was a product of one of the MPO's studies, illustrating the productivity of the MPO studies. He stated that the Lynchburg District had been blessed with regard to receiving funding for STARS projects and studies and special studies; he noted that studies were often put into practice in this district. He guided the Board through a variety of Smart Scale projects in the Lynchburg District. Then, Mr. Youngblood stated that, in speaking with City of Danville staff, there was certainty that Phase II of Mount Cross Road and Arnett Boulevard would be supported, but were not sure about Kentuck Road. Mr. Youngblood discussed aspects of how the MPO area related to the Smart Scale process in terms of project potential. He noted that alternative intersections would play a significant role during the next round of Smart Scale, and he discussed alternative intersections.

Mr. Youngblood stated that project phasing would be a significant tool to reduce costs during the Smart Scale process, and added that thinking beyond the single-occupancy vehicle would be an important consideration as well. He mentioned Danville Transit as an example of this, noting that the agency now had more funds as a rural transit agency than as one associated with the MPO.

Mr. Youngblood noted that one change during the upcoming Smart Scale process would be scheduling, particularly with regard to the portal opening during the March/April time frame. He also stated that next year, the notice of intent to apply would be required and that, following the notice of intent period, the actual application submission period would begin on July 1 and close on August 1. He added that all local governments would be required to submit Board of Supervisors resolutions as part of the Smart Scale process. Mr. Youngblood stated that localities

and MPOs would be subject to a maximum number of applications they would be able to submit based on population. With regard to the economic development component of Smart Scale, Mr. Youngblood stated that Danville and Pittsylvania County, as well as the Salem District, would now be eligible for an additional half-point to a point due to the fact that these areas were considered distressed. Mr. Barksdale asked if there was a definition of an economically distressed area, to which Mr. Youngblood replied that the high unemployment rates of the area demonstrated a greater economic need, based on zip code. Mr. Barksdale voiced favor for this economic development component, and Mr. Winstead encouraged Mr. Barksdale to attend the October 4th CTB hearing to voice his position. Mr. Youngblood noted that the region was weighted 35 percent for economic development, and that partnerships among the PDCs, MPOs, and localities would be very important in support of this factor. Ms. Manning stated the importance of localities adding projects into the regional CEDS document, which would provide support for a Smart Scale application, and some discussion took place. Ms. Manning added that the CEDS update process for 2018 would begin soon, and the WPPDC would be reaching out to localities for their input into the process. Mr. Youngblood stated that site design with regard to the Smart Scale process would be different this coming year, as the buffer drops from five miles to three, and different points would be awarded based on whether the site design was conceptual or approved. He noted that with regard to square footage, appropriately zoned contiguous parcels would be required to accrue points. Additional discussion about the Smart Scale process took place.

6. 2018 Smart Scale Project Submittal by MPO

Mr. Hoback stated that the Danville MPO had submitted project applications which had been successful the last two Smart Scale cycles, and he added that he would like the MPO to be successful in the future with regard to these applications. He stated that the Mount Cross Road and Whitmell School Road intersection project was selected last year for funding, but that the Mount Cross Road and Mill Creek Road intersection project was not. He noted that this second project was relatively close to being selected last year, and asked for input on whether it would be worthwhile for the MPO to resubmit the project in 2018. Mr. Youngblood stated that if a project originated from a study, his advice would be to submit it, but if it came out of the blue, he would need more information prior to issuing a submission recommendation. Mr. Hoback stated that since the project originated from a study and scored relatively well during the previous Smart Scale round, he thought it would be a good idea to resubmit it. Mr. Youngblood offered two suggestions. First, he stated that projects from the Mount Cross Road study would be good candidates, as needs still existed, even though the study was somewhat dated. Second, he stated that Route 58 on the east and west sides of Danville would be good candidates for applications with regard to access management, but particularly on the east side of the city, as the Berry Hill Industrial Park developed, resulting in additional freight traffic traveling to the Port of Virginia. He added that with the new intersection tool VDOT was developing, alternative intersection concepts might be feasible. Mr. Hoback asked the Board what its thoughts were regarding reapplying for the Mount Cross Road and Mill Creek Road project, as well as taking a second look at the Route 58 West study. Mr. Youngblood stated that Route 58 was a Corridor of Statewide Significance, and noted that arterial preservation could play a significant part in addressing a need identified in the study. Mr. Bonanno asked Mr. Youngblood whether he was referring to Route 58 on the east side of Danville or on the west side, to which Mr. Youngblood replied that he was referring to either side. Mr. Sides asked if the Board would have to focus on one side or another, to which Mr. Youngblood replied that this would be how the discussion goes forward, but noted that his suggestion would be the connector road. He stated that the MPO could apply for the connector road, utilizing high-priority program funds, and a Route 58 project could be applied for via District Grant funds. Some discussion took place. Mr. Youngblood stated that potentially, the MPO could submit four projects, the PDC could submit four projects, and the County could submit four projects for a total of 12. He added that he would try to formulate a plan as to how to maximize the potential funding. Mr. Sides raised discussion about the Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors, and stated that he would like to wait until November when new board members were elected, to which Mr. Youngblood stated that course of action would be acceptable. Some discussion took place. Mr. Winstead stated that it was imperative that a thorough job be done with regard to scope, scale, and budget of Smart Scale project applications. Some discussion took place.

Comments/Updates from VDOT

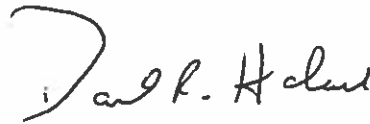
Mr. Winstead stated that working with VDOT Lynchburg District staff, the agency was able to move the construction advertisement date of the Route 58 Business/Berry Hill Road intersection project up to March 2020 from the original December 2020 advertisement date, potentially enabling the project to be completed by the end of Calendar Year 2020. Mr. Youngblood stated that on October 4th, prior to the CTB hearing, there would be a Smart Scale training session held at the Holiday Inn in downtown Lynchburg from 1 – 3 p.m., and that the town hall meeting would be held from 4 – 6 p.m. Mr. Winstead recommended arriving as early as possible.

7. Other Business

No other business was noted.

8. Adjourn

With a motion from Mr. Vogler and seconded by Mr. Barkdsale, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.



David R. Hoback
Danville MPO Administrator