**DOVER/KENT COUNTY MPO PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF OCTOBER 27, 2015**

**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS attending:**

**Michael Gumrot, Chair Chris Asay Dwight Meyer**

**Dr. Carlton Cannon Dr. Carolyn Cohee Jonathan Contant**

**Earle Dempsey Carol Giesecke Karen McGloughlin**

**MEMBERS not attending:**

**Jayce Lesniewski, Vice Chair Phyllis B. Collins Jonathan Street**

**Jeremy Tucker/Kevin Yingling James Webster**

**Non-members attending:**

**Gene Donaldson, Director, DelDOT ITMS B.J. DeCoursey, Univ. of DE, IPA**

**David Edgell, Office of State Planning 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 (enclosure)**

Dr. Cohee asked that the agenda be amended to add Item 5A, an explanation of CMAQ projects by Gene Donaldson, director of DelDOT’s ITMS.

MOTION By Mr. Dempsey to amend the agenda as requested. Seconded by Mr. Meyer. Motion carried.

**4. *ACTION ITEM:* Approval of Minutes, Aug. 25, 2015 (enclosure)**

MOTION By Mr. Meyer to approve the minutes. Seconded by Mr. Contant.

Mr. Gumrot reported that, as mentioned in the minutes, he tried to contact elected officials concerning the issues at Thompsonville Road. Dr. Cohee noted that the construction zone now has a speed reduction to 45 MPH. As a point of order, it was noted that this could have been reported during member reports.

The vote was taken on the motion, and the motion approving the minutes was carried.

**5. *ACTION ITEM:* FY 2016 Amended UPWP (enclosure)**

Mr. Vetter reported that $185,000 money from previous years has been added to the FY2016 UPWP. He referred the PAC members to pages 19 and 20 for details. Projects added include a feasibility study for the Senator Bikeway projects, traffic counts to assist DelDOT for congestion management similar to WILMAPCO (no further details at this time), and a parking study for the plan to restore central Dover (awaiting formal request).

It was noted that the UPWP had been amended after the paper copy was sent to TAC members, the change reflected on page 20. Mr. Contant requested that the list of PAC members on page 6 be updated.

MOTION By Mr. Dempsey to approve the document with the discussed changes on Page 7 and Page 20. Seconded by

Seconded by Mr. Meyer. Motion carried.

**5A. EXPLANATION OF CMAQ PROJECTS – Gene Donaldson, DelDOT ITMS**

Mr. Donaldson explained in depth what the Intelligent Traffic Management System is, the many components and how the system is used. He also explained the projects funded by the Congestion Management Air Quality program, noting that it is all part of a multiple year plan to build the system statewide. He also noted that the statewide program funding comes from both federal and state monies.

**6. PRESENTATION: Low-Stress Bicycling Network Study - B.J. DeCoursey, University of Delaware**

Mr. DeCoursey explained that the University of Delaware is working with DelDOT to develop a community survey to identify low-stress bike routes. The survey is intended to be a template or guide for local governments to identify “bikeability.” He said that it is a “grass roots” type of project, starting with the towns, and said that the MPOs – both the D/KC MPO and WILMAPCO – would be involved.

The survey will be used to identify routes that have major problems for biking such as “scary” traffic that would cause bicyclist to make detours rather than use the route. It will also identify bicycle routes that are disconnected, with no access to major routes.

Mr. DeCoursey noted that the idea behind the survey is not to “fix” all roads, but to find low-stress connections for bicycle riders. There are 4 types of roads identified:

1. Bike/ped trail or low level traffic
2. Low speed traffic, wide shoulders
3. Shared lanes
4. Heavy traffic (that only NYC bike messengers would be comfortable in)

Mr. DeCoursey said that DelDOT has done a lot of work on this, using ITMS information and aerial photographs. IPA’s job is to create a guide to help the towns to figure this out.

Mr. DeCoursey said that local knowledge is important in identifying the issues facing a bicycle rider. The survey forms that were sent to the PAC members were 3 different versions being considered for use by the municipalities. The different surveys are each a different level of detail. The list provides prompts as to what to look for, and the responses are color coded (as to type of impediment). He was looking for input as to what degree of specificity should be used for the surveys (version 1, 2, or 3).

The PAC members had questions concerning the target municipalities and how the survey information would be used. There were concerns about the amount of work and information required, and that some municipalities would be overwhelmed by this type of project. Despite these concerns, some members felt that Option 3 – more detail – was the best way to collect the necessary information. It was felt that volunteers performing the survey would need consistent training to make the collected information uniform and useful. Dr. Cohee felt that a cover sheet to the survey was needed, to identify where the road being surveyed is located. After further discussion, Option 2 was felt to be better able to get the best feedback. It was also noted that some of the questions could be affected by subjectivity (i.e., surveyor a cautious driver/bicycle rider), and would be hard to qualify. Education concerning the rules of the road were mentioned, but the survey is not designed to have an education component. Mr. Gumrot noted that many of the PAC members are bicycle riders, and he thought this project was a fantastic initiative. Mr. DeCoursey left his contact information in case any PAC member wanted to reach him.

**7. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION: State Strategies Map updates – D. Edgell, Office of State Planning**

**Coordination (enclosure)**

Mr. Edgell gave a PowerPoint presentation concerning the update of the State Strategies maps, which occurs every five (5) years. He noted that the schedule for public hearings was included in the PAC materials, and there would be three in Sussex County, two in Kent County and 2 in New Castle County. The public comment period ends on November 4, 2015. The State Strategies are designed to coordinate land use decisions with the provision of services and infrastructure at the State and local levels. State agencies also use the State Strategies to coordinate with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

There are different levels of land use in the maps:

1. Urban areas/towns and cities
2. Growing areas
3. Suburban areas
4. Rural and agricultural/some residential
5. Out of play – parks and trail improvements, sports fields are allowed, no private development

Mr. Edgell noted that Delaware is unique because the State pays for so much. The Office of State Planning and Coordination (OSPC) works closely with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). He reported that there are not many changes in the map this year; there are some updated comprehensive plans, but overall Kent County is not projecting out of the development areas. The Delaware Annual Report shows building permits for the Smyrna/Clayton area, the Middletown/Townsend area, and Fenwick Island and Ocean View. Mr. Gumrot asked about jobs, were they all in New Castle County? Mr. Edgell said that there is some commuting both ways. Ms. McGloughlin asked if there was a summary outlining changes and new projects; Mr. Edgell said that there is no summary, but the information is available in the annual reports, which are available on the OSP website.

Mr. Edgell noted that the maps are not parcel based, and interested parties must check with local governments regarding land use possibilities. He said that even in investment areas, not all parcels can be developed.

The PAC members had comments and some questions. Dr. Cohee asked about the sea-level rise, noted as one-meter per year, and at what point the State would continue to protect the shore or give it up? She noted that Route 9 is already flooding, and asked what Delaware would do about the bridges on Route 9. Mr. Edgell said this was a new issue, a flood-risk map is being incorporated for the decision-making process and for public information. He also said that the process is still evolving, and will depend on the locations involved. He noted that Frederica is already on the “radar,” with two roads having flooding issues. He said that eventually this will be Capital Transportation Plan (CTP) to change the roads, and a hydraulic study will have to be included, to determine if a levee or dike will solve the problems.

Public Comments may be made in writing, at the public hearings, or on the website.

**8. DISCUSSION ITEM: Project Prioritization Working Group Project Rankings – Jim Galvin (enclosures)**

Mr. Galvin reviewed the history of the MPO’s project prioritization process, what issues led to the formation of the Working Group, and noted the TAC and PAC members who participated in the 2015 meetings.

He reported that the Working Group came to the decision to us DecisionLens, but with criteria and weighting developed by the MPO. He explained the process of identifying the criteria, and how DecisionLens was used to develop the weighting using pair-wise comparisons. He then reviewed all the criteria and weighting, and showed the priority project list that was the result of the work. He noted that the program only uses 0-1 for scoring.

He said that some things are lacking in the criteria. For example, Level of Service (LOS) information is not available and was scored as not applicable. He noted that WILMAPCO has been collecting LOS information for years, and that the MPO should consider developing the same for Kent County. He also felt that Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety and the Air Quality criteria should be looked at more closely.

There was discussion concerning the projects on the list. Mr. Galvin said that none of the projects ranked had been listed in the CTP for funding; the list did not include any projects already underway. There were questions and discussion concerning the criteria and the scoring. Some PAC members had concerns over the scoring/weighting that resulted from multiple components in some criteria. Mr. Vetter and Mr. Galvin explained that this is balanced through the pairwise comparison in DecisionLens. Mr. Asay wanted to know how the Working Group came up with this; Mr. Galvin explained that the Working Group went around the table, each person had input, and the program took care of the rest.

Mr. Vetter noted that some of the projects on the priority list are already in the CTP. The Working Group and TAC felt that indicated the process was working. Using DecisionLens resulted in a project list that could be provided to DelDOT to make the MPO’s priorities clear.

Mr. Galvin noted that the list has some natural breaks between the top, middle and bottom.

**9. *ACTION ITEM:* Project Prioritization Process and Project List – MPO Staff**

Mr. Galvin asked if the PAC would like to make the process and list official, by endorsing it to Council for adoption. Council could then forward the list to DelDOT. He noted that DelDOT has already seen some of these projects. He also said that this method would be used to prioritize projects for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan next year. The Working Group would get together early in 2016 to develop a new list of priority projects for the.

MOTION By Mr. Asay to recommend Council adopt the priority process and the priority project list. Seconded by

Ms. Geisecke. Motion carried.

**10. *ACTION ITEM:* Date of December PAC meeting**

PAC members discussed moving the December meeting to a day other than a Tuesday. Staff said they would check to be sure there were no problems with the bylaws. Ms. Layton would arrange a location for the meeting, either the Kent County Administration Building or the Town of Camden meeting room.

MOTION By Dr. Cohee to move the December meeting to Thursday, December 17th. Seconded by Ms. Geisecke.

**11. \*\*\* MEMBER REPORTS \*\*\***

Dr. Cohee reported that the road construction affecting Thompsonville Road is being managed with regulatory signs to help with the merge, and Delaware State Troopers are patrolling the area.

**12. Staff Reports –**

**12.1 Progress & Financial Reports – Rich Vetter (enclosures)**

**12.2 Other Project Updates/Activities – MPO Staff**

**12.3 Correspondence, Publications/Reports/Outreach – K. Layton**

Mr. Vetter reported that the charrette for the Capital Gateway project will be held November 16 – 19 at the Sankofa Inner City Cultural Center. The public workshops will be held at 5:00 PM, but MPO staff will be there from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM as well.

Ms. Layton reported that Cindy Small is retiring from Kent County Tourism.

**13. ADJOURN**

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