



Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 383, Dover, Delaware 19903
<http://www.doverkentmpo.org>

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

Data and Demographics Sub-committee Minutes of Wednesday, December 15, 2010

Members attending:

James Galvin, MPO Staff
Janelle Cornwell, City of Dover
David Edgell, OSPC

Michael DuRoss, DelDOT Planning
Mary Ellen Gray, Kent County Planning
Theon Callender, Town of Cheswold

Members not attending:

Ben Johnson, MPO Staff
Dave Hugg, Town of Smyrna

Gary Norris, City of Milford

Non-members attending:

Catherine Samardza, MPO Staff

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM in the King Meeting Room in Camden's Town Hall.

Mr. Galvin distributed revised agendas, noting that Items 2 and 3 had been left off the original agenda.

1. Introductions

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION By Mr. Edgell to accept the agenda as amended. Seconded by Ms. Callender.
Motion carried.

3. Approval of Minutes of 11-9-2010

Ms. Gray asked that the minutes be amended on page 3; she reported that there "has been," not "will be."

MOTION By Mr. Edgell to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Ms. Cornwell.
Motion carried.

4. Update on new data (from Cheswold, Milford and Kent County)

Mr. Galvin distributed materials with data from Cheswold, Milford and Kent County. He noted that the Milford data would be reviewed with regards to what belongs in Kent County and what is in Sussex. It is a similar situation with Smyrna and Kent and New Castle counties. Bruce Allen of DelDOT Planning



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would be contacted regarding the Sussex County portions of Milford. Mr. Galvin did not believe there would be any significant change to the projections already completed.

There was discussion concerning Mr. Johnson's schedule and availability.

Ms. Gray said that the process was helpful for Kent County, as they are transitioning to electronic files with public access. It has helped with identifying data bases that are already available. Mr. Galvin added that most municipalities give the Office of State Planning and Coordination information, such as building permits and development approvals. It is the only data base in the State where the information is as accurate as possible. There are 57+ municipalities, all with different procedures.

There was a discussion concerning building permits by parcels, residential units, non-residential units and square footage of space. It was noted that data from the 2008/09 Annual report was analyzed, showing 10,000 permits in 2005, and 3,000 permits in 2009.

Mr. Edgell said that he will give the MPO the Shape files. He noted that in Kent County, more permits were approved in municipalities than the County (54%-46%); in Sussex County there were more permits approved in the County; and in New Castle County it was about equal.

Ms. Callender asked if Cheswold gave this information to Kent County or to OSPC; Mr. Edgell said that it goes directly to OSPC on a 6-month basis. He also said that while approvals were good information, building permits show action.

There was a discussion of "heat" maps – Dan Blevins at WILMAPCO creates these maps to show where activity is taking place.

5. Review of Process to develop TAZ

Mr. Edgell noted that the Census rolling survey does not compare "apples to apples" – there is a margin of error in the data. It will be next spring before the 2010 Census Data is available. Mr. DuRoss noted that, despite the recent News Journal cover story, the preliminary information will not be used for re-districting. The rolling surveys add a year and drop a year for a 5-year average, and the margins for error are high. Ms. Callender noted that the Cheswold zip code, 19936, is for Post Office boxes only; the majority of residents have a Dover address. Cheswold had concerns about getting an accurate count from the Census. Mr. Galvin said that the Census works within municipal boundaries. Ms. Callender still had questions, and Mr. Edgell said that Mike Mahaffie would be the person to ask. He would be able to find the right person to contact to challenge the numbers when they are published. Ms. Cornwell noted that the Census worked with the City of Dover and verified properties and addresses in the city. Mr. DuRoss added that he has a Dover Post Office Box number, but a Hartly address, and he received phone calls from Census takers to verify that.

Mr. Edgell suggested that Mike Mahaffie could host a training seminar for agencies about the Census



data, and how to use it.

6. Sub-Committee governance

Mr. Galvin reported that Ms. Wieczorek would like the Data and Demographics Committee to be a standing one, with consistent meetings. She did not expect a meeting every month, but at least several times a year. Mr. Galvin asked if the committee wanted to meet annually and elect officers, or have a volunteer chair person. He also asked what their expectations of the committee were and what kind of schedule it should have.

It was noted that the Delaware Population Consortium releases the data in October; the Committee must then take it to the TAZ and grid levels, probably beginning in November. Discussion concerning time frame and end date noted that WILMAPCO meets every month for 6 months, ending in June or July. Mr. Galvin said that meeting monthly for 6 months would help him keep on track. It was mentioned, though, that WILMAPCO has three times the population that the D/KC MPO area to deal with.

Mr. DuRoss discussed the Long Range Plan update cycle (recently changed to 4 years from 3) and how the modeling has been done by DeIDOT prior to the update to understand recent trends. DeIDOT has paid Ed Ratledge to do a Kent County survey prior to the modeling in 1996, 1999 and 2002. For the 2005 update, the MPO contracted with Mr. Ratledge for the survey. WILMAPCO does an annual update of the TAZ data, but DeIDOT is not up to one year updates for Kent County. They are currently aiming for an update every 2 years. It is also possible that with the federal Reauthorization in 2011, the update cycle may change again.

Mr. Edgell mentioned that in 2005/06 there was funding to pay Mr. Ratledge to model the school district enrollment as well. It was the only time all the information was modeled together. He felt that it needed to be updated. He would like to see an annual process for Kent County and Sussex to be part of a statewide piece. He asked if everyone thought that would be workable.

There was discussion concerning an annual process. Everyone felt it would be helpful. Mr. DuRoss felt it was a good idea as long as it did not over-burden the agencies involved. He reminded the Committee that WILMAPCO, responsible for New Castle County, has a planner working on this two days a week. Mr. Edgell felt that this could be a collaborative process, asking for the information every 7 months. He noted that OSPC was the agency working with all the information, but a statistical process was not as meaningful. Mr. DuRoss said that there is a good process in two counties; however, Sussex is another issue. Mr. Edgell felt that the two MPOs could come up with a step-by-step process, so someone could do this for Sussex as well. It would be comparing "apples to apples" every year.

There was some further discussion concerning the Population Consortium control totals and Sussex County data. There were questions concerning the portion of Sussex County in the Salisbury MPO and if Sussex would meet the MPO requirements any time soon. However, the 50,000 for a small MPO area was being changed to 100,000.



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Mr. Galvin asked if the D/KC MPO wanted to do as WILMAPCO does, or divide up the responsibility for the State. He felt that the committee should talk to Mr. Blevins. He had done State calculations, even though he only had to do New Castle County.

Mr. Edgell felt that it was reasonable to promote this – it was in everyone’s best interest for one set of numbers for everyone. He asked what steps needed to be taken to get where we need without everyone taking on a monumental task. Mr. Galvin thought that Delaware is a small enough state to get away with it, with a coordination of cooperative effort.

7. Questions/Comments

Mr. Edgell asked what the path forward was to update to 2011. Mr. Galvin felt that a meeting in April to discuss small area household population was reasonable. He felt the biggest effort would be employment.

Mr. Edgell asked if the method was analogous to what Mr. Blevins uses; Mr. Galvin said that the D/KC MPO’s method was a bit different. Mr. DuRoss noted that Mr. Blevins update did not include all projects, just a trend-based scenario. Mr. Galvin said that the process he is using is more intensive than a trend-based scenario. Since Kent County doesn’t have the population that New Castle does, he can get a good handle on the subdivision process.

There was discussion concerning the methodology and how it was similar and different to what Mr. Blevins uses for WILMAPCO. Comparison of trend-based and momentum models were discussed.

Mr. Galvin felt that the process he was using, with a preferred scenario taken from 4 different possibilities and using the Population Consortium totals as well as actual numbers from development, was a reasonable method to go forward with.

8. Next Steps/Meeting

Ms. Gray asked if the next step was employment information. Mr. Galvin said that population and housing would be assigned to modified grids and aggregated to TAZs, then the employment section.

Mr. Edgell asked to clarify, if Mr. Galvin was going down to the grid level then up to the TAZ. Ms. Gray asked which is smaller. Mr. DuRoss said that Delaware grids don’t match Census block groups, they have changed over the years. Mr. Edgell asked which was more useful to the D/KC MPO. Mr. DuRoss said that modified grids tend to be smaller and more uniform. Mr. Edgell asked if the grids were Delaware specific, and Mr. DuRoss said yes.

Mr. Edgell asked if the grids could be built to the school districts, which don’t match anything. Mr. DuRoss said it could be done by Census block and grid – both ways have grown separately over the years.



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Mr. DuRoss felt that April should be to look at Census Block data, to take the month and compare.

Mr. Galvin told the Committee that the D/KC MPO would be doing the Long Range Plan in-house, for a March 1012 completion.

There was a discussion concerning Mr. Ratledge and his retirement.

It was decided that the next meeting should be in late January, but the exact date would depend on Mr. Johnson's availability.

9. Adjourn

MOTION By Ms. Callender to adjourn the meeting at approximately noon. Seconded by Mr. Edgell.
Motion carried.