

**CENTRE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CCMPO)
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, June 13, 2007
9:30 a.m.
College Township Municipal Building**

Minutes

Voting Members

Bill MacMath	Spring Township
Bob Jacobs	Centre County Planning & Community Development Office (CCPCDO)
Chris Price	CCPCDO
Harold Nanovic	PennDOT Central Office
Michele Barbin	Mountaintop Planning Region
Karen Michael	PennDOT District 2-0
Kent Baker, Chair	College Township
Dave Modricker	Ferguson Township

Non-Voting Members

Teresa Davis	Penn State University
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Others Present:

Tom Zilla	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Trish Meek	CRPA
Mike Bloom	CCPCDO
Vickie Rusnak	PennDOT District 2-0

1. Call to Order

Mr. Baker called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. **There was not a quorum present.**

2. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Barbin had a correction to the May 9, 2007 meeting minutes. Action on the minutes will take place at the next meeting.

3. Citizens' Comments

There were no comments for items not on the agenda.

4. Member Reports

College Township

Mr. Baker reported that the Puddintown Bike Trail project went out for bid and bids are expected back by July 12.

Spring Township

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Mr. MacMath reported that the Township has offered conditional approval of Weis Market's plan. PennDOT has approved the traffic impact study for this project. Construction should start in the next three months. There will be three traffic signals installed as part of this project.

Ferguson Township

Mr. Modricker stated that Circleville Road will be closed for approximately one month.

Centre County

Mr. Price noted that the streetscape project in Philipsburg is well under way. Staff visited the area several weeks ago. Although there is a lot of construction going on, all the businesses are still open.

Mr. Jacobs said that Centre County staff is involved with two ongoing feasibility studies. One is for the Beech Creek Greenway and the other is for the Bellefonte Central Rail Trail. In addition, the County will be starting work on the Centre County Recreation and Greenway Plan shortly.

PennDOT

Ms. Rusnak reported that a Planning Partners meeting will be held on June 19 to receive financial guidance for the next TIP cycle.

Mr. Nanovic said that a budget needs to be approved by July 1 for the Commonwealth. The Senate is supposed to start discussing this in the next week. There is no information available about funding for special programs.

Ms. Michael noted that the Puddintown Bike Trail will be bid mid-July and the Atherton Street Bike Trail will be bid at the end of July. In addition, the District had a meeting with Penn State and discussed plans for Park Avenue. One of the questions that came up was beautification of the interchange where the hospital, the Penn Stater and the stadium all sit. In the past, they had been told that there was little that could be done because it is a federal limited access highway. However, there is a special federal program that is being piloted in Pennsylvania and a package was put together to try to obtain funding for this area. If the money is approved, Penn State has agreed to maintain the plantings for at least three years.

5. Centre County Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Ms. Meek recalled that new legislation required that the MPO adopt a new PPP, identifying ten components. FHWA did a preliminary review of this and was satisfied with what was included. One of the major outreach components of this Plan was input from specific interested parties. These parties will be part of the process from this point forward.

The Plan also outlines future actions that have not occurred in the past. These include an annual report, annual review of the PPP, an interested parties database, analysis of Centre County demographics to see if there are other populations to target, making meeting tapes available to the public, more coordination with interested parties, informational brochures and upgrades to the web site to enhance accessibility.

A 45-day public comment period was required for the PPP and any revisions will also require a 45-day comment period. Copies of the approved Plan must be provided to FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration.

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Reviewing public comment, Ms. Meek said that only comment was provided and included with the agenda. This letter included the following:

- A request that the authority of the MPO be defined
- Asked who the MPO reports to
- Asked how the members are selected and recommended that membership should be based on geographic area instead of population
- Noted that these factors are crucial to a bona fide PPP

A summary and responses was included with the agenda. Staff is recommending that the PPP be revised to include two narrative sections from the adopted LRTP that address the MPO structure and responsibilities in response to these comments. In addition, a list of members would be included as an appendix to the PPP.

Staff is asking that the Technical Committee provide comments to be forwarded to the Coordinating Committee about the adoption of the PPP. The consensus was that the PPP should be adopted by the Coordinating Committee.

6. Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2007 Update

Ms. Meek recalled that the reason for the update was to bring the LRTP into SAFETEA-LU compliance. Five components needed to be addressed. Revisions were made to address these components and were presented at the April meeting.

In Chapter V, the Project Evaluation Process, text was added related to environmental mitigation, consultations with resource agencies, consistency of the Plan with planned growth and development and operational and management strategies. These were in response to comments that FHWA provided.

Related to the environmental mitigation and consultation with the resource agencies, staff added additional mapping where resources were identified and overlaid the proposed transportation projects. The existing adopted project ranking criteria already considers some environmental factors. Staff went to the Agency Coordination meeting with resource agencies on May 23, 2007.

Staff reviewed the Plan for consistency with planned growth and development plans, using growth forecasts to establish project need. Existing mapping shows the established countywide growth areas in relation to transportation projects.

For operational and management strategies, what was done with the project ranking criteria is adequate at this time.

In Chapter VII, Transportation Projects, additional bridge projects were reviewed based on a list from PennDOT and nine new projects were added. Nineteen new bike/pedestrian projects were evaluated and five were added to the LRTP, with the rest falling beyond fiscal constraint. Eight of the projects on the current LRTP were pushed beyond fiscal constraint. Ms. Meek noted that staff believes that different criteria is needed for ranking bridge projects.

A public comment period was held April 30-June 4, 2007 and comments were included with the agenda. The first was related to specific project requests and staff provided an update of the status of these projects. The second comment related to the preservation of the Linden Hall historic

district. Staff will forward this to PennDOT for consideration at any point where there will be a project in this area.

Staff is asking for comments to the Coordinating Committee about adoption of the 2007 LRTP Update. There was consensus to recommend adoption.

7. Annual Federal Transportation Planning Process Certification

Mr. Zilla reported that the MPO is now on a two-year cycle for certification, so this agenda item is not needed.

8. FY 2006-07 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Zilla reported that in the past if there were revisions to the UPWP at the end of the fiscal year it was done between staff and PennDOT. However, FHWA now requires MPO approval for amendments for line item changes that are over \$10,000.

Attached to the agenda was detailed information about changes. Specifically, staff is proposing that money be put into Line Item I.D., Long Range Transportation Plan, from other line items.

Mr. Zilla said that changes are typical at the end of the year when there is money left in items. This is generally done after the third quarter, with PennDOT's approval. He noted that local officials contribute significant amounts of money to support MPO staff, so the budget line items are artificially low in the budget, which only shows the federal, state and local match funding.

The consensus was to recommend approval.

9. 2009-2012 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Zilla reported that financial guidance will be received at the Planning Partners meeting later in the month. He said that November will be an important month for the MPO. There has been an effort in this cycle to push the schedule forward so that the MPO has more time to discuss projects. Staff normally discusses each of the projects on the TIP and upcoming projects with PennDOT to determine which can be fit in with the fiscal constraints. This will be done earlier this year and reported to the MPO in November. Discussions will have to take place with FHWA, PennDOT, EPA and DEP about air quality conformity in December.

The schedule calls for PennDOT to have their comments back to the MPO on the Preliminary Draft TIP by the end of February. That is also when spike funding is announced. Mr. Zilla said that the MPO needs to obtain spike funds for the local access interchange construction in Marion Township. In March, staff will be asking the MPO to authorize the advertising of the Final Draft TIP.

Mr. Zilla reported that the MPO will be at approximately the same level of funding in the formula allocation as the last TIP, which is roughly \$50 million for bridges and highways. It also looks like there is Transportation Enhancements funding shown in the financial guidance. However, it appears that there will not be an application cycle because there are so many projects across the state that have not moved forward yet. Centre County is not in that position, but there may be the possibility of adding new TE projects to the TIP. Information will be better known after the Planning Partners meeting.

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The State Transportation Commission session will take place on August 2. Staff will be sending out a memo to all municipal managers and secretaries, as well as all MPO members. The guidelines document will be attached. Mr. Zilla said that staff is trying to use the LRTP as the basis for the next TIP update, so new projects will not be solicited.

10. Announcements

Mr. Zilla reported that the Coordinating Committee authorized submission of correspondence and a list of comments to the Governor and state legislators about the state transportation funding crisis. That letter was completed and sent out yesterday.

A request has come in from Rush Township to reconsider the MPO's position on the proposed landfill interchange on I-80. Mr. Zilla said that he has discussed this with Rush Township, Dan Klees, PennDOT and FHWA, but did not know where it was going at this point. He doubted whether it would be on the June MPO agenda. Mr. Zilla said that this would not come to the Technical Committee right away because there is a procedural question that needs to be answered by the Coordinating Committee. Their last action in March, 2006 was to defer the request until DEP issued a permit for the landfill. The first question is whether there have been any significant changes in conditions that would merit looking at this again. It will then be decided whether it comes to the Technical Committee.

Mr. Zilla said that there has been some indication that an \$500,000 earmark might come through in the SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections Bills for improvements related to the baseball stadium at Penn State. This is a new earmark, but the Bill has not yet been approved by Congress.

11. Adjourn at 10:35

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Z. Shingler
Recording Secretary