

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
March 30th, 2005**

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

Attendees:

TAC Members:

John Redden, Chair, Wicomico County Public Works
Ray Birch, Vice Chair, City of Salisbury Public Works
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation

Others:

Jack Lenox, Director, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Gary Pusey, SW/MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning
Riggin Johnson, Shore Transit
Ron Spalding, Maryland Department of Transportation
Jim Thompson, Maryland State Highway Administration

Discussion

Mr. Lenox opened the meeting at 1:10 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Members and other attendees introduced themselves.

Organizational Issues

Mr. Lenox stated that at the last meeting of the Technical Committee, there was a discussion concerning the designation of a Chair and Vice Chair, as required by the Bylaws, and interest has been expressed by Mr. Redden to be Chair and Mr. Birch to be Vice Chair. As a result, a motion was made by Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Nixon, with the motion unanimously carried, to appoint Mr. Redden, Chair, and Mr. Birch, Vice Chair.

The meeting was handed over to Mr. Redden as Chair.

Mr. Redden introduced the next item on the agenda, which were the minutes of the Committee's March 9, 2005, meeting. Vice Chair Birch moved to approve the March 9, 2005 meeting minutes. Ms. Gordy seconded the motion. All Committee members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

MPO Update – Shore Transit & Designation of MPO Boundary

Mr. Redden asked Mr. Pusey to address this item. As background, Mr. Pusey stated that Shore Transit representatives had presented information to the Committee at its March 9,

2005 meeting concerning its proposed budget for FY 2006. Shore Transit is anticipating a revenue shortfall for the upcoming fiscal year, and the MPO Council referred this matter to the Committee for recommendations on how the budget issues could be resolved. The Committee made recommendations at its March 9, 2005 meeting, and Shore Transit officials considered these recommendations and presented to the MPO Council a strategy for balancing its FY 2006 budget. This presentation was made to the Council on March 21, 2005, at which time the Council forwarded a favorable recommendation to the Tri-County Council supporting the strategies proposed by Shore Transit to balance its budget. Mr. Pusey informed the Committee that Shore Transit's strategy complied with the Committee's recommendations, in particular by proposing reductions through hours of operation that did not result in the elimination of any routes. Shore Transit is also going to pursue additional revenue sources by investigating partnering with local businesses and organizations and seeking municipal funding. Both of these potential sources of new revenue were also recommended by the Committee. Mr. Johnson stated that public feedback received since Shore Transit's proposals became publicized has generally been supportive, especially since no routes were proposed to be cut. This item was included on the agenda for informational purposes only; no action is required by the Committee.

Also at the March 21, 2005 meeting, the Council adopted the boundaries for the MPO. Mr. Pusey displayed a map showing the Urbanized Area, designated as a result of the 2000 Census, with the Metro Core boundary superimposed. The Metro Core boundary designates that area identified for future growth in the City of Salisbury and Wicomico County's Master Plans. The MPO boundary adopted by the Council is the outermost limits of both the Urbanized Area and the Metro Core.

Mr. Thompson questioned the boundary, and suggested that, for planning purposes, the boundary should perhaps extend outward for a greater distance. Much discussion followed. It was noted that the area outside of the MPO boundary is severely restricted for development purposes by Wicomico County's zoning regulations, and there is currently much vacant land within the boundary to accommodate future development. In response to a question from Mr. Lenox, Mr. Spalding and Mr. Nixon stated that the boundary can be amended at any time if the Council determines it's warranted. This item was included on the agenda for informational purposes only; no action is required by the Committee.

Long Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Lenox opened the discussion on this item. The Long Range Transportation Plan must be completed by October 1, 2005 in order to meet federal funding requirements. Staff is in the process of reviewing each jurisdiction's plan in the SW/MPO, especially the transportation element of these plans, and will merge these elements into one document. Staff will then compare what information is already available from these existing documents with what the federal regulations require for the plan. At that point an assessment can be made as to which federal requirements may need to be completed with the help of a consultant.

In addition to the projects contained in existing plans, Mr. Lenox asked Mr. Birch about the status of a Comprehensive Traffic Study that the City of Salisbury was considering undertaking. Mr. Birch stated the Study had been discussed during the budget process the last two years but had never been funded. There was agreement that this is the type of project that should be coordinated with the MPO. At the end of the discussion of this item, Mr. Lenox left at 2 p.m. to attend another meeting.

Mr. Nixon stated that Md. DOT was in the process of completing a trend analysis that would be useful for the financial plan component of the Long Range Plan, and he would provide that to Mr. Pusey as soon as it was available.

Mr. Thompson asked for input from the Committee as to which functional classification system the Plan should use. There was agreement that the Federal classification system should be used, and the focus of the Plan's recommendations should be limited to those roadways at the Rural Major Collector/Urban Minor Arterial level and above. Mr. Thompson suggested that Mr. Pusey obtain the most current map that contains the updated classification of the area's roadways.

Other suggestions made were to obtain traffic count data from SHA and to check with the local district office to see what data they may have available as a result of projects they've been involved with; contact Shore Transit for data they may be able to share; and begin to collect data pertaining to the amount of construction funds the local jurisdictions have spent on transportation projects in the past. Mr. Thompson also suggested that Mr. Pusey include the projects contained in the Highway Needs Inventory prepared by SHA in the list of all projects proposed for the MPO.

In summary, Mr. Pusey stated that he would begin collecting the data suggested by the Committee members for inclusion in the Long Range Plan.

Additional Items – Discussion of Alternates

Members discussed the need to designate alternates in the event a regular member cannot attend. It was agreed that regular members can designate an alternate to attend future meetings who is authorized to participate and vote on any issues discussed. The members agreed to notify Mr. Pusey with the name of the designated alternates.

Next meeting agenda items include:

- Discussion of next steps for the Long Range Transportation Plan

Next meeting is scheduled for **April 27, 2005 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.** at the same location.

Meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.