

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
March 14th, 2007**

**City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Government Building
125 North Division Street, Salisbury, MD
Room 301**

Attendees:

TAC Members:

John Redden, Wicomico County Public Works, Chair
Ray Birch, City of Salisbury Public Works, Vice Chair
Sara Bynum-King, Town of Delmar
Brenden Frederick, City of Salisbury Transportation & Safety Advisory Comm.
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning
Rob Harris, Tri-County Council
John F. McDonnell, City of Fruitland
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation
Mike Pennington, Tri-County Council

Others:

Gary Pusey, S/W MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Keith Hall, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration
Jeffrey Downes, Salisbury University
Richard Kautz, Sussex Co. (Del.) Planning Dept.
Jim Magill, Salisbury/Wicomico Planning Commission
Jim Dooley, Maryland State Highway Administration
Jim Thompson, Maryland State Highway Administration
Kevin Quinn, Maryland Transit Administration

Introduction

Mr. Redden opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

Mr. Redden introduced the first item on the agenda, which were the minutes of the Committee's September 13, 2006 meeting.

Mr. Birch moved to approve the September 13, 2006 meeting minutes, and Mr. Nixon seconded the motion. All Committee members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

FY 2007-2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment – Recommendation to the MPO Council

Mr. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to introduce the next item, and Mr. Pusey deferred to Mr. Nixon.

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.

In response to a question, Mr. Thompson summarized some of the projects being undertaken, which included backup power supplies for traffic signals and an upgrade at the Delmar weigh station.

Mr. Downes questioned the inclusion of the U.S. Route 13 bike path under the “Comments” section and Mr. Thompson clarified that this project has been completed but it is still listed since it was completed in FY 2007.

There were no further questions, and upon a motion by Mr. Birch, seconded by Ms. Gordy, the Committee forwarded a favorable recommendation to the MPO Council to approve 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. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to report on this item.

Mr. Pusey summarized the proposed FY 2008 UPWP, stating that the Committee’s task is to review the document and to forward a recommendation to the MPO Council for its adoption. He summarized the funding, and stated that the MPO will be receiving approximately \$4,000 more in FY 2008 than in FY 2007. He summarized the categories and activities being proposed for FY 2008 and stated that the work program follows that used for FY 2007, and he pointed out the narrative section of the UPWP that explains in more detail what each of the activities being proposed are. He noted that some of the activities being carried over from FY 2007 are included so that an ongoing review of these activities can occur. In particular, these include the Long-Range Plan, the Freight Plan and the Public Participation Process. It was noted that a Local Freight Plan and a Public Participation Plan are scheduled to be adopted before the end of FY 2007.

Discussion ensued about the Corridor Plans. Mr. Pusey summarized that the Committee had identified and recommended three corridors to be studied in more detail due to development pressures that were occurring along these roadways. These corridors were the South Division Street/Beagin Park Drive/Snow Hill Road Corridor, the Pemberton Drive Corridor and the Mill Street/Carroll Street/Riverside Drive intersection. The Committee recommended to the MPO Council that these studies be performed, and the

Council identified an additional corridor to be studied (the Delmar/Bi-State Boulevard Corridor) and approved funding for only two corridors – South Division Street and Pemberton Drive. There are funds remaining in FY 2007 to complete a good portion of the remaining two studies, but funding from FY 2008 will be needed to complete the studies. Mr. Pusey stated this topic is the next item on the agenda, but he said that Staff will be recommending that the Mill Street study be expanded to include Riverside Drive from downtown Salisbury to the MPO Planning Area Boundary. Also, Staff is recommending that another river crossing be explored as part of this study.

Mr. Arhin commented that the Corridor and Traffic Management Studies section needs to be more specific as to what is being proposed. He stated that the wording was general and more emphasis should be placed on what has been accomplished to this point and what future progress will be made. He also suggested that a separate section pertaining to data collection should be included as well. Also, that a section on transit should be included, particularly in regards to the Transportation Development Plan (TDP) as it relates to the MPO Area.

Mr. Pusey responded that the Corridor section could be expanded, and there was discussion about data collection that has occurred, but rather than a separate section in the UPWP this item could be included in one of the other activities, such as the MPO Administration. Mr. Nixon stated that the Tri-County Council has an adopted TDP and instead of doing something that could be redundant, the UPWP could include an activity under “Core Planning” stating that the TDP will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the MPO’s Plans.

Mr. Magill questioned the awarding of contracts for the Corridor Studies. Mr. Pusey explained the process and stated that the Council approved the awarding of contracts but that all paperwork was handled in the Planning Department.

After further discussion, upon a motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Birch, with all members voting in favor, the Committee voted to forward a favorable recommendation to the MPO Council for the adoption of the FY 2008 UPWP, contingent on the inclusion of the revisions discussed.

Corridor Studies - Update

Mr. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to report on this item.

Mr. Pusey stated this was discussed in some detail under the previous agenda item, but summarized that funding from FY 2007 was not sufficient to cover the total costs associated with completing the final two corridors that had been identified for detailed study, so FY 2008 funding will be needed as well. These two corridors were the Delmar/Bi-State Boulevard Corridor and the Mill Street/Riverside Drive intersection.

Although proposals were received from a qualified consultant last year, these two will be bid out again since a year has passed, and Staff is also recommending that the Mill Street

project be expanded to include the entire length of Riverside Drive to the MPO Study Area Boundary. This will also add to the cost of this study. In addition, Staff is suggesting that this study also investigate, at least on a very preliminary basis, the feasibility of an additional river crossing. Mr. Pusey stated this is a subject that has been discussed at various times through the years with no consensus reached, but any river crossing would have to connect with Riverside Drive, so this may be an appropriate time to begin discussions on this.

Mr. Thompson stated from an SHA perspective, he believes the inclusion of a potential river crossing is a topic that needs to be addressed, and he endorsed its inclusion in the corridor study.

Upon a motion by Mr. Birch, seconded by Ms. Bynum-King, with all members in support, the Committee recommends to the MPO Council that the Delmar Bi-State Boulevard Corridor and the Mill Street/Riverside Drive Corridor (expanded to include Riverside Drive from downtown Salisbury to the MPO Study Area Boundary) be approved for funding using FY 2007 funds and additional funding, as needed, in the FY 2008 UPWP. In addition, the Committee recommends that the Council include the feasibility of an additional river crossing as part of the Mill Street/Riverside Drive Corridor Study.

Bylaws Discussion

Mr. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to report on this item.

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.

However, there were a number of minor changes proposed that are more "housekeeping" in nature, and Mr. Pusey briefly summarized those. 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.

Mr. Pennington suggested that the process be spelled out clearly in the Bylaws that the Council would appoint members annually, and at the discretion of the Council, it was not necessary that all the departments/organizations be represented. Mr. Pusey agreed with this suggestion.

Mr. Thompson pointed out the wording on page 4 in the paragraphs referring to the UPWP and the TIP. He stated the wording about various agencies funding in the UPWP was confusing and that the time frame of the TIP being approved in May or June should be changed. Mr. Nixon agreed that the time frame should be deleted, and that the Bylaws just refer to the TIP being approved “annually.” Mr. Pennington added that this wording should be consistent with that on page 7 that addresses the Council’s approval of these documents.

There were no further suggestions, and upon a motion by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Birch, the Committee forwarded a favorable recommendation to the MPO Council to approve the revised Bylaws with the revisions that were raised. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Discussion of MPO Boundary in Delaware

Mr. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to report on this item.

Mr. Pusey stated that Greg Oliver from the Delaware Department of Transportation had raised an issue that needed to be addressed. Mr. Oliver was unable to make today’s meeting, however.

Discussion ensued as to the letter signed by Governor Minner, and it was the consensus of the Committee that this topic be brought back at the Committee’s May meeting. In the meantime, both Mr. Kautz and Mr. Pusey stated they would discuss this issue further with Mr. Oliver. No action was necessary by the Committee at this time.

Other Business

No other new business was raised.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is scheduled for May 9, 2007 at 1 p.m. Mr. Pusey stated he will send out reminders and all relevant meeting materials prior to the meeting.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mr. Nixon, seconded by Ms. Gordy, with all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.