

Meeting Minutes

Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization
June 6, 2012

City of Salisbury/Wicomico County Government Building
125 North Division Street, Salisbury, MD
Room 300

Attendees:

S/W MPO officials:

Luther Hitchens, Vice Chair, Delmar, MD
Dr. Lore Chambers, City of Salisbury, Asst. City Administrator
Sharon Jones, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore
Rick Konrad, Wicomico County, Purchasing Department
Mike Nixon, Maryland Department of Transportation
Terry Cohen, Salisbury, City Council President

Others:

Keith Hall, S/W MPO staff
Julie Wheatley, Sussex County DE Economic Development
Donnie Drewer, Maryland State Highway Administration
Martin Gilchrist, Urban Research and Development Corporation
Bryan Cope, Urban Research and Development Corporation
Tyson Byrne, Maryland Department of Transportation
Bunky Luffman, Jr., Town of Delmar, MD
Melinda Lewis, Wicomico County, recording secretary

Introduction

Mr. Hitchens opened the meeting at 1:10 P.M. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

The first item of business was the approval of minutes from the January 26, 2012 meeting. Vice Chairman Hitchens asked if anyone had any additions or corrections, and there were none. Mr. Konrad made a motion to approve the minutes, with the motion seconded by Ms. Cohen. All Board members voted aye, with none opposed, and the motion to approve the minutes was passed unanimously.

S/W MPO Functional Master Plan of Hiker and Biker Trails presentation

Mr. Hall briefly provided an overview of the bidding process used to determine the consultant chosen for this study, as well as information related to the purpose of the study, which is in its first phase. Mr. Hall proceeded to introduce the consultant team from Urban Research and Development Corporation (URDC) Martin Gilchrest, President, and Bryan Cope, Engineer.

Mr. Gilchrist began the presentation with an analysis and mapping of existing trails in Wicomico County. The consultants took turns examining different aspects of actual hiking and biking trails in the County, analyzing routes to connect existing pathways, incorporating federal and generally accepted design guidelines, and also gave examples of successful trail systems within urban communities. The study incorporated, when appropriate, pathways to local community centers, schools and neighborhoods. Mr. Hall discussed the next step or phase two, which was to take the presented information and focus on four or five areas for further study. This phase would have to be researched, drafted and presented to the MPO Technical Advisory Committee at a future meeting and then approved by the Council as part of a UPWP.

The presentation ended with a question and answering session, which members and presenters discussed the existing bike ways, the Salisbury University to Carroll Street corridor, grant funding application and public participation.

FY 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Nixon provided a brief summary of a one-time opportunity offered by the FTA to shift capital funds to assist Shore Transit with the increased price of fuel. Five of the six counties that the shift has been approved for have opted to use the capital funds for fuel. Mr. Nixon added that there is also supplemental funding through a special grant for the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) program that would also benefit Shore Transit's operating expenses. These supplemental funds were not approved with the original TIP because the amounts were still unknown in December when the budget was approved. This is a fifty/fifty state and federal grant that would be used in the operating budget. Mr. Hall added that the proposed amendments to the FY 2012 – FY 2015 TIP had been advertised in the paper and on the MPO Website for 14 days and no comments were received by the public. Additionally, the proposed amendments were presented to the MPO Technical Advisory Committee meeting earlier in the day and the committee made a favorable recommendation for approval.

After a brief discussion, upon a motion by Ms. Cohen, seconded by Mr. Nixon, with all members voting in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Hall presented the Draft FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to the Council members. He noted the UPWP is the annual budget outlining funding levels and work program items for the upcoming fiscal year. Over the past few years, the MPO has benefited from increased funding levels; however, Staff has been instructed by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to prepare this work program consistent with funding levels of the approved FY 2012 UPWP, which totaled \$122,334.00. Mr. Hall stated the funding level is likely to be modified as a result of the Federal budget adoption, which will occur prior to October 1, 2011.

After additional discussion, upon a motion by Mr. Konrad, seconded by Ms. Cohen, with all members voting in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

New Urbanized Area Boundary

Mr. Hall presented a map of the expanded urbanized area as determined by the 2010 Census information. The map shown to the Council was showing only the urbanized area and not the full extent of the overall MPO. Mr. Hall noted the Urbanized Area of the MPO has expanded to include the Town of Hebron, Allen and parts of Somerset County, as well as extending in a northerly direction along U.S. Route 13 approximately 17 miles to encompass portions of Sussex County, Delaware, including Laurel and Seaford. Mr. Hall added that this expansion is going to create challenges as we move forward and reach out to these areas; however, current funding does not reflect the challenges associated with incorporating and collaborating planning efforts with these communities. Mr. Nixon commented that the changes and incorporation of the new area does not need to be immediate but that the MPO does need to show progress.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Mr. Hall will contact members when a meeting needs to be scheduled and an appropriate date and time will then be determined.

Ms. Cohen noted that because of time, there was no longer a quorum present. The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.