

# Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

## **May 17, 2017 Technical Planning Committee Meeting Summary and Minutes** 9:30 a.m.

### **Meeting Location:**

**Northampton Community College, Monroe Campus  
2411 Route 715  
Tannersville, PA**

### **Technical Planning Committee**

#### **Attendees:**

Marie Bishop\*  
Dave Bekisz\*  
David Bodnar\*  
Brendan Cotter\*  
Ray Green\*  
Peggy Howarth\*  
Vanessa Koenigkramer\*  
Chris Kufro  
Amanda Leindecker  
Christine Meinhart\*

#### **Organization:**

PennDOT District 4-0  
STS  
Carbon Co. Planning  
LANTA/CCCT  
PennDOT Central  
MCTA  
PennDOT District 5-0  
PennDOT District 5-0  
PennDOT District 5-0  
Monroe Co. Planning

#### **Attendees:**

Michael Mrozinski\*  
Ryan Richards  
Susan Smith\*  
Matt Smoker  
Brian Snyder  
Ron Tirpak\*  
  
Alan Baranski  
Kate McMahan

#### **Organization:**

Pike Co. Planning  
Carbon Co. Planning  
Schuylkill Co. Planning  
FHWA  
Pike Co. Planning  
Carbon Engineering  
  
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 March 21, 2017 meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Smith to accept the minutes, seconded by Ms. Howarth. 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 March 21, 2017 Business Meeting**

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

#### **2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions**

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

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted one administrative action as presented by Ms. Bishop on behalf of PennDOT District 4-0.

Administrative Action: 1) SR739 Shld Widening - decrease phase due to the project being obligated on the prior TIP and the funds are returned to the HSIP Set Aside Line Item. Ms. Bishop stated that the project is funded to the bid amount plus inspection.

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

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted 16 administrative actions as presented by Ms. Koenigkramer on behalf of PennDOT District 5-0.

Administrative Actions: 1) I-380 Median Barrier- increase to cover work order and cover AUC for the PE phase. The HSIP Set Aside Reserve is the source. 2) Consultant Assistance for TE/TA project and PA 115 Widening. The source is SR 2030 Ramp Brdg over I-80 and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item. 3) SR 61/209 Intersection- construction phase adjusted for new estimated let date of 12/30/18. The HSIP Set Aside Reserve is the source. 4) I-81 Frackville/Mahanoy City - decrease project to match low-bid plus inspection. 5) P3 Change Order Line Item - provide funding for change order #11 due to shoulder and drainage swale work. The NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item is the source. 6) NEPA AWPM- add construction phase to the TIP. The NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item is the source. 7) Hallet Rd over Brodhead Creek- increase to fully fund the construction phase. SR 2003 over Pine Creek and SR 3005 over Schuylkill WB- advance to align with anticipated need. The NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item is the source. 8) PA 390 over Leavitts Branch- fully fund construction phase. Pine Creek Bridge- fully fund Right of Way. The NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item is the source. 9) NEPA High Friction Surface- add construction phase to the TIP. 209 Mt. Nebo to Municipal- increase needed, add preliminary engineering to TIP. SR61/209 Intersection- aligning with anticipated need. The Safety Line Item is the source. 10) Delivery Consult Assistance - increase for ARC project management- Patterson St Resurface and TE/TA project - remove excess funds that are no longer needed. NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item is the source. 11) PA 390 over Leavitts Branch - increase to fully fund construction phase. SR 2006 Culvert Replacement - remove excess funds. The NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item is the source. 12) NHPP and 581 adjustments to several projects to align with anticipated need - Mansion Hill Rock Slide Mitigation, Interchange Rd Resurface, Hamilton West Resurface, SR209 Frable to Lesh Rd, SR 209 Gilbert to Leslie, SR 61 Restoration Phase 1 & 2, Schuylkill Haven to St. Clair. The sources are PA 309 Rush-Kline Twp PE Phase, Gold Star Highway Resurface and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item. 13) NEPA High Friction Surface - increase to fully fund construction phase. 248 Barrier Install and Safety Line Item are the source. 14) 309 Pavement Preservation - for PMC write up for \$2.4 million to be used to use them in fiscal year 2017. Revised estimate for I-80 bridge ramp. 443 Roadway Improvements, PA 33 Median Barrier and NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item are the source. 15) SR 1014 over Wallenpaupack Creek - remove 185 funds and return to the NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item. Maintenance funds will be used to purchase a box culvert. 16) Cherry Creek Bridge I - increase to fully fund construction. Stony Creek Bridge, SR 2003 over Pine Creek and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Line Item are the source.

c) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted administrative actions as presented by Ms. Howarth on behalf of Monroe County Transportation System.

Administrative Action: 1) Wash Bay Refurbishment - the project was originally requested as a rural grantee, prior to the ability to connect to public sewer and prior to the P3 CNG project. Engineers conducted a site review of the wash bay and provided an updated estimate to complete the project.

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted administrative actions as presented by Mr. Bekisz on behalf of Schuylkill Transportation System.

Administrative Actions: 1) 2 CNG Buses with Communication- move to 2018. 2) Administrative Support Vehicle- purchase replacement for current admin vehicle - update price and funding sources. 3) Operations Support Vehicle - Purchase replacement for operation support vehicle - update price and funding sources. 4) Maintenance Support Vehicle - delete project. Current maintenance utility vehicle is still in usable condition. 5) Small Transit Buses - decrease from 6 to 3 small transit buses. 6) Maintenance Support Vehicle - delete project. Current dump truck is still in usable condition. It only needs a new box. 7) Facility Upgrade - move project from 2017 to 2018. 8) Med-Large Transit Buses- move project from 2017 to 2018. 9) Digital Gas Pumps, software & ground maintenance needed for installation - upgrade fuel pumps to better control fuel consumption. 10) Replace Dump Box on Maintenance Vehicle - dump truck is still in good condition but needs to new box due to rusting and holes. 11) Trailer for Skidsteer - purchase trailer to transfer skidsteer and use at both facilities. 12) AED Devices - to purchase 3 AEDs to utilize CPR certified personnel. 13) Saint Clair Facility alarm system and building entry card reader - repair/replace parts of outdated security system from 1988. 14) 4 CNG Buses w/Communication equipment - purchase 4 CNG buses to replace current fixed route diesel buses. 15) 2 CNG Buses w/ Communication equipment - update the funding sources.

Mr. Bekisz highlighted one additional administrative action: 1) Engine Rebuild- rebuild engine for bus which has not reached the end of its useful life.

Mr. Mrozinski asked about administrative action #5 and whether the small buses are CNG buses. Mr. Bekisz stated that they are not CNG buses. Mr. Mrozinski asked about the timeline for the CNG station? Mr. Bekisz stated that they are looking at building a new facility close to their current one. The CNG station is dependent on that but they are moving ahead with purchasing CNG buses.

Mr. Baranski stated that MCTA is also getting a CNG station. Mr. Baranski asked when it is scheduled for construction? Ms. Howarth stated 2018 but those dates are fluid. The MCTA board is reviewing the agreement. It is also contingent on the extension of the CNG line from Sanofi but they can construct the filling station in the meantime. There is a meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss the CNG line with the interested parties.

### 3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

#### a) US DOT Rule on MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform

Mr. Baranski stated that the US DOT Rule on MPO Coordination has been formally rescinded. The Senate passed a bill to repeal the rule and sent it to the House. The House also passed it and the President signed it into law. The rule has been formally repealed and will no longer go into effect. Mr. Baranski stated that we will continue to work cooperatively with our neighboring MPOs.

#### b) Functional Classification Review

Mr. Baranski stated that we have a meeting scheduled at District 4-0 to begin the process of reviewing our functional classification in Pike County. Wayne County will also be in attendance. We anticipate that the process with Pike County should move quickly. Once Pike County is completed, we will move to the counties in District 5-0. We will be engaging the county planners in this activity. Mr. Smoker stated that the functional review was a finding that came out of the TIP review process. Mr. Baranski stated that there are a lot of reasons to move forward with the review since funding is tied to it. Mr. Meinhart asked how it will proceed? Mr. Baranski stated that we will systematically look at the road network and see if the current classification still makes sense based on the data that is available. With the development that has occurred within the region, we do anticipate some changes in functional

classification. Any change will need to be backed up by data, including traffic counts. Ms. Meinhart asked if it is reliant on GIS? Mr. Baranski stated that yes, GIS will assist in reviewing the classifications. Ms. Meinhart stated that the county does traffic counts and they will make the additional data available. Mr. Mrozinski asked if additional traffic counts will be necessary? Mr. Baranski stated that if the data isn't available, we can work with Central Office to generate it. Ms. Bishop stated that it makes sense to look at when the traffic counts were taken and determine if they need to be updated. Mr. Smoker stated that the counties may want to review the guidance documents from FHWA and then look at the current classification of the roadways in their counties. Mr. Green asked if we are still coordinating with the neighboring MPOs? Mr. Baranski stated that we invited Wayne County to participate in the meeting next week. We'll also continue to coordinate with the other surrounding MPOs. Mr. Smith stated that since this will be a GIS-heavy activity, it may make sense to get all of the GIS folks together to generate regional data sets that are uniform. We can start to have those conversations upfront. Mr. Baranski agreed.

c) 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Program Update

Mr. Baranski stated that we are beginning the process of the TIP update. NEPA staff participates in the Financial Guidance workgroup to look at the funding that is available for the upcoming TIP. We will put together a timeline for the committee that shows all of the TIP activities for the next year. Mr. Baranski stated that he anticipates that this TIP update should go a little smoother than previous TIP updates that were impacted by Act 89 and the FAST Act. We will be looking at all of the projects currently on the TIP and their current status. Ms. Howarth asked about including a study of commuter travel patterns and whether it would be outside of the TIP? Mr. Baranski stated that it would be a planning study. It is included in the NEPA work program and we hope to be able to do it. Ms. Howarth stated that it could assist them coordinate travel outside of Monroe County.

d) 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. A few PennDOT Connects meetings on current TIP projects have already occurred. As additional meetings are held, the county planners will be notified and the local officials will be invited to the meetings to provide input on local needs. There is a planning form that needs to be completed and documents the PennDOT Connects process. Ms. Howarth asked whether transit projects like their wash bay project will fall under this process? Mr. Green stated that project was included on previous TIPs and would not fall under this process. Mr. Kufro stated that the district is still working through the process. They won't be able to do all of the things that a municipality may want but they can document it and assist in identifying funding. It could help leverage funding through sources such as TAP. For the 2019 TIP, they will have the PennDOT Connects meetings in the next few months. Mr. Kufro stated that the district has been doing PennDOT Connects in an informal way before but this is more documented and formalized. Mr. Baranski stated that training for the districts and Planning Partners on PennDOT Connects is ongoing. Municipal training will likely occur after that. Ms. Smith stated that with the municipal elections that are occurring this fall, it would make sense to wait until January to educate the municipal officials since there will be a lot of turnover. Ms. Smith also stated that in the past, during TIP development there were meetings at the district office to go over each project on the TIP, its scope and status, etc. Ms. Smith asked if that will occur this time since it has not occurred in the last TIP cycle. With PennDOT Connects, it may be more important than ever. Mr. Smoker stated that NEPA will develop a TIP timeline or calendar to show when the different aspects of the TIP development will occur. Mr. Baranski agreed and stated that we have the time this cycle to do it right. Ms. Smith stated that it might help to show where the projects have been submitted through various grant programs such as TAP, Green Light Go, etc. It might help to show where there are needs that may not be met at this point.

e) Local Bridge Funding

Mr. Baranski stated that there is a bridge funding chart from FHWA in the meeting packet. Mr. Smoker stated that one of the biggest issues with project eligibility during TIP development was with local bridges. The chart shows how bridge funding eligibility can be determined based on ownership, length, roadway type, etc. The chart can help determine what program a bridge may be eligible for. Mr. Kufro stated that it ties into the functional classification review because changing the functional classification may change which funding program a bridge is eligible. Ms. Smith asked if once the functional classification change is approved, does it automatically become eligible for that type of funding? Mr. Smoker stated they look at functional classification when the request for federal funds is submitted to them.

Mr. Baranski stated that related to this item is a handout on the PA Road Maintenance and Preservation (MaP) Program. The program includes funding for locally-owned bridges that can be leveraged through the passage of the vehicle registration fee by the county. Up to \$2 million can be leveraged on a 50% match basis for locally-owned bridges. Other types of local funds can leverage the state funds. Ms. Smith asked if any of our counties have passed the \$5 registration fee? There are several across the state but none in the MPO region. Ms. Meinhart asked if LSA funds can be used? Ms. McMahan stated that they didn't mention LSA funds. Act 13 funds are eligible but Liquid Fuels funds are not eligible. Mr. Green stated that he can check on that. Mr. Baranski stated that Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman will be at the June meeting and he may be able to address that.

f) PennDOT Grant Programs

- i) Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set Aside Program - Ms. McMahan stated that a round of funding will open this summer. Applications will begin in early July and will close in September. Ms. McMahan stated that she participated in the Transportation Alternatives Work Group and will be looking at the guidance document to see if there are any changes necessary for this round. The program will likely be similar to the previous round. Our region participates in the statewide pool. Last round we submitted four projects in our region and one project was funded.
- ii) Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) Program - Ms. McMahan stated that the Automated Red Light Enforcement Grant Program typical opens June 1<sup>st</sup> and runs through June 30<sup>th</sup>. An announcement has not been made yet but will likely be made in the coming week or two. Ms. Meinhart asked for an explanation of the program. Ms. McMahan stated that it is similar to Green Light Go in that it is for intersection improvements. ARLE is more flexible since the intersection improvements can include pedestrian improvements, crosswalks, pavement markings, etc. as well as improvements to the traffic signals. ARLE projects go through the state; they aren't ranked by the MPO.

g) Commuter Services Update

Mr. Baranski stated that the Commuter Services Board is meeting today so they are unavailable. Mr. Baranski stated that Commuter Services will provide the committee with some metrics on how the program is reducing miles traveled, etc. That reporting will occur in July.

**4) Other Business**

- a) Meeting Dates - Mr. Baranski stated that there is a list of tentative meeting dates in the packet. We will need to advertise the meeting dates. We would like everyone to take a look at the meeting dates and let us know if there are any major conflicts that we should be aware of. We will look for an action at the June meeting. With regards to the June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, it will be a joint meeting with the MPO Policy Board. Deputy Secretary Jim Ritzman will be in attendance to discuss PennDOT Connects.

Ms. Meinhart asked about the status of the Jim Thorpe Parking Study. Mr. Baranski stated that we got the signed contract back from PennDOT. We will form a steering committee. A procurement process for a consultant will take place. Mr. Baranski hopes to have a consultant in place by July.

Mr. Smoker stated that he is developing a Technical Assistance plan for the MPO. If there is anything that the committee would like concerning information or training, let us know. Mr. Baranski stated that PennDOT is developing an MPO training manual and we will share it with the committee when it is finished. Ms. Howarth stated that information about the changes between MAP-21 and the FAST Act might be helpful. Mr. Smoker stated that he can address that from FHWA's standpoint but not FTA's. Mr. Green stated that the committee had previously discussed doing a Bike/Ped plan and maybe FHWA could provide some information on that. Ms. Meinhart stated that this is an issue for them, especially with the 9-11 Trail.

## **5) Adjournment**

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.