

Minutes
for the
April 19, 2023 Meeting
of the
Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization
Virtual Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Attendees

Lee Vogler, City of Danville, Chairman
Brian Dunevant, City of Danville
Emily Ragsdale, Pittsylvania County
Ron Searce, Pittsylvania County
Rick Youngblood, VDOT
Chris Winstead, VDOT
Tiffany Dubinsky, DRPT
Michael Armbrister, Danville MPO Administrator
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

Mr. Vogler called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes from the March 1, 2023 meeting

Mr. Vogler asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2023 meeting. Mr. Youngblood made a motion to adopt the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Dunevant. The motion was voted upon and was approved unanimously.

3. Adoption of FY 24 MPO Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UPWP), Michael Armbrister

Mr. Armbrister stated that the MPO was responsible for the annual adoption of the UPWP, which served as a blueprint for the MPO's activities over the course of a year. He added that for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, the MPO would be funded in the amount of \$163,280, 80 percent of which would be federal funding, 10 percent of which would be from the State of Virginia, and 10 percent of which would be split evenly between the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County. Mr. Armbrister further added that the MPO typically carried funds over to the next fiscal year, but uncertainty regarding the viability of the South Ridge Street Study caused that to be questionable. Therefore, Mr. Armbrister stated that the carryover would be held off until FY 25, given that the MPO would begin updating the Long-Range Transportation Plan that fiscal year. Mr. Armbrister stated that \$86,797 would be available for consultant-led studies, and that the MPO was presently under contract to fund the South Ridge Street study.

Mr. Armbrister stated that the WPPDC would serve as the administrator for the MPO, adding that the MPO would be working on the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant-funded program, providing administration for that study without any additional fees. He concluded by stating that MPO staff recommended the adoption of the FY 2024 UPWP, and Mr. Vogler asked if there were any questions, but none were forthcoming. Mr. Vogler asked for a motion to adopt the FY 2024 UPWP, to which Mr. Dunevant made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Searce. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

4. Approval of FY 2024 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Michael Armbrister

Mr. Armbrister stated that in recent months, MPO staff had been working to develop the FY 24 – 27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and he described some of the background of this document. He stated that the TIP was a four-year document adopted every three years, and added that two TIPs would be in effect over the coming fiscal year. Mr. Armbrister noted that the heart of the FY 24 – 27 TIP could be found within pages 15 through 21, while the remainder of the document was similar to the previous TIP. He added that a 30-day public comment period had taken place, followed by a public hearing, though no members of the public were present. He further added that the public comment period as well as the public meeting were advertised on the MPO website, on social media, in newspapers, and via mailings to entities within the MPO area. Mr. Vogler asked if there were any questions, but none were forthcoming. Mr. Dunevant made a motion to adopt the FY 2024 – 2027 TIP, which was seconded by Mr. Searce. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

5. Approval of FY 2021 – 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments to incorporate new statewide / districtwide maintenance project funding, Michael Armbrister

Mr. Armbrister acknowledged periodic administrative or other updates to the TIP, adding that the MPO received such updates from VDOT to incorporate into the TIP. He brought the Board's attention to Page 17 of the TIP, which was an amendment that would incorporate additional funding to facilitate preventative maintenance for bridges, preventative maintenance and system preservation, and traffic and safety operations. Mr. Armbrister added that no public notice or comment was required, given that this update was administrative in nature. He then stated that staff recommended adopting this amendment. Mr. Dunevant made a motion to approve the amendment, which was seconded by Mr. Searce. The motion was voted upon and approved unanimously.

6. Project Update – South Ridge Street Study & SS4A Grant, Michael Armbrister

Mr. Armbrister initiated discussion of the South Ridge Street study, noting that the study team was attempting to formulate a strategy to link South Ridge Street with Industrial Avenue, though many constraints were present. He added that the study team evaluated the Monument Street corridor as a connector option, but doubt persisted as to whether the study would be feasible because of a potentially prohibitively high cost. Mr. Armbrister stated that EPR was drafting its thoughts, and it had provided the MPO with a parcel layout that could potentially facilitate a connection between the existing terminus of South Ridge Street and Goodyear Boulevard. He added that once EPR had the opportunity to review a potential alignment, given the latest information, they would provide their thoughts to the MPO. He further added that if the decision was made to not proceed with this study, the MPO would convene its technical advisory committee to select the next study.

Mr. Armbrister provided an update on the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant the MPO received through the WPPDC. He stated that the kickoff meeting for that study had taken place, the grant agreement had been drafted, and after several revisions had been sent to FHWA; he added that once a signed agreement was in place, the project could proceed and EPR would begin work.

Mr. Armbrister stated that MPO staff participated in a kick-off meeting for the Danville MPO model development. He mentioned that this pertained to the new transportation analysis zone (TAZ) area that had been presented at a prior MPO meeting, and he added that MPO staff were working on some data pertaining to that. He further added that this would be a several month-long process, and that MPO staff would bring some items to the Board for approval.

7. Comments/Updates from VDOT/DRPT/FHWA

Mr. Youngblood stated that he had been working with the MPO on the South Ridge Street study, and that some transportation model updates were underway. He added that the Transportation Alternatives (TAP) program would be opening soon, and that VDOT would be moving forward with Smart Scale. He added that VDOT would soon be conducting interviews to replace David Cook, who accepted another position with VDOT in Richmond.

Mr. Winstead stated that the VDOT Lynchburg District's Six-Year Improvement Program public hearing had been scheduled for May 17th at the Lynchburg Grand Hotel, and added that the latest edition of the draft funding scenario for the district had been published, in the amount of \$583.5 million. He also announced National Work Zone Awareness Week, adding that the theme this year was "Work With Us."

Ms. Dubinsky, representing the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, stated that DRPT had published its draft of the Six-Year Improvement Program, available on its website. She added that DRPT was initiating the Discover Transit campaign, which would extend through the spring and into the fall. She added that DRPT had available media placements, advertisements, and promotional material that could be shared through social media. She further added that DRPT had rolled out a new rebranding effort, known as connectingva.org. She also noted that the agency was hiring new planners, but that she would likely remain the MPO's DRPT representative, despite some staff shuffling.

8. Other Business

No additional business was discussed.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 5:49 p.m.


Kristina Eberly
Danville MPO Administrator