



# 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 January 7, 2015

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

**Brad Eaby, for Brooks Banta, President, Kent County Levy Court, Acting Chairman**

**Robin Christiansen, Mayor, City of Dover**

**Don Tinari, Mayor, Town of Cheswold, for Kent County Municipalities**

**Cathy Smith for John Sisson, Executive Director, Delaware Transit Corporation**

**Terry Pepper, Dep. Dir., Safety & Homeland Security, for Governor Jack Markell, State of Delaware**

**Drew Boyce, for Shailen Bhatt, Secretary, Delaware Dept. of Transportation**

**Marc Dixon for Mary Ridgeway, Division Administrator, Federal Highway Admin. (FHWA)**

### Members not attending:

**Reginald Lovelace, Acting Regional Administrator, Region III, Federal Transit Admin. (FTA)**

### Non-members attending:

**Jerry Emerson (public)**

**Rich Vetter, MPO Executive Director**

**Kate Layton, MPO Staff**

**Chris Kirby, MPO Staff**

**Luther Wynder, DTC**

**James Galvin, MPO Staff**

**Catherine Samardza, MPO Staff**

## **1. Introduction of Members & Guests**

## **2. Public Comments**

Mr. Jerry Emerson, a resident of Rising Sun, introduced himself. His interest is bicycle and pedestrian planning. He felt the region had made progress, but felt there were other additional possibilities to improve the network that were being missed.

## **3. ACTION ITEM: Approval of Agenda**

MOTION By Mayor Christiansen to adopt the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Pepper. Motion carried.

## **4. ACTION ITEM: Approval of Minutes / November 5, 2014**

Ms. Samardza noted that the minutes had been sent to Senator Dave Lawson, as he had spoken at the last meeting. She reported that he did not contact her with any comments.

MOTION By Mr. Boyce to approve the minutes. Seconded by Ms. Smith. Motion carried.

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

Mr. Vetter explained that this amendment is to add monies to the budget item Transportation Planning Studies. However, it is just a shift of funds, not additional money. Funds are 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. Mr. Pepper noted that lack of a comprehensive plan is a problem for Hartly.

MOTION By Mr. Pepper to approve the amendment. Seconded by Mayor Christiansen. Motion carried.



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### **6. DISCUSSION ITEM: Delaware Motor Transport Association TAC Reinstatement – C. Samardza**

Ms. Samardza reported that the MPO has heard from Mr. Lee Derrickson of the Delaware Motor Transport Association. The DMTA has re-established itself after being dormant for a number of years. At one point, DMTA was a non-voting member of the TAC and was mentioned in the bylaws; they were removed when MPO staff was unable to contact them. Ms. Samardza noted that, due to how the last contract for the TAC and PAC committees were written, if the Council wishes to re-instate DMTA, it only requires a unanimous vote. Council members discussed the desirability of having an organization knowledgeable about freight on the TAC committee. Mayor Christiansen felt that this was an important industry, and suggested the organization be re-instated as a voting member. Staff will contact Mr. Derrickson and ask if DMTA would accept a voting membership, and eventually bring this back to Council for a vote.

### **7. DISCUSSION ITEM: Project Prioritization Process – Jim Galvin**

Mr. Galvin gave a Power Point presentation that summarized the history and methodology of the priority process for both the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP, also known as the long range transportation plan). Mr. Galvin noted 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 a more sophisticated rubric and covers 4 years. He also noted that the process and ranking criteria evolved over the years, adding complete streets, the growth plan and environmental justice. He reported that the entire TIP project list has not been ranked for a number of years.

Mr. Galvin 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.

The MPO established a Priority Process Working Group in 2012, but work was suspended while DelDOT was exploring the use of DecisionLens. Mr. Galvin noted that the group had a number of DelDOT representatives.

Mr. Galvin suggested the MPO moved to a project-based approach for prioritizing the next MTP (2015) and nominate problems. He also said that this approach would change how the municipalities approach their comprehensive plans, and thought that the change-over could occur when the municipalities update their plans. Once in the MTP, the problems could be prioritized and sent to DelDOT for a preferred solution. He felt the process should be open to many shareholders in the process, and it was possible the MPO could use DecisionLens, although with different criteria.

Mayor Christiansen liked the idea of public input to the priority process. He felt it was vital that the public be part of the decisions early on, that it could eliminate "push back" later on. Mr. Boyce said he liked the overall philosophy, that Mr. Reeb has a lot of good ideas. He felt that projects should be evolved from the transportation elements of the comprehensive plans. He also noted that there have been changes in DelDOT Planning, and that different people would be representing DelDOT in an MPO working group. Mr. Boyce also felt that getting advice from FHWA was important, to see if some projects would need to be removed from the CTP. He also was not sure DelDOT was set up to come up with solutions in a manner timely enough to go into the MPO TIP.

There was further discussion of DecisionLens, noting that it was just a tool, with a lot of flexibility, and it could do whatever was wanted. Ms. Smith noted that it helps DTC with a footprint to "grow transit." She felt that a "buy in" from the municipalities' comprehensive plans would be helpful. Mr. Galvin noted that the nice thing about DecisionLens was that the program could be changed to reflect which criteria were most important. Ms. Smith mentioned the economic development criteria that resulted in the South Frederica grade-separated



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interchange being delayed; Mr. Galvin said that the MPO would not use the DeIDOT criteria.

Commissioner Eaby noted that comprehensive plans amendments could only be done when the plan is updated – every five years – or when a new plan is required – every ten years. Mr. Boyce said that could be worked around, unless it was a large shift in direction for the municipality or county wanted to go. Otherwise, if a project was consistent with the comp plan and land use, then something could be crafted to get over the hurdle and be consistent with the plan.

Commissioner Eaby noted that staff would be reconstituting the working group; Mr. Galvin said it was the consensus of the TAC that the working group should be reconstituted. Mr. Galvin said that the criteria for the MTP should also be updated during the spring.

### **8. DISCUSSION ITEM: City of Dover Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update - Rich Vetter**

Mr. Vetter reported that the final draft is about 99% complete. This is the final draft for both the pedestrian and bicycle plans. These are only for the City of Dover, within City limits. There will be a public workshop on January 20<sup>th</sup> from 4-7 PM at the Pitt Center, to present the final recommendations for both bicycle and pedestrian projects. There is a full gamut of short and long-term projects, from maintenance issues to new trails. The City expects to adopt the plan in the spring.

### **9. MUNICIPALITIES/KENT COUNTY REPORTS: City of Dover / Town of Cheswold / Kent County**

Mayor Christiansen reported that construction work and utility replacements will take place on White Oak Road. The City is still considering a formal request for an interchange at Route 1, to accommodate industrial park tenants. Mr. Boyce asked if he meant something different than a connector road to South Little Creek Road, or a full interchange? Because that would be a bigger hurdle.

Mayor Tinari reported that a new Family Dollar store opened in Cheswold. He also noted there have been some annexations, but housing has not changed much, and the town is still struggling with finances. He also said that Main Street looks much nicer, properties have been cleaned up.

He noted that Secretary Bhatt is leaving Delaware, and wondered why Delaware looked out of state (for Secretary Bhatt) when there was a capable nominee already here (Jennifer Cohan). Mr. Boyce suggested Ms. Cohan had been working on her skillset, and that Delaware had been a “stepping stone” on Secretary Bhatt’s journey.

Commissioner Eaby reported on the Regional Air Terminal and Kent County Aeropark. He said that the County had wanted a longer term lease than will be awarded by the Air Base. He said that it will cost about \$24M to put in a storage area for larger planes, and it is not possible to get an investor for the project with a short-term lease. Commissioner Eaby also reported that the developers for the South Frederica Sports Complex expect to submit a plan in the next three months. DeIDOT is working with Becker Morgan to design a temporary transportation entrance. The Greater Kent Committee is hiring an executive director.

### **10. TAC Report – Rich Vetter**

### **11. PAC Report – Kate Layton**

Ms. Layton reported that the PAC held a special election on December 16<sup>th</sup> to replace vice-chair Edmund Maron, a county appointee, who resigned from the committee. The new vice chair is Jayce Lesniewski. In addition, Prameela Kaza, a City of Dover appointee, has also resigned, leaving 2 open seats on the PAC.



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### **12. Staff Report –**

**12.1 Outreach Activities – Kate Layton**

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

**12.3 Other MPO Projects & Updates – Rich Vetter**

**Next Meeting: March 4, 2015**

Ms. Smith introduced Luther Wynder, chief of performance management at DTC.

**MOTION** By Mr. Boyce to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mayor Christiansen. Motion carried.