

## **Meeting Minutes**

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

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

#### **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, MD and DE  
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning  
Richard Kautz, Sussex Co. (Del.) Planning Dept.  
Jim Magill, Salisbury-Wicomico Planning Commission  
John F. McDonnell, City of Fruitland  
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation  
Mike Pennington, Tri-County Council  
Gary Pusey, S/W MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning

##### Others:

Taisha Clemons, Federal Highway Administration  
Mark Glaze, Delaware Department of Transportation

#### **Introduction**

Mr. Redden opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone. It was noted that a quorum was present.

#### **Minutes**

Mr. Redden introduced the first item on the agenda, which were the minutes of the Committee's July 11, 2007 meeting.

Mr. Birch moved to approve the July 11, 2007 meeting minutes, and Ms. Gordy seconded the motion. All Committee members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

#### **Public Participation Plan - Discussion**

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

Mr. Pusey first handed out an updated version of the Plan, which included the page numbers corresponding to the Table of Contents. He stated that federal regulations require that MPOs prepare and adopt a Public Participation Plan (PPP) and this is the first draft of the Plan. The Committee's role is to review and make comments on the Plan, and eventually forward a recommendation to the MPO Council, which is the approving body. He stated that comments have already been submitted from Ms. Clemons at Federal Highway, and these comments will need to be addressed before any recommendation is sent to the Council. One of Ms. Clemons' comments concerned input provided by "interested parties" in the development of the Plan. Mr. Pusey stated that interested parties need to be identified, and the draft plan will be submitted to them for review and comment. He anticipates bringing the draft Plan back to the Committee at the next meeting in January, after all comments have been received and addressed.

Mr. Pusey briefly went through the Plan, explaining the documents that would be subject to the notice requirements of the Plan. These include the Unified Planning Work Program, the Transportation Improvement Program and the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Other documents may also be subject to the PPP's requirements, as determined by the Council. The specific processes that would be followed for each of these documents are described in the last two pages of the Plan. He noted that the soon-to-be-live MPO Webpage and the media will play major roles in disseminating information to the public and attempting to encourage public participation.

In addition, he noted that a second aspect of the PPP is to raise the visibility in the community and, as a result, encourage citizen participation in the transportation planning process. Methods to accomplish this goal include developing a brochure explaining what the MPO is and what it does and making this brochure available at locations throughout the area and attending and participating at meetings of other local agencies. Ms. Gordy suggested having informational booths at various meeting such as the Maryland Association of Counties and the Maryland Municipal League, among others.

Ms. Gordy also questioned why the Corridor Studies would not be subject to the requirements of the PPP. Mr. Pusey stated that he viewed the Corridor Studies differently than the other types of plans that the MPO does, as the Corridor Studies are more technical in nature and require a specific expertise in transportation planning on the part of the consultant. The other plans focus more on process and are more "planning based," where citizen participation would be much more appropriate.

Mr. Pusey summarized by stating that the citizen involvement portion of the development of the PPP needs to be addressed, and as a result, he does not recommend that the Technical Committee forward any recommendation to the Council at this time. The draft Plan will be brought back to the Committee after all concerns have been addressed, and this should be for the January meeting.

No action was taken by the Committee on this item at this time.

## **FY 2008-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Recommendation**

Mr. Nixon reported on this item. Mr. Pusey handed out the proposed FY 2008-2010 TIP, which includes seven general SHA categories and two transit categories. Mr. Nixon went through each of the nine total project categories and explained that these categories cover projects planned to be completed within the MPO Area during the next three fiscal years. The categories included Environmental Projects; Safety and Spot Improvements; Resurface and Rehabilitate; Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation; Urban Street Reconstruction and Revitalization; Congestion Management; Northeast Collector Trail – Phase II; Small Urban Transit System (capital assistance for Shore Transit); and Small Urban Transit System (operating and maintenance assistance for Shore Transit).

Mr. Redden asked if a traffic light at Route 50 Business West at the intersection of Naylor Mill Road and the proposed Westside Collector was included in this document. Mr. Nixon responded that he didn't see this particular project specifically listed, but he would check to verify what the status of this was.

Mr. Birch asked if the bridge on Maryland Route 12 at the City Park was maintained by the State. Mr. Birch stated this bridge was located beyond the "Limits of State Maintenance" but he was not sure if there was an MOU that delegated the bridge's maintenance to the State. Some discussion ensued, and it was assumed that the bridge was the responsibility of the City of Salisbury, but Mr. Nixon said he would verify this.

Mr. Redden and Mr. Pennington questioned the absence of funding for Shore Transit's permanent facility in the TIP. Mr. Pennington stated a final site has not been selected, but it was his understanding that funding had been allocated for the purchase of land, but he was uncertain as to the status of funding to be allocated for the actual construction of the facility. Mr. Nixon stated he would check with MTA to determine this project's status as well.

Mr. Nixon stated he would find out the status of these three projects and would let Mr. Pusey know, and Mr. Pusey could contact the other Technical Committee members and give them this information.

Upon a motion by Mr. Birch, seconded by Mr. Magill, the Technical Committee unanimously forwarded a favorable recommendation to the MPO Council to approve the proposed FY 2008-2010 TIP, subject to clarification of the three projects referenced above.

## **Update on Corridor Studies**

Mr. Pusey provided an update on the Corridor Studies. He stated that on Friday, Nov. 16, several members of the Technical Committee will be meeting with The Traffic Group, Inc., to discuss the status of the South Division Street/Beaglin Park Drive Corridor Study. The Traffic Group will be presenting their preliminary findings at that meeting, and Mr. Pusey stated it may be possible that a presentation to the full Technical Committee may

be made at the next meeting in January. A time frame for the remaining two studies will be discussed with The Traffic Group at the Friday meeting as well.

Discussion ensued about the impacts that the relocation of Bennett Middle School will have on the South Division Street study. It was noted that a final location had not been selected but that the Fruitland area is being targeted, which would impact any recommendations of this study. Mr. McDonnell noted that conversations he has had with Board of Education officials indicated that a final selection would not be announced until September of 2008 and school construction would not be completed until 2014.

In response to a question from Ms. Gordy, Mr. Pusey stated that the results of the various corridor studies are used in particular when new development proposals are submitted and the City and County can negotiate with a developer as to the type of road improvements that are needed. Mr. Birch added that this is being done with Parsons Road as a result of the Pemberton Drive study's recommendations. Mr. Birch also added that the studies' recommendations are being used to develop the City of Salisbury's Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Pusey stated that a secondary use of the studies will be to help determine the appropriateness of certain land uses when the County revises its Comprehensive Plan in the next two years.

No action was required for this item.

### **Discussion and Recommendation – Membership of Technical Committee**

Mr. Pusey stated that Mr. Greg Oliver from DelDOT had raised an issue with him that the MPO's Bylaws should be amended to include DelDOT as a non-voting ex officio member of the MPO's Technical Committee. Mr. Pusey handed out an excerpt from the Bylaws and noted that the current wording is unclear, as it now states that Ex Officio members are "Federal Highway Administration," "Federal Transit Administration," "State Highway Administration" and "Maryland Transit Administration." "State Highway Administration" appears to refer to Maryland's agency and leaves out DelDOT. Mr. Pusey recommended that wording be added so that "State Highway Administration" becomes "Maryland State Highway Administration" and "Delaware Department of Transportation" also be added as a new Ex Officio member.

After discussion, Ms. Gordy made a motion to recommend to the MPO Council that the Bylaws be amended so that the Ex Officio membership of the Technical Committee be changed so that "State Highway Administration" becomes "Maryland State Highway Administration" and "Delaware Department of Transportation" also be added as a new Ex Officio member. Mr. Kautz seconded the motion and the motion was carried unanimously.

### **Other Business**

Mr. Nixon stated that he had two items to discuss. First, with the new membership on the MPO Council and the increase in the voting members of the Technical Committee, he

thought it may be beneficial to have a representative from FHWA present a half-day course on all aspects of MPOs. Mr. Nixon stated this was done in Hagerstown a couple years ago and he and Mr. Pusey attended that one and both thought it would be helpful here as well. He was looking at a January time frame for this. Ms. Clemons stated she would be glad to work with Mr. Nixon and look into this as well.

The second item concerned one pending SAFETEA-LU requirement that has not yet been met, which was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the local public transit provider (Shore Transit) and the MPO. He stated he had a model MOU that he's working on and will modify to fit our purposes. He further stated he would be in contact with Mr. Pusey and Mr. Pennington in the near future to discuss this in more detail.

Mr. Pennington raised an issue for the Committee to consider. He stated that ridership at Shore Transit has become flat and may have peaked, despite the recent rise in gasoline prices, which runs counter to what they would have expected. He stated that he thinks they do a good job of knowing who their customers are, but they need to find who they aren't serving and what they can do to provide service to these people, and whether they need to increase their marketing efforts, or provide different routes, etc. A great deal of discussion ensued, and Mr. Nixon stated he would see what resources are available at MDOT that may provide some assistance.

No action was required for these items.

### **Next Meeting Date/Adjourn**

The next meeting date is scheduled for January 9, 2008 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 Ms. Gordy, seconded by Mr. Birch, with all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.