



Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 383, Dover, Delaware 19903

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

<http://doverkentmpo.org>

DOVER/KENT COUNTY MPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 10, 2014

Technical Advisory Committee Representatives attending:

Mary Ellen Gray, Kent County Planning (Chair)
Tim Riley, Kent Conservation District
Ann Marie Townshend, City of Dover, Planning & Insp.
Tremica Cherry for C.Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation
Aaron Chaffinch, Town of Camden

David Edgell, Office of State Planning (Vice-chair)
Valerie Gray, DNREC
Michael Kirkpatrick, DelDOT Planning
Marc Dixon, Federal Highway Administration

Technical Advisory Committee Representatives not attending:

Rick Crawford, Norfolk Southern
City of Milford
Dave Hugg, Town of Smyrna
Jennifer Vallee, Dover Air Force Base

Ryan Long, Federal Transit Admin.
Sharon Duca, City of Dover, Public Works
Joe Zilcosky, DE Economic Dev. Office
Milton Melendez, DE Dept. of Agriculture

Non-members attending:

Lee Derrickson, DE Motor Transport Association
Arshon Howard, DE State News
Matt Bittel, DE State News
Kate Layton, MPO Staff
Chris Kirby, MPO Staff

Rachel Yocum, DNREC (alternate)
Rich Graham, FHWA
Rich Vetter, MPO staff
James Galvin, MPO Staff
Catherine Samardza, MPO staff

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

MOTION By Ms. Townshend to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Riley. Motion carried.

- 4) ***ACTION ITEM: Approval of Minutes – October 8, 2014 (enclosure)***

MOTION By Mr. Kirkpatrick to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Riley. Motion carried with one abstention.

- 5) ***ACTION ITEM: FY 2015 UPWP Amendment (Comp Plan Assistance) – Rich Vetter***

Mr. Vetter explained that no additional monies are involved in the amendment. Money is being moved from a project providing assistance on a DTC project. That project has been re-evaluated by DTC and has been incorporated into a larger study. The MPO will move this money to Transportation Studies to provide technical assistance and/or funds to municipalities. The Town of Kenton anticipates needing assistance with their comprehensive plan, which is being done by the University of Delaware. Mr. Vetter reported that WILMAPCO provides financial assistance like this for New Castle municipalities. He also reported that to date, no official request has come from Kenton. There is also a possibility that the Town of Hartly will require assistance later on in the year.

MOTION By Ms. Townshend to recommend Council approve the amendment as presented by staff. Seconded by Mr. Kirkpatrick. Motion carried.

- 6) ***DISCUSSION ITEM: Project Prioritization Process - Jim Galvin (enclosure)***

Mr. Galvin reported that at the November Council meeting, Commissioner Eaby asked staff to make a presentation on how the MPO will change the prioritization process in response to DelDOT's use of DecisionLens. Mr. Galvin said that, after



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reviewing the MPO process and the history of how it has developed, he felt that more work is needed. He said that there is a difference in the process between the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and the TIP; the MTP is a 25-year plan and the process is broader, while the TIP process is more detailed and covers 4 years. DelDOT chooses projects from the TIP based on availability of funds. Although DelDOT is supposed to develop their Capital Transportation Program based on the TIP, in Delaware the TIP reflects the CTP. The MPO makes recommendations, and DelDOT chooses the projects they will move forward. Mr. Kirkpatrick said that DelDOT checked with FHWA; the process is not strictly defined, so there are variations between the different states and MPOs, one of which is Delaware's variant.

Ms. Gray noted that neither DelDOT nor the MPO has control over funding; that control is with the State Legislature, bringing politics into the process.

Mr. Galvin said that the MPO needs to look at the TIP timing, and be proactive in working with DelDOT on the CTP. He also said that in 2011, Ralph Reeb (who was then DelDOT's director of Planning and a member of the MPO Council) suggested that the TIP and CTP should be driven by the comprehensive plans. He also suggested that, rather than the municipalities asking for specific projects, they identify their needs and problems, leaving the solution to DelDOT. This would be a significant change as to how the MPO and the municipalities currently do business.

Mr. Galvin gave a PowerPoint presentation that illustrated the priority process methodology for both the MTP and the TIP. The process and ranking criteria evolved over the years, adding complete streets, the growth plan and environmental justice. He noted that the entire TIP project list has not been ranked for a number of years.

Although a working group was established to review and redefine the priority process, the task was put on hold while DelDOT evaluated DecisionLens. Mr. Galvin also noted that the working group had a significant number of DelDOT personnel.

There was discussion concerning the relationship between the MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) and CTP (Capital Transportation Program); Mr. Edgell noted that every project in the CTP must be in the MTP. If the MTP is changed to reflect projects, how will that be reflected in the CTP? He also questioned why the TIP project list has to be prioritized, if the MTP projects are prioritized.

There was discussion concerning TIP prioritization, and how this change to problems rather than projects would affect the municipalities' comprehensive plans. It was noted that there is a disconnect comparing problems to projects. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that both DelDOT and the federal agencies have criteria to deal with managing the system, and that process is not something the MPO has control over.

Ms. Townshend said that her fear was handing a problem to engineers to solve, how would it be handled if the solution was not something the municipalities wanted? What recourse would there be if the engineering solution conflicted with planning goals? Her example was that the engineering solution for congestion would be to expand an intersection, but that would conflict with pedestrian needs.

Mr. Edgell said that no town has a comprehensive plan written in this formula, and it would require all municipalities to re-draft their plans, and effort and cost to them. He also noted that the plans are on a ten-year cycle, with 5-year reviews; that would be the opportunity to look at this new process, because the towns could do amendments then. Mr. Galvin suggested not dealing with this change this time around, to plan for the next cycle of reviews and revisions.

Mr. Dixon suggested changing the long range plan list to broader issues; one problem could generate five projects.

Further discussion kept returning to how this would affect the TIP, the comprehensive plans and how to assure that DelDOT's solutions would reflect what the communities involved actually want or need. Mr. Kirkpatrick said there would have to be visioning for the communities, that a vision is essentially the crux of DecisionLens.

Mr. Galvin said that he believed the MPO should restart the working group and develop criteria for problems and a process for the TIP. Mr. Edgell asked if this process is similar or different from the one WILMAPCO uses; Mr. Galvin said that



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WILMAPCO is happy with their process and will not be using DecisionLens. Mr. Edgell had concerns if Kent County was going to have a different process from the other counties; he felt that if this was going to be required for the comprehensive plans, State Code will be involved.

Mr. Galvin felt that the MPO would go out to the municipalities to talk to them about the process. Mr. Chaffinch said that the Town of Camden has been doing everything they were asked to regarding traffic problems since 2008 and were not any closer to a solution; he felt that adding additional red tape was not helpful.

Ms. Samardza noted that reconciling the problems vs. projects had been an issue for Juanita Wieczoreck, the MPO's former director.

Ms. Townshend asked how this would fit with DecisionLens; the CTP comes from DecisionLens, not the MPO priority process. She wanted to know how this would work, and felt the TAC was "just spinning our wheels." Mr. Kirkpatrick said that while in theory, all of the information goes in, it is actually a parallel process.

Ms. Townshend noted that Commissioner Eaby's concerns regarding the Sports Complex were still an issue. Mr. Kirkpatrick said that DecisionLens can be "gamed" based on politics. He also reported that the DecisionLens representative said that the program's greatest competition was a spreadsheet.

It was suggested that the MPO not prioritize already prioritized lists like maintenance; only 10% of funding is available for other projects. Half of that list comes from mandated systems.

MOTION By Mr. Edgell to reactivate the Priority Process Working Group and continue this discussion in those meetings. Seconded by Mr. Kirkpatrick.

Ms. Townshend noted that the working group had been heavy with DelDOT influence, and suggested changing the members of the working group. Ms. Valerie Gray suggested that DelDOT only get one vote in the group. Ms. Mary Ellen noted that the group had been on a volunteer basis and that even consensus could be influenced. Mr. Galvin said he would have to look at the calendar to see when projects must go into the CTP draft cycle; he felt something for FY17 would have to be done by May 2015 to influence DelDOT.

MOTION was carried.

7) **DISCUSSION ITEM: City of Dover Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update – Rich Vetter**

Mr. Vetter reported that the Dover Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan update is 99% complete. He met with Dover's committee, and the draft has been approved and will be presented at a public workshop in January. The City expects to adopt the Plan in April. Ms. Townshend expressed the City's appreciation of the MPO's leadership and assistance on this project.

8) **Member Agency Reports:**

City of Dover: Planning – Ms. Townshend reported that the City continues to work with the MPO on the update of the Bike/Ped Plan. The City is also working with DelDOT on developing the TID (Transportation Improvement District). That project is moving slower than expected due to lack of staff. The HAWK signal at Dover High School is working well, although the flashing light is still an issue with motorists. Also, the lack of sidewalks on the south side of DE8 and on Mifflin Road is a problem.

Kent Conservation District – Mr. Riley reported that two subdivisions have petitions Levy Court for stormwater maintenance. The petitions will go before the commissioners on 12/16 for approval. There are 17 subdivisions in various stages of the petitions process. KCCD evaluates the facilities; they must be up to code before accepted into the County program. There were additional discussions concerning HOAs and their responsibilities, and the different processes involved (County, municipalities) on dealing with defunct HOAs. There are additional problems when the areas in a development have not passed to an HOA and are still in the developer's ownership.



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State of Delaware:

DTC – Ms. Cherry reported that DTC is working with the consultant WRA on an origin/destinations study for Kent and Sussex counties inter-county routes. The study will be in place in April and will take 6 weeks. Mr. Kirkpatrick asked if a parallel study would be done in New Castle County; Ms. Cherry said no, there is no study planned.

9) Staff Report:

9.1 Outreach Activities – Kate Layton

9.2 UPWP Progress & Financial Reports – Rich Vetter

9.3 2015 Meeting Calendar

Ms. Layton reported that the MPO newsletter went out via e-mail. She also noted that she is working with Kent Kids on a Grant application to support activities such as the community dinner, summer health fair and community gardens.

Mr. Vetter reported that the MPO took pedestrian counts at Delaware State University in October, once during the middle of the week and then on Homecoming weekend. He noted that on US13, there is an 80-90% compliance with traffic signals and use of crosswalks. However, there was not much compliance on College Road. Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that in Newark, University of Delaware police gave out traffic tickets; if the student did not pay the ticket, they would not be allowed to graduate. He said that this strategy worked to improve pedestrian compliance.

10) Next Meeting: February 11, 2015

MOTION By Mr. Kirkpatrick to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Edgell. Motion carried.