

**Minutes**  
for the  
**November 17, 2021 Meeting**  
of the  
**Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
Virtual Meeting  
at 6:00 p.m.  
Attendees

Ron Scarce, Pittsylvania County, Chairman  
Brian Dunevant, City of Danville  
Ken Gillie, City of Danville  
Marc Adelman, Danville Transit  
Emily Ragsdale, Pittsylvania County  
Rick Youngblood, VDOT  
David Cook, VDOT  
Chris Winstead, VDOT  
Taylor Jenkins, DRPT  
Bill Wuensch, EPR, PC  
Jeanie Alexander, EPR, PC  
Michael Armbrister, Danville MPO Administrator  
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Approval of Minutes from the March 22, 2021 Meeting**

Mr. Scarce asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2021 MPO meeting, to which Mr. Winstead made a motion, which seconded by Mr. Dunevant. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

**3. Update on Piney Forest Road Corridor Study: Jeanie Alexander, P.D., EPR, PC**

Ms. Alexander opened the discussion by noting that the study team was working on the second phase of the Piney Forest Road corridor study, which consisted of traffic analysis and operations. She added that the hope was that the traffic counts obtained during late summer 2021 would reflect greater accuracy than earlier traffic counts due to the COVID pandemic, which she noted proved to be the case. She thanked the City of Danville and the WPPDC staff for their roles in the data collection process.

Ms. Alexander noted that the team was examining 2021 (existing) conditions as well as 2045 conditions without improvement. She stated that travel time and Level of Service were analyzed, and that the corridor generally operated at LOS D or better, but that side streets were the main source of delay; she noted that delays were also exhibited from the corridor onto side streets. She added that there were a number of side street locations at which backups extended beyond the turn lanes, and she further added that turn lanes on about half the side streets were only one-hundred feet in length. She stated that the greatest problem area was Piney Forest Road at Franklin Turnpike, particularly with regard to the northbound queue. Mr. Bonanno added that the left-turn queue at that intersection was significantly longer than that of the through lanes. Ms. Alexander stated that traffic operations were generally good at unsignalized intersections. She stated that the team analyzed future travel conditions without improvements, and noted that the signal timings were optimized for that analysis. Presenting a graphic to the attendees, she stated that future results were not significantly different, with side streets and signalized intersections being the main points of delay. She added that some of the northbound and southbound left-turn movements along the corridor experienced delay, and that it was expected there would be a few more locations at which traffic queues extended beyond turn lanes in 2045, such as that at Franklin Turnpike, which was expected to extend as far south as Woodside Drive. She discussed some additional aspects of future delay, and concluded by stating that the mapping indicated that intersections were the greatest contributors to congestion, and that making left turns was also a problem, which, she noted, was consistent with public input.

Ms. Alexander noted that for Phase 2, data collection and existing and future no-build analyses had been completed, and that this winter, the team would evaluate improvement strategies. She added that the team hoped to have concepts refined to share with the public early in 2022, and that the public participation process would consist of a second public input meeting as well as a follow-up online survey. Following this, Ms. Alexander stated that the team would present to the MPO Policy Board, after which a final report would be developed.

**4. Route 29 Business (Piedmont Drive) Project Pipeline: Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner**

Mr. Bonanno briefly discussed a VDOT Project Pipeline study, the intent of which was to produce recommendations for the segment of Piedmont Drive in the City of Danville extending from Park Avenue to Boxwood Court. He noted that the initiative was led by VDOT and the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI), but that RK&K consultants had been employed to conduct the study. He added that the intent of the study was to improve vehicular safety and functionality along the corridor by

advancing recommendations for access management, traffic signal improvements, and bicycle and pedestrian access. He noted that the MPO had participated in online meetings and a recent walk-through of part of the corridor. Mr. Bonanno further added that the study was well-timed to coordinate with the Piney Forest Road study, located immediately to the north. He concluded by stating that the study was scheduled to wrap up in time for Round 5 of Smart Scale.

**5. Update on OIPI GAP Project: Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner**

Mr. Bonanno provided the Board with an update on the Growth and Accessibility Planning (GAP) grant-funded project, first discussing the background of the project, and then noting that since the kickoff meeting with the consultants in June, five recommended goal areas, which were consistent with the *Danville MPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan*, had been developed. He added that since that time, draft objectives had been developed for each of the goal areas. He further added that the team of consultants developed a list of data sources as well as criteria which they would satisfy. He concluded by stating that the next steps would involve finalization of the measures based on staff feedback, documentation of the calculation process, and that other steps would be documented. He stated that the entire project was anticipated to be completed in June of 2022.

**6. Smart Scale Round 5 Information and Discussion: Rick Youngblood and David Cook**

Mr. Cook opened the discussion by noting changes to the Environmental and Land Use factors of Smart Scale for Round 5. He began with the Land Use factor, and presented some background regarding this measure, which, he noted, involved examining future transportation efficient land use as well as increasing transportation-efficient land uses. Mr. Cook stated that one of the major changes would be that Area types C and D, as defined within Smart Scale, would, beginning in Round 5, include the Land Use factor. He further added that the Land Use factor would be weighted as 10 percent for Area type D, which encompassed the MPO, and that some share of the Accessibility and Economic Development factors would be reduced to account for the added Land Use factor. Another change Mr. Cook noted would be a buffer area reduction from three miles to one mile. He added that an analysis of the addition of Land Use to Area types C and D would give those areas a slight boost with regard to project scores, since many of the more rural areas of the state did not always benefit from economic development. Mr. Cook stated that the CTB presentation was available for viewing the changes, and that comments could be provided through the end of November. He further noted that in December, action would be taken to with regard to policy changes for Land Use, and that the Smart Scale Policy Guide would be updated by the end of the year.

Mr. Cook discussed changes to Smart Scale's Environmental factor, and presented the manner by which points were allocated through this factor. He stated that one proposed change would be the allocation of non-single occupancy vehicle (SOV) users by mode for more precise point calculation, the normalization non-SOV and Freight categories separately, and equally weighting of categories. Mr. Cook also stated that a greenhouse gas emissions component would be integrated into this revision.

Mr. Cook noted that a second change to the Environmental factor would be a buffer area radius change, specifically that Tier 1 projects (smallest projects) would have a 30-foot buffer, Tier 2 projects (those of a moderate size) would have a 1/8-mile buffer, and Tier 3 projects (the largest project types) would have a 1/4-mile buffer. He noted that this change, in an analysis of projects, would benefit many projects in the West Piedmont PDC. He and Mr. Bonanno briefly discussed a sidewalk project in the Town of Stuart that the PDC planned to resubmit as part of the Round 5 submission process.

**7. Comments/Updates from VDOT/DRPT/FHWA**

Mr. Youngblood stated that the main impetus of Mr. Cook's presentation was that the Smart Scale process changed somewhat during each round. He added that the Lynchburg District advocated for inclusion of the Land Use measure in Areas C and D and that this came to fruition. Mr. Cook stated that the updated 2016 – 2020 Potential for Safety Improvement (PSI) index had been released and was available on the VTrans Interact web tool. Mr. Winstead acknowledged an upcoming change in State administrations and details pertaining to that would be forthcoming, and he noted that he believed project delivery would continue as it had been. He also briefly mentioned the federal infrastructure bill, noting that its provisions would go beyond roads and bridges.

**8. Adjourn**

Mr. Searce adjourned the meeting at 6:42 p.m.



Michael Armbrister  
Danville MPO Administrator