

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
September 9th, 2009**

**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
Ian Beam, Maryland Department of Transportation
Keith Lackie, Maryland Department of Planning
Julie Wheatley, Sussex County
Jeff Downes, Salisbury University
Riggin Johnson, Tri-County Council
Jim Magill, Salisbury/Wicomico Planning Commission
Sara Bynum-King, Town of Delmar
Gary Pusey, S/W MPO staff, City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Planning

Others:

Mark Glaze, Delaware Department of Transportation
Betty Tustin, The Traffic Group, Inc.
Derek Joost, The Traffic Group, Inc.
Rob Hyman, Cambridge Systematics

Introduction

Chairman Redden opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions of all attendees were made.

Minutes

Chairman Redden introduced the first item on the agenda, which were the minutes of the Committee's May 13, 2009 meeting. Mr. Magill moved to approve the meeting minutes, and Mr. Birch seconded the motion. All Committee members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed.

Presentation by The Traffic Group, Inc., - Route 13 North Corridor Study

Mr. Redden asked Ms. Tustin and Mr. Joost to present this item.

With the assistance of Mr. Joost, Ms. Tustin presented a Powerpoint display showing the study area with the intersections that were analyzed. Data was provided for current traffic counts during peak hours, which she stated was for April 2008, and projections were made for the years 2010, 2020 and 2030 based on anticipated future development in the area. The future development data was provided by the Planning Department and consisted of known and anticipated development based on zoning and development plans submitted as provided by the Town of Delmar, Sussex County, and for the City of Salisbury and Wicomico County.

In response to a question, Ms. Tustin stated that the traffic counts were taken in April of 2008, when the Saturn dealership was still open.

A total of six intersections were studied in detail, including U.S. Route 13 and Connelly Mill Road/Winner Road; U.S. Route 13 and Foskey Lane; U.S. Route 13 and Route 54; Bi-State Boulevard and Route 54; Bi-State Boulevard and Foskey Lane; and Bi-State Boulevard and Connelly Mill Road. Currently, with the exceptions of the Bi-State Boulevard/Foskey Lane and U.S. Route 13/Foskey Lane intersections, all other intersections are operating at an acceptable Level of Service. These two intersections are experiencing significant delays during peak hours, with a traffic signal likely needed soon at the Bi-State Boulevard/Foskey Lane intersection.

For 2010, taking into account anticipated development expected to occur, it is likely that both the Bi-State Boulevard/Foskey Lane and U.S. Route 13/Foskey Lane intersections will need traffic signals.

For 2020, significant improvements are recommended for each of the six intersections, including adding new thru and turn lanes, extending turn lanes and adding signalization. Similarly, for 2030, additional improvements are recommended, consisting primarily of adding thru lanes. With all of the recommended improvements being implemented, each road's intersection would not be worse than an LOS of "D."

In response to a question, Ms. Tustin stated no traffic light was recommended for the U.S. 13/Foskey Lane intersection currently due to traffic turning being relatively light, even though significant delays were occurring. A signal was being recommended for future years, however.

Mr. Magill questioned the cost of a roundabout versus signalization, especially in regards to the Bi-State Boulevard/Foskey Lane intersection. Ms. Tustin responded that the cost of a roundabout at Bateman Street/South Division Street was estimated at \$1.7 million as opposed to \$200,000 for signalization, but for the Bi-State Boulevard/Foskey Lane intersection a roundabout could cost four times as much as signalization.

After further discussion, the Technical Committee thanked Ms. Tustin and Mr. Joost for their presentation. No action was necessary for this item.

Discussion – Update of Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Chairman Redden welcomed Mr. Hyman from Cambridge Systematics to the meeting. Mr. Pusey stated that Cambridge Systematics was being retained to update the MPO's LRTP, which is required to be adopted by October 1, 2010. He noted that the MPO is on a 4-year approval cycle, with the current Plan being adopted in October of 2006. He further stated that Cambridge Systematics was the consultant who prepared the 2006 Plan.

Mr. Hyman stated that this was an introductory meeting in an attempt to find out from the Technical Committee members what topics may need to be included in the revised Plan that perhaps weren't now included. My Hyman stated he had already met with Mr. Beam, Mr. Pusey and Mr. Lenox before this meeting to get some ideas from them.

A lengthy discussion followed about some of the recent developments that have been approved or are perhaps pending. In particular, the expansion of the Wallops facility was discussed and the impacts on various modes of transportation that this facility would have on the area. Mr. Magill mentioned that an increased emphasis on bicycle facilities should be included. It was noted that there are a number of Comprehensive Plans now being revised by the local jurisdictions, including Wicomico County, the Cities of Salisbury and Fruitland, and the Town of Delmar, that should be of help when updating the MPO Plan. Also, the various corridor studies that the MPO has undertaken will provide not only traffic data but also recommended roadway improvements for the area.

Mr. Hyman stated that this was a good first step, and that Committee members should provide their ideas to Mr. Pusey, who will in turn provide them to Mr. Hyman for consideration during the Plan's update.

No action was necessary by the Committee for this item.

FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Recommendation to MPO Council

Chairman Redden asked Mr. Beam to report on this item.

Mr. Beam 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 four fiscal years. The categories included Environmental Projects (consisting of aesthetic improvements such as tree removal); Safety and Spot Improvements (localized improvements such as paving and signalization to address safety issues on State highways); Resurface and Rehabilitate (including the repaving of U.S. 13 from Bridgeview Street to Zion Road); Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation; Urban Street Reconstruction and Revitalization; Congestion Management; Northeast Collector Road Phase II Bikepath (from Old Ocean City Road to U.S. 50); Small Urban Transit System (capital assistance for Shore Transit); and Small Urban Transit System (operating and maintenance assistance for Shore Transit).

In response to Mr. Magill's question, Mr. Beam noted that State Highway, in many cases, had not identified the proposed projects on the information sheets provided. He stated that he would consult with State Highway representatives to determine what these projects are, and that he would have this information in time for the MPO Council meeting later this month. [NOTE: Mr. Beam subsequently spoke with SHA, and he was informed that specific projects have not yet been identified for the MPO region. The dollar amounts are placeholders and are SHA's best guess at this time, but future funding amounts are uncertain due to the State's budget crisis.]

Upon a motion by Mr. Birch, seconded by Mr. Magill, the Committee voted unanimously to forward a favorable recommendation to the MPO Council to adopt the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program as presented.

Other Business

There was no other business to report, and no action was necessary for this item.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Mr. Pusey stated that the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee is scheduled for November 11, 2009, but that is Veterans Day when most offices will be closed. Mr. Pusey stated that, as the date draws near, he would poll the members to see what alternate date would work best for most of the members. The Committee members agreed with this approach.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mr. Magill, seconded by Mr. Birch, with all members voting in favor, the meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.