

Minutes
for the
July 11, 2024, Meeting
of the
Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization

Attendees

Lee Vogler, City of Danville, Chairman
Kenneth Gillie, City of Danville
Emily Ragsdale, Pittsylvania County
Chris Winstead, VDOT
Eddie Hite, Pittsylvania County, Board of Supervisors
Rick Youngblood, VDOT, Lynchburg
Kathryn Benedict, FHWA
Mitch Huber, DRPT
Paige Lazar, DRPT
Kristie Eberly, Danville MPO Administrator
Joseph Bonanno, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

Mr. Vogler called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes from the April 23, 2024 meeting

Mr. Joe Bonanno opened the meeting asking for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2024 meeting. Mr. Eddie Hite made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Chris Winstead. 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, Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner

- a. The SS4A Safety Action Plan development is proceeding well. An interactive Social Pinpoint survey has been active for about six weeks and is concluding. In addition, staff promoted the project and the survey at several recent community events.
- b. As of May, the team struggled a bit to get robust public input, even with the chance for participants to win a \$50 gift card. However, with greater outreach, 100 survey comments were received and about 164 in-person comments were obtained at events.
- c. Additional outreach included the following:
 - i. MPO staff brought flyers advertising the project and the survey to various locations, mostly in Pittsylvania County, where input was particularly lacking.
 - ii. Danville Community Market and Food Truck Rodeo, June 1st
 - iii. Juneteenth Block Party, June 18th
 - iv. Latino Health Fair, June 29th
- d. Included in the next steps will be a Safety Summit in Danville in the month of September, a draft plan in October and November, and plan completion in December. Mr. Bonanno discussed some of the relevant statistics that EPR summarized, and discussion ensued with regard to speeding along Craghead Street and Arnett Boulevard. Traffic calming measures and raised crosswalks were mentioned as possible solutions along Craghead and perhaps Monument streets.

4. Adoption of Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Commitment to pursuing Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries

- a. It was noted that the meeting packet included a section entitled SS4A Official Public Commitment of Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries. It was further noted that one of the requirements of recipients of this grant is an official public commitment to an eventual goal of zero deaths and serious injuries.
- b. Grantees are given the option to either commit to a target date for zero deaths and serious injuries or an "ambitious" percentage reduction in deaths and serious injuries by a specific date, with an eventual goal of zero deaths and serious injuries.
- c. The staff recommendation is that the MPO should be the governing body to make this commitment and that the goal within the Virginia Strategic Highway Safety Plan is best to adopt, which is: Reduce deaths and serious injuries by half by 2045, with the ultimate goal for the MPO of eventually reaching zero deaths and serious injuries

- d. It is also the staff recommendation that the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County put forth resolutions to support the MPO in this goal, but not be obligated to adopt this goal, or a similar goal, themselves.

The Chairman asked for a motion to adopt the Safety Action Plan commitment to pursue Zero Deaths and Serious Injuries, as part of the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant. Mr. Ken Gillie made a motion to approve seconded by Mr. Eddie Hite. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Endorsement of Revised Southern Virginia Mega Site at Berry Hill Connector Road Smart Scale Round 6 Resolution, Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner

- a. The MPO submitted the Smart Scale pre-application for the Berry Hill Connector Road expansion at the end of March, however, the Smart Scale team determined that the Diverging Diamond Interchange upgrade at Oak Ridge Farms Road and Danville Expressway could be applied for at this time, but not the expansion of the connector road from two to four lanes. This decision was reached because the Interchange Access Request document showed the interchange with only a two-lane connector road, and another study included in the pre-application showed the widened roadway was not needed until more than 5,000 workers were employed at the Mega Park.
- b. At the last meeting in April, the MPO Board was asked to vote on and approve a resolution supporting this Smart Scale application, which, at the time included both the interchange upgrade and the roadway expansion to four lanes. However, we thought we would submit a revised resolution to vote on, which only includes the interchange upgrade.

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the Endorsement of Revised Southern Virginia Mega Hill Connector Road Smart Scale Round 6 Resolution. Mr. Eddie Hite made a motion to approve seconded by Mr. Ken Gillie. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Highway Systems Functional Classification Update, Joe Bonanno, Senior Planner

- a. After each decennial census, roadway functional classifications are reviewed and updated when deemed necessary. Resources were included in the meeting packets to summarize what functional classification is. Functional Classification basically refers to the designation roadways are given based on the primary functions they provide - interstates, arterials, connectors, and local roads.
- b. In the MPO area, the only changes during this round of updates included on/off ramps, a few minor changes along U.S. 29 in Pittsylvania County, and along some other roadways that appear to mainly be median crossovers; there are no significant changes this round.

VDOT is asking the MPOs to review and to acknowledge/approve VDOT's coordination on this effort. The staff recommendation is that the Board approve the changes and process.

7. Approval of 2024 Highway Systems Functional Classification Update for Danville MPO area

The Chairman asked for a motion for the approval of 2024 Highway Systems Functional Classification Update. Mr. Eddie Hite made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Mr. Ken Gillie. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. TAZ update process

The TAZ update process on our end has been completed, and now the VDOT modelers are finalizing the update on their end. Once the TAZ is approved, the MPO office can start updating the LRTP.

9. Discussion of Franklin/Bedford County RAISE Grant award

- a. It was announced about two weeks ago that the West Piedmont PDC was awarded a federal RAISE grant, which stands for "Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity." While the grant will not be in the MPO, it is regionally significant and worthy of mention. This grant will fund a plan to improve Route 122 for about 24 miles, from Wirtz Road in Franklin County to Joppa Mill Road in Bedford County.
- b. The plan will recommend safety, capacity, and geometric improvements, as well as examine the feasibility of a corridor-wide multi-use trail, corridor-wide connectivity and redundancy - including multimodal options spanning a lake, a park-and-ride facility with EV charging stations, elements of Complete Streets where feasible, and a shuttle between the corridor and nearby Amtrak stations. The plan will also incorporate recommendations from one previous and one current planning effort in the Westlake Corner community of Franklin County.

Ms. Kathryn Benedict with FHWA mentioned that FHWA would be setting up an in-person meeting for the RAISE kick-off.

10. Comments/Updates from VDOT/DRPT/FHWA

-Paige Lazar, with DRPT, noted that the FY 2025 Six-Year Improvement Program was approved at the last CTB meeting. The City of Danville's transit system was awarded over 1 million in state funding and nearly 3 million in state controlled federal funding in support of their transit system. Just a few projects are new bus shelters, replacement buses, a new bus wash, and money towards operating costs. Smart Scale final documents are due August 1, 2024. Railroad Crossing Elimination Plan Grant -NOFO is now open for applications.

-Rick Youngblood mentioned that the RAISE Grant Program and the Reconnecting Communities Grant for Elizabeth Street would be worth looking at again. Everything else is moving forward.

-Mr. Chris Winstead with VDOT, noted that the Berry Hill Connector Road is on track to be opened by the end of November.

-Chairman Lee Vogler questioned the follow-up on Piney Forest Road. Mr. Bonanno mentioned the improvements and will send an email with those improvements for informational purposes. The City submitted two Smart Scale applications that were funded on Pedestrian and Vehicle Safety and the new intersections.

11. Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Adjourn 6:11 pm



Kristina Eberly

Danville MPO Administrator