



# Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 383, Dover, Delaware 19903

(302) 387-6030 FAX: (302) 387-6032

<http://doverkentmpo.org>

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## DOVER/KENT MPO COUNCIL - MINUTES OF JULY 6, 2011

### Dover/Kent MPO Council Members and /or Representatives thereof attending:

Carleton E. Carey, Sr., Mayor, City of Dover, Chairman  
Brad Eaby, for Brooks Banta, President, Kent County Levy Court  
Ken Potts for Stephen Kingsberry, Director, Delaware Transit Corporation  
Ralph Reeb for Cleon Cauley, for Shailen Bhatt, Secretary, Delaware Dept. of Transportation

### Members not attending:

Eliz. Olsen, Dep. Dir., Safety & Homeland Security, for Governor Jack Markell, State of Delaware  
Justin King, for Richard Maly, Mayor, Town of Camden, for Kent County Municipalities  
Letitia A. Thompson, Regional Administrator, Region III, Federal Transit Admin. (FTA)  
Hassan Raza, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Admin. (FHWA)

### Non-members attending:

Don Tinari, Town of Cheswold  
Juanita Wieczoreck, MPO Staff  
Kate Layton, MPO Staff  
Ben Johnson, MPO Staff  
Catherine Samardza, MPO Staff

Richard Vetter  
James Galvin, MPO Staff  
Arthur Wicks, MPO Staff  
Michael Tholstrup, MPO Staff

1. Introduction of Members & Guests
2. Public Comments
3. **ACTION ITEM: Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Eaby noted that the date of the minutes on the agenda was incorrect, and should be amended to read May 4.

MOTION By Mr. Eaby to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Mr. Potts. Motion carried.

4. **ACTION ITEM: Approval of Minutes/ May 4, 2011**

MOTION By Mr. Eaby to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Potts. Motion carried.

5. **ACTION ITEM: Notice and Approval of Executive Session of the MPO Council – Closed Session to review Executive Director Candidates**

MOTION By Mr. Eaby to adjourn for Executive Session. Seconded by Mr. Potts. Motion carried.

### **ADJOURN PUBLIC MEETING – CLOSED SESSION – ASSEMBLE FOR NEW PUBLIC MEETING**

1. **ACTION ITEM: Approval of Executive Session Recommendations: New Executive Director – J. Wieczoreck**

MOTION By Mr. Eaby to accept the Executive Committee recommendation and appoint Richard K. Vetter as Executive Director of the Dover/Kent County MPO with salary and benefits as recommended by the Executive Committee. Seconded by Mr. Potts. Motion carried.

2. **ACTION ITEM: Draft Population and Household Estimates – J. Galvin**

Mr. Galvin reviewed the draft population estimates. He and the Data and Demographics Committee are now working on the employment estimates. Mr. Galvin displayed maps illustrating the TAZs. Mr. Johnson explained the methodology and answered questions from the Council to clarify the process.



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Mr. Reeb had questions regarding growth near Cheswold, Milford and Farmington. Mr. Galvin responded that the area around Farmington is expected to grow. Harrington is placing sewer lines, so is also expected to expand. He explained that most growth is expected to take place in the County growth zone, but there are some exceptions.

There was discussion concerning the population projections and how they were estimated out to 2040. Mr. Reeb said he was comfortable with the process and the projections.

**MOTION** By Mr. Reeb to approve the population figures for adoption for the purposes of modeling by DelDOT for the MPO. Seconded by Mr. Eaby. Motion carried.

### **3. UPDATE: Connector from DE 8 to Hazletville Road – Ralph Reeb for Cleon Cauley, DelDOT**

Mr. Reeb reported that a project was added to CTP/TIP. A connector road from DE8 to Hazletville Road will be built. Preliminary engineering is set to start FY2015, \$250,000 is set aside for the project. Another \$750,000 is budgeted for right-of-way in FY2014, and \$3.5M for construction in FY2012. He said that he would have a better idea of the actual cost as the project gets closer. Ms. Wiczoreck reported that MPO staff will present a TIP amendment for this project. Mr. Eaby asked where the connector road would be located; Ms. Wiczoreck said it would run parallel with Artis Drive near the new Dover High School. Mr. Galvin explained the concern was that construction of the new school could pose traffic problems by the Cannon Mills subdivision and other area. The City of Dover has been advocating for the connector road. Mayor Carey pointed out that the school is supposed to be occupied by 2014, but the road will not be completed until 2015. Mr. Reeb suggested that this was something the school district could ask the MPO to take on.

### **4. Sub-committee Reports: J. Galvin**

#### **4.1 ACTION ITEM: Data and Demographics Sub-committee Structure and Quorum**

Mr. Galvin reported that the members of the D&D sub-committee had been identified as Dover, Harrington, Cheswold, Smyrna, Milford, Kent County and the State of Delaware. To date, only 3 representatives had been attending on a regular basis. There were concerns regarding the quorum. Mr. Galvin discussed the issue with the sub-committee, and then it was brought to the TAC and PAC to get their input. The sub-committee suggestion was for a quorum of three. TAC members felt that this would not provide any incentive to sub-committee members to participate, and asked that the quorum be set at four.

There was discussion concerning the sub-committee, the frequency of its meetings and the membership. Mr. Galvin reported that although the sub-committee has six voting members, there have been no problems with actions needing a “tie-breaker.” Mary Ellen Gray, Kent County Planning, chairs the sub-committee.

Council members discussed the issue. Ms. Wiczoreck noted that this sub-committee is the genesis of numbers for travel demand and air quality analysis. There could possibly be legal concerns regarding the process. Mr. Galvin reported that the County code includes a citation that the MPO’s projections determine whether or not a traffic analysis is required for an area; this traffic analysis could become a legal issue.

Mr. Reeb asked how many of the members were not public employees; Mr. Galvin reported that only Mr. Tinari of Cheswold was not a public employee. Mr. Reeb said that a quorum of four would be understandable and logical, and made allowance for illness or vacation.

Ms. Wiczoreck noted that Council action would establish the quorum and the membership of the subcommittee. She suggested that once Council took action, Mayor Carey (as chair) should draft a letter to municipal mayors and others who direct staff to attend these meetings, to let them know that attendance and participation is important.

**MOTION** By Mr. Reeb to approve the structure of the Data and Demographics Sub-committee with the above-mentioned membership and a quorum of four. Seconded by Mr. Eaby. Motion carried.

#### **4.2 UPDATE: Project Priority Working Group**

Mr. Galvin reported that the working group is reviewing the process used in the past and analyzing suggestions for changing the process. One suggestion is to identify a problem instead of a project. For example, if there are problems



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travelling in a certain area, start with the problem description. The group is developing a three-step project: 1) identification (request of ideas and what the problem is); 2) initial review and project impact analysis (take a look at NEPA planning process and do an initial scan of the problem and consider safety; 3) quick analysis of traffic and comparison with growth zone and Complete Streets policy. Ultimately, it would then go to the MPO committees and Council for prioritization. The working group is still working out how that process would work. The difference would be to have data available on each problem, including an environmental and condition scan. Mr. Galvin reported that he expects the working group will meet two or three more times and then bring the draft process through MPO channels.

### **5. Municipalities Report – Mayor Carey**

Mayor Carey reported that the City will be realigning the sewer main along Division Street from Kirkwood Street to Kings Highway. Division Street will be closed from July 9-17, 2011. They are working to eliminate cracks and disfigurements in the sewer main to extend the life of the system. This will be a 24-hour operation. He also reported that the outside lane of Route 13, from Kings Highway to North State Street, will be under construction to install a new 12-inch water line. The project has been ongoing for just under a month and is projected for 180 working days. Construction is being done at night due to traffic.

Mayor Carey announced that the City received an award from the public power association for the sun park at Garrison Tract. The park is the largest sun park on the east coast. The award ceremony was held in Washington, DC.

Mayor Carey also noted that the City received a federal grant to install three more security cameras in downtown Dover and that City Council approved the budget.

### **6. TAC Report – J. Wieczorek – no outstanding issues**

### **7. PAC Report – K. Layton – no outstanding issues**

### **8. Project Update:**

#### **8.1 Public Outreach – K. Layton**

#### **8.2 Public Education – K. Layton**

#### **8.3 Transportation Studies**

- Dover Transit Center Neighborhood Plan and Design Guidelines – J. Galvin

- Cheswold Town Center – J. Wieczorek

#### **8.4 Regional Bicycle Plan – J. Wieczorek**

Staff reported that Ms. Layton has been editing the Neighborhood Plan for printing. When finished it will also be posted on the MPO web page. It is already posted on the Downtown Dover Partnership website. The MPO has submitted an application to FHWA for a TCSP grant to support the Neighborhood Plan. The application project is a traffic analysis for south Dover and a storm water analysis. One plan for the area includes an open civic center.

Mr. Galvin reported that he is working with the census to create TAZs. These TAZs are not the same as the TAZs used in DelDOT's modeling. The Census criteria for these new TAZs require a minimum of 600 people. Mr. Galvin is using the existing TAZs as a basis for the new ones. The Census TAZs will be aggregated into Traffic Analysis Districts (TADs) of 20,000 people and used to collect data using the American Community Survey.

There was some discussion concerning the Census project. Mr. Galvin felt it was important that the MPO be involved in this project, to assure that the information gathered would relate to the model TAZs and be useful to Delaware.

Ms. Wieczorek reported that the MPO was working with Cheswold on a Town Center plan. Cheswold is looking for a plan that respects the town, airport and the highway system for transit-oriented development and redefines the center of town. However, the town has financial problems and has declined to move ahead with the project.

The draft Regional Bicycle Plan is finished, but some pagination issues have occurred and must be resolved before it can be released. MPO intern Arthur Wicks has developed the maps for the Plan using Google Maps.

Mr. Potts gave an update on the Delmarva intercity passenger rail study. It has been agreed that the study will look at one



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or two trips per day, and connect to New Castle County. The Technical Advisory Committee will begin meeting on July 8, 2011 and work on developing what the study should be. Guidelines include limited frequency to avoid excessive infrastructure requirement. It would benefit Kent County in a number of ways, including access to the northeast corridor service and serve conventions and trade shows in Dover. DTC intends to reach out to economic development people. Mr. Potts noted that rail systems figure into air quality mitigation, and this project will benefit Delaware if a reasonably priced proposal can be developed. DTC expects that the TAC will meet on a quarterly basis, and that some public outreach will be done.

### **9. Executive Director's Report**

#### **9.1 UPWP and Financial Reports**

#### **9.2 Correspondence**

Ms. Wieczorek announced that a completion report would be available at the September meeting, which is also the annual meeting. She reported that the MPO received FTA and FHWA approval for the UPWP. She noted that there were some issues with DelDOT regarding the UPWP, and she will be meeting with DelDOT staff to discuss those issues and changes that were requested.

Ms. Wieczorek reported that the MPO received a letter from DelDOT regarding the financial allocation. The amount is more than expected, but some match is still needed. She also said that there was FY2011 money to carry over to FY2012 programs. Mr. Reeb cautioned that if the "numbers are too good to be true, it's worth looking into." Ms. Wieczorek said she would double-check the figures.

There was discussion regarding the reauthorization of the federal Transportation Bill. Of concern to the MPO is the draft FHWA bill that proposes MPOs under 200,000 be eliminated, unless the governor of that state determined they should be maintained. Options to keep them would be to combine them with other MPOs in the same state. Ms. Wieczorek was not sure how large a threat this would be to the D/KC MPO, but it should be watched. She felt that if Council felt strongly that the MPO should continue as a separate entity, they should contact their national organizations (such as the National League of Cities) and let them know. She mentioned the NLC because in the last reauthorization, the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) worked with NLC and other, similar, groups because the MPOs represent those entities in addition to the states. She also noted that she did not know how serious this FHWA suggestion is. She reported that AASHTO had agreed to raise the threshold for new MPOs to 100,000, and that existing MPOs would be "grandfathered" in and able to receive federal funds. She also heard that the criteria should be a 200,000 population, and still "grandfather" existing MPOs.

Mr. Reeb said that no one knew where this was headed. Logic behind the 200,000 is for congestion mitigation (air quality). For 17 years small MPOs have been part and parcel to the process around the country. Rather than undo all that, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." He noted that there were some "boom" towns emerging with populations of 50,000. No one wanted to create an MPO for that population, and have it disappear. He felt that it was easy for Delaware's congressional delegation to get a good sense of what was happening. He suggested contacting Beth Osborne in Senator Carper's office to better understand what is being proposed. Ms. Wieczorek reminded everyone that the MPO exists by an agreement between the MPO Council and the governor.

Ms. Wieczorek thanked everyone for the nice retirement reception given for her. Mayor Carey congratulated her on her years of service and wished her well to enjoy her retirement. Ms. Wieczorek said that the support of the Council makes the MPO strong, and thanked the members for their support.

Mayor Carey then congratulated the new Executive Director, Richard Vetter.

### **Next Meeting: September 7, 2011 – Camden Town Council Chambers**

**MOTION** By Mr. Eaby to adjourn the meeting at 4:46 PM. Seconded by Mr. Potts. Motion carried.