

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization (S/WMPO)
Council
June 11, 2015**

**Government Office Building
Council Chambers, Room #301
125 N. Division Street
Salisbury, MD**

Attendees:

Council members:

Matt Creamer, Chair, Wicomico County Council Administrator
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Julia Glanz, City of Salisbury
John Hall, Wicomico County Council
Laura Mitchell, City of Salisbury Council
Bunky Luffman, Town of Delmar, Maryland, Commissioner
Mike Pennington, Tri-County Council of the Lower Eastern Shore
Rick Konrad, Wicomico County

Others:

Keith Hall, S/WMPO Administrator
Hal Godwin, Sussex County, Delaware
D.J. Hughes, Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc.
Lisa Ludwig, Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council (LESHC)

Introduction

Mr. Creamer opened the meeting at 1 P.M. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

The first item of business was the approval of minutes from the April 9, 2015, meeting. Ms. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, with the motion seconded by Mr. Nixon. Mr. Creamer called for the vote, and with a majority of the votes in favor of the motion, none opposed, Mr. Luffman abstaining; the motion passed.

FY 2014 – FY 2017 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) – Proposed Amendments

Mike Nixon – MDOT

In advance of the meeting, S/WMPO Council members were provided with the proposed amendments to the FY 2014 – FY 2017 TIP via e-mail. Mr. Keith Hall stated the meeting notice, as well as the public review and comment period for the proposed TIP amendments were advertised in accordance with the S/WMPO's Public Participation Plan. The Public Participation Plan requires

a 15-day public review and comment period prior to an action by the S/WMPO TAC or Council, as well as a public meeting notice advertised in the Daily Times, PAC 14, and the S/WMPO website for at least 14-days in advance of a meeting. To date, no public comments were received. Additionally, the S/WMPO's Technical Advisory Committee had reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to forward the proposed amendments to the S/WMPO Council for their consideration. Mr. Nixon then proceeded to summarize that the amended TIP would provide for the following improvements:

- Nanticoke Rd/MD 349 over Windsor Creek: During Hurricane Sandy, the bridge was completely covered by the storm surge. The proposed improvement will raise the bridge by approximately one foot at the cost of \$3.128M; and
- Line Rd/MD 54 over Mockingbird Creek: This bridge is deteriorating and will be completely replaced at the cost of \$3.96M. Mr. Hall added Wicomico County Public Works Department and SHA were developing a traffic control / detour plan to minimize the traffic impact to residents and farmers. Tentatively, improvements will be made on or around June 2016.

Ms. Mitchell made a motion to approve the additional funding for the MD 349 Bridge Improvements. Seconded by Mr. John Hall, and with all members voting and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Konrad made a motion to approve the additional funding in the FY 2014 – FY 2017 Amended TIP to reconstruct the MD 54 Bridge over Mockingbird Creek, with the motion seconded by Mr. John Hall. With all Board members voting in favor, and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – Proposed Amendments

Keith Hall (S/WMPO Administrator)

In advance of the meeting, S/WMPO Council members were provided with the proposed amendments to the FY 2014 – FY 2017 TIP via e-mail. Mr. Keith Hall stated the meeting notice and proposed amendments to the FY 2013 UPWP had been advertised in accordance with the S/WMPO's Public Participation Plan. To date, no public comments were received. Additionally, the S/WMPO's Technical Advisory Committee had reviewed and made a favorable recommendation to forward the proposed amendments to the S/WMPO Council for their consideration. He summarized the following proposed amendments to the FY 2013 UPWP:

- Decrease of \$12,500 from the Urbanized Area Transition;
- Increase of \$6,170 to the Long Range Transportation Plan; and
- Increase of \$6,330 to the Scenic Byways Planning Initiative.

The remaining line items contained in the FY 2013 UPWP will not be changed and the total overall budget would also remain unaffected

Mr. John Hall made a motion to approve the Amended FY 2013 UPWP, with the motion seconded by Mr. Konrad. With all Board members voting in favor, and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Keith Hall – S/WMPO Administrator

Mr. Keith Hall stated the meeting notice and proposed FY 2016 UPWP had been advertised in accordance with the S/WMPO's Public Participation Plan. To date, no public comments were received. The proposed funding level of the FY 2016 UPWP is 2 percent less than the FY 2015 UPWP. The major difference in the budget from the previous year is in the Special Studies section of the UPWP. Three (3) items from FY 2015 are proposed to receive continued funding and two (2) new Special Studies have been identified. The funding levels for the remaining budget items is consistent with FY 2015 UPWP apportionments. Special Studies are proposed as follows:

- GIS Enhancements – funding continues from year to year for upgrades, new maps and other GIS related planning expenses related to S/WMPO. Budget proposed of \$15,000 is consistent with last year's funding level;
- Feasibility Study for a Salisbury to Mardela Rails to Trails – new project to conduct a planning-level feasibility of converting an existing abandoned rail line to a pedestrian / cyclist path. Study will identify potential alignments and funding opportunities. The S/WMPO will coordinate this effort with appropriate MDOT personnel. Proposed budget is \$15,000;
- Transit Planning – continuing funding for Shore Transit planning initiatives. Proposed allocation is consistent with prior year funding. Proposed budget is \$7,000;
- Scenic Byways Initiative – continuing funding for Scenic Byways mobile and web-based app. and other scenic byways planning efforts. Proposed budget is \$20,000, which is consistent with prior year funding; and
- S. Division Street Corridor Study – a continuation of the Eastern Shore Drive Corridor Study. The Study will provide recommendations to improve / enhance motorized and non-motorized travel and safety conditions based on current and projected demand. The area of interest for this multi-phase planning effort includes: Division Street extending from S. Camden Avenue to U.S. Route 13 (South Fruitland Blvd.); Division Street extending from U.S. Route 13 (S. Fruitland Blvd.) to the intersection at Coulbourn Mill Road; and Brown Street / Old Eden Road extending from E. Cedar Lane to Stockyard Road. Proposed budget is \$22,239. Additional funds will need to be programmed to cover the anticipated project cost.

Mr. Keith Hall stated the S/WMPO TAC had forwarded a favorable recommendation on the proposed FY 2016 UPWP to the S/WMPO Council for review and action. Mr. Nixon made a motion to approve the Proposed FY 2016 UPWP Budget, with the motion seconded by Ms. Mitchell. With all Board members voting in favor, and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

Member Updates / Other Business

Mr. Keith Hall mentioned City of Salisbury applied and received a Bronze-level recognition and a Bicycle Friendly Community designation by the League of American Bicyclists. Presentation to be held later in the day.

Presentation – Eastern Shore Drive Corridor Study

DJ Hughes – Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc.

Mr. Hughes provided a summary about the project's scope of work and the study area. To identify current demand at various intersections in the study area, data was collected in October 2014 to ensure traffic would be representative of a regular day during the school year for Bennett High School and Salisbury University.

Mr. Hughes presented the following findings and proposed recommendations of the Eastern Shore Drive Corridor Study:

- Eastern Shore Drive at Carroll Street – the study found the two (2) lane left turn at the “T” intersection of Eastern Shore Drive and Carroll Street is unusual and the City should consider conducting a traffic signal warrant analysis to determine if a traffic signal will improve existing conditions;
- Eastern Shore Drive from E. Carroll Street to Clemwood Street or South Boulevard – Mr. Hughes stated a road diet would be operationally feasible solely based on the annual average daily traffic counts. Prior to any action of the City to implement a road diet, he suggested additional engineering studies to be completed to evaluate the performance and operation of the intersections along Eastern Shore Drive.

If a road diet was considered the following improvements are recommended:

- Reduce the number of lanes on the roadway to facilitate two lanes of traffic going in each direction with a center turn lane;
- Add bike lanes on the existing roadway instead of on-street parking;
- Install pedestrian curbing to reduce crossing distance at intersections and reduce gaps in existing sidewalk network;
- Continue to coordinate with Salisbury University to identify potential bike paths extending from E. College Avenue to Milford Street; and
- Stripe right turn lanes onto the existing pavement at intersections to help traffic flow.

Mr. Hughes stated the implementation of a road diet could be achieved at a minimal cost because the roadway has an existing center left-turn lane and on-street parking could be added to the roadway. Mr. Keith Hall noted TAC members expressed concern about incorporating on-street parking. Several Council members expressed concern over losing traffic lanes, and suggested bike lanes being added to the grassy areas between the sidewalks and streets. In addition, improving the existing bike and pedestrian path along the west side of Eastern Shore Drive is another potential means to address increasing bike lanes and safety in the Corridor. Mr. Keith Hall emphasized the scope of work for this planning effort was to evaluate existing and future conditions for motorized and non-motorized travel, and subsequently provide planning-level recommended improvements and cost estimates. Several proposed recommendations within the Draft Study, including, but not limited to implementation of a road diet and adding bikes lanes, as well as a traffic signal warrant analysis require further study prior to an action by the affected jurisdiction. Mr. Hughes added any improvements or recommendation may slow down traffic or increase delays, which may improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

Mr. Hall, with the consensus of the Council members, recommended Mr. Hughes return at a later meeting to present the final report and cost estimates for the recommended short, mid, and long-term improvements.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

The next meeting of the S/WMPO Council is going to be combined with the TAC and is scheduled for Thursday, July 9, 2015, commencing at 1 P.M.

There being no other business before the Council, upon a motion by Ms. Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Konrad, with all members voting in favor, and none opposed, the meeting was adjourned.