

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

June 20, 2023 Joint Technical Planning Committee and Policy Board

Meeting Summary and Minutes

9:30 a.m.

Attendees:

David Alas*
Marie Bishop
David Bodnar*
Casey Bottiger
Roger Christman*
John Christy*
Brendan Cotter*
Alex Ferguson
Brian Funkhouser
Micah Gursky^
Kathy Henderson^
Peggy Howarth*
Vanessa Koenigkramer*
Mike Mrozinski*
John Petrini*

Organization:

PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 4-0
Carbon Co. Planning
Michael Baker Intl.
Ross Township
Monroe Co. Commiss.
LANTA
PennDOT District 4-0
Michael Baker Intl.
St. Luke's Hospital
CCEDC
MCTA
PennDOT District 5-0
Pike Co. Planning
PennDOT District 4-0

Attendees:

Gene Porochniak
Emma Pugh
Jeff Rai
Jonathan Shaw
Jason Skrimcovsky*
Brian Snyder*
Susan Smith*
Mark Tobin^
Scott Vottero

Alan Baranski
Jeff Box
Nettie Ginocchetti
Kate McMahon
Daniel Yelito

Organization:

FHWA
PennDOT District 4-0
PennDOT District 5-0
Luzerne Co. Planning
Carbon Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning
Schuylkill Co. Planning
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 5-0

NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance

*Technical Committee members who voted at this meeting

^Policy Board members who voted at this meeting

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

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

Action 1 Ms. Henderson requested a motion from the Policy Board to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2022 Policy Board Meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Gursky, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Mr. Cotter to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Ms. Henderson requested a motion from the Policy Board to approve the 2023-2024 meeting dates, contingent on approval by the NEPA Board of Directors of their 2023-2024 meeting dates. A motion was made by Mr. Gursky, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the 2023-2024 meeting dates. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously.

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

1) Business Items

a) Policy Board Approval of Minutes from the June 21, 2022 Business Meeting

Ms. Henderson requested a motion from the Policy Board to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2022 Policy Board Meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Gursky, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Technical Committee Approval of Minutes from the May 16, 2023 Business Meeting

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth, seconded by Mr. Cotter to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Policy Board Approval of the 2023-2024 Meeting Dates

Mr. Baranski stated that the NEPA Board of Directors will meet next week to approve their meeting dates for the upcoming year. The Policy Board typically meets following the NEPA Board of Directors meetings so our meeting dates mirror theirs except for the Joint MPO meeting next June. Ms. Henderson requested a motion from the Policy Board to approve the 2023-2024 meeting dates, contingent on approval by the NEPA Board of Directors of their 2023-2024 meeting dates. A motion was made by Mr. Gursky, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

d) Technical Committee Approval of the 2023-2024 Meeting Dates

Mr. Cotter asked if the LRTP will be approved at the September meeting. Mr. Baranski stated that it will likely be at the end of the year. The Technical Committee will recommend approval of the LRTP to the Policy Board who will take final action to approve it. There is a Policy Board meeting at the beginning of January so that is the likely adoption date. Mr. Baranski stated that the meeting dates will be advertised through legal ads and will be posted on the NEPA website. Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the 2023-2024 meeting dates. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. 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. Petrini highlighted the actions for District 4-0. Ms. Koenigkramer highlighted the actions for District 5-0.

Statewide Informational Item 1- Rpr 9 Critical Sections of Roadway- add approved MTF project. The source is the Multimodal Reserve Line Item. Interstate Informational Item 2- I 80 Phase 2- Reconstruction- additional environmental study & work associated with two bridges not included in original scope. The source is the Interstate Contingency Line Item. Action 1- I-84 Cable Median Barrier- shift construction phase from FFY 25/26 to FFY23/24. The sources are SR 590 Safety Improvements and the NEPA 4-0 Highway Reserve Line Item. Action 2- Milford-Bushkill #2- add utility phase to pay pending invoice. The source is the NEPA 4-0 Highway Reserve Line Item. Action 3- SR 611 Emergency Rock Slope Mitigation- add requested 15% match of estimated construction cost. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 4- NEPA AWPM 2023- advance funding for low bid increase. The source is 209 Holy Cross Rd to Hollow Rd. Action 5- 443 over Mill Creek- increase to cover final design negotiated amount plus internal charges. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Reserve Line Item. Action 6- US 209 over Swatara Creek- increase construction phase to revised PS&E estimate. The sources are the utility phase of the project, NEPA Bridge Overlay Bundle 2, SR 611 Emergency Rock Slope Mitigation and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 7- Rattlin Run Road Bridge- IDA Perm Repair- increase to revised PS&E estimate. The source is the NEPA Bridge Overlay Bundle 2. Action 8- SR 6 over Wallenpaupack Creek- increase PE to cover

agreement costs. The sources are SR 6 over Delaware River and the NEPA 4-0 Highway Reserve Line Item.

b) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions

Ms. Howarth highlighted actions for the Monroe County Transit Authority (MCTA).

Action 1- SR Bus Replacements 173, 179- two shared ride buses were in accidents which resulted in MCTA receiving insurance claim checks. MCTA seeks to replace these two vehicles and will use the insurance revenue for half of this procurement. The other half is requested from PennDOT in state funds. The two vehicles had not met their estimated useful life in miles or years, however, replacements are needed. Action 2- Rooftop Air Conditioning and Heating Unit Replacements- MCTA is requesting funds to replace rooftop A/C and Heating units which have met their estimated useful life. A cycle of repeated costs for repairs and no guarantee are escalating. Vendors will only replace the units, repairs are no longer an option. PennDOT is working with MCTA on pre-award authority.

3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

a) Current Project Status

Mr. Petrini provided an update on Bridge projects in District 4-0. Mr. Vottero provided an update on Bridge projects in District 5-0.

Mr. Christy requested an update on SR 611 closure in Delaware Water Gap. Mr. Vottero stated that the National Park Service has all the environmental documents they require. PennDOT needs a special use permit to proceed with the project. Another meeting is scheduled with the district and NPS to address questions about right-of-way ownership. NPS has concerns about the impact to the viewshed because the repairs require mesh into the mountainside to stabilize it and prevent further slides. Mr. Christy offered to contact NPS to see if it can be moved along.

b) NEPA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Ms. Smith stated that the LRTP will be addressed at the Steering Committee meeting following the MPO meeting.

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

Mr. Baranski stated that staff has developed a schedule for the 2025 TIP development process and shared it with the committees. Our next step is to review the current TIP projects and determine which projects will carryover. Meetings with the districts will be held in the coming weeks and will include the county planners. We would like the meetings to be held in-person at the district offices. The TIP schedule covers the development over the next year with adoption expected at a Joint MPO meeting next June.

d) Eastern PA Freight Study

Mr. Baranski stated that WSP has prepared a draft background profile. It has been shared with the county planners for review and comment. The profile is very data heavy. A call with WSP was held last week to discuss next steps. A survey for freight stakeholders has been developed. It will be used to gain more insight into freight activities in the region. We also anticipate an engagement of freight stakeholders in-person later this summer or early fall. A date will be established shortly. Ms. Smith asked if there were any substantial comments on the freight profile. Mr. Baranski stated that Monroe County provided some more information on current freight activities in their county.

e) Functional Classification Update

Mr. Porochniak stated that FHWA submitted additional questions to Central Office regarding the submission last week. Ms. McMahon stated that she will follow up with Central Office to see if they need any information from the MPO staff.

f) TASA, CRP and CMAQ Funding Opportunity

Mr. Baranski stated that the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) funding round is open. Projects in our region compete for statewide funds. The NEPA MPO also has funding for the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program in Carbon County. We plan to screen the TASA applications for eligibility under all three programs. Pre-applications through the TASA website are due by July 17th. A meeting with district and MPO staff will be held to review the project submissions. A full application will be due by September 15th. Mr. Baranski encouraged everyone to reach out to potential project sponsors to let them know about the opportunity.

g) 2024-2025 UPWP Development Process

Ms. Smith stated that there has not been an update since the last meeting. Mr. Baranski stated that we are waiting for guidance from Central Office but expect to engage the UPWP subcommittee in July or August. Ms. Smith asked if UPWP and TIP meeting dates can be sent out since scheduling over the summer can be difficult. Ms. McMahon stated that UPWP meetings are usually held following MPO meetings or in place of a cancelled MPO meeting, but we will work with the districts on getting the TIP development meetings on the calendar.

h) USDOT Equity Action Plan

Mr. Porochniak stated that US DOT is seeking comments on their Equity Action Plan through a Request for Information. It is open for comments until July 30th. A webinar to allow stakeholders to provide comments and ask questions about the plan is scheduled for June 23rd. Mr. Porochniak shared several links about the Equity Plan, new Bicycle and Pedestrian Guidance and open funding opportunities.

<https://www.transportation.gov/priorities/equity/equity-updates>

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0920984aa80a4362b8778d779b090723/page/Homepage/>

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/guidance/

<https://www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/key-notice-funding-opportunity>

4) Other Business

Mr. Baranski stated that long-time District 5 employee and MPO committee member Amanda Leindecker recently retired. We wish her well in her retirement. Mr. Vottero stated that Vanessa Koenigkramer is acting in her position. In addition, Chris Kufro is the acting District Executive since Mike Rebert's assignment to Central Office.

Mr. Gursky stated that the Coaldale ARC Project is applying for additional ARC funding to complete their project. It had been scaled back due to construction cost increases but additional funding will allow them to complete the pedestrian facilities and get back to the original project scope. He thanked the committee for their support of the project.

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Policy Board and Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.