

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

March 21, 2023 Technical Planning Committee

Meeting Summary and Minutes

9:30 a.m.

Attendees:

David Alas*
Chris Barrett
Megan Beste
Marie Bishop
David Bodnar*
Casey Bottiger
Roger Christman*
John Christy*
Kerry Cox
Steve Fisher*
Brian Funkhouser
Doyle Heffley*
Kathy Henderson
Peggy Howarth*
AJ Jordan*
Vanessa Koenigkramer*
Amanda Leindecker

Organization:

PennDOT Central
PMVB
Rep. Wild's Office
PennDOT District 4-0
Carbon Co. Planning
Michael Baker Intl.
Ross Township
Monroe Co. Commiss.
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT District 4-0
Michael Baker Intl.
PA House of Reps.
CCEDC
MCTA
LANTA
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT District 5-0

Attendees:

Gary Martinaitis*
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*
Mike Mrozinski*
John Petrini
Gene Porochniak
Emma Pugh
Rich Schlameuss
Jonathan Shaw
Brian Snyder*
Susan Smith*
Garry Wentz*

Alan Baranski
Nettie Ginocchetti
Kate McMahon
Daniel Yelito

Organization:

STS
Monroe Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning
PennDOT District 4-0
FHWA
PennDOT District 4-0
MCTA
Luzerne Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning
Schuylkill Co. Planning
NEPA Board

NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance

*Technical Committee members who voted at this meeting

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

During this meeting, the MPO Technical Committee voted on the following actions:

Action 1: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Ms. Howarth to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Smith requested a motion to confirm the email ballot approving the 611 Emergency Rock Slope Mitigation Project Amendment. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, seconded by Mr. Christy. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Ms. Smith requested a motion on adopting the 2023 PM-2 Performance Measure targets. A motion to adopt the PM-2 targets established by PennDOT was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: Ms. Smith requested a motion on adopting the 2023 PM-3 Performance Measure targets. A motion to adopt the PM-3 targets established by PennDOT was made by Mr. Christy, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1) Business Items

a) Approval of minutes from the January 17, 2023 Technical Committee Meeting

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Ms. Howarth to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Confirmation of Email Ballot Approving 611 Emergency Rock Slope Mitigation Project Amendment

Ms. Smith requested a motion to confirm the email ballot approving the 611 Emergency Rock Slope Project Amendment. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, seconded by Mr. Christy. The motion passed unanimously.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

a) District 4-0 and 5-0 2023-2026 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted administrative actions on the 2023 TIP for District 4-0 and 5-0. Mr. Fisher highlighted the actions for District 4-0. Ms. Koenigkramer highlighted the actions for District 5-0.

Action 1- SR 6 Paving-Pike- advance Construction phase and increase to low bid amount. The sources are Milford-Bushkill #2 and the NEPA 4-0 Highway Reserve Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 1- NEPA High Friction Surface- swap regional and Set Aside HSIP funds. The source is the HSIP Set Aside Line Item. Action 2- Mount Pocono Borough Pipes-IDA- add PE phase to cover negotiated amount and internal charges on IDA permanent repair project. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 3- Sterling Road Safety Improvement Area 1- increase for photogrammetry and to cover internal charges on initial agreement. The source is the Safety Regional Reserve Line Item. Action 4- County Bridge #8 Foundry Road- increase to match amount needed for bid advertisement. The sources are the Brockton Mountain Road over Locust Creek and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 5- Rattlin Run Rd Bridge- IDA Permanent Repair- increase to revised utility estimate of allowable reimbursable activity. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 6- 209 Business over Kettle Creek- increase to match damage claim estimate to impacted property owners. The sources are the Raven Run over Shenandoah Creek and NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 2- NEPA Vulnerable Road User Tier 1- add PE and Con phases. The source is the HSIP Set Aside Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 3- Relocate Existing Message Boards 78 WB to 81 NB- increase to cover half of low bid adjustment. NEPA Dynamic Curve Warning Sign- increase to cover half of low bid adjustment. The source is the TSMO Reserve Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 4- NEPA Systemic Safety Improvements- re-add phase to 2023 TIP for advance construct conversion and increase to meet low bid plus inspection cost. The sources are the Safety Regional Reserve Line Item and the HSIP Set Aside Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 5- SR 611 Emergency Rock Slope Mitigation- add 582 funds to Construction phase. Action 7- Relocate Existing Message Boards- 78 WB to 81 NB- regional share of increase for low bid adjustment. The sources are the SR 2024 Ridgeway Street and NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 8- Tremont Road over Swatara Creek- increase for low bid adjustment. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 9- NEPA Dynamic Curve Warning Sign- regional share of increase for low bid adjustment. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 10- Berne Drive over Red Creek Bridge- increase to revised construction estimate. The sources are the Brockton Mountain Road over Locust Creek and NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 11- Glenbrook Road Bridge- Isaias Permanent Repair- increase to revised estimate for design/build project to address electric and

communications costs. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 12- SR 447 over Goose Pond Run- increase for work order to cover delays and item changes. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 13- 209 Schafer School House Road- increase for final design supplement to complete tasks related to ROW plan revisions. The source is the Safety Regional Reserve Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 6- Urban Regional Reserve Line Item- increase the Urban Line Item with NEPA CRPU allocation. The source is the Carbon Reduction Program Reserve Line Item. Action 14- Delivery Consultant Assistance- increase for project management assistance in NEPA region. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 15- SR 715/611 Intersection- add utility phase to cover AC'ed amount. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 16- US 209 over Swatara Creek- increase to cover damage claim estimate in full. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 17- Hamilton West Resurfacing- add final design phase to include negotiated amount and internal charges. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 18- 209 Schafer School House Road- increase to revised estimate and reduce HSIP to overall capped project amount on HSIP form. The sources are the Columbia Street Arch Bridge and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 19- Columbia Street Arch Bridge- swap out STP funds for BRIP funds to cover estimated need on Construction Cost Summary. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 20- Hunters Creek Bridge- add preliminary engineering phase to cover supplement plus internal charges. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 21- Jim Thorpe Preventative Maintenance- increase for final design supplement and internal charges. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item.

Ms. Smith asked about the Congestion Reduction Program (CRP) and what it can be used for. Ms. Koenigkramer stated that the eligibility is similar to CMAQ. PennDOT may be able to swap the funds out. Mr. Baranski stated that we received urban CRP funding for 2022 and 2023 based on our previous urban status. Going forward, we will no longer receive the urban CRP funds, but we will receive rural CRP funds. We are looking at the eligible projects under CMAQ, CRP and TASA. They have similar eligibility for the use of funds. We are in discussion with Central Office about how we can solicit projects for all of the funding sources and match projects up based on their eligibility. We will have more information in the coming months.

Ms. Smith also asked about the reason for swapping STP funds for BRIP funds. Ms. Koenigkramer stated that STP is more flexible than BRIP. BRIP can only be used on bridges. The STIP funds can be used for other projects that are not eligible for BRIP.

- b) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions
None.

3) Transportation Planning & Programs

- a) Current Project Status

Mr. Fisher provided an update on Highway projects in District 4-0. Mr. Vottero provided an update on Highway projects in District 5-0.

- b) 2023 PM-2 and PM-3 Performance Measure Goals

Ms. McMahon stated that there is a letter in the meeting packet from Central Office about the PM-2 and PM-3 performance measures. We consider these performance measure goals every two years. PM-2 is related to performance of pavements and bridge decks on the interstates and National Highway System. PM-3 is related to system reliability including truck travel time, excessive delay and percentage of non-single occupant vehicle travel. As we have for the past several years, the MPO has to adopt PM-2 and PM-3 performance targets by either adopting the targets proposed by the state or coming up with our own targets. Each time we have considered them, we have adopted the targets proposed by the state.

Ms. Smith requested a motion adopting the 2023 PM-2 Performance Measure targets. A motion to adopt the PM-2 targets established by PennDOT was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously. Ms. Smith requested a motion on adopting the 2023 PM-3 Performance Measure targets. A motion to adopt the PM-3 targets established by PennDOT was made by Mr. Christy, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

c) 2020 Census Urban Area Changes and MPO Status

Mr. Baranski stated that there has been an issue with the 2020 Census data. The Census Bureau redefined how urban areas are established. As a result, the East Stroudsburg Urban Area population dropped under 50,000 according to US Census Bureau 2020 data. We have been in touch with Central Office and FHWA as well as our professional advocacy associations such as AMPO. In February, FHWA stated that they will continue to recognize MPOs with urban areas that have dipped below 50,000 in population according to the 2020 Census Bureau. Planning funds will continue to be provided. Some federal program monies, such as urban CRP funds which we discussed, will no longer be allocated to our region. A lot of these programs also have a rural component which we will be eligible to receive. MCTA is also impacted and will not receive urban transit funds but there will not result in significant adverse impacts to services. Mr. Jordan stated that they had a call recently about the difference between urbanized area and urban area and how they are being used. FTA and the Census Bureau are treating them differently. Mr. Baranski asked if LANTA's service in Carbon County will be affected. Mr. Jordan stated that there are not service impacts, but how they do their reporting is impacted. Ms. Howarth stated that in their letter from FTA, East Stroudsburg is referred to as an "urbanized area." They also learned that any urban funds allocated through FY23 can be used. MCTA's reporting will also be affected but it is not a critical issue for them.

d) NEPA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Funkhouser provided an update on the LRTP. The profile of existing conditions has been completed using online available sources. They will supplement that information with stakeholder interviews. A customized set of questions has been developed for each interview and it should last about 30 minutes. They are looking for insights on existing plans, issues and projects. They are also conducting strategy days with the PennDOT districts. Public listening sessions will be held in each county and they will coordinate with the county planners on setting those up. The State Transportation Commission survey is available through the end of April and an online forum will be held. Information from that outreach will inform the development of the LRTP. The STC has received 5,000 survey responses to date and their goal is 10,000 responses. Emails about the stakeholder interviews are going out. Ms. Smith stated that she has shared the STC survey information with stakeholders in Schuylkill County including the chamber, EMA, and conservation district and encouraged others to do the same. Ms. Smith asked if NEPA has social media accounts for the MPO. Ms. McMahon stated that we use the general NEPA social media accounts to share MPO information. Ms. Ginocchetti handles social media and has put the STC information out a few times. We will also share it in our Interchanges newsletter and the NEPA Newslines newsletter.

e) 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Twelve Year Program

Mr. Baranski stated that the 2025 TIP development process has started. It is earlier than in previous TIP development years to allow more time for TIP development. The Financial Guidance Work Group has met several times to look at the funding formulas for TIP and a draft of the Financial Guidance has been developed. There will be one more meeting of the work group and then it will be shared with all the PennDOT districts and planning partners. The Financial Guidance will also be used in the development of the LRTP.

f) Congressional Directed Community Project Funding

Ms. McMahon stated that we have been working with the federal legislative offices to submit appropriations requests for Congressional Directed Community Project Funding, previously known as earmarks. We worked with the PennDOT districts to identify one project in each county to submit. In Pike County, we submitted the SR 6 over Delaware River to Congressman Cartwright, Senator Casey and Senator Fetterman. In Monroe County, we submitted the Hamilton West Resurfacing Project to Congressman Cartwright. In Carbon County, we submitted the 903 over Mud Run Bridge to Congresswoman Wild. In Schuylkill County, we submitted the Rt. 61 Frackville to St. Clair Reconstruction Project to Senator Casey and Senator Fetterman. We have also been in touch with Congressman Meuser's office about the Rt. 61 project. We were instructed to submit only 2 projects on the Senate side and the limit was \$2 million. We may have a better chance on the House side since we are not competing against projects from across the state. We will keep everyone posted about the requests.

g) National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Funding

Ms. McMahon stated that PennDOT delayed issuing the NOFO for NEVI funding until the federal guidance was issued. It was issued in February, so PennDOT will begin accepting applications for the first round of funding through the NEVI Program on March 27th and it closes on May 5th. The first round of funding will go towards installing EV stations along the interstates. We will see what applications get submitted in our region along the interstates.

h) Eastern PA Freight Study

Mr. Baranski stated that the project consultant, WSP is currently working on the freight study. We provided GIS data to WSP from each county. WSP is reviewing the data as well as freight trends in the 10-county study area. We had a call with WSP last month to review their findings so far. They showed various maps and overlays that they have developed. They anticipate completing the study by the fall. We hope to have someone from WSP to offer a briefing at an upcoming MPO meeting.

i) Functional Classification Update

Ms. McMahon stated that we responded to the questions and clarifications that came back from FHWA. There were about 15 different items that had to be addressed. Central Office has reviewed the responses and informally submitted them to FHWA. They also have to formally resubmit the package of functional classification changes. Ms. Smith asked what type of clarifications there were. Ms. McMahon stated that FHWA requested additional clarification on some of the changes. Map changes were also required in some instances. There were also discrepancies in One Map that PennDOT had to address. Our hope is that the Federal-aid changes will be approved soon since they can be approved by FHWA in Harrisburg. The changes on the National Highway System on Route 6 will have to go to FHWA Headquarters in DC for approval. Ms. Howarth asked if the package of functional classification changes can be sent out to everyone since it has been so long since we started the process. Ms. McMahon stated that she would send it out to everyone.

j) PennDOT Connects Municipal Outreach

Mr. Baranski stated that more PennDOT Connects municipal outreach sessions will be held this spring. Sessions have been set in District 4 on March 28th and on May 16th in District 5. They will be hybrid meetings held at the district offices and virtually. NEPA staff will attend both sessions in person. Information was included in the packet about registration for the sessions.

4) Other Business

Ms. Howarth stated that Frank Migneco from the NEPA Apex Accelerator (formerly PTAC) assisted MCTA in conducting a DBE workshop and commended Frank for his assistance with it. Ms. Howarth asked about the column on the fiscal constraint chart that shows Federal Fiscal Year 2027 and beyond. Ms. Koenigkramer stated that it refers to funding on the Twelve Year Program beyond the first four years

of the TIP. Ms. Howarth also thanked Mr. Alas for his assistance with the MCTA amendments in January and thanked the committee for approving the email ballot for those projects.

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.