



# 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 COUNTY MPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2015

### Technical Advisory Committee Representatives attending:

Mary Ellen Gray, Kent County Planning (Chair)  
Michael Kirkpatrick, DelDOT Planning  
Cathy Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation  
Milton Melendez, DE Dept. of Agriculture  
Marc Dixon, Federal Highway Administration

David Edgell, Office of State Planning (Vice-chair)  
Valerie Gray, DNREC  
Joe Zilcosky, DE Economic Dev. Office  
Jennifer Vallee, Dover Air Force Base  
Ann Marie Townshend, City of Dover

### Members not attending:

Tim Riley, Kent Conservation District  
Sharon Duca, City of Dover, Public Works  
Aaron Chaffinch, Town of Camden  
Rick Crawford, Norfolk Southern

Dave Hugg, Town of Smyrna  
City of Milford

Ryan Long, Federal Transit Admin.

### Non-members attending:

Lee Derrickson, DE Motor Transport Assoc.  
Mila Robinson, DelDOT  
Rich Vetter, MPO Exec. Director  
Kate Layton, MPO staff  
Catherine Samardza, MPO staff

Matt Bittle, DE State News  
Kendall Somers, DNREC  
James Galvin, MPO staff  
Chris Kirby, MPO staff

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

**MOTION** By Mr. Kirkpatrick to approve the agenda. Seconded by Ms. Smith. Motion carried.

- 4) **ACTION ITEM: Approval of Minutes – December 10, 2014**

**MOTION** By Mr. Edgell to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Melendez. Motion carried.

- 5) **DISCUSSION ITEM: FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program - Potential Projects – Rich Vetter**

Mr. Vetter reviewed the projects listed in the UPWP, and asked the TAC members if they had any suggestions for Transportation Studies. Ms. Townshend suggested a study for Dover's "gateway" from the west (Division Street from Saulsbury Road to State Street). Dover has received grant money for improvements to the area.

He also noted that some of the "wish list" projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (aka long range transportation plan) have been around for a long time, and he is not sure where the projects originated. Mr. Vetter informed the PAC that the UPWP is scheduled for adoption by the Council in May. Any suggested projects should be relayed to the MPO by the end of April.

It was noted that Milford's new City Manager is Hans Medlarz; staff will contact him to see if Milford has any potential projects for the UPWP.

Ms. Smith said that some projects might come out of DTC's upcoming origin/destination study. She was reminded that the projects have to be submitted in April. Mr. Zilcosky and Ms. Vallee suggested a feasibility study for the Civil Air Terminal as the last one was done quite awhile ago. Mr. Zilcosky thought 20 years; Mr. Kirkpatrick said that one had been done less than ten years ago by a consultant, and the study is on file at DelDOT. There was discussion concerning past proposals for use of the Civil Air Terminal. Ms. Vallee felt it might be helpful just to get it on the UPWP list. Mr. Kirkpatrick asked her if Dover



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Air Force Base would survive the next round of base closures; Ms. Vallee said that services are being sent to Dover, and that she, personally, does not see the Base closing. Mr. Kirkpatrick asked if civilians would be locked out again, as happened after 9/11. Ms. Vallee also noted that the Joint Use Agreement is valid for 5 more years, but that there will always be security concerns.

Mr. Kirkpatrick mentioned the Cheswold Airpark, but Mr. Zilcosky said it would not hold large planes. Mr. Edgell asked who would request the project: DAFB, Kent County, DeIDOT or DEDO? Ms. Vallee said the land does not belong to the Air Base; Mr. Kirkpatrick suggested that DEDO make the request. Ms. Townshend said that no matter who owned the property, DEDO should make the request based on economic potential. Ms. Vallee pointed out that the Joint Use Agreement is with DeIDOT. Mr. Kirkpatrick reported that Randall Wiedemann, who completed the last study, is still a DeIDOT consultant with an open-end contract.

Ms. Townshend brought the conversation back to her suggested project, the gateway. Dover is considering streetscapes and land use zoning based on what the City would like to see as redevelopment occurs; the City wants a vision, like the Neighborhood Transit Design project.

Mr. Vetter said again that any suggestions for projects were needed by April. The request could be for financing or in-house expertise, with available money for consultant services (\$150,000 – 200,000).

### **6) DISCUSSION ITEM: FY 2017 - 2020 TIP Project Prioritization - Jim Galvin**

Mr. Galvin distributed a map in addition to the materials sent to the TAC previously. He explained that when revisiting the prioritization process, he kept in mind that the MPO had to interact with DeIDOT, and provide a list of projects to consider for the FY2017-2022 Capital Transportation Program (CTP). He reviewed the list of projects in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Some were nominated by Kent County, some were carried over from previous versions of the MTP. Out of 20 projects, 17 came from studies. He noted that he wasn't comfortable using DecisionLens for this, he did not think it serves the MPO process. As an interim process, he suggested using the Consumer Reports "circles" guide. He hoped to develop ranking system rather than a scoring system.

Mr. Galvin asked the TAC to review the projects and rank them; an alternative solution would be to have staff rank the projects then bring the list to the TAC for review and any changes. Mr. Vetter said that he was looking for the top three projects, which would give DeIDOT the information needed to determine priorities.

There was considerable discussion regarding the proposed interim process. Mr. Dixon noted that federal regulations required the MPOs to have a mathematically quantitative process, and using circles was not quantitative. He wasn't sure it was specific enough.

Mr. Galvin reiterated that it was an interim process to get something to DeIDOT. He felt that the MPO was not ready to use DecisionLens until more work was done on the MPO process. He felt that the MPO process was more subjective than quantifiable. Ms. Townshend and Ms. Smith noted that it was always a subjective process, even when numbers were assigned.

There was discussion concerning definitions, and that the MPO and DeIDOT differing goals would always be an issue.

Ms. V. Gray suggested using the circle process to identify five projects, then screen those to send to DeIDOT. She also felt that she would like to hear what the municipalities/communities felt was more important. She said she could score using her agencies priorities and goals, but might score differently if she knew what Dover or Camden wanted; there should be a balance.

Mr. Edgell said he felt that all the projects were important, the TAC members had to find a way to narrow the list. He thought the MPO should use the older numeric system, that the circles were too simple, and DecisionLens had no human element to discuss policy.

There were concerns that everyone would "vote" for "their" projects. Ms. Townshend questioned the value of the process because whatever was sent to DeIDOT would be reprioritized and DeIDOT would do something different, and the MPO would have to amend the TIP. Until that issue was resolved, it doesn't seem to matter how "scientific" or not the process used is.



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There was further discussion concerning the fact that some projects are more ready to go than others. Mr. Edgell thought the MPO should go to the communities and ask them to pick one project for right now, then the MPO could look at the fiscal aspect and rank the projects in that manner. Ms. Townshend noted that there are no sidewalks on the south side of Route 8, and the cost would not be large, although with school students on the road, the need was massive. She added that someone would die, then it would rank high. Mr. Zilcosky was concerned that the MPO would send a project list to DelDOT, and questioned whether they would actually look at it, or just automatically put it into DecisionLens. Mr. Kirkpatrick said that all the municipalities have legislative representation; they should be contacted with the list.

Mr. Vetter thought it would be helpful if proposed projects were the result of a study.

There was further discussion concerning DecisionLens taking the politics out of prioritization; Mr. Derrickson felt that you could never entirely take the politics out of the decision. Ms. Townshend felt that the list could be qualitative; Mr. Edgell said it should say "this is what we want Kent County to look like." Mr. Kirkpatrick noted that safety would be considered over economic development. Mr. Galvin felt that was where DecisionLens fall apart. He liked Ms. Townshend's idea. Ms. M. Gray said it would be safety, then economic development, then quality of life; Ms. Townshend said that safety is in the eye of the beholder, and for engineers that meant roads without "fender-benders." Ms. Kirkpatrick said that just made the point for DecisionLens, that government would never say not to fix a road where someone has died. Ms. V. Gray said that assumed that the transportation system was at fault as opposed to human error.

Mr. Edgell said that there seemed to be a project in a number of local governments' jurisdiction, and suggested forwarding the list of projects to them and ask for their top priority, why it was the top priority, and how ready the project is for moving forward. Then the TAC would prioritize the top three projects. Mr. Edgell also wanted to discuss qualitative criteria and review the fiscal realities to see what the TAC can come up with. It was suggested that the projects out on the 2030 calendar year be eliminated.

Mr. Kirkpatrick said that there are many steps to the process, and sometimes a project can get into the queue and then disappears – sometimes because a project won't work. If you want to get a project to design, you have to keep pushing forward. Ms. V. Gray asked if any of the projects need to be studied first; Mr. Vetter said yes, although some were ready for project development. Ms. M. Gray felt that most projects on the list were ready for design.

The issue of qualitative v. quantitative criteria was again mentioned; Mr. Kirkpatrick said he was pretty sure the law requires a quantitative process. Mr. Edgell suggested not worrying about that at first, that staff should reach out to local governments for priority projects.

The priority process sub-committee could discuss those projects in March. Mr. Kirkpatrick said the sub-committee could look at WILMAPCO's process. Mr. Edgell suggested creating a spreadsheet where local communities would equal "100."

**MOTION** By Mr. Edgell for staff to coordinate outreach to the municipalities with an edited list of projects.  
Seconded by Ms. Townshend. Motion carried.

Ms. Townshend noted that the policy aspect of the criteria could be quantifiable.

**MOTION** By Mr. Edgell to recommend Council change the priority process sub-committee to a working group.  
Seconded by Mr. Zilcosky. Motion carried.

The following people volunteered to participate in the working group: Mr. Vetter / Mr. Edgell / Mr. Galvin / Ms. Townshend / Ms. V. Gray / Ms. M. Gray / Mr. Zilcosky / Ms. Smith / Ms. Robinson (DelDOT, replacing Mr. Kirkpatrick on the TAC)

It was agreed that the working group should meet the last week of March, to report to the TAC at the April 8, 2015 meeting.



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### 7) **PRESENTATION: DNREC's Recreational Trails GIS System – Kendall Sommers**

Ms. Sommers gave a PowerPoint presentation illustrating DNREC's program for inventory of recreational facilities. The inventory assists the State, counties and municipalities in determining what facilities or improvements may be needed, and where. Service areas are identified with the program, locate gaps for best location for new facilities, and evaluate which facilities would benefit by investment to reach the most people. Information such as bicycle and pedestrian networks and public transportation can be input into the program, as well as population densities and Census data regarding housing, age and ethnicity. Ms. Sommers said that DNREC would be happy to help the MPO and members in any way for planning efforts.

### 8) **Member Agency Reports:**

**City of Dover: Planning** – Ms. Townshend expressed concern that the proposal to reduce Municipal Street Aid is counter-intuitive to the Strategies because it leaves no support for municipal streets.

**State of Delaware: DeIDOT Planning** – Mr. Kirkpatrick announced that DeIDOT has a new Secretary, Jennifer Cohan.

**Statewide Planning** – Mr. Edgell reported that this year OSP is updating the Strategy for State Spending maps. There is no schedule yet, the office is gathering data. There will be a public workshop later on in the process. This will be the fourth rendition since 1999, the maps require fine-tuning now more than major changes.

### 9) **Staff Report:**

**9.1 Outreach Activities – Kate Layton**

**9.2 UPWP Progress & Financial Reports – Rich Vetter**

Ms. Layton reported that the next newsletter is almost finished, and she is gearing up for the spring/summer tabling events. The MPO will be partnering with the Department of Motor Vehicles, and DART for the 55+ Expo in April.

Mr. Vetter reported that the public workshop for the City of Dover Bicycle and Pedestrian plans was held at the Pitt Center on January 20, 2015.

### 10) **Next Meeting: April 8, 2015**

MOTION By Ms. Townshend to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Zilcosky. Motion carried.