

Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

October 25, 2016 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:
David Bodnar*	Carbon Co. Planning
Kerry Fields*	PennDOT District 5-0
Steve Fisher*	PennDOT District 4-0
Amanda Leindecker	PennDOT District 5-0
Rob Mordan	Commuter Services
Michael Mrozinski*	Pike County Planning
Tony Prudenti*	West Penn Twp.
Ryan Richards	Carbon County Planning
Susan Smith*	Schuylkill County Planning
Ron Tirpak*	Carbon Engineering
Larry West	Sen. John Blake's Office
Eric Ziegmont	Commuter Services

Attendees:	Organization:
Alan Baranski	NEPA Alliance
Jeff Box	NEPA Alliance
Nettie Ginocchetti	NEPA Alliance
Kate McMahon	NEPA Alliance
Daniel Yelito	NEPA Alliance

Conference Call:

Micah Gursky*	St. Luke's Hospital
Peggy Howarth*	MCTA
Christine Meinhart*	Monroe County Planning

*Committee members who voted at this meeting.

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: Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the September 20, 2016 meeting. Mr. Mrozinski noted that Mr. Fisher was listed as being from District 5-0, not District 4-0 on page 2 of the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Bodnar to accept the minutes with the correction, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed.

Mr. Mrozinski called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

1) Business Items

Approval of minutes from the September 20, 2016 Business Meeting

Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the September 20, 2016 meeting. Mr. Mrozinski noted that Mr. Fisher was listed as being from District 5-0, not District 4-0 on page 2 of the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Bodnar to accept the minutes with the correction, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

a) District 4-0 2015-2018 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

None.

b) District 5-0 2015-2018 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted 5 administrative actions as presented by Ms. Fields on behalf of PennDOT District 5-0.

Administrative Actions: 1) Cressona wall repair on SR 3004- Increase to start ROW phase to address emergency repairs to collapsed retaining wall. SR209-SR901 Intersection – reduce to meeting low bid with inspection and consultant service and Highway Line Item are partial source. 61 Recon St Clair-Frackville is the balancing source. 2) Stony Creek Bridge- advance funds for commitments obligated to date. SR 3005 over WB Schuylkill- reduce to actual obligations and aligning it with anticipated need. SR2030/ I-80 Bridge is the balancing source. The Highway Line Item is the partial source. 3) Repair/Monitor Wetlands in Carbon County- increase to environmental line item to comply with MS4 permit requirements. BR Reserve and Repair- advance funds for encumbrances and expenditures to date. Cash flow and increase funding to match current expenses and encumbrances for 115 Widening and Ramp Improvements, Mahantango Creek Trib, Deferred ADA Ramps and Pine Creek Bridge. The Highway and Bridge Reserve Line Item is a partial source. 4) SR 1003 over Brodhead Creek, Pottsville St. Bridge Replacement, 2011 over Big Meadow, Fritz Valley Rd Normal Ck, Tobyhanna Ck Br II- advance funds and encumbrances to date. SR 2030/I-80 Bridge and the Highway and Bridge Line Item are the partial source. 5) Repair/Monitor Wetlands Carbon County- increase to cover wetland environmental work. Gold Star Highway Resurface- cash flow a portion of funds to match current expenses and encumbrances. The Highway and Bridge Line Item is the partial source.

District 5-0 2017-2020 TIP Amendment and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted 3 administrative actions as presented by Ms. Fields on behalf of PennDOT District 5-0.

Administrative Actions: 1) Tidewood Industrial Park Access Road- Appalachian Regional Commission selected project with approved amount. 2) Delano Industrial Park Access Road- Appalachian Regional Commission selected project with approved amount. 3) Reprogramming funds that were not carried over from the previous TIP- Fritz Valley Road over Normal Creek- Reprogram UTL phase not carried over from 2015 TIP during 2017 TIP development, updated estimated need by project manager. White St over Big Meadow Rd- reprogram FD phase not carried over during 2017 TIP development. US 209 over Wabash Ck Arch- reprogram UTL and ROW phase not carried over during 2017 TIP development. Stites Tunnel Bridge, Hollow Rd Bridge over Shawnee Creek and Highway & Bridge Line Item are the source.

Ms. Smith asked if SEDCO was the applicant for the ARC projects? Ms. Fields stated that they were. Mr. Box noted that they were the applicant along with the municipality. Rush Township and Delano Townships were the applicants along with SEDCO. Mr. Box stated that NEPA can provide more information about what the scope of the project is.

Mr. Baranski asked if there will be any other adjustments from the 2015 TIP. Ms. Leindecker stated that these are the last of the administrative actions for the 2015 TIP.

District 5-0 Repurposed Earmarks

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted one administrative action for a repurposed earmark as presented by Ms. Fields on behalf of PennDOT District 5-0. 1) Scotrun-Swiftwater- assignment of repurposed earmark from I-80 Exits 298-299 from 2004 Appropriations bill and I-80 Exit at Stony Hollow Road from 2002 Appropriations bill.

Mr. Baranski asked if there be repurposing of the funds does not affect the funding of other projects when they meet their phases? Ms. Fields replied yes. Mr. Baranski asked if there will be other actions for the repurposing of earmarks. Ms. Leindecker replied that there will be another action in Schuylkill County. They are working to find a project that will meet the criteria to receive the funds from the earmark. Ms. Leindecker stated that the project must be NHPP-eligible. Discussions are ongoing. The funds can only be reassigned once and must be spent when it is assigned. Ms. Smith asked if the funds were going to the Rt. 309 project from the Walmart north to McAdoo. Ms. Leindecker stated there was a change in scope and the timeline for the Rt. 309 project no longer meets the criteria to receive the funds. Ms. Smith asked if Rt. 61 is NHPP eligible. Ms. Leindecker replied that only segments of Rt. 61 and Rt. 309 are NHPP-eligible. The functional class does not allow the funds to be used. Mr. Baranski noted that this can be address during the functional classification review that we will undertake.

- c) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions
None.

3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

- a) US DOT Proposed Rulemaking on MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform

Mr. Baranski stated that the original comment period closed and NEPA submitted comments on behalf of the MPO and with the Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO and Lehigh Valley MPO. Over 500 comments were submitted during the first comment period. The comment period was reopened in September, seeking additional information on cost of implementing the rule, possible exceptions to the proposed rule and impacts on planning documents. The second comment period closed on October 24th. NEPA participated in a conference call with AMPO and NADO to discuss the reopening of the comment period. The reopening followed concerns by the Office of Management and Budget concerning the fiscal impacts of the rulemaking. NEPA drafted and submitted comments regarding the issues outlined in the reopening. PennDOT also posted comments as well as Lehigh Valley. At this point, we will wait to see what the final rule looks like and what options are available to address it through Congressional action.

- b) PennDOT Connects Initiative

Mr. Baranski noted that this program was Planning and Engineering 360 and has been renamed PennDOT Connects. Secretary Richards has made this one of her priorities. We have provided a presentation that was shared at the Planning Partners meeting earlier in October. There have been training sessions with the Planning Partners. We attended a session in King of Prussia and another will be held in Montoursville. The program looks to address local concerns regarding pedestrian facilities, multimodal, stormwater and green infrastructure in TIP projects. The purpose is to ensure there is local input earlier in the project development. A policy is currently being developed. Rollout of the program is expected in the spring. It will affect TIP projects that are in the preliminary phases. Mr. Mrozinski noted that the coordination will be difficult in municipalities that have limited staff. Mr. Baranski agreed that the level of municipality management varies across the state. It cannot be a one-size-fits-all program. Mr. Baranski also noted that documentation is necessary to incorporate additions into TIP projects and many municipalities have not updated their comprehensive plans in decades. Mr. Baranski stated that the PennDOT Connects ties into the LPN process. Ms. Smith asked if we need to complete LPN forms for the TIP that was just adopted. Mr. Fisher noted that the projects that were included in the 2017 TIP were not new projects so the LPN forms were not required during the 2017 TIP development.

Ms. Smith noted that a refresher on the LPN program may be necessary when we need to fill them out again.

c) Critical Urban Freight Corridor and Critical Rural Freight Corridor Designations

Mr. Baranski stated that a presentation was included in the meeting packet regarding these designations. There are provisions in the FAST Act to designate Critical Urban Freight Corridors and Critical Rural Freight Corridors. The designations will make the road segments eligible for additional funding. There is a limited number of miles of each type of freight corridors within the state and there is criteria that must be met for a road to be considered for the designation including percentage of truck traffic, freight generators, etc. Each Planning Partner has been tasked with identifying candidate road segments for the freight corridor designation. They would like to receive the recommendations by the end of the year but it can extend into early 2017. The committee needs to review the freight data to select road segment candidates for the designations. Data has been provided by PennDOT through PennShare. Ms. Smith noted that agricultural facilities, mining, grain elevators, etc are considered as freight generators. There could be many of these freight generators within the county. Ms. McMahon noted that there are requirements for the roadway including percentage of truck traffic, connections to other roads on the freight network. It could help narrow down which roads are eligible and then identify if there are any freight generators nearby. Ms. Smith asked about the format of the data that is eligible. Mr. Baranski stated that we will have to review that data is available and share that with the committee. Ms. Smith stated that there is commodity flow information available at the county level that could assist in the identification of these road segments. Mr. Baranski suggested providing the data to the county planning and then doing a work session at the November or December committee meeting to review the data and make selections.

d) 2017-2020 STIP Approval and Planning Finding

Mr. Baranski stated that FHWA approved the 2017 STIP and provided the planning funding letter to PennDOT. It includes strengths within the commonwealth and the TIP process. The letter also noted some weaknesses which include that some Planning Partners' work programs are generic. NEPA's work program is more specific and that has been noted by FHWA. Mr. Baranski noted that the TIP development process for the 2019 TIP will begin shortly.

e) Commuter Services

Mr. Mordan reported that Commuter Services has done events at Hudson Bay which have successful. They been working with the Humboldt Industrial Park as well. They conducted meetings with Michaels and Hansen Technologies. They also have Safety Days coming up. They have been very successful at the Amazon Distribution Center. They had two events and got 125 signups at Amazon alone, with 216 total employees registered in the NEPA region in the last month. Mr. Mrozinski asked if they can do anything to assist. Pike County has limitations. Mr. Mordan noted that they are looking into new strategies with Woodloch to make it work. He noted that if anyone has HR contacts, they are happy to meet with them.

f) Coordinated Transit- Human Services Transportation Plan

Mr. Baranski noted the Technical Committee recommended approval of the plan at the September meeting. The Policy Board is scheduled to meet on November 2nd and we expect them to approve the plan. Once it is approval, the final plan will be printed and an electronic copy will be put on the website.

4) Other Business

Functional Classification

Mr. Baranski stated that at the Planning Partners meeting, we had discussion with our neighboring MPOs including Lackawanna-Luzerne and Northern Tier. We would like to have the discussion occur at the district level. We plan to start in District 4-0 and Pike County. Once we have worked through the

process, we will move to District 5-0 and the other MPO counties. Ms. Smith noted that Matt Smoker offered to do a presentation. Mr. Baranski agreed and has spoken to Mr. Smoker about doing the presentation in November or December.

Multimodal Transportation Fund

Mr. Baranski stated that one project was funded through the Multimodal Transportation Fund. It was submitted by Pocono Mountain Industries. A new funding round for the Multimodal Transportation Fund just opened. The deadline to apply is December 16th. Ms. Smith asked if there is any update on the TAP projects. Ms. McMahon replied that we are still waiting for the announcement on TAP.

5) Adjournment - There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.