

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

**Wednesday, March 12, 2008  
9:30 a.m.  
College Township Municipal Building**

**Minutes**

**Voting Members**

Bill MacMath	Spring Township
Michele Barbin	Mountaintop Planning Region
Karen Michael	PennDOT District 2-0
Dave Modricker	Ferguson Township
Amy Story	State College Borough
Bob Jacobs	Centre County Planning and Community Development
Sue Hannegan	Centre County Planning and Community Development
Paul Weener	Harris Township
Kent Baker	College Township
Karen Brown	Halfmoon Township
Ray Hankinson	Penns Valley Planning Region
Harold Nanovic	PennDOT Central Office

**Non-Voting Members**

Matt Smoker	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
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**Others Present:**

Tom Zilla	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Trish Meek	CRPA
Greg Kausch	CRPA
Lori Shingler	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.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

*Ms. Story made a motion to approve the February 22, 2008 minutes. Mr. MacMath seconded and the motion carried unanimously.*

**3. Citizens' Comments**

There were no citizen comments.

**4. Revised Preliminary Draft 2009-2012 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

*[Note that items 4 and 5 on the agenda were discussed in reverse order at the meeting.]*

Mr. Zilla reviewed that although the Preliminary Draft TIP was adopted at the February meeting, there has been new information received that changes that document.

Governor Rendell's new infrastructure initiative sets a goal of repairing or replacing 1,000 structurally deficient (SD) state bridges in the next three years and reducing the number of SD state bridges by 40% over the next ten years. Mr. Zilla reviewed that expenditures for state bridges will increase from \$1.1 billion to \$1.6 billion per year. This will be financed by shifting Act 44 revenues from pavement restoration to bridges, focusing spike funding on SD bridges, and a bond issue that will generate \$200 million per year for ten years.

For Centre County, the bond issue will result in an additional \$3.35 million over the 2009-2012 period. There is an annual target of repairing/replacing four state bridges (3 SD) in the county. Mr. Zilla said that this will mean that additional state bridges will be added to the 2009-12 TIP and may involve shifting Act 44 funds from pavement restoration to state bridges. He reported that the additional funding brings the base allocation up \$69,072,000. This does not include spike funding that PennDOT District 2-0 has requested for three bridges.

Ms. Michael noted that the District was given the Bridge Bond and Bridge Preservation amounts for each year. She said that the Bridge Bond funding is a small amount and chances are it will not be enough to take an SD bridge off the list. The 2 bridges currently programmed to use bond funding are quite large. The District has not yet identified bridges for years 2011 and 2012, but that will be done later today. These will be smaller structures than those programmed in 2009 and 2010, so more of them can be done.

A chart was shown that outlined bridge funding and what will be delivered for each year of the next TIP. Ms. Michael noted that Centre County is doing really well and by the end of 2012 should be down to 2.87% structurally deficient deck area. This does not, however, account for additional bridges becoming SD over that time.

Mr. Baker referred to the SR 3011 (Branch Road) bridge in Lemont and the fact that there is another bridge close to that which also needs work. The hope was to accomplish these bridges at the same time and only close the road once. Ms. Michael said that the second bridge cannot be programmed if it is not SD. However, it may become SD before the first bridge is scheduled to be repaired.

Mr. Weener noted that the estimated expenditures on the chart exceeded Governor Rendell's target for the county. Ms. Michael said that Act 44 funding was a big help in programming new bridges and the District is putting every available dollar they can toward SD bridges.

Mr. Modricker asked if the goals were based on percentage of total bridges or deck area. Ms. Michael answered that it was based on both, but the District is rated on deck area. She stated that Pennsylvania has a 22.5 percent SD deck area rate, but Centre County's percentage is only 8.8.

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Mr. Zilla reviewed changes to the TIP, saying that it now illustrates revised costs, phases and schedules. Two new bridges were added (SR 879 and SR 3027), but there will be others added as well. The Maintenance and Preservation line items were included. He said that Central Office now wants the line items converted to projects, so the TIP will change again before adoption. For the Highway element, there are now revised costs and phases for the Whitehall Road/University Drive project and the Pavement Restoration line item was reduced to account for the shift to bridge projects. The Transit element was revised to account for Year of Expenditure and new information received from CATA about their vehicle purchases.

At the February Coordinating Committee staff had said they were going to try to stay with the original schedule, despite the bridge changes. Mr. Zilla said that will not be possible at this point because changes will not be sent from PennDOT until mid-April. He suggested that MPO meetings be scheduled in April to adopt the TIP and LRTP so that they could proceed to air quality analysis and public comment. He said the Technical Committee would have to be pushed to the third week of the month so that PennDOT's comments were in.

*Mr. MacMath made a motion to recommend scheduling Technical and Coordinating Committee meetings in April to approve the Preliminary Draft TIP, with the Technical Committee meeting being held on April 16. Ms. Story seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

### 5. Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2008 Update

Ms. Meek distributed revised tables. She said that when the current LRTP was developed, costs were escalated 2.5% a year, or a flat 10% over each four-year period. The new Year of Expenditure (YOE) regulations requires an annual escalation rate of 4% per year.

Reviewing assumptions for the base Highway and Bridge funding, Ms. Meek said that the 4% escalation rate was included. She reviewed the state and local funding increases and noted that the Bridge Bond has only been identified for years 2009-2012. In addition, the local funding allocation in 2009-2012 includes \$1,450,000 in local funds for the Beaver/Fraser Intersection improvements, which would be from the State College Borough. Staff is still working on how to handle the percentage of Act 44 funding that will be allocated to bridges and that which will be allocated to Pavement Restoration.

Ms. Meek reported that no spike funding is being assumed for projects in 2009-10, although the MPO has been successful in securing spike funding in the past and there is currently a spike request pending. Staff was being conservative and did not program any spike funding in the out years. There is SXF earmark funding in 2009-10 for several projects. She said that a maximum of \$55 million in Appalachian Highway Development Program (APD) fund is available for completion of the I-99/I-80 High Speed Interchange project. That project does not show on the LRTP because the MPO cannot show where the remainder of the funds for that project would come from. Additional APD or spike funding would be needed to complete the Local Access Interchange, the High Speed Interchange, Route 322 Corridor O1 and the SCCCTS Project. These are all defined as "projects for future consideration."

Reviewing the Transportation Enhancements table, Ms. Meek said that these projects are different because a local sponsor is required. Other MPOs and RPOs show these as line items for the out years and staff is recommending that this approach be taken, with the two active projects being shown in their entirety. If there is another TE application cycle, projects would be ranked with the MPO's special ranking process and the LRTP will be amended to add specific projects.

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Mr. Baker asked if the project for bike paths along Whitehall Road, Brush Valley Road, College Avenue, Benner Pike and roads to the Airport was redundant. Ms. Meek said that it was very vague when it was provided. She was not concerned because the scope of the project would have to be revised if it moved forward.

Ms. Meek presented the Highway and ITS Projects table, saying that the highlighted lines were new in concept or project type. Staff is recommending that the Pavement Restoration line item, generated by Act 44, be put in as a place holder. A Safety line item and a CMAQ line item would also be put in, although these amounts are small in 2009-2010 because funds have already been assigned to projects. She noted that even though the LRTP uses four-year periods, the first period showing is only from 2009-2010. This is to stay consistent with the original plan, where the first two years of the first four-year period have already passed.

Mr. Modricker noted that for the Whitehall Road project, the Final Design and Utility phases are showing in 2009, but the right of way and construction is not showing until 2011. He said it is hard to do the utility work if the right of way is not obtained until later. Ms. Rusnak explained that environmental clearance would be done by September 2009 in order to capture the funding in 2009. Final Design would initially start in 2009, with the utilities and initial right of way done in 2010. The utility phase shown in 2009 was for moving utilities that were in the way. Ms. Meek noted that TIP could be relatively fluid; money could be moved from other projects if the Whitehall Road project was ready to move.

Ms. Meek stated that the Local Access Interchange and High Speed Interchange were stricken on the list and would be moved to the list for future consideration. The funding is not available to complete these projects. She noted that Mr. Zilla is still working to try to get funding for the local access interchange.

The Fraser Street/Beaver Avenue intersection improvement/realignment project is shown with \$1.5 million in local funding. State College Borough is continuing to pursue federal money and if it becomes available, the project needs to be on the TIP in order to use that.

On the third page, the projects below the black line are shown in 2006 dollars. Ms. Meek said that once staff has a better handle on the money available, timeframes will be assigned based on YOE adjustments and fiscal constraint. Mr. Zilla noted that when the LRTP was adopted, staff was showing an escalation in costs, but not 4% a year. This increase is anticipated to result in significant changes to the LRTP in the form of projects coming off.

Ms. Meek said that the bridge lists will change the most dramatically because the intent is to add all the state SD bridges to the LRTP. As discussed previously, the MPO's ranking system for bridges is not well suited to choosing the bridges most in need of repairs. The MPO should probably rely on PennDOT District 2-0 for those priorities.

Staff hopes to have all the project lists completed as much as possible for the Coordinating Committee mailing, so Technical Committee members will receive it then. There will probably be a few additional changes after that, which will be ready prior to the April meetings.

Mr. Smoker stated that the 4% escalation rate came from FHWA headquarters. There is the ability to use a different percentage as long as it is justifiable and documented.

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Mr. Nanovic said that the MPO staff is working hard to get a good cost factor for projects. PennDOT is concerned that fuel prices are going to add to those costs. He wanted members to be aware that staff has no control over that factor. For bridge projects, the Secretary of Transportation has said that the bridge initiative will be a long term effort, so contractors can count on being able to hire more people and buy more equipment. Hopefully, this will help keep costs down.

Mr. Zilla said he would like to identify one or two additional municipal bridges to add to the TIP so that there is always one or two in progress. These are not yet shown.

Mr. Zilla added that the spike funding request for the local access interchange does not look promising, which will pose policy issues. He will continue to talk to the Turnpike Commission about including it on their list of work that needs to be done within the I-80 toll conversion project.

The Coordinating Committee discussed earmarks and the possibility of the MPO adopting some sort of policy for this last month. Mr. Zilla said there was no consensus on how the MPO could coordinate earmarks or act as a pass-through for applications. Further discussion will have to take place in upcoming months.

### 6. Draft Bylaws for CCMPO

Mr. Zilla said that the MPO Performance Review Committee has developed a set of draft bylaws for the MPO, based on the current representation structure. At their February meeting, the Coordinating Committee agreed to have the Technical Committee review these first. They will then go back to the Review Committee for revisions before going through the normal MPO process of a Technical Committee recommendation, then Coordinating Committee adoption. Mr. Zilla suggested going through each page to see if there were any comments or questions.

On page 3, Mr. MacMath referred to the alternative language suggested for "Representatives of Centre County government and the individual municipalities shall be appointed by the respective governing bodies." He recommended the second alternative because that would work better for the rural municipalities who may only have three Board members. Ms. Barbin suggested that it read, "It is *strongly* recommended that representatives be elected members of the governing body....."

On page 4, Mr. MacMath referred to the alternative language pertaining to representatives being expected to support the views and positions of the specific entity that they are representing. He said this would be difficult to interpret or enforce.

There was some discussion about when officers are elected for each of the two committees and whether it should be at the first meeting of the year or February. It was decided that the Technical Committee would elect officers in February, after municipal appointments have been made.

Mr. Zilla referred to page 7 where it said that once a motion has been acted upon, the action taken shall not be reconsidered for a two-year period. He noted that this generated a lot of discussion in the Performance Committee, mostly related to the landfill issue. Several exceptions were listed.

On page 8, Mr. Zilla noted that Member Reports was moved toward the end of the agenda rather than the beginning. He also noted that updates to the bylaws would require a two-thirds vote of the entire membership. The formation of special committees would also require a two-thirds vote in the Coordinating Committee.

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On page 15, Mr. MacMath suggested that a note be added that Member Reports do not happen every month. It was agreed that “at the discretion of the Chair” would be recommended.

Mr. Jacobs asked if it would be appropriate to put “Nittany Valley” in parenthesis after Spring Township as a voting entity. Mr. MacMath noted that Benner Township was part of Nittany Valley, but was a separate member. He said that Marion and Walker Townships have not presented issues other than through the normal TIP process and the I-80/I-99 interchanges. Mr. Zilla said that this representation was an issue when the expanded MPO was developed. Those townships are not represented because of an agreement at the time to make the current structure work. It was also the reason that a performance review was to be done after two years. He said that after a year of discussing many alternatives with the Performance Review Committee, there was no consensus on a new representation structure. The current structure continues to recognize that Bellefonte Borough, Spring Township and Benner Township will represent Marion and Walker Townships. Ms. Hannegan suggested that perhaps it be noted in the bylaws that Marion and Walker Townships are represented by the other municipalities.

**7. Announcements**

Mr. Baker reported that the next Technical Committee meeting would be on April 16, 2008 and that the Coordinating Committee may be pushed to the fifth week of April. Mr. Zilla said that the June meetings listed may not be necessary since the MPO will have to meet in July.

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Z. Shingler  
Recording Secretary