

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

March 21, 2017 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:

Marie Bishop*
Matt Boyer
John Christy
James Ferry
Steve Fisher
Micah Gursky*
Peggy Howarth*
Damian Knepper
Vanessa Koenigkramer*
Amanda Leindecker
Christine Meinhart*
Michael Mrozinski*

Organization:

PennDOT District 4-0
Commuter Services
Monroe Co.
Luzerne Co. Planning
PennDOT District 4-0
St. Luke's Hospital
MCTA
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT District 5-0
Monroe Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning

Attendees:

Tony Prudenti*
Michael Sherman
Susan Smith*
Matt Smoker
Brian Snyder
Ron Tirpak*
Eric Ziegmont

Alan Baranski
Kate McMahan

Organization:

West Penn Township
FHWA
Schuylkill Co. Planning
FHWA
Pike Co. Planning
Carbon Engineering
Commuter Services

NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance

*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 February 21, 2017 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Tirpak to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Meinhart. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion to approve an amendment to the FY2016-18 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to include funding for the Jim Thorpe Parking and Complete Streets funding, contingent on a budget information correction. A motion was made by Mr. Tirpak, seconded by Ms. Meinhart. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion to approve the amendment from District 5-0, contingent on approval from the PMC. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart, seconded by Ms. Howarth. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion to submit the Critical Urban Freight Corridor and Critical Rural Freight Corridor recommendations to PennDOT with the clarifications made. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Meeting Minutes

1) Business Items

a) Approval of minutes from the February 21, 2017 Business Meeting

Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2017 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Tirpak to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Meinhart. The motion passed unanimously.

b) FY 2016-18 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment

Mr. Baranski stated that NEPA was successful in securing supplemental planning funds from PennDOT for completion of a Parking Analysis and Complete Streets Study for Downtown Jim Thorpe. The amount from PennDOT is \$80,000 and does require a \$20,000 local match. NEPA was also successful in securing an additional \$20,000 in transit funds. With the addition of those funds, our UPWP needs to be amended to include them. Mr. Baranski stated that the funds are included in the two budget tables. Mr. Baranski stated that a motion needs to be made to add those funds. Mr. Tirpak stated that there is an error in addition on the budget tables. Mr. Baranski clarified that the funds for the Jim Thorpe Parking study is divided 25/75 between the two years and we are also adding the transit funds. Mr. Tirpak stated that there is still an issue with the addition. Mr. Baranski agreed that the numbers do not total the correct amount. Mr. Baranski stated that we will correct the budget tables before submitting them to PennDOT. Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion to approve an amendment to the FY2016-18 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to include funding for the Jim Thorpe Parking and Complete Streets, and transit funding, contingent on a budget information correction. A motion was made by Mr. Tirpak, seconded by Ms. Meinhart. The motion passed unanimously.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

a) District 4-0 2017-2020 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

None.

b) District 5-0 2017-2020 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted 6 administrative actions as presented by Ms. Koenigkramer on behalf of PennDOT District 5-0.

Administrative Actions: 1) PA 390 over Leavitts Branch and SR 3010 over Pohopoco Creek- addition of Final Design to 2017 TIP. The sources are SR2010 over McMichaels Creek, PA924 over SR4030 RR, NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. 2) I-80 Resurfacing Exits 284-293- increasing construction by \$2 million to include ramp work within the limits of work. The Interstate Preservation Line Item is the source. 3) Mansion Hill Rock Slide Mitigation and SR3005 over Schuylkill WB- increase for updated estimate. Gordon Mountain Road Truck Signing- increase for FD supplement for DEP revisions. 209 Mt Nebo to Municipal and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item are the source. 4) Co. Bridge 123 over L. Schuylkill River- add to TIP with Act 13 funds. 5) Pine Creek Bridge- Increase construction phase due to increased scope. Also aligning with anticipated need. 443 Roadway Improvements, White Street Bridge Removal due to a reduced bid and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item are the source. 6) PA 901 over Schuylkill River- updated estimate for final design. The NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item are the source.

Ms. Koenigkramer presented 1 amendment on behalf of PennDOT District 5-0.

Amendment: 1) 209/115 Int. Imp- Phase 2- increase to fully fund ROW need for increased scope, demolition, appraisal fees, personnel services and operating expenses. It is contingent upon PMC approval. The scope was increased from a signal to a roundabout which has increased the ROW necessary for the project. The sources are the 209/115 Int. Imp. construction phase, SR209 Frable to Lesh Rd, I-80 Bridge Ramp to SR8024, 61 Recon Haven-St. Clair and the CMAQ and NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Items.

Ms. Howarth asked what PMC stands for? Ms. Koenigkramer stated it is Program Management Committee. Mr. Mrozinski asked what it does? Ms. Koenigkramer stated that when a project goes over \$1 million, it goes before this committee. The committee includes the Secretary, Central Office personnel and FHWA. Mr. Mrozinski stated that he was surprised by the increase but understands if the project is now a roundabout. Ms. Meinhart stated that it is actually two roundabouts and that has been the design for the project since 2015. The original estimate was \$2.5-\$3.5 million. Ms. Meinhart asked if the increase means there will be more right-of-way acquisitions? Ms. Leindecker stated that there are 56 sliver takes. Ms. Leindecker stated that the alternative wasn't actually selected until last fall. There were some issues with sidewalks and drainage issues. On the last TIP, the ROW funds were used for final design and the ROW would be funded on the current TIP but couldn't be included until the alternative was selected. Mr. Christy asked about the sliver takes and why the estimates have changed so much. Ms. Leindecker stated that the project manager may be able to answer those questions but the original project manager retired. The estimate was based on a consultant's estimate and when it went to PennDOT's ROW staff, the estimate changed dramatically. Mr. Christy stated that the project has been dragged out for quite some time. Ms. Leindecker stated that the environmental clearance was completed in December 2015. The final design was completed in November 2016. Ms. Meinhart stated that the concern is about how many more commercial properties were affected.

Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion to approve the amendment from District 5-0, contingent on approval from the PMC. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart, seconded by Ms. Howarth. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Smoker stated that the amendment won't be submitted to FHWA until after PMC approves it. Ms. McMahan asked that she be notified when the PMC approves it so the eSTIP can be submitted. Ms. Leindecker stated that she will let her know.

- c) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions
None.

3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

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

Mr. Baranski stated that we have provided the committee with a list of the candidates for the Critical Urban and Critical Rural Freight Corridors based on the committee's recommendations. We have classified them into Category A and Category B. We would like to submit them to Central Office with the committee's approval. Mr. Mrozinski asked how the recommendations were put into the two categories? Mr. Baranski stated that they are based on the truck ADT and the input from the committee. Ms. Smith asked if they are in any order within Category A and Category B? Mr. Baranski stated that they are not. Mr. Mrozinski noted that there is one submission within the urban category. Ms. Smith stated that Lowe's Distribution Center needs to be added to the submission for Rt. 901 since the trucks will go out both ways. SR4007 and SR901 should have the same freight generators listed since trucks will go out either interchange.

Ms. Smith asked to confirm that our submission is not too late? Mr. Baranski stated that we are not too late. PennDOT has acknowledged that there were some issues with this process. Ms. Meinhart asked

what the next step in the process is. Mr. Baranski stated that there is a limited amount of mileage for each type of freight corridor within the state according to the FAST Act. So PennDOT now has the task of determining which of the recommendations will be selected within the mileage cap. They will then be submitted to FHWA. Once the designations are made, those segments will be eligible for funding for freight-related improvements. Mr. Prudenti stated that we are submitting a lot of mileage for such a small pot. Mr. Smoker stated that many MPOs have submitted a significant amount of mileage, as much as 100-200 miles and are leaving the decision to PennDOT. Mr. Smoker stated that we will revisit this again in about 5 years.

Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion to submit the Critical Urban Freight Corridor and Critical Rural Freight Corridor recommendations to PennDOT with the clarifications made. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

b) PennDOT Connects Initiative

Mr. Baranski stated that we are proceeding with implementing the PennDOT Connects initiative. PennDOT Connects formalizes the process to ensure local government input into projects. There are training sessions MPOs and the Districts scheduled for this spring. Outreach at the local level is also expected. Projects on the 2017 TIP that have not begun preliminary engineering will be included in the roll out of PennDOT Connects. Mr. Fisher stated that with the effort moving forward, it will be included as part of the Linking Planning and NEPA process to help streamline everything and we don't have multiple processes going on. Mr. Mrozinski asked if District 5-0 has designated someone as the contact for PennDOT Connects. Ms. Koenigkramer is the contact person for District 5-0. She stated that the project managers will be involved as well but she is the point of contact. Mr. Baranski stated that we will soon have a list of projects that will go through the PennDOT Connect process and we will start meeting with the affected municipalities. Ms. Smith asked if maintenance projects will be included in the PennDOT Connect process? Ms. Leindecker stated that for now, only TIP projects are included. Ms. Smith stated that some substantial roadway projects through Maintenance and the municipalities raise concerns about drainage, etc. Ms. Smith also asked about the LPN forms? Are we supposed to be completing them? Mr. Fisher stated that we haven't added new projects to the TIP due to financial constraints. Only new projects require LPN forms. Mr. Baranski stated that as we move projects off the LRTP and onto the TIP, we will fill out LPN forms. Ms. McMahan stated that we have done LPN forms for all of the projects on the four-year TIP. When we did the 2017 TIP update, we had to complete one new LPN form. All of the other projects were carryover projects and we have already done LPN forms 2-3 years ago. Ms. Howarth asked if transit projects are included in PennDOT Connects? Transit agencies do more than buy buses. They have a few significant projects coming up. Mr. Baranski stated that is unclear.

Ms. Bishop stated that Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman from PennDOT is scheduled to address the MPO in April to address PennDOT Connects. Mr. Baranski stated that we haven't locked in a date yet but he will address a joint meeting with the Technical Committee and Policy Board.

c) US DOT Rule on MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform

Mr. Baranski stated that NEPA submitted a letter to go to our federal delegation regarding the Final Rule on MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform and requesting action to reverse the rule. Mr. Baranski stated that the Senate has passed a bill to repeal the rule. It was done with unanimous consent. It is also in the Transportation Committee on the House side. We anticipate action on the House side as well. We will keep the committee informed.

d) Commuter Services Update

Mr. Boyer provided an update on Commuter Services. Mr. Boyer provided copies of their annual report. Commuter Services is in its 12th year. They were planning their 100th meeting but it was cancelled due

to weather. Bike to Work Week is coming up so they will celebrate that. Commuter Services has a presentation at the PPTA conference in April. April is also when they do their performance monitoring. They have added a few more partners within our region.

e) Functional Classification Review

Mr. Smoker with FHWA provided a presentation on Functional Classification. (Presentation is attached.)

Mr. Baranski stated that a lot has occurred in the region since the last functional classification review was undertaken and it effects how the roadways currently function. We need to review the classification and make sure it makes sense, especially as the roadways flow between the counties and into other areas. We also have to keep in mind that if we elevate the functional classification of a roadway, the design standards change and require more funding for projects. We are going to start the functional classification review in Pike County and then move to the counties within District 5-0.

Mr. Smoker stated that there are about 1,200 miles in the NEPA region on the federal-aid system and the 62 of those miles are locally owned. Only 240 of those miles are on the National Highways System. So less than 20% of the federal-aid roadways are eligible for National Highway System funding which accounts for 60% of the federal funding available for the NEPA area.

4) Other Business

Mr. Baranski stated that there will be renovations occurring at the NEPA office so we will not be holding the next several meetings here. We anticipate that the May and June meetings will have to be moved. We will keep everyone informed.

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.