

Meeting Minutes

**Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization (S/WMPO)
Technical Advisory Committee
October 13, 2016**

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

Attendees:

S/WMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members:

John Redden, Chair, Wicomico County Public Works
Amanda Pollack, Vice-Chair, City of Salisbury Public Works
Ian Beam, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Tracey Gordy, Maryland Dept. of Planning (MDP)
Eric Berkheimer, Salisbury University
Brad Bellacicco, Shore Transit
William Hardin, Town of Delmar
Berley Mears, City of Seaford Public Works
Mary Purner, Town of Hebron
Becky Robinson, Delmarva Water Transport Committee
Josh Thomas, Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT)
Keith Hall, S/WMPO Administrator

Others:

Christy Bernal, State Highway Administration (SHA)
Joe Buckley, Shore Transit
Lauren DeVore, DNREC – Air Quality
Mike Gibbons, City of Fruitland
Andrew Lyons, GMB
Stephen Ottinger, Delaware Transit Corporation
Peter Sotherland, SHA
Debbie Stam, City of Salisbury HCDD
Steve Warren, Town of Willards
Dr. Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (telephone)

Introduction

Chairman Redden opened the meeting at 10:30 A.M. and welcomed everyone.

Minutes

The first item of business was the approval of minutes from the July 28, 2016 meeting. Ms. Pollack made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted, with the motion seconded by Mr.

Bellacicco. With all Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) members voting in favor, and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

Wicomico County Health Department Walkability Initiative – Presentation

Cara Rozaieski (Wico. County Health Department)

Ms. Rozaieski started the presentation with an overview about the 1422 grant, which provides planning funds to help reduce chronic disease in a community, including, but not limited to heart attack, obesity, and diabetes. She noted chronic disease causes seven (7) out of 10 deaths in the Country and accounts for approximately 86 percent of health care cost. A cost effective measure to reduce chronic disease is walking because it's easy and most people can do it. In support of improving health as a function of walking, the Wicomico County Health Department retained professional planning services to prepare a Walking Audit Plan. The purpose of this Plan is to provide goals and strategies to promote and encourage walking in Wicomico County. Moreover, the Plan recommends developing a walking strategy toolbox, as well as a listing of potential funding opportunities to improve pedestrian infrastructure and associated amenities.

The Health Department will host a public meeting on October 31, 2016, 1:00 PM, at Fire Station #2 in Salisbury. A primary objective of the meeting is to provide citizens an opportunity to be involved in the early stages of the planning process to increase walkability in Wicomico County. To date, the Health Department has met with Salisbury, Fruitland, Delmar, Mardela Springs, and Hebron to discuss this initiative.

Chairman Redden inquired if the three (3) remaining municipalities were included as part of the outreach and coordination efforts of the Health Department. Ms. Rozaieski responded outreach with municipalities was based on communities included in the Walking Audit Plan. She stated the Board of Education will be involved in the work group.

To promote walking routes in communities, the Health Department has a limited number of wayfinding signs available to communities on a first-come first-serve basis. To date, one route in the City of Salisbury has walking route signs installed. Mr. Hardin asked about the process for a jurisdiction to request walking route signs from the Health Department. Ms. Rozaieski responded to contact her for assistance with acquiring walking route signs.

Being no further questions, Chairman Redden thanked Ms. Rozaieski for attending the meeting and presenting an update to the TAC.

Sustainable Communities Designation – Presentation

Tracey Gordy (MDP)

Ms. Gordy started the presentation with an overview of the Sustainable Communities program, which is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). In Wicomico County, the City of Salisbury is the sole designated Sustainable Community, and Mardela Springs has an application pending. She proceeded with a brief overview of MDP's Priority Funding Area (PFA) program, which focuses on allocating State funding for projects located in areas designated for growth and meeting several criterion.

The Sustainable Community Act creates a geographic designation, which is a subset of a PFA. This subset represents a local jurisdiction's priority area for development or redevelopment to make better use of scarce State resources. Ms. Gordy stated participation in the Community Legacy, Strategic Demolition Fund, Smart Growth Impact Fund, or the Neighborhood BusinessWorks Programs is contingent upon the area being designated as a Sustainable Community.

Ms. Gordy presented the Sustainable Communities application criteria, which MDP will provide technical assistance to prepare an application upon request from a jurisdiction. The application has been simplified over the years and consists of a few pages of questions and a matrix divided into five (5) different categories. The information to complete the questions and matrix is contained in a jurisdiction's adopted comprehensive plan. Ms. Gordy proceeded to summarize the Sustainable Communities application guidelines: municipal or county government can participate; proposed areas must be entirely within a PFA; must be consistent with locally adopted comprehensive plan; form a workgroup to develop application (Planning Commission, Elected Officials, Citizens and interested parties – determined by local jurisdiction); and the Action Plan (application) and Sustainable Communities boundary shall be supported by government resolution.

Ms. Gordy stated applications are accepted three times a year, which February 5th is the upcoming deadline. Additional submission dates include June 3, 2017, and October 7, 2017. If an application is approved, the Sustainable Community designation is good for five (5) years. Both MDP and DHCD can provide technical assistance with preparing applications.

State funding opportunities for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure – Presentation

Peter Sotherland and Christy Bernal (SHA)

Mr. Sotherland presented information about grant and internal (SHA) funding programs for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure projects. Grant funding opportunities include: Maryland Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program; Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS); and the Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP).

TA projects are designed to: expand travel options, improve the cultural, historic, and environmental aspects of transportation infrastructure; improve safety for non-motorized travel; reduce congestion and emission; and improve the health of children. The TA program requires a request to be: sponsored or co-sponsored by an eligible agency or authority; meet one (1) or more of the nine (9) eligible categories; and provide a 20 percent cash match. Eligible activities include funding assistance for planning, design, construction, long-term maintenance of pedestrian and cyclist facilities. SHA can provide assistance with the application process, as well as serves as the responsible agency for approvals during design, right-of-way, and construction phases. Next round of TA grant applications will be accepted from April 15, 2017, through May 15, 2017.

The purpose of the SRTS Program is designed to: enable and encourage children to walk and bike to school; improve safety for pedestrians and cyclist to encourage a healthy lifestyle from an early age; and facilitate planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities to improve safety, reduce traffic congestion and fuel consumption, and improve air quality. Funding is available for engineering (sidewalks, on-street cycling, and pathways), pedestrian and cyclist education on safety and benefits, encouragement (walking school buses and completion/events), enforcement (training crossing guards, parents, community), and evaluation. Eligibility

requirements for a project include a 20 percent cash match, benefit elementary or middle school students, benefit students who walk or bike to school, include school participation, located within a 2-mile radius of school, and complete participation surveys and reports. Ms. Gordy inquired if the 20 percent cash match is mandatory, which Mr. Sotherland confirmed it is a requirement.

A brief overview of the FLAP program was provided by Mr. Sotherland. The purpose of the program is to improve transportation facilities providing access to, adjacent to, or located within Federal lands. Funding is available for planning, engineering, preventative maintenance, rehabilitation, construction, and operation and maintenance of transit facilities. Facilities include: parking areas; scenic/historic sites acquisition; bicycle and pedestrian facilities, environmental mitigation; and construction or reconstruction of roadside rest areas. Mr. Sotherland emphasized since it's a Federal program, all NEPA requirements will need to be met for projects using FLAP funding. This program requires a 20 percent match and the applicant must own the facility for which grant funding is requested.

Mr. Sotherland concluded the presentation with a briefing about SHA's internal funding sources for sidewalk and cycling facilities.

MDOT Draft FY 2017 – FY 2022 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) – Presentation

Peter Sotherland (State Highway Administration)

Mr. Sotherland stated the SHA portion of the CTP consists of 16 system preservation projects in Wicomico County, for an estimated total of \$87 million. Chairman Redden questioned if the \$87 million included the funding allocation for the replacement of the bridge decks along the Salisbury Bypass. Mr. Sotherland confirmed the allocation is included in the total amount for SHA projects located in Wicomico County.

Mr. Sotherland concluded the presentation with an overview of the relationship of the State CTP and a MPO's TIP, which the overview was recommended by Dr. Kwame Arhin. Individual projects consist of items costing over \$10 million, capacity expansion, or full bridge replacement. These items would be incorporated into a TIP as an individual project. In addition to individual projects, a TIP consist of improvements grouped into various categories.

DeIDOT Draft FY 2018 – FY 2023 Consolidated Transportation Program – Presentation

Josh Thomas (DeIDOT)

Mr. Thomas stated DeIDOT is waiting for final Federal approval of State's FY 2017 – FY 2020 STIP, which is consistent with the MPO's TIP. DeIDOT recently released the draft CTP, which covers the FY 2018 – FY 2023 timeframe. The first four (4) years of the CTP, will constitute the MPO's TIP for the same timeframe. Mr. Thomas distributed the Executive Summary of the overall statewide changes, a spreadsheet containing all the proposed projects, and information about DeIDOT's project prioritization criteria.

Projects within the MPO area focus on rehabilitation or system preservation projects. Of particular importance to the MPO is the road widening and pedestrian improvements project on

Discount Road in the Town of Laurel. He concluded the presentation by providing an overview of the timeline associated with the development and approval process for the CTP.

Member Updates / Other Business

TAC Members

Ms. Amanda Pollack provided an update about the Main Street Revitalization project. She noted, fencing was installed this week and construction will occur over the next year. Also, the City of Salisbury has a project website containing information about road closures, as well as a 24-hour hotline for citizens with questions about the project.

Public Comments

Stephen Ottinger of the Delaware Transit Corporation stated the agency received service recommendations from the Sussex County Origin-to-Destination Study. The new transit center being constructed in Lewes will be operational in the Fall of 2018. The new location will provide an opportunity to provide year round service to the coastal areas and the potential to partner with Shore Transit.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Mr. Hall stated the upcoming meeting of the TAC is scheduled for January 12, 2017.

There being no other business before the TAC, upon a motion by Mr. Berkheimer, seconded by Mr. Josh Thomas, with all members voting in favor, and none opposed, the meeting was adjourned.