

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

**Thursday, February 18, 2010
9:30 a.m.
Centre Region COG Building**

Minutes

Voting Members

Brent Brubaker	Patton Township
Bob Jacobs	Centre County Planning and Community Development Office (CCPCDO)
Sue Hannegan	CCPCDO
Kent Baker, Chair	College Township
Jim May	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Amy Story	State College Borough
Dave Modricker	Ferguson Township
Irv Hoy	Lower Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region
Ray Hankinson	Penns Valley Planning Region
Mike Savage for Jan McDonald	Moshannon Valley Planning Region
Michele Barbin	Mountaintop Planning Region
Hugh Mose	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)
Bill MacMath	Spring Township
Karen Michael	PennDOT District 2-0
Doug Weikel	Benner Township
Frank Hampton	PennDOT Central Office

Non-Voting Members

Dallas Gallo	Bellefonte Borough
Kathy Dimpsey	Federal Highway Administration

Others Present:

Vickie Rusnak	PennDOT District 2-0
Tom Zilla	CRPA
Trish Meek	CRPA
Mike Bloom	CCPCDO
Lyssa Cromell	CRPA
Ray Gutshall	Marion Township
Ken Roan	Marion Township

1. Call to Order

Mr. Baker called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

A round of introductions was made for the benefit of the new Committee members. Mr. Zilla introduced Mr. Irv Hoy, the newly appointed Technical Committee representative for the Lower Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region.

2. Election of Officers for 2010

Motion was made by Mr. MacMath and seconded by Mr. Weikel to retain Mr. Baker as Chair and Mr. Mose as Vice Chair of the CCMPO Technical Committee for 2010. The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Ms. Story and seconded by Ms. Barbin to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2010 CCMPO Technical Committee meeting as presented. The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. Citizens' Comments

Mr. Ray Gutshall of Marion Township asked how a decision on Act 44 would affect the status of the I-80/Route 26 local access interchange.

Mr. Zilla responded that if the I-80 tolling plan is approved, the interchange would be financed through toll revenues under the Turnpike Commission's Capital Improvement Program, and construction would proceed. From the MPO perspective, the project would still have to be added to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), following the standard process. For a project of this size, this would most likely include a 30-day public comment period before action by the MPO Coordinating Committee.

Ms. Michael added that there is currently no construction funding for the local access interchange, but that it is on the Turnpike Commission's capital plan for Year 1. However, even if tolling is approved relatively soon, construction would not begin until this tolling has been enacted, near the end of 2011.

5. Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2040

- a. **Performance Measures** – Mr. Zilla reported that staff has begun developing performance measures for the new LRTP and TIP, based on the project ranking criteria adopted by the CCMPO in June 2009. He asked the Committee for its input on potential performance measures, and Ms. Meek led a discussion of the various types of data in relation to each of the eight goals outlined in the LRTP.

In response to a question from Mr. Modricker regarding reporting frequency, Ms. Dimpsey stated that she was not familiar with the federal requirements, but that her colleague, Mr. Matt Smoker, was. Mr. Hampton offered to contact Mr. Smoker to find out how frequently performance data must be reported.

Mr. Zilla stated that in order to make sure the goals and objectives are being met, performance evaluations should be undertaken each time there is a major update to the LRTP.

Mr. MacMath asked what the consequences might be if the goals in the LRTP were not met, to which Mr. Hampton responded that from the Commonwealth's point of view, the intent is not to be punitive.

Mr. MacMath recommended that a statement be included in the LRTP clarifying that the goal of performance evaluations is to refine and improve the planning process for the future.

Mr. Bloom added that LRTP goals and objectives can change over time, and that there may be a need to modify the project ranking criteria in the future if performance measures are not being met.

Mr. Baker asked Ms. Dimpsey if the federal government would be using the performance data as an indicator of the types of projects that should receive funding. Ms. Dimpsey replied that to the best of her knowledge, it is more a matter of accountability.

The Committee's comments and suggestions will be taken into consideration as staff determines which types of performance data might be readily available.

The Coordinating Committee will be asked for input at its meeting on February 23, 2010.

b. Potential Line Items

Ms. Meek asked the Committee for input on the specific line items and corresponding funding levels to be included in the new LRTP. Specifically, she asked if the existing line items should be carried over, and if new ones should be added. She explained that from a programming perspective, allocating funds through line items, rather than by project, is advantageous in that projects can begin as soon as they are ready.

In response to a question from Mr. Baker, Mr. Zilla stated that over the last few years, the number of line items, as well as some funding levels, has increased. He added, however, that even though a project-based LRTP is harder to administer, it has the advantage that the public can see specific projects being moved forward.

Mr. Baker asked if the use of line items could allow projects that had not gone through the initial ranking process to go forward. Mr. Zilla responded that some betterment projects have been funded without being ranked, but that the MPO makes the final determination. He added that District 2-0 staff has been very proactive in informing the MPO in advance of using funds for these projects. Ms. Meek added that all of the line item totals in the LRTP are allocated to projects on the TIP.

Mr. Baker also inquired as to whether the Pavement Restoration and Stormwater Drainage Facilities line items should be combined, to which Ms. Michael responded that the difficulty in combining these items is that the funding comes from different sources. Ms. Michael also pointed out that having a separate line item for Stormwater Drainage Facilities shows that it is a high priority.

Ms. Meek pointed out there are a number of new Transit line items, which have been reviewed by the CATA Board. Mr. Zilla explained that the Transit line items were designed to give CATA more flexibility in vehicle rehabilitation and replacement.

Mr. Baker requested that MPO staff work with PennDOT to come up with funding recommendations for each of the proposed line items and to determine the percentage of funds allocated to line items versus specific projects.

6. Member Reports

Mr. Modricker (Ferguson Township) provided a status report on improvements to the four-mile section of Whitehall Road between West College Avenue and Tadpole Road. The project is in the design phase, and utility information has been forwarded to the designer. Right-of-way acquisition will occur later this year. Ferguson Township's time schedule for this section of Whitehall Road is similar to PennDOT's for the state-owned section of the road.

Mr. Modricker also reported on the Old Gatesburg Road extension from Science Park Road to Blue Course Drive. This project is also in the design phase; the environmental studies have been done, and the field view is nearing completion. Bid letting is anticipated for September 2010.

Mr. Mose (CATA) reported that ridership has increased as a result of the winter weather, and now totals over 40,000 riders per day on a typical weekday.

Mr. Brubaker (Patton Township) reported that the installation of a new traffic signal at the Woody Crest development on North Atherton Street will begin within the month. Also, one driveway on North Atherton Street will be eliminated with the development of Chick-Fil-A on the site of the former Lemoyne Sleeper store.

Mr. May (CRPA) distributed a flyer outlining the dates and locations of the six Centre Region issue identification meetings for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Mr. Baker (College Township) reported on three developments which will involve the installation of new traffic signals:

- Mt. Nittany Elementary School – A new signal will be installed at Brandywine Drive and Warner Boulevard near the Oak Hall exit off the Route 322 Expressway. The Township will be meeting with S&A Homes and the State College Area School District to try to negotiate a cost sharing agreement. Improvements will also be made at South Atherton Street and Warner Boulevard to allow for a protected/permitted left turn from South Atherton Street onto Warner Boulevard.
- South Ridge Sheetz – The Township has negotiated with S&A Homes to relocate West Branch Road to align it with the existing Hills Plaza entrance. The existing signal will be moved to improve traffic flow on South Atherton Street.
- Country Inn Hotel – A signal will be added to the intersection of Squirrel Drive and College Avenue, and the entrance to the W.R. Hickey Beer Distributor will be redesigned.

Mr. Baker also noted that the replacement of the Trout Road Bridge is scheduled for April.

Ms. Hannegan (CCPCDO) reported that the CCPCDO is in the process of completing an inventory of underutilized and vacant properties within the county, with the goal of collecting information that can facilitate the marketing of those buildings for future uses. The County Commissioners will be appointing members to the Marcellus Shale Task Force within the next few weeks. A report on the Marcellus Shale drilling industry is available on the website. There are nine wells currently drilled in Centre County, and over 100 are in the planning stages.

Ms. Story (State College Borough) reported that the Borough received county funding to make signal upgrades in the downtown area to coincide with PennDOT's North Atherton Street signal upgrade project.

Mr. Weikel (Benner Township) reported that growth continues along the Benner Pike and that several development proposals will require transportation impact studies.

Mr. MacMath (Spring Township) reported that PennDOT issued a Highway Occupancy Permit for the Weis Market on Zion Road; this includes three new traffic signals as well as new curbs.

Mr. Savage (Moshannon Valley) reported that the bridge is being replaced in Black Moshannon State Park. There will be a temporary bridge in place with one-way traffic and a light until the project is completed in summer.

Ms. Rusnak (PennDOT District 2-0) reported that a “spike” funding announcement is expected by the end of February. Mr. Zilla added that the Coordinating Committee authorized MPO staff in December to submit a spike funding request for safety improvements to Route 322.

Mr. Jacobs (CCPCDO) reported that the County hopes to have its Greenway Plan adopted by May. Sewer and water projects have been completed in smaller communities throughout the county, using a variety of funding sources; the County will be applying for housing rehabilitation funds for those communities as well. The County is also working to preserve a farm along Route 45 to create a large agricultural preservation cluster between Country Club Park and Centre Hall.

Mr. Gallo (Bellefonte Borough) reported that discussions are underway with PennDOT concerning upgrades associated with the Northwest Savings Bank project, which will impact East Bishop Street and Zion Road.

7. Announcements

The next Technical Committee meeting will be held on March 10, 2010 at 9:30 a.m. at the College Township Municipal Building.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the February 18, 2009 MPO Technical Committee meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyssa Cromell
Recording Secretary