

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
April 30, 2007**

**City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Government Building
125 North Division Street, Salisbury, MD
Room 302**

Attendees:

SW/MPO officials:

Luther Hitchens, Deputy Mayor, Delmar, MD
Sharon Morris, Assistant Director of Administration, Wicomico County
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation
Stevie Prettyman, Vice President, Wicomico County Council
Doris Schonbrunner, Council Administrator, Wicomico County Council
Louise Smith, President, City Council, City of Salisbury
Barrie P. Tilghman, Mayor, City of Salisbury

Others:

Gary Pusey, S/W MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Keith Hall, Long Range Planner, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Kate Thompson, Citizen and member of the Girl Scouts

Introduction

Mr. Pusey opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Since there were several new members in attendance for their first meeting, all members introduced themselves. In addition, Mayor Tilghman introduced Kate Thompson, who accompanied the Mayor and is a Girl Scout working on her Leadership Badge.

Chair and Vice Chair Nominations

Mr. Pusey stated that the Council currently has no Chair or Vice Chair, as Marvin Long was the former Chair who decided not to seek re-election to the County Council and Rick Pollitt was the former Vice Chair and is currently the County Executive, and is no longer a member of the MPO Council.

There was discussion as to who was not in attendance at today's meeting, and it was decided to establish a Nominating Committee composed of Mr. Nixon, Ms. Schonbrunner and Mayor Tilghman who would contact the members of the Council to determine who may be interested in serving. The goal of the Committee would be to have candidates willing to serve that the full Council could vote on at the next meeting.

It was agreed that Mr. Pusey would continue to run the remainder of this meeting.

Minutes

The second item of business was the minutes from the Council's September 2, 2006 meeting. Mr. Pusey asked if anyone had any additions or corrections, and there were none. Mayor Tilghman made a motion to approve the minutes, with the motion seconded by Ms. Prettyman. All Board members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

Discussion of the Salisbury/Wicomico MPO

At this point, Mr. Pusey stated that with the addition of several new members to the MPO Council as a result of the recent elections, Mr. Pusey and Mr. Nixon thought it may be beneficial to provide background information on the MPO and to explain what it does.

Mr. Nixon gave a brief presentation on the MPO, its establishment as a result of the 2000 U.S. Census, and the products that the MPO creates. He explained that the three major documents produced by the MPO are the Transportation Improvement Program; the Unified Planning Work Program; and the Long-Range Transportation Plan. He explained that federal funding is provided to the MPO in order to conduct transportation planning activities, and this amount typically is in the range of \$100,000 annually. He also stated that the MPO has undertaken a program of conducting corridor studies for heavily-traveled roads within the region. There were no questions for Mr. Nixon.

FY 2007-2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

Mr. Pusey introduced the next item and asked Mr. Nixon if he would like to report on this.

Mr. Nixon summarized the proposed amendment, which consisted of additional construction funds being added in FY 2007 to the Congestion Management project. The previously-approved TIP indicated \$1,150,000 was available, and the amendment adds \$650,000 in FY 2007 to bring the total amount to \$1,800,000.

Ms. Prettyman questioned the notation referring to "CVISN" as one of the identified projects. Mr. Nixon stated that this had to do with a bar coding that would allow the tracking of commercial vehicles, especially as they approach weigh stations.

There were no further questions, and upon a motion by Ms. Prettyman, seconded by Mayor Tilghman, the Council approved the amendment to the FY 2007-2009 TIP as presented. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Pusey summarized this item.

He stated that the work program is adopted annually and lists all the projects that the MPO would like to complete during the year, and a cost estimate is provided for each of the projects. He summarized the budget table at the end of the document, and stated that the entire funding for FY 2008 is proposed to be \$113,213. Approximately \$91,000 of this is federal funding, with \$11,000 of state funding and the remaining \$11,000 being provided locally as in-kind services, and not actually cash. The proposed funding for FY 2008 is almost \$4,000 more than that budgeted for FY 2007.

He briefly described each of the line items in the budget table, and focused on the largest item, which is the Corridor Studies. He stated that the Council identified four corridors to be studied, but has approved funding for only two of the studies – the Pemberton Drive Corridor and the South Division St./College Ave./Beaglin Park Dr. Corridor. There is approximately \$40,000 remaining in the FY 2007 budget that can be used toward the two remaining studies that remain unfunded – the Bi-State Boulevard/U.S. Route 13 Corridor and the Riverside Drive/Mill Street intersection. Based on the estimates that were obtained a year ago, the \$40,000 would not cover the entire costs for both of these studies, but should be enough to complete the Bi-State Boulevard study. The proposed FY 2008 budget includes the Riverside Drive study, assuming that Bi-State Boulevard is funded with FY 2007 money. He noted that the Technical Committee recommended that the Riverside Drive study be expanded to include the entire length of the road from the Mill Street intersection southwest to the MPO Study Area boundary at South Upper Ferry Road, and that the possibility of a future river crossing be included in the study at least on a preliminary basis.

In response to a question from Ms. Prettyman, Mr. Pusey stated that the “Other” funding under the Corridor Studies category is for an as-yet-to-be-determined corridor, but it is anticipated that one will be identified during FY 2008. Ms. Prettyman also requested that Mr. Pusey speak with Rai Sharma about the status of any other River crossing studies that may have been prepared through the years.

Ms. Prettyman also questioned the “Freight Plan” item, and Mr. Nixon responded that a state-wide plan is being prepared and it is anticipated that much of the MPO’s plan will be based on the State plan. The State and subsequent MPO Plan will most likely be completed during FY 2008.

There being no further comments, upon a motion by Mr. Nixon, seconded by Ms. Smith, with all members voting in favor, the Council approved the FY 2008 UPWP as presented.

Corridor Studies

Mr. Pusey noted that this item had been discussed in length in the discussion on the Unified Planning Work Program, but to summarize, the Pemberton Drive study is nearly complete, and work is continuing on the South Division St. study.

Several members of the Technical Committee met with consultants The Traffic Group, Inc., on April 23, 2007, to discuss the preliminary findings. A presentation to the full Technical Committee is scheduled for May 9, and Mr. Pusey invited the Council members to attend. He also stated that the consultants will be presenting their report to the Council at a future meeting, probably in June.

The South Division Street study was delayed due to the replacement of the culverts at Coulbourne Mill Pond and the construction of the Fruitland roundabout, but the consultants are collecting data and have begun the study.

As noted earlier in this meeting, Mr. Pusey stated that there is funding available to complete the Bi-State Boulevard, and there may be enough in the FY 2007 budget to begin the expanded Riverside Drive Corridor study also.

After discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Hitchens to authorize FY 2007 funding for the Bi-State Boulevard Corridor Study and the expanded Riverside Drive study, as described by Staff. The motion was seconded by Ms. Prettyman, and all members voted in favor.

Bylaws Discussion & Technical Committee Members Appointment

Mr. Pusey stated that with the implementation of a new form of government in Wicomico County, it was anticipated that the Bylaws would need to be revised to reflect this change. However, when going through the document, Staff believes it was written in such a way that extensive changes would not be needed. For example, instead of referring to appointments by the "Wicomico County Council" (which are now done by the County Executive), the document states that appointments are made only by "Wicomico County." This wording is general enough that appointments can be handled in-house without revising the Bylaws.

Many of the changes being proposed were more "housekeeping" in nature, such as consistently referring to the MPO by its correct abbreviation of "S/W MPO" and referring to the "MPO Council" instead of the "MPO Board."

Mr. Pusey briefly summarized two changes that he wanted to bring to the Council's attention. One major change being proposed is the makeup of the Technical Review Committee. He pointed out the proposed change on page 9 of the Bylaws, which would add more members to the Committee, giving the MPO Council the option of appointing the members annually from the group of organizations and departments listed. The four

groups being added have been non-voting members of the Technical Committee for the last year and have regularly attended the meetings. This revision would make them voting members. The second change concerns the length of terms of the MPO Council members by stating they serve two year terms "or until a successor is named." This would allow members to serve even though a strict two year time frame may not be adhered to.

Mr. Nixon stated that he had expressed the concern that with more members of the Technical Committee you may run a greater risk of difficulty obtaining a quorum, but he agreed that the four groups being added had been regular contributors and he supported the change.

There were no further comments, and upon a motion by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mayor Tilghman, the Council approved the revised Bylaws as presented. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Other Business

There was no other business to be discussed.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Discussion ensued concerning the next meeting date. Mr. Pusey stated that, at this time, there is no business pending that would require setting a meeting date for the next month, but more than likely there would be a need for a meeting in June, at which time it is hoped that The Traffic Group can present the Pemberton Drive Corridor Study. Mr. Pusey stated he would contact the members at that time to determine the next meeting date.

A motion was made by Mayor Tilghman, seconded by Ms. Prettyman, and unanimously approved to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 1:55 PM.