

Minutes

for the
March 20, 2008, Meeting
of the

Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

Attendees:

John Hamlin, Danville, Chairman
Jeff Kessler, VDOT-Lynchburg District Planning Engineer
Rob Cary, VDOT Lynchburg District Administrator
Greg Sides, Pittsylvania County Planning Director
Coy Harville, Pittsylvania County
Randy Hamilton, VDOT, Chatham Residency Office
Marc Adelman, Danville Transit System
Henry Davis, Pittsylvania County
Rick Drazenovich, Danville
Robert W. Dowd, Danville MPO Administrator
Joan Hullett, Danville MPO Staff

1. Call to Order

Mr. Hamlin, MPO Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous MPO Meeting & Hearing, December 10, 2007

Mr. Hamlin presented the minutes of the December 10, 2007, meeting, offering an opportunity to submit changes; hearing none, he called for a motion on the minutes as presented. Mr. Harville made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve the minutes. Upon vote, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the December 10, 2007, MPO meeting of the Policy Board and Public Hearing.

3. Election of MPO Officers

Mr. Hamlin noted that the Vice-Chairman position was vacant since Mr. Searce was no longer on the MPO Board and asked the Board members for a nomination to fill this vacancy through June 30, 2008, at which time a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman would be elected. Mr. Davis made a motion to appoint Mr. Harville to serve as Vice-Chairman through June 30, 2008. As there were no other nominations, Mr. Harville moved that the nominations be closed. Upon vote, Mr. Harville was elected by acclamation to serve in this capacity.

4. Additional Items for the Agenda (as necessary)

Mr. Dowd distributed a revised meeting agenda, noting that the agenda which had been distributed with the Board package had included two listings for "additional items." He also noted that he had distributed a paper entitled "FY 08-09 TIP Amendment Narrative," which needed to be considered under "Other Business."

Mr. Harville made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to accept the revised agenda and to add the "FY 08-09 TIP Amendment Narrative" item under "Other Business." Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

5. Resolutions related to Contents. Approval of the FY 2009 Unified Work Program and the MPO Application for Section 5303 Transportation Planning Funds from the Federal Transit Administration

a) Resolution to Apply for Federal Transit Administration, Section 5303 Transportation Planning Funds, FY 2009 – Resolution 2008-3

Mr. Dowd explained that approval of Resolution 2008-3 would authorize the filing of an application with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia, for a

grant for federal funds under Section 5303 of the Federal Transit Act of 1991, as amended in the amount of \$97,495. He noted that the contract for financial assistance would impose certain obligations upon the applicant, including the provision by it of the local project costs. He also advised that the City of Danville as a member of the MPO and a pass-through recipient was being asked to provide the 10 percent local matching project cost share of the total project cost of \$97,495, with commitment to be made by its resolution.

Mr. Kessler made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis to adopt Resolution 2008-3, as presented, authorizing the MPO Administrator/West Piedmont Planning District Commission Executive Director to:

- a) Execute and file an application on behalf of the Danville Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), to aid in the financing of Section 5303 transportation planning projects including administration and planning support efforts by the Danville MPO and transit-related planning efforts by the City of Danville via pass-through of Danville MPO funding;
- b) Execute and file with such application and assurance or any other document required by the VDRPT and VDOT effectuating the purposes of such grant;
- c) Furnish such additional information as VDRPT may require in connection with the application or the project;
- d) Set forth and execute Minority Business Enterprise (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Women Business Enterprise) policies and procedures in connection with the project's procurement needs;
- e) With the City of Danville's commitment of local shares, to execute a grant agreement on behalf of the Danville Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization with the VDRPT to aid in the financing of Section 5303 transportation planning projects including administration and planning support efforts by the Danville MPO and transit-related planning efforts by the City of Danville via pass-through of Danville MPO funding.

Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

b) Authorization of MPO Administrator to Contract with City of Danville, Danville Transit System to Receive Pass-Through Funds from the Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 Transportation Planning Funds, FY 2009 – Resolution 2008-4

Mr. Dowd informed the Board that the Danville MPO anticipates receipt of Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 Planning and Technical Studies Grant funds and that the City could use certain Section 5303 grant funds for conducting eligible planning and technical activities under the Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 Program.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harville, to adopt Resolution 2008-4, which authorized the MPO Administrator/West Piedmont Planning District Commission Executive Director to contract with the City of Danville for the City's receipt and eligible use of a portion of Federal Transit Administration Section 5303 grant funds that may be received by the Danville Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization in FY 2009. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. Consideration of Resolution 2008-5, Approval of the Danville MPO Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UWP) for FY 2009

Mr. Dowd reviewed the components of the FY 2009 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UWP). He noted that the solicitation for a consultant was currently underway for the development of an update to the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan and that the staff desires to get under contract as soon as possible to allow time to complete the project by mid-

2009. Mr. Kessler noted that VDOT would be doing the modeling for the plan, which would provide for consistency in modeling across the State. Mr. Kessler also noted that Ms. Unwanna Dabney, the FHWA representative, had reviewed the draft UWP and advised him of her approval. Mr. Dowd and Mr. Kessler will make fine adjustments to meet state or federal regulatory requirements as needed in the document.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harville, to adopt Resolution 2008-5, which adopts and requests VDOT, VDRPT, FHWA, and FTA approval of its FY 2009 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program (UWP) in the total project amounts of \$402,295 inclusive of matching amounts and with provision for funding the WPPDC/MPO administration, consultants, and MPO/City of Danville transit planning efforts. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

7. Authorization of MPO Officer and MPO Administrator to Sign the Resolution for Endorsement of STIP Procedures, Memorandum of Agreement – Resolution 2008-6

Mr. Kessler informed the Board that VDOT, working with the MPOs and FHWA, had developed new policies and regulations governing the development of MPO TIPs and the Statewide TIP. In the future, some of these policies allow VDOT to approve blanket amounts of dollars statewide for certain programmed categories which then allows the MPOs to have projects or amendments to projects covered under blanket authority and thereby not require individual and separate actions on projects that are exempt from the more lengthy procedures of TIP amendments. He also stated that VDOT would be providing the MPO Administrator with a list that can be distributed to the MPO Board or posted on the PDC website.

Mr. Dowd noted that VDOT had submitted a draft Memorandum of Agreement Resolution, supported by appended procedures and explanations which in their application would advance the streamlining of the development of the TIPs and the Statewide TIP in the future while furthering the intents and purposes of the national transportation act, SAFETEA-LU and its successor acts and amendments.

Mr. Harville made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to adopt Resolution 2008-6, authorizing the MPO Officer and its MPO Administrator/West Piedmont Planning District Commission Executive Director to sign the Resolution for Endorsement of STIP Procedures Memorandum of Agreement. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

8. Discussion of Various Elements of Ongoing Work Activities of the MPO:

• Route 58 West Access Management Study and Memorial Drive-West Main Street Access Management Study:

Mr. Dowd noted that Hayes Seay Mattern & Mattern was conducting both of these access management studies. He advised that he and the Project Management Team had been working with the firm on these projects and that a meeting had recently been held for public input. The meeting had been well attended. He informed the Board that a meeting had been held with the firm to review the recommendations, and the firm would be completing the studies near term. The studies would then be given to the City Manager and from there it would go to review by the City Council and, subject to Council reviewing and considering, the document would be completed and printed.

• Iris Lane Parkway Corridor Study:

Mr. Dowd noted that this was a city-county corridor study being conducted by URS Corporation. He also advised that the Iris Lane Parkway Corridor Study was being conducted because prior studies on Piney Forest Road had been unsuccessful in producing practical alternatives to moving traffic flow and reducing congestion.

• Route 730 to Route 29 Connector Alternatives Corridor Study:

The URS Corporation is also studying a connector from Eagle Springs Road/Route 730 to the U.S. 29 Bypass, and the study will include revisiting the option of an interchange with Route 730 and the 29 Bypass as they are currently aligned.

- **Route 29 North (Blairs) Access Management Study:**

Mr. Dowd noted that the staff was working with VHB Incorporated on the development of an access management study on the Route 29 corridor between the intersection with State Route 726 and State Route 718. He told the group that a public meeting was being held on March 24th at the Chamber of Commerce Office on Route 29.

- **Route 29 North (Tightsqueeze) Access Management Study:**

Mr. Dowd also briefed the group on the Route 29 North (Tightsqueeze) Access Management Study on discussions with a consultant firm for the development of this project for the corridor between State Route 718 and the Route 29 Ramp into the Town of Chatham just north of Tightsqueeze.

9. Update on Transportation Issues in General, Other Area Projects

Mr. Kessler introduced Mr. Rob Cary, the new Lynchburg District Administrator. Mr. Cary stated that he looked forward to working with the MPO and discussed project funding in the District as well as statewide. He noted that there could be as much as a 44 percent cut in transportation funding in the future. He did state, however, that there had been some discussions of a possibility of a special session of the General Assembly this year to attempt to address transportation funding issues. He stated that the development of several new transportation districts in the Commonwealth were incurring necessary discussions of funding since these new regional entities would affect the funds available to distribute to the various Virginia localities and construction districts.

Mr. Harville inquired about the components of funding for the Route 41/Franklin Turnpike Extension over to the U.S. Route 29 Bypass. He indicated that he understood that the bridge or the roadway was missing authorized funding and wanted clarification. Mr. Cary indicated that he thought the funding was available for both the road and the bridge structure; Mr. Kessler noted that both projects were funded and scheduled for December advertising. Mr. Hamilton indicated that he would followup on this to make sure the Board was informed of the status.

Mr. Cary noted that a meeting was scheduled for April 16th at the Holiday Inn Select in Lynchburg at 5 p.m. to review the Six-Year Program in followup to the full Commonwealth Transportation Board meeting. He noted, however, that this meeting did not cover urban projects.

Mr. Kessler informed the Board that a Route 29 Corridor Study was being advertised by the Culpeper District and it would involve localities along the corridor. He also informed the Board that the Lynchburg District Office had held its first workshop on the 527 program. He encouraged Danville and Pittsylvania County to have staff participate in the 527 meetings. The next workshop will be held on April 25th at the Holiday Inn Select in Lynchburg from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will be more hands-on. Mr. Sides informed the group that he had attended the first workshop and commended VDOT on efforts to get the word out about these sessions. Mr. Cary also stated that VDOT would have staff come out to make presentations to local officials if requested.

Mr. Harville inquired as to whether the Iris Lane project discussed earlier would include a connector over to it from Route 863. Mr. Dowd indicated that he was unsure as to whether that was actually being addressed in the current study. Mr. Harville indicated that he thought it had been agreed that it would be addressed. Upon further discussion and viewing the area on a map, Mr. Dowd noted that this connector actually had been studied three years ago by the Parson Group. He noted that when the MPO had the Mount Cross Road Study undertaken, it had been recognized that the existing connector improvements would disturb land use and particularly homes to such an extent that major work appeared impractical so it was then recognized that an extension off of Mount Cross directly onto Piney Forest Road would be of benefit and that project

was then included in the last Long-Range Plan. This route accomplishes what Mr. Harville was inquiring about. Mr. Harville indicated that he thought he had recalled such a study and that was helpful and he saw the need to look towards funding such a project in the future. Mr. Kessler also noted that this could be a potential future study. Mr. Dowd indicated that he would locate a copy of the referenced Mount Cross Road Study for Mr. Harville.

10. Other Business

a) FY 08-09 TIP Amendment Narrative (item added to agenda)

Mr. Dowd indicated that Mr. Adelman had contacted him about an amendment to the current TIP to include several projects—one in FY 2008 and another in FY 2009—and make adjustments to funding. Mr. Dowd told the Board that there were several options, one of which would be to consider this change as being an administrative adjustment under the MPO/VDOT Memorandum of Agreement from several years past. The other alternative would be to run the amendment through the full amendment process that would include substantial public involvement contacts, advertising, a public hearing, and an MPO meeting in the future.

Mr. Kessler indicated that it appeared that the MPO could consider the changes for FY 2008 and FY 2009 as administrative amendments and could take a motion that they be approved. He advised that the two out years, 2010 and 2011, may need some research which he could do including checking for some dollar information from VDRPT in the latter part of last year. He could then advise what approach could be used to address the information for those latter two years.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harville, to use the administrative adjustment for the eligible changes upon advice from Mr. Kessler to Mr. Dowd. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously.

b) Other Items, Discussion

- Mr. Harville inquired as to the MPO supporting the development of a direct connection with Route 863 and the U.S. 58 Bypass. Mr. Dowd was asked to pursue this in the upcoming Long-Range Plan studies by introducing the concept to the selected consultant and the inclusion of the project concept in the Long-Range Plan Scope of Work. Mr. Dowd, Mr. Harville, Mr. Drazenovich, and Mr. Sides conferred on the map location of this concept and Mr. Dowd asked Mr. Sides to assist him by supplying a rough drawing of the concept using a recent County map.

- Mr. Cary stated that, in recent discussions, VDOT representatives had indicated their concern that the Route 29 corridor be maintained as a key freight-carrying corridor in Virginia. He further noted that there are three primary north/south routes in Virginia—Interstate 81, U.S. 29, and Interstate 95—and that all three were vital freight corridors. Mr. Dowd stated that the Danville MPO Policy Board members, both current and past, had expressed concerns for maintaining a free-flowing U.S. 29 Corridor along its entire length. He pointed to the fact that, in the past, the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO had taken the Bypass component out of its Long-Range Plan, making the bypass project much more unlikely to be achieved in the future. It was agreed that attention should be given to future meetings of the Route 29 Corridor Study group.

- Mr. Kessler advised that VDOT had developed access management procedures that the General Assembly had reviewed. The procedures for principle arterials will become effective July 1, 2008; the minor arterial and major collector procedures will follow in early Fall 2009.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Harville, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Robert W. Dowd, AICP
Danville MPO Administrator