

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

Transportation Programming for the Counties of: Carbon ✧ Monroe ✧ Pike ✧ Schuylkill

January 15, 2019 Technical Planning Committee Meeting Summary and Minutes **9:30 a.m.**

Meeting Location:
NEPA Alliance
1151 Oak Street
Pittston, PA 18640

Technical Planning Committee

| Attendees: | Organization: | Attendees: | Organization: |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| David Bodnar* | Carbon Co. Planning | Mike Rebert | PennDOT District 5-0 |
| Matt Boyer | Commuter Services | Frank Paczewski | State Trans. Comm. |
| John Christy* | Monroe Co. Comm. | Susan Smith* | Schuylkill Co. Planning |
| Steve Fisher* | PennDOT District 4-0 | Brian Snyder* | Pike Co. Planning |
| Chuck Gould* | Chestnuthill Twp. | Tiana Williams* | CCCT/LANTA |
| Ray Green*^ | PennDOT Central | Matt Smoker | FHWA |
| Doyle Heffley*^ | PA House of Reps. | | |
| Peggy Howarth* | MCTA | Alan Baranski | NEPA Alliance |
| Vanessa Koenigkramer* | PennDOT District 5-0 | Annette Ginocchetti | NEPA Alliance |
| John Malinchok* | Sch. Planning Comm. | Kate McMahon | NEPA Alliance |
| Christine Meinhart-Fritz* | Monroe Co. Planning | Daniel Yelito | NEPA Alliance |
| Mike Mrozinski* | Pike Co. Planning | | |

*Committee members who voted at this meeting.

^ Participated via phone

Summary of Actions Taken by the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee:

During the course of this meeting the MPO Committee voted on the following actions:

Action 1: Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2018 meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Rebert. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to confirm the email ballot from December 18, 2018. A motion was made by Mr. Gould, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: A motion to apply for Supplemental Planning Funds for the Milford Borough Traffic Study was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Snyder. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: A motion to endorse Ms. McMahon's application to attend the I-95 Corridor Coalition Freight Academy was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Ms. Howarth. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 5: A motion to replace Ms. Meinhart-Fritz as a NEPA MPO representative on the SRTP Board with Ms. Smith was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Mr. Malinchok. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1) Business Items

a) Approval of minutes from the October 16, 2018 Business Meeting

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the November 20, 2018 meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Rebert. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Confirmation of the December 18, 2018 Email Ballot

Ms. McMahon stated that an email ballot for an item that was presented at the November meeting as an administrative action. Following the meeting, it was determined to be an amendment so an email ballot was sent to approve it. It was approved by the committee by a vote of 12-0. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to confirm the email ballot from December 18, 2018. A motion was made by Mr. Gould, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

a) District 4-0 and 5-0 2019-2022 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted combined administrative actions on the 2019 TIP for District 4-0 and 5-0. Ms. Koenigkramer and Mr. Fisher presented the administrative actions.

1) Schuylkill Department Force Permanent Repairs- add federal funds to address the July flooding. 2) SR 739 Shoulder Widening- add ROW phase to the 2019 TIP. The source is the Milford to Matamoras Betterment project. 3) T-516 County Bridge #12- add PE phase to cover advance construction amount. SR 4004 over Pocono Creek- increase and federalize to match 2017 TIP. County Bridge #8- Foundry Road- increase to match advance construct amount on 2017 TIP. The sources are Moseywood Road over I-80 and Long Pond Road over Tunkhannock Creek. 4) PA 33 Median Barrier- increase to cover PE supplement. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. 5) Bushkill Village- add additional Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) funds to the TIP. 6) and 7) 185 adjustments on NEPA Bridge Preservation & Repair 5&6. The NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item is the source. Interstate Informational Item #1) I-80 Exit 308 Realignment- add Utility phase and increase ROW phase. The Interstate Contingency Line Item is the source. Interstate Informational Item #2) I-80 Advance Traffic Study- add study phase to the Interstate TIP. The State Reserve is the source. 8) 209/115 Intersection Improvement project- increase final design due to changes in sidewalk and stormwater management design. Statewide Informational Item #1) 209-Schafer Schoolhouse Road- increase to the PE supplement due to retaining wall and environmental considerations. The HSIP Set Aside Reserve Line Item is the source.

Mr. Rebert stated that they will likely have an amendment for the committee to consider by email ballot for a project to be added to the TIP. They did an inspection of a bridge on SR 940. They are going to have to post the bridge at 23 tons and 28 tons for combinations. They are planning to do an in-house design for a superstructure replacement for the bridge. It will cost about \$600,000. There is a quarry that is located very close to the bridge. They can work with the locals on a detour route. They may have to do an official detour route for tractor trailers. They want to do the repairs as soon as possible. There is another bridge that may be pushed out for a year and it will free up money for these repairs.

b) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions

None.

3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

a) Current Project Status

Mr. Rebert provided an update on the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside, Multimodal Transportation Fund and Appalachian Regional Commission projects in District 5-0. Mr. Rebert also provided an update on the Bridge Projects in District 5-0.

Mr. Fisher provided an update on the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside, Multimodal Transportation Fund and Appalachian Regional Commission projects in District 4-0. Mr. Fisher also provided an update on the Bridge Projects in District 4-0.

b) NEPA MPO Strategic Plan

Mr. Baranski stated that we have been in touch with the selected consultant Michael Baker International and are working to finalize a contract. Once the contract is drafted, we will run it by the Policy Board for approval. We are looking to add some additional dates for meetings, and we will send out a Doodle poll to check availability. We may also extend the February meeting to be a kick off meeting for the strategic plan. We also plan to do a TIP after action review as part of the strategic plan process. The TIP development process has already kicked off. Mr. Baranski stated that the Financial Guidance Workgroup will have its first meeting next week and he will participate in it. Mr. Baranski also stated that the UPWP development process is also beginning as well. NEPA staff also participates in the UPWP Workgroup which held its first meeting in December. We plan to engage the NEPA MPO UPWP subcommittee again as we get into the process of developing the next two year work program.

c) PennDOT Connects Initiative

Mr. Baranski stated that we have a few PennDOT Connects meetings on the calendar for some bridge projects. Ms. Koenigkramer stated that there is a new PennDOT Connects system that is being rolled out. The Project Identification Form will be able to be completed and signed electronically. Mr. Baranski stated that we have training on the system coming up in a week or two. We are still working on scheduling the PennDOT Connect sessions for municipalities. We are scheduling two sessions in our region. We are looking to have one in Monroe County at the Public Safety Center. We will also coordinate one in District 4-0. We hope to have it in by the end of the first quarter but it may be later. Mr. Fisher asked where the one in District 4-0 will be. Ms. McMahon stated that we hope to hold it at the Lackawanna County Public Safety Center. Mr. Christy asked that the water and sewer companies are invited to the sessions so they can learn about the process and the municipalities can get some contacts with them.

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz asked about the PennDOT Connects system and HOPs. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz asked if PennDOT Connects meeting is not required for HOPs unless the consultant for the project requests one. Ms. Koenigkramer stated that there is some outreach to the municipalities during the HOP process. Mr. Rebert stated that they reach out to the municipality but do not always reach out to the county. Mr. Rebert stated that they cannot change the scope of the project during the HOP process. They have to do a traffic study and PennDOT determines what improvements they need to do to receive the HOP. Ms. Smith stated that in Schuylkill County, the planning office does the subdivision for about half of the municipalities. It would be helpful to get contacted for the HOPs where the county does the subdivision for the municipality. Mr. Rebert stated that if the county wants to be included, they can be. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz stated that they are sometimes invited by the municipality, especially for the bigger projects. Mr. Baranski asked if it is possible to change the process so the counties are invited. Mr. Rebert stated that they could do that, but they would receive all of them. It is hard to filter them for only bigger

projects. Ms. Smith stated that they can provide a list of the municipalities that they do subdivision review in order to receive notice about the HOPs.

d) Functional Classification Review

Ms. McMahon stated that we are moving along with our functional classification review. We have completed our review in Monroe County. We met with the staff in Monroe County to go over all the changes and show them on the map that Nettie made. We decided to meet with PennDOT District 5-0 staff to go over the changes to get their concurrence. We will be meeting with District 5-0 staff on January 31st to go over the Monroe County changes. We also requested a meeting with District 4-0 to go over the changes in Pike County. That meeting will be held on January 28th. We are also meeting with Carbon County on January 25th for a second time to continue the review there. We may be able to wrap up the review at that meeting. Once we are done with Carbon, we will meet with District 5-0 again to go over those changes and then we will move on to Schuylkill County. We hope to complete the functional classification review by the summer. Mr. Smoker stated that the review is a priority for FHWA and they commend the staff, counties and PennDOT for working on the review.

e) Jim Thorpe Parking Study/Complete Streets Analysis

Mr. Baranski stated that the study is moving along. We are in the last phase of the study and recommendations. We see it wrapping up in the next 90 days. We will have a presentation for the Technical Committee once the study is done to review how the process evolved and the final recommendations were developed.

f) Milford Borough Traffic Study

Mr. Baranski stated that we met with Pike County Planning staff and a Milford Borough Councilman regarding traffic issues in Milford Borough. We discussed the issues and ways to address them. It is similar to the Jim Thorpe Borough issues but it is on a smaller scale. We would like to pursue Supplemental Planning Funds to review the issues and come up with recommendations. There is a funding round for Supplemental Planning Funds through Central Office that is due by the end of February. Mr. Baranski stated that we would like an action from the committee to pursue Supplemental Planning Funds for the study. Mr. Mrozinski stated that there will be a 20% match for the study and the borough is willing to come up with it. Milford Borough is the county seat, a tourism town and is on a national bike route. They have worked to implement traffic calming and have done a number of streetscape projects over the years. Mr. Baranski stated that he will talk with the consultant for the Jim Thorpe study to get an idea what the study would cost. Jim Thorpe was \$100,000 and we expect it to be much less. Mr. Christy asked if NEPA is funding the study. Mr. Baranski stated that NEPA will apply to PennDOT for competitive planning funds. It requires a 20% match which will be provided by the locals. A motion to apply for Supplemental Planning Funds for the Milford Borough Traffic Study was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Snyder. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith asked about the possibility to doing some of the strategic plan meetings in other locations to see some of the major projects in the region so the committee members from other areas can get familiar with them. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz stated that she agrees it would be good at least for the county planning directors to do a tour to get more familiar with other areas of the MPO region. Ms. Smith stated that she can look at projects on a map, but nothing is better than seeing an area in person.

g) I-95 Corridor Coalition Freight Academy

Mr. Baranski stated that we have been looking to address freight issues in our region, especially along the interstates. We are planning to do an inventory of our freight generators as well. The I-95 Corridor conducts a Freight Academy in New Jersey. We would like to send Kate to the Freight Academy. It is a competitive program. Mr. Smoker stated that it is a great program. Two FHWA staff have attended the program in the past. We would like a motion from the committee endorsing her application to attend the

Freight Academy. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Ms. Howarth. The motion passed unanimously.

h) Commuter Services Update

Mr. Boyer stated that they are doing new employee orientations at the Amazon Distribution Center at the Humboldt Industrial Park, the Walmart Distribution Center in High Ridge and at Great Wolf Lodge. They have also done outreach meetings at Penn State Lion Launch, Lehigh-Carbon Community College and the Tamaqua Chamber. They have also met with the EDSI office in Monroe County. The state labor employment offices are good because they provide travel options to their clients and they can also help Commuter Services make contacts with employers. There is a new program update for the last six months which was provided to everyone.

Mr. Boyer stated that there is an SRTP board meeting tomorrow. They will be confirming a new slate of board members at that meeting. Mr. Baranski stated that we currently have three members from the NEPA MPO that are assigned to the SRTP Board. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, Ms. Howarth and Kathy Henderson from Carbon County are the current voting members from the NEPA MPO. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz would like to step down from the SRTP Board and be replaced by Ms. Smith to provide representation from Schuylkill County. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Mr. Malinchok to reassign said seat. The motion passed unanimously.

4) Other Business

Mr. Rebert stated that they had the I-80 Reconstruction Project Public Meeting at Stroudsburg High School in December. They had about 250 people attend the meeting. Mr. Smoker asked if the I-80 study that was in the administrative actions came out of the public meeting. Mr. Rebert stated that the study is actually to look at options off of Interstate 80 to address issues on SR 611.

Mr. Baranski stated that there have been meetings on restoring passenger rail from New Jersey into Monroe County. A committee has been meeting regularly to determine what steps need to be taken to restore rail. The committee has applied for funding through the Local Share Account and the Appalachian Regional Commission to update engineering costs to restore rail and do bridge work on the line. Mr. Baranski will keep the committee updated as the project progresses.

Mr. Paczewski stated that the State Transportation Commission will be meeting on September 19th in Jim Thorpe. A location for the meeting is to be determined.

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.