



DOVER/KENT COUNTY MPO PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF DECEMBER 16, 2014

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS attending:

Michael Gumrot, Chairman	Chris Asay	Jeremy Tucker
Phyllis B. Collins	Jonathan Street	
Jayce Lesniewski	Dwight Meyer	

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS not attending:

Prameela Kaza	Dr. Carlton Cannon	James Webster
Kevin Yingling (alternate)	Anne Priestly	Earle Dempsey

NON MEMBERS attending:

Rich Vetter, MPO Staff	Kate Layton, 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 Mr. Meyer to approve the agenda. Seconded by Mr. Street. Motion carried.

4. ***ACTION ITEM: Approval of Minutes, Oct. 21, 2014 (enclosure)***

MOTION By Mr. Street to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. Motion carried.

5. ***ACTION ITEM: Special election for PAC vice chair – MPO Staff***

Ms. Layton reported that Mr. Maron had resigned from the PAC, and the committee would have to elect a new vice-chair.

MOTION By Mr. Street to open the floor to nominations. Seconded by Mr. Lesniewski. Motion carried.

MOTION By Mr. Lesniewski nominating Mr. Asay as vice-chair. Seconded by Mr. Meyer.

Mr. Asay declined the nomination, and the motion failed.

There was discussion concerning the responsibilities of the vice-chair.

MOTION By Mr. Asay nominating Mr. Lesniewski as vice chair. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. Motion carried.

MOTION By Mr. Asay to close nominations. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. Motion carried.

Mr. Lesniewski was elected vice-chair by acclamation.

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

Mr. Vetter noted that the line item “Transportation Studies” allows the MPO to provide technical assistance and/or funds assistance to municipalities, particularly the smaller towns that have no staff. He explained that no additional monies are involved in the amendment. Money is being moved from a project providing assistance on a DTC project that has been re-evaluated and is on hold. 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. Mr. Galvin noted that three Kent County municipalities do not have comprehensive plans: Woodside,



Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 383, Dover, Delaware 19903

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

<http://www.doverkentmpo.org>

Kenton and Hartly.

MOTION By Mr. Asay to recommend that Council approve and adopt the amendment to the UPWP. Seconded
By Mr. Tucker. Motion carried.

7. DISCUSSION ITEM: Project Prioritization Process - Jim Galvin

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 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 its 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. Galvin noted that FHWA lays out the process, but there are variations between the different states and MPOs.

Mr. Asay asked for clarification; that the MPO's process is not the same as DelDOT's. He referenced the issue with the South Frederica grade-separated intersection. Mr. Galvin said that there has been discussion in the TAC meeting of using DelDOT's process, but the criteria DelDOT uses do not really represent the MPO's interests.

There was discussion concerning the MPO priority process and how it fits with DelDOT's. 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.

Mr. Asay said this was all new to him, and asked how the difference of problems vs. projects would work to create solutions. Mr. Galvin said that the MPO would rank the significance of the problems. Mr. Asay asked if this was, in effect, handing the problem to DelDOT to develop a solution. Discussion ensued, noting that this process "will not fly" if New Castle and Sussex counties don't do it as well. The question was asked, if this is such a great idea, why isn't DelDOT using it for Sussex County?

Mr. Galvin continued explaining the differences in the process for both the TIP and MTP; although essentially the same process, the criteria are different. Over the years, new criteria were added to reflect the Complete Streets regulations, the Growth Management Plan, and environmental/economic justice requirements.

Although a working group was established to review and redefine the priority process, the task was put on hold after just a few meetings, while DelDOT evaluated DecisionLens. Mr. Galvin also noted that the working group had a significant number of DelDOT personnel. Mr. Galvin suggested scoring that would assess problems.

Mr. Galvin reported that at the TAC meeting, David Edgell (Office of State Planning) expressed concerns about changing this process, because the Comprehensive Plans of the municipalities are based on projects, not problems. This new process would create problems in the Comprehensive Plans.

Mr. Galvin suggested a different process: 1) request nomination of problems; 2) use a different scoring method (than is currently used); 3) open the scoring to many stakeholders, not just a few; and 4) possibly use DecisionLens with criteria developed by the MPO.

Mr. Galvin said that at this time the MPO would like to re-establish the Priority Process Working Group. Mr. Asay asked if WILMAPCO would also look at problems as opposed to projects; Mr. Galvin said that WILMAPCO uses a completely different system, and does not use DecisionLens. Mr. Asay asked if this new approach was a trend in other states, or Mr. Galvin's idea; Mr. Galvin said that the idea originated with Ralph Reeb (DelDOT Planning), formerly on the MPO Council.

Mr. Asay additionally said that handing off a problem to the engineers would still require the MPO to review the solution, to see if that is best for the MPO region. Mr. Street agreed that this was a good idea, but it creates a problem if the solution is handed back, saying it won't work, or isn't what was wanted. Mr. Galvin noted that one problem could result in several projects (i.e., Camden Truck Bypass).

There was further discussion concerning municipal comprehensive plans and how this change in approach would require going



Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 383, Dover, Delaware 19903

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

<http://www.doverkentmpo.org>

out to the towns to talk about this. There was also discussion concerning how DelDOT did not consider the community or economic development regarding the South Frederica project. Mr. Gumrot wanted to know if DelDOT would accept re-thinking the process and get the community involved, because the communities should have the opportunity to discuss these issues. He felt that the community input is the piece that is missing from the present system. He also felt that it had to be worked out at the level of the Governor and the secretaries of DelDOT and DEDO. Mr. Galvin said that what the MPO does will serve the MPO, but he didn't know if it would change how DelDOT works.

Mr. Meyer said that it was a good to try to take politics out of the process, but he didn't think it could be done. Mr. Gumrot said there had to be a process, feeding information from various components (i.e., engineers, communities). DecisionLens eliminated the community input.

There was further discussion concerning how to make the change to "problems" vs. "projects" with the TIP, the MTP and municipal comprehensive plans. It was also noted that DecisionLens as DelDOT employs it uses engineer and transportation oriented criteria; other components have to be represented, and if the MPO uses the DecisionLens program, some of the MPO criteria should reflect those missing components.

8. DISCUSSION ITEM: City of Dover Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Update – Rich Vetter

Mr. Vetter reported that the Dover Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans updates are 99% complete. He met with Dover's committee, and the drafts have been approved and will be presented at a public workshop in January. The City expects to adopt the Plans in April. Mr. Gumrot asked if there was funding for the recommended projects; Mr. Vetter said that the City has applied for a grant for \$150,000, and a priority list of projects will be sent to DelDOT. Unfortunately, DelDOT has a 2 year backlog on bike/ped projects due to lack of funding. Mr. Asay asked if the MPO Regional Bike Plan (2011) would be updated, and how it fits in with the Dover Plan; Mr. Vetter said it should be looked at, and he would bring the request to Council. He expected that any update review would be done in-house.

9. *** MEMBER REPORTS ***

Mr. Street reported that the traffic signal at Westin Drive near Booker T. Washington School is not timed properly with the new light; the old light was supposed to be removed, but is still there. Mr. Vetter said he will check on this.

Mr. Street also reported that the timing on the North Street traffic signals is also "off." He also asked about the traffic study on North and West Streets concerning left turns; Mr. Vetter said the study was completed, but that the State expects the West Dover Connector will solve any problems at that location.

Ms. Collins asked about making Layton Avenue in Wyoming one way. Mr. Vetter asked if any studies have been done; Ms. Collins said that the Chief of Police has a report concerning accidents, and there have been local public hearings. Mr. Vetter said that a traffic analysis could be done, and that the Town should send the MPO a letter requesting traffic counts. Ultimately, he felt this would be a DelDOT issue, because the road ties into a State-maintained street.

Mr. Meyer thanked Mr. Vetter for contacting DelDOT regarding the timing of the traffic signal at Woodley Town Road and State Street; it has been adjusted. He also noted that the MPO is a federal mandate for a reason; it seems like a lot of mundane things until a project like the Sports Complex comes along and politicians think they can push it through, but there is a process. He felt it was very interesting to hear people talk about the issue. Mr. Meyer reported that a charter military school would be taking over the old St. Joseph's buildings (formerly used by Providence Creek Academy charter school). The school is a junior marine ROTC program. He noted that military schools go up and down in popularity; this one is expected to open in fall of 2015, and he felt it was a bold step that would help the community and county.

10. Staff Reports –

10.1 Progress & Financial Reports – Rich Vetter



Dover/Kent County Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 383, Dover, Delaware 19903

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

<http://www.doverkentmpo.org>

- 10.2 Other Project Updates/Activities – MPO Staff
- 10.3 Correspondence, Publications/Reports/Outreach – K. Layton
- 10.4 2015 Committee Schedule

Ms. Layton reported that both Mr. Maron and Ms. Kaza had resigned from the PAC. Ms. Kaza was a City of Dover appointee, and Mr. Maron was a Kent County appointee. She asked PAC members to contact her with any suggestions on filling the two positions. She noted that the Dover appointee does have to reside in the City.

11. ADJOURN

Next meeting, Feb. 24, Kent County Levy Court Building (if possible).

MOTION By Ms. Collins to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. Motion carried.