

Minutes
for the
November 13, 2024, Meeting
of the
Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization

Attendees

Lee Vogler, City of Danville, Chairman
Carson Eckhardt, VDOT
Dr. Gary Miller, Danville
Brian Dunevant, Danville
Amanda Poncy, EPR
Bill Wuensch, EPR
Eddie Hite, Pittsylvania County, Board of Supervisors
Rick Youngblood, VDOT, Lynchburg
Nancy Etro, EPR
Kristie Eberly, Danville MPO Administrator
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff
Pastor Perry-Guest

1. Call to Order :

Mr. Vogler called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes from the July 11, 2024 meeting

The Chairman opened the meeting asking for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 11, 2024 meeting. Mr. Lee Vogler made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Eddie Hite. The motion was voted on and was approved unanimously.

3. Update on Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant-funded Safety Action Plan development, EPR, PC. Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner

Mr. Joe Bonanno introduced EPR staff to discuss the SS4A program. He discussed the SS4A Safety Action Plan based on the Safe Systems Approach. The SS4A grant-funded initiative to develop the SS4A Safety Action Plan is well on its way to completion, and tonight we have EPR staff members Ms. Amanda Poncy and Mr. Bill Wuensch joining us to give us a rundown on where we are and when we can expect the final product. Ms. Amanda Poncy mentioned that the reason that the plan is being done was because 11 people in Danville area have died due to traffic crashes and 80 people have been seriously injured every year. These deaths are preventable. Part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant program was created to help communities address this preventable crisis of deaths and injuries on our roadways. They provided some planning and implementation grants which recognize the safe system approach, acknowledging that safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer vehicle speeds and post-crash care all must work together to improve safety. The Action Plan that is in production needs to contain these specific elements as indicated by law. A goal was set of a 50% reduction by 2045 at the MPO Board meeting in July 2024. EPR has been working with the project working group and some data analysis and public engagement has been done. We also will be working on highlights of the plan recommendations that will be shared by early December 2024. We have reviewed a lot of existing plans and policies in the area as well as some crash analysis, crash and equity analysis, and met with project working group three times over the course of the project timeline. Public surveys have turned up nearly 100 responses, and the team has attended several pop-up events over the summer and spoke with more than 150 people about transportation safety concerns. A safety summit was also held in September. We are now at the plan development and review stage. Joe Bonanno and Kristie Eberly received a draft last week, and are making some revisions to that in the coming week and will be sending it back to them. Everyone else will get a chance to review the plan at the beginning of December. We are excited for your comments and feedback. Ms. Amanda Poncy proceeded to fill in the attendees with more data that will be available in the plan update and from the Safety Summit. Dr. Miller questioned what can be done about reinforcing seatbelt use and pedestrian crossing,

especially at night, on Piney Forest Road.

4. Approval of updated VDOT transportation model, Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner

Mr. Bonanno announced that the TAZ update has been completed, and that the Danville MPO Model update meets the guidelines of the Virginia Travel Demand Modeling policies and procedures manuals. Last month MPO staff participated in an online training session to learn the basics of the travel demand modeling to run the model. The travel demand model is a tool that predicts transportation movements throughout metro areas which, in this context, will show likely travel patterns based on various development scenarios in the MPO area in 2050. The travel demand model will be essential to update the MPO's 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan to 2050, and this update will begin shortly. We will need action to approve the use of the model before it can be officially used in the project analysis, especially for use in the LRTP updates and Smart Scale analysis. Mr. Rick Youngblood explained that the model goes hand in hand with LRTP, which is a required document through the state of Virginia FHWA that MPOs go through every five years. In order to complete the constrained Long-Range plan, VDOT is required to determine which data goes into economic development, business, commercial entities, population, census, within which a variety of information is incorporated. We are going through this simultaneously in the City of Danville development and for the City of Lynchburg each year. Both models are required to be updated prior to moving forward with the update of constrained long-range plan. Mr. Youngblood noted that EPR uses the model for their studies as well. That's part of their forecasting process. They get the output from our models and hand them over to their associate, then they go into their analysis of their studies as well. It has multiple uses outside of just the constrained long-range plan. We need our respective approval for the model. It is the staff's recommendation that the MPO Board adopt the VDOT Transportation model.

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the updated VDOT Transportation model. Mr. Rick Youngblood made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Brian Dunevant. Upon the vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Update of Danville MPO 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan, Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner

Mr. Joe Bonanno explained that each year a discussion takes place regarding which studies the MPO should pursue. Mr. Bonanno and Ms. Eberly met in September 2024 with VDOT, Mr. Brian Dunevant from the City of Danville, and Ms. Emily Ragsdale from Pittsylvania County to discuss possible consultant studies going forward. However, the Long-Range Transportation Plan needs to be updated every five years. Since the last update was adopted in summer 2020, the MPO will begin putting together the RFP to send out to the on-call consultants. According to our records, the cost to develop the 2045 CLRP, adopted in 2020, was a little over \$100,000. It is expected to be higher this time due to inflationary factors. Mr. Rick Youngblood noted the MPO banks money through their work program each year and VDOT provides funding close to a year or a year and a half in some cases. Thank you to the MPO and continue to work towards covering those costs.

6. Comments/Updates from VDOT/DRPT/FHWA

Mr. Carson Eckhardt noted that the two Smart Scale Applications (within the MPO area) were the Orphanage Road signal and Berry Hill Road interchange, which had both made it through to full application status, and they are currently going through scoring, which would hopefully be complete by the end of the year. Mr. Rick Youngblood noted that Ms. Amanda Poncy presented the other studies, and everything will go hand in hand with the Long-Range Transportation Plan Update process as well. The MPO is sitting in a very good position for other things to go smoothly and move quickly. It was noted that there was a ribbon cutting for the opening of the Berry Hill Connector Road and an announcement was made from the first business coming to the Berry Hill Industrial Park. It was noted by Mr. Rick Youngblood, speaking on behalf of Mr. Chris Winstead, that the meetings were based on engineering studies and technical aspects. Mr. Youngblood dually noted Mr. Joe Bonanno's involvement over the years in Smart Scale applications with his extreme detail in his work, along with the City of Danville, Pittsylvania County and the MPO helping to secure the funding for these projects. It was noted that several updates from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation were shared, including information on grant applications and rail project opportunities.

Mr. Joe Bonanno noted that he had received updates from DRPT's Ms. Paige Lazar.

*DRPT Connects Communities Campaign initiative aims to enhance and promote the benefits of local transit agencies across Virginia. The campaign focuses on increasing awareness and

usage of public transportation options, highlighting their role in realizing connected and thriving communities.

*The FY26 Grant Application Workshop will be November 13th at 11am and the FY26 Grant Application Cycle opens December 1, 2024.

*TDP/TSP Agency feedback Survey- DRPT is engaging all our transit agencies on their recent TDP/TSP development process. From collaboration to the usefulness of individual chapters, DRPT is seeking to enhance our planning requirements for our agencies.

*FY26 5310 Pre-Application Webinar-DRPT hosted pre-application webinars for our 5310 recipients on November 4th for both new and returning applicants.

*Rail Annual Application Cycle-DRPTs Rail team will be opening annual applications December 1, 2024

*Localities should reach out to Linda Balderson for any Rail Industrial access (RIA) needs or an introduction to the program.

7. Other Business

The Chairman introduced Pastor Perry who wanted to discuss Route 58 and Barrett Street. Pastor Perry: I'm addressing 58 West and Barrett Street, an 11-mile corridor from the MPO Study, which from 2013 to 2018, had 432 crashes including angle crashes. From 2012 to present there have been 51 crashes at intersection. Community of Dan Heights, 3 churches, professional buildings, Ingram Heights apartments, and a service road. All traffic comes in at one time. That is a very dangerous intersection. He showed a picture snapped a week ago – Park Springs School – school buses cross 58. October 12th – someone did not yield to a motorcycle and the driver was seriously injured. Dr. Miller noted that you tense up at that intersection because you don't know who's coming. Mr. Lee Vogler agreed and noted that he would like to go on record – a traffic signal is warranted at that intersection. The City Manager will do an updated study. Mr. Brian Dunevant noted that he had talked to Mr. Bill Wuensch with EPR about the signal warrant and getting one updated, and we'll try to expedite that and get it started. We're just finishing up a warrant on Bishop and Memorial and we'll use funds left over for this one. Mr. Rick Youngblood questioned Mr. Bill Wuensch with EPR as to whether this was from the 58 W access management study. Mr. Wuensch noted that they did see an uptick in crashes since covid. Access Management Study was focusing on maximizing safety. This was part of an RCUT series that was recommended. Mr. Lee Vogler asked if there was anything we as an MPO can do to support this. Mr. Joe Bonanno asked if there is a letter we need to write, as the MPO can provide one. Mr. Brian Dunevant noted that it would be a locally funded project. There was a question about pedestrian movements. Pastor Perry stated that there are people crossing there. A motion was made by Mr. Rick Youngblood and second by Brian to support the updates and changes.

The MPO asked what the next steps are for this intersection Mr. Brian Dunevant stated that getting the design going in the next two months and construction by summer. The construction piece has not been budgeted, but we may have some funding from the project on Memorial and Bishop. We cannot award until after July 1st. Mr. Lee Vogler noted that he did not think that there would be an issue with Council providing the funds. This would be a locally funded project, and not a VDOT application.

8. Adjourn 6:15 p.m.


Kristina Eberly
Danville MPO Administrator