

Minutes

for the
December 3, 2008, Meeting
of the

Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization

Danville Municipal Building, Second Floor Conference Room, Patton Street, Danville
at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees:

Charles Rasnick, VDOT-Richmond Office
Daniel Rudge, VA Department of Rail and Public Transportation-Richmond
Ken Pollock, VA Department of Rail and Public Transportation-Richmond
Jeff Kessler, VDOT-Lynchburg District Planning Engineer
Randy Hamilton, VDOT-Chatham
Lyle Lacy, Danville
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County Planning Director
Marc Adelman, Danville Transit System
Fred Shanks, Danville
Kent Shelton, Danville
Lawrence Campbell, Danville
James Snead, Pittsylvania County
Henry A. Davis, Jr., Pittsylvania County
Joe Springer, Parsons Transportation
Robert W. Dowd, Danville MPO Administrator
Joan Hullett, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous MPO Meeting & Hearing, June 23, 2008

Mr. Kessler made a motion, seconded by Mr. Campbell, to approve the minutes as presented. Upon vote, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the June 23, 2008, MPO meeting of the Policy Board and Public Hearing.

3. Additional Items for the Agenda (as necessary)

Mr. Dowd noted that an item needed to be added to the agenda for "Public Comment/Opportunity to Speak to MPO Issues." The Board unanimously agreed that this item be added.

4. Public Comment/Opportunity to Speak to MPO Issues

No one was present to comment or speak to MPO issues.

5. Presentation on US Route 29 Corridor Study (Gainesville, VA, to Danville, VA) by Joseph Springer of Parsons Transportation Group, Consultant to VDOT

Prior to their presentation on the US Route 29 Corridor Study from Gainesville to Danville, Mr. Dowd introduced Mr. Joe Springer of Parsons Transportation Group; Mr. Charles Rasnick, representing VDOT and the Commonwealth Transportation Board; and Mr. Daniel Rudge, representing the VA Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

Mr. Rasnick provided background information on the Route 29 Corridor Study, which will cover a 219-mile segment from North Carolina to I-66 at Gainesville. He noted that Route 29 is a National Highway System Route designated by Congress to serve interstate travel and movement of goods. He pointed out that Route 29 serves long-distance travel, connecting three MPO areas, rural areas, and heavy commuter travel to Northern Virginia. In addition, it was pointed out that Route 29 carries large volumes of local traffic which conflict with its' service to through travel. It was noted that, at the January 16, 2008, meeting of CTB members and elected and local leaders, the most noted issues of concern with regard to Route 29 were safety-congestion, through travel/through-put, local traffic-access control, and land use/transportation planning.

Mr. Rasnick stated that the Route 29 Corridor Study will include a public focus on why this transportation corridor is important; how they use the corridor; and goals for safe future transportation. In addition, the project will include corridor data collection to provide travel information (traffic data, transit and rail passenger use and freight movements by rail and highway) and land uses (employment, cultural centers, universities, and parklands). The short-term/immediate action plan will identify solutions for critical safety "hot spots"; recommend improvements for transit, rail or other passenger services; recommend improvements for freight movements;

make recommendations for congestion mitigation; and develop local access management plans. He pointed out that interim corridor recommendations would include enhancements to rail and regional transit, recommendations for land use controls, development of a corridor access management plan, recommendations for safety and congestion management, and improved freight movements. Ultimately, the Route 29 Corridor Plan will create a blueprint for the corridor which will provide a multimodal vision plan for the entire corridor, building on the commonalities of citizen concerns along the corridor, provide additional capacity for the highway transit and rail modes, recommendations that are context sensitive and responsive to environmental concerns, and provide a forum for public review of the draft.

Mr. Rudge of VDRPT discussed the transit component of the Corridor Study and responded to questions from Mr. Adelman, Director of the Danville Transit System.

Mr. Rasnick then introduced Mr. Joe Springer of Parsons Transportation Group who provided a timeline and overview of the approach to be utilized in the plan development; a copy of the Route 29 Corridor Study Timeline/Approach handout is attached. Mr. Springer briefed the group on the listening tour plan and kickoff, designed to inform elected and appointed officials and to generate a dialog with the general public. The listening tour, which was detailed in the handout, will include a Planning Studio Session to be held on December 19, 2008, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Danville Municipal Building, Fourth Floor Conference Room. During this open/drop-in format session, VDOT and VDRPT will have an opportunity to discuss where everyone is in their respective part of the study process and what needs to be accomplished to keep the project on schedule. In addition, the session will allow PDC members, local government representatives, and other key stakeholders an opportunity to join the Study Team in the afternoon to discuss the study an offer insight into key issues.

During discussion, it was noted that the MPO/PDC staff was being asked to develop a mailing list to announce this session. Mr. Dowd requested that Mr. Sides and Mr. Shelton provide assistance in development of the list.

Mr. Springer indicated that input from the listening tour, previous studies, existing databases, study committee input, and fieldwork would be analyzed and compiled to develop a complete picture of issues and constraints in the corridor study area. At that point a more formal set of seven meetings would be held to close out the listening tour portion of the study to ensure that everyone has a chance to hear the same thing and to give an opportunity for public review. One of these seven meetings would be held in Danville. He then outlined the steps in Phases I and II of the study which are presented in the attached handout.

6. **Updates on Corridor Studies of the Danville MPO**

- ***Route 58 West Access Management Study & Memorial Drive-West Main Street Access Management Study by Hayes Seay Mattern & Mattern:*** Mr. Dowd informed the Board that the study had been completed and copies distributed by HSMM.
- ***Iris Lane Parkway Corridor Study & Route 730 to Route 29 Connector Corridor Study by URS Corporation:*** Mr. Dowd noted that the Iris Lane Parkway Corridor Study was in the printing stage and copies would be available for distribution shortly. Similarly, the Route 730 to the US Route 29 Bypass Connector Corridor Study was complete and headed toward printing by URS Corporation.
- ***Route 29 Access Management Study for Tightsqueeze Area by MPO, VDOT, Kimley Horn:*** Mr. Dowd stated that this study which was being undertaken by the Lynchburg VDOT staff, County Planning Director, MPO Administrator, and on-call consultant support from Kimley Horn of Richmond was in the initial stages. A public information and public input/involvement meeting had been held at Chatham Middle School, and the consultant firm was now to analyze the input received and data collected to date to develop an approach to access management for the study area.
- ***Route 29 Access Management Study for Blairs Area by VHB Corporation Consultant:*** It was noted that this study is also in its final wrap-up towards production of a final draft report for review.

7. **MPO Area Long-Range Transportation Plan Update, Contract with URS Corporation**

Mr. Dowd informed the Board that the contracting process with URS Corporation had been completed to development of the Long-Range Plan this year and early next fiscal year. He noted that he was working with the VDOT staff in Richmond and Lynchburg to bring together a new travel demand model that will help in determining the best, most helpful projects from the last Plan update and any new ones that appear logical according to the model. He also stated that he was bringing together some abstracts or summaries of some plans from the

Danville Regional Airport and the Regional Bicycle Plan. There will be meetings with lots of parties in the winter-spring period to take input on problems seen by them in the network and ideas they may have for improvements. A kickoff meeting with the Project Management Team was scheduled for December.

Mr. Kessler stated that, given the financial situation for the Commonwealth and funds available for future large construction projects, it may be wise for the MPO and consultant to focus on smaller projects and spot improvements.

8. Election of Officers

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Snead, nominated Coy Harville as MPO Chairman. Mr. Shanks made a motion, duly seconded, to close the nominations. The Board voted unanimously to elect Mr. Harville as MPO Chairman.

Mr. Campbell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, nominated Mr. Shanks as MPO Vice-Chairman. Mr. Kessler made a motion, duly seconded, to close the nominations. The Board voted unanimously to elect Mr. Shanks as MPO Vice-Chairman.

Following the election of officers, there was discussion concerning verification that Mr. Adelman is a voting Danville alternate and member of the Project Management Team. Mr. Lacy requested that Mr. Dowd provide him with a copy of the MPO bylaws in order to further clarify this.

9. Other Business

Mr. Dowd informed the Board that he would be working with Mr. Harville, the new MPO Chairman, and Mr. Lacy, Interim Danville City Manager, to obtain signatures on the VDOT-MPO Memorandum of Understanding. This document was originally given to the Secretary of Transportation but he subsequently made some minor changes requiring the document to have new signatures.

10. Update on Transportation Meetings, Programs, and Area Projects

Board members were reminded of the upcoming working draft public hearings being held by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The CTB is inviting comments about essential rail, public transportation, commuter service, bicycle, pedestrian, and highway projects to be included in the Working Draft Revised FY 2009-2014 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) to be approved by the CTB in January 2009. It was noted that the Bristol/Salem District session will be held on Monday, January 5, 2009, at the New River Valley Community College, 5251 College Drive, Dublin. The Richmond/Fredericksburg/Lynchburg District session will be held on Monday, January 12, 2009, at the VDOT Central Office Auditorium, 1221 East Broad Street, Richmond. It was noted that public hearings for local/secondary/municipality-maintained roads will be held in other forums.

Mr. Hamilton updated the Board members on the status of several projects including the Worsham Street demolition project; the 265 connector project; and the Robertson Bridge project.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Robert W. Dowd, AICP
Danville MPO Administrator