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

**MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2016 WORKSHOP**

**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**

**Michael Gumrot, Chair Jayce Lesniewski, Vice Chair Chris Asay**

**Dr. Phyllis B. Collins Jonathan Contant Earle Dempsey**

**Karen McGloughlin (alt) Jesse Spampinato**

**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS not attending:**

**Kevin Yingling (alt) Jonathan Street Dwight Meyer**

**Dr. Carlton Cannon Dr. Carolyn Cohee John Grady**

**NON-MEMBERS ATTENDING:**

**Barry Benton, DelDOT Cathy Smith, DTC, TAC**

**Greg Layton, DelDOT 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. Dempsey to approve the agenda. Seconded by Dr. Collins. Motion carried.

**4. *ACTION ITEM:* Approval of Minutes, April 26, 2016 (enclosure)**

MOTION By Mr. Asay to approve the April minutes. Seconded by Mr. Dempsey. Motion carried.

**5. *ACTION ITEM:* MPO Title VI/Environmental Justice Policy — Jim Galvin (enclosure)**

Mr. Galvin reviewed the changes made to the draft policy since the last time it was seen by the PAC. In particular, the complaint process was simplified, following the format of the streamlined process that WILMAPCO uses. He noted that he also reviewed the process used by DelDOT’s Civil Rights division, but felt that the WILMAPCO process was more appropriate for the MPO.

He asked for a motion to recommend Council allow the draft policy to be released for a 30-day public comment period. It will then come back to the TAC and PAC for final recommendations.

Mr. Gumrot asked if the MPO has ever had any complaints. The answer was no. There was some discussion concerning the geographic areas identified with populations protected by Title VI and Environmental Justice. The West Dover Connector was mentioned because the road comes through a community. Staff reported that the area did not include a protected class, and that DelDOT carried out a great deal of outreach in an 18-month process to choose the route that would become the West Dover Connector. Dr. Collins said that in education they are required to look at multi-racial issues. Ms. Smith said that agencies are required to consider limited English proficiency, but not multi-racial populations. She also said that DTC is allowed to “piggy-back” on other policies, such as the MPO’s, when performing EJ/Title VI review. Ms. McGloughlin asked how the geographic areas are defined; Mr. Galvin explained census blocks to the PAC members.

MOTION By Mr. Dempsey to recommend Council release the draft policy for public comment. Seconded

By Mr. Spampinato. Motion carried.

**6. PRESENTATION: Barry A. Benton, DelDOT Transportation Solutions--Sea Level Rise in Delaware**

Mr. Benton gave a Power Point presentation concerning the potential impact of sea level rise in Delaware. Mr. Benton’s presentation noted information has been collected since the 1800s documenting the amount of rain and flooding. He reported that the information is updated every ten years or so. He noted that it is warmer now, and there is more rain, and the sea level has risen about 13 inches in the last 100 years. DNREC has done low, middle and high estimates and expects sea level rise to be between .5 and 1.5 meters by 2100.

Mr. Benton noted that although this is being monitored, there is no funding, no policy, and no agreement concerning this issue. DelDOT is expected to plan for sea-level rise when designing bridges in areas that would be affected by higher water levels, but there are no specifics. He said that currently, it is anticipated that a bridge is designed to last between 75-100 years.

The presentation noted that Kent County is expected to be the county least affected by sea level rise. Sections of Route 9 in New Castle County are expected to be seriously impacted by water. Plans being discussed include raising the roads, raising bridges, and possibly making decisions regarding road access. In Kent County there are about 86 bridges that would need to be raised; by 2100 most bridges would need major work anyway. Mr. Benton encouraged questions during the presentation, and there was discussion concerning specific areas that had been changed due to high water issues in the past, including an area where 171 homes were purchased outright and a wetlands created in the former development.

Mr. Benton said that there are no good, or inexpensive, choices when discussing solutions. There was further discussion concerning developing policies, and how to avoid potential issues with land use policies. Mr. Benton noted that DelDOT does not control land use policies. That is up to the municipalities and the counties. Once a development occurs, DelDOT is responsible for providing road access, so any future rise in the sea level has DelDOT “on the hook.”

It was noted that some people are still very skeptical about the reality of global warming and sea level rise: Mr. Benton said that he isn’t trying to convince anyone – he just deals with the facts as they occur when required to maintain Delaware’s bridges. He noted that people make choices on where they want to live, and DelDOT makes every effort to provide service, although some areas are harder than others.

**7. DISCUSSION ITEM: FY 2017-2020 TIP Review (summary of changes enclosed) - Jim Galvin**

Mr. Galvin referred the PAC members to the one-page summary of changes that had been sent to them. With so few changes, the MPO was originally going to amend the FY2016 TIP to reflect those changes, but DelDOT Finance asked that the MPO produce a full TIP. Although normally the TIP is adopted in May, there are always amendments after the budget is passed by the Legislature at the end of June. The TIP will come to the TAC and PAC in August, for approval by the Council in September. Mr. Galvin again noted that there are not a lot of changes in the new TIP.

**8. \*\*\* MEMBER REPORTS \*\*\***

Mr. Gumrot reported that construction on the Kent County Sports Complex athletic fields is underway north of Milford. He said that although the Thompsonville Road traffic light was removed, there have been no fatalities. Mr. Vetter said that the new traffic pattern at Thompsonville Road will be in place until fall. Mr. Gumrot said that it appears to be working well, which is a good thing, but surprised him because he thought it would be more difficult.

Dr. Collins asked when the West Dover Connector would be finished, and Mr. Vetter said it would be completed in 2017, but he did not know exactly when. Dr. Collins said she was surprised when she realized that deer are still living in that area.

Ms. McGloughlin said that the Firefly festival improves every year and that it was not difficult to get around Dover during the event. Dr. Collins said there was still a traffic back-up on Thursday around 5:00 pm on College Road from Route 8 to US13. Mr. Contant said he went through at 6:00 pm with no trouble, and Mr. Gumrot felt that was a minimal inconvenience.

**9. Staff Reports –**

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

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

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

Mr. Vetter reported that there will be money from FY16 to roll over into the FY17 budget. He noted that the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan public workshop was held earlier in June, and that a section on sea level rise is included in the Plan.

Ms. Layton reported on the outreach for the MTP and the MPO participation in summer events such as the Farmers Market and the Wyoming Peach Festival. She also noted that the MPO newsletter is out and that Public Participation Plan public comment period ends on June 30th.

**10. ADJOURN**

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

As the meeting adjourned Ms. Layton presented gift cards to the members to thank them for their participation as PAC members.

**NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, August 23, 2016**