

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
September 26, 2005**

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

Attendees:

SW/MPO officials:

Rick Pollitt, Vice Chair, City of Fruitland
Mike Dunn, City of Salisbury, City Council
Stevie Prettyman, Wicomico County Council
Mike Thompson, Wicomico County
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation
Larry Points, Town of Delmar, MD

Others:

Gary Pusey, S/W MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning

Introduction

Vice Chairman Pollitt opened the meeting at 1:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

The first item of business was the minutes from the Council's August 22, 2005 meeting. Vice Chairman Pollitt asked if anyone had any additions or corrections, and there being none, Mr. Dunn made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Ms. Prettyman seconded the motion. All Board members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

FY 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Nixon provided information to the Council members explaining the proposed TIP for the period FY 2006 through FY 2008. The TIP contains projects being funded by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) for the MPO Area under two categories – a Highway element and a Transit element.

Ms. Prettyman questioned the "Environmental Projects" item under the Highway element, noting that no specific projects were listed in this category although funds have been allocated. Mr. Nixon responded that the specific projects haven't been identified at this point, and that this item will come back to the Council for approval at a future date once projects have been identified.

Vice Chairman Pollitt questioned the status of the “roundabout” being proposed at Cedar Lane and North Division Street in Fruitland. Mr. Nixon noted that Planning and Engineering funds have been programmed for FY 2006, with the entire project to be completed in FY 2008.

Mr. Dunn questioned if a permanent site had been chosen for the proposed Shore Transit facility. Mr. Nixon responded that a specific location had not yet been chosen. It is estimated that a site will be chosen by FY 2007, when design and engineering costs are programmed, with construction costs scheduled for FY 2008. Ms. Prettyman noted that this project listed the funding source as a combination of federal, state and local funds, with \$20,000 of local funds programmed for FY 2007 with an increase to \$300,000 in FY 2008. She questioned these figures, and noted that the Wicomico County Council has not had budget discussions on this item as of yet, and was concerned what impact a vote of approval by the MPO Council would have on the County Council’s actions for this project. Mr. Nixon stated he would obtain more information about this project from the Maryland Transit Administration, and he agreed that the MPO Council, if it approves the TIP, should make the approval contingent on this additional information being supplied to the satisfaction of MPO Council members.

Ms. Prettyman also questioned the status of the bike path being proposed for the Northeast Collector. Mr. Nixon responded that this project has been approved, with funding provided by MDOT with construction costs programmed for FY 2006. The path will extend from U.S. Route 50 north to Old Ocean City Road.

Mr. Points raised an issue that he believed could be considered a congestion management project, and that was the Foskey Lane/U.S. Route 13 North area near Delmar. He described some of the projects that the Town has approved recently in this area and noted that this intersection will receive a great deal of additional traffic once these projects are developed. The Town believes that turn lanes and a traffic signal will be needed at this intersection in the near future. Mr. Nixon explained the process for having projects included in the TIP. He recommended that the Town prepare a letter and provide testimony at the upcoming SHA Annual Tour to be held at the Civic Center on October 11. Mr. Points responded that he would ensure that the Town would do this.

There being no further discussion, upon a motion by Mr. Dunn, seconded by Ms. Prettyman, with all members voting in favor, the Council approved the FY 2006-2008 TIP, with the condition that additional information will be provided by Mr. Nixon to the Council members regarding funding for the Shore Transit facility. (NOTE – Mr. Nixon supplied the requested information, and as a result, the TIP was approved with a footnote for the Shore Transit facility stating “The construction cost estimates for this project are very preliminary and subject to change as planning, site selection and design progresses. The local share of the costs will be shared by member agencies of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore. The exact level of funding participation by these parties has not been determined. The inclusion of this project in the Transportation Improvement Program does not constitute a funding commitment by any of the Metropolitan Planning Organization member agencies.”)

Interim Long-Range Transportation Plan

Vice Chairman Pollitt asked Mr. Pusey to report on this item.

Mr. Pusey provided the members with copies of the Plan and stated that, in accordance with federal regulations, an advertisement had appeared in the Daily Times noting that today's meeting was a Public Hearing for anyone wishing to comment on the Plan. Copies were available at the County Library and the Planning Department, and a copy of the Plan was also available on the County's Website. These copies had been available to the public for the last 30 days. No comments had been received by the Planning Department, and no members of the public were in attendance today.

Mr. Pusey briefly summarized the Plan. He stated that one "housekeeping" measure needed to be addressed by the Council. The MPO boundary for the portion in Maryland was previously adopted by the Council; however, the boundary for that portion within Delaware has not been formally adopted. This issue was considered by the Technical Committee and the Committee recommended that the boundary be the same as the "Area of Study" proposed in the Town of Delmar's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Pusey stated that this rationale conformed with the method by which the boundary was adopted for the Maryland portion – in each case, the boundary is determined to be the growth area as identified in the local jurisdictions' comprehensive plans. Mr. Pusey showed the proposed boundary on a map, and noted that although Shore Transit initially had some concerns with the Maryland portion of the boundary, that objection has now been withdrawn and all members of the Technical Committee were in agreement on this proposed boundary.

There being no questions, upon a motion by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Ms. Prettyman, with all members voting in favor, the Council approved the MPO boundary as designated on the map and as contained in the Interim Plan.

Mr. Pusey then briefly summarized other sections of the Plan. He referenced Chapters 3, "Future Transportation Needs" and Chapter 4, "Financially-Constrained Transportation Plan" and discussed the projects that were being proposed within the next five years. Mr. Pusey noted that this is an Interim Plan that focuses on projects in the MPO Area for the next five years, and the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan, which will be more detailed to the year 2030 is required to be adopted by the Council by October 1, 2006. Consultants have been retained to assist with the development of the Final Plan. It is anticipated the Final Plan will be completed by late spring or early summer, with adoption occurring at that time.

Vice Chairman Pollitt asked if the Council had any questions about the Interim Plan. There were none, and upon a motion by Mr. Dunn, seconded by Mr. Points, with all members voting in favor, the Council adopted the Interim Plan.

Other Business

There was discussion that it may be helpful for the Council members to have a refresher course as to the responsibilities and duties of the MPO. Mr. Nixon stated that FTA had recently conducted such a seminar for the Hagerstown MPO, and the attendees had found it to be informative. Mr. Nixon and Mr. Pusey stated they would begin preparations for this future session, and Mr. Nixon offered to find some dates that the presenters could conduct this training.

No action was required by the Council for this item.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Discussion ensued concerning the next meeting date. Mr. Pusey stated that there is no business pending that would require setting a meeting date for the next month. The Council stated it would not set a meeting date at this time, but instead would plan on meeting when necessary.

There was discussion as to the best meeting day and time for the members. There was a consensus that the best day was the second or fourth Wednesday of the month (with the fourth Wednesday being most preferable), with the most suitable time being later in the day, such as around 3:30 p.m.

Upon a request from Vice Chairman Pollitt for a motion to adjourn, a motion was made by Mr. Dunn, seconded by Mr. Thompson, and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.