

Meeting Minutes

Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization (“S/WMPO”) Council meeting

February 21, 2024 @ 1:30 P.M.

Hybrid Meeting Council Chambers (Room 301) and Zoom

Attendees:

S/WMPO Council members:

Matthew E. Creamer, Chairman, Wicomico County
Charles Anderson, Vice-Chairman, City of Seaford, De.
Tyson Byrne, Maryland Department of Transportation (“MDOT”)
Twain Evanson, Town of Delmar Proxy
Josh Hastings, Wicomico County Council
Sharon Dashiell, City of Salisbury Council
Marc Henderson, City of Fruitland
Bunky Luffman, Wicomico County
Greg Padgham, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore
Pamela Steinebach, Delaware Department of Transportation (“DelDOT”)

Others:

Jasmine Champion, Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”)
Lamin Williams, FHWA
Rashad Pinckney, MDOT
Nancy Roisum, Citizen
Betty Tustin, The Traffic Group
Heather Coons, Rossi Group

Staff:

Keith Hall, S/WMPO Executive Director
Gary Pusey, S/WMPO Administrator

Introduction

Chairman Creamer opened the meeting at approximately 1:30 P.M. and welcomed attendees. He noted that since this is a Hybrid meeting with a Zoom component, attendance was taken via roll call. Mr. Hall confirmed a quorum has been achieved.

Minutes

The first item of business was approval of the minutes from the May 18, 2023, meeting. Ms. Dashiell made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted; seconded by Mr.

Luffman. With all participating members voting in favor, none opposed, the motion passed.

Brown Street Corridor Study Presentation

Ms. Betty Tustin (The Traffic Group)

Chairman Creamer welcomed Betty Tustin with The Traffic Group and asked her to present the Brown Street Corridor Study. Mr. Hall also gave a brief introduction and mentioned that Ms. Tustin and The Traffic Group have been assisting the MPO since 2006, and he noted that the Fruitland City Council has reviewed this Study and it was well-received.

Ms. Tustin began the presentation with an overview of the Study Area, and she noted that Brown Street is a narrow road with several large recreational facilities on both sides of the street. Speeding is an issue on Brown Street, along with a concern for children crossing the street as they leave the parking areas to reach the facilities on the opposite side.

She pointed out the major recreational facilities on Brown Street, including the Crown Sports Center, Falcons Youth Sports, Beach Bounders Gymnastics, and the Fruitland Recreational Facility including the little league fields. She also pointed out the location of residential areas, including Colonial Village, Bailey's Crossing, and nonresidential uses such as the Fruitland Business Park and Fruitland City Hall.

She stated that in the Spring of 2023 traffic counts were taken, including turning movements and a speed study was also completed along Brown Street and Division Street. She summarized the data collected, noting that the peak traffic occurred between 5-6 p.m. on a Tuesday in mid-April. Levels of Service ("LOS") were calculated for the five (5) intersections in the Study Area and although each LOS was "acceptable" at "D" or above, the Brown Street/East Main Street intersection for the east bound left through right was the only intersection that graded "D", and it also had the longest delay for vehicles attempting to turn.

She noted that the data indicates there is a speeding problem on Brown Street. Although the speed limit is 25 mph on Brown Street, the majority of vehicles were traveling above 40 mph.

Ms. Tustin also explained data indicating where travelers to Brown Street originated from; the mode of travel, which was predominantly private auto; crash data in the Study Area; and survey data of users in the area indicating their purpose for traveling on Brown Street.

Ms. Tustin then summarized the recommendations contained in the Study. These include:

- A raised crosswalk be installed on Brown Street connecting the Fruitland Recreational Facilities located on both sides of Brown Street, with the crosswalk meeting certain dimensional requirements;
- Flashing signage be installed at this crosswalk with pushbutton operation;
- She also noted that technology exists that allows the flashing signage to operate by video/camera, or with LIDAR, without requiring manual operation;
- Lighting (streetlights) is also recommended at the crosswalk;
- Multi-use path be installed on the east side of Brown Street adjacent to the parking lots for pedestrians. This path would lengthen an existing path directly opposite Garrison Way;
- On South Division Street, a multi-use path or sidewalk is recommended to be installed from the existing parking lot to East Main Street;
- Two (2) radar signs are recommended on Brown Street near the Fruitland Recreation Facility; and
- Should funding become available, it is recommended that the existing grass parking lot opposite Garrison Way be converted to gravel to eliminate the haphazard parking that is now occurring.

Mr. Henderson noted that the City is in the process of implementing several measures already, including the crosswalk, which will have a speed bump and LED flashing push button pedestrian signs. There will also be an additional three (3) speed bumps on Brown Street going towards Crown Road. He noted that MDE has restricted the City from adding more stone or paved parking lots on the south side of Brown Street due to open space restrictions, and this restriction also applies to the parking lot on Division Street across from the police station. He also stated that the City has been working on a multi-use path along the north side of Brown Street, as there is an existing sidewalk that they'd like to connect to and lengthen.

Ms. Tustin concluded by summarizing project costs for the proposed crosswalk, and depending on the features discussed, the cost would range from \$5K for a painted raised crosswalk to \$100K to include the various signage alternatives with the streetlights.

Chairman Creamer asked if members had any questions, and thanked Mr. Henderson for his comments.

With no additional questions, Chairman Creamer thanked Ms. Tustin for the presentation.

Public Hearing Items

Mr. Hall noted that the next three (3) items require Public Hearings and he recommended that one (1) Public Hearing be held for all three items, and the Council agreed. Mr. Hall stated the FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program, the FY 2024 – FY 2027 Transportation Improvement Program, and the Long-Range Transportation Plan are all federal

requirements that are part of the MPO's core work program. He noted these items were advertised in the newspaper, on PAC-14's Community Calendar and on the MPO's Website and no comments were received from the public. Mr. Hall asked if there was any member of the public who would like to speak today on any of these Resolutions, and there were no public comments. He advised the Chairman that Staff would briefly summarize each item.

FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program – Proposed Amendments (Resolution 01-2024)

Gary Pusey (S/WMPO Administrator)

Chairman Creamer asked Mr. Pusey to present the proposed amendments to the adopted FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program ("UPWP"). Mr. Pusey stated the purpose of this agenda item is allocate an additional \$43,063 in carryover funding received from MDOT to certain line items within the budget. The original UPWP was adopted by the Council on May 18, 2023.

Proposed amendments included:

- Long Range Transportation Plan: Increase by \$10,000.00;
- MPO Administration: Decrease by \$10,000.00;
- GIS Enhancements: Increase by \$5,000.00;
- Wor-Wic Community College U.S. 50 Egress Study: Increase by \$9,999.00; and
- Six Points Intersection Study: Increase by \$28,064.00.

Mr. Pusey stated that the MPO TAC recommended approval of the amendments to the FY 2024 UPWP at its Feb. 6, 2024, meeting and Staff also recommends approval.

Chairman Creamer asked if there were any questions from the Council members, and there were none.

A motion was made by Mr. Anderson to approve Resolution 01-2024 for the proposed amendments to the adopted FY 2024 UPWP; seconded by Mr. Byrne. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2024 – FY 2027 Transportation Improvement Program – Draft (Resolution 02-2024)

Gary Pusey (S/WMPO Administrator)

Chairman Creamer asked Mr. Pusey to present the draft of the FY 2024 – FY 2027 Transportation Improvement Program ("TIP").

Mr. Pusey stated the draft FY 2024 – FY 2027 TIP is a planning-level budget and is a companion document to the State's TIPs and Capital Programs (6-year budgets), and the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan. The TIP includes transportation projects within the Urban Area that will be funded using federal and/or state monies. As proposed, the

Draft FY 2024 - FY 2027 TIP totals \$100.6 million for roadway, bridges, dams, bike and pedestrian, freight design, right-of-way acquisition and implementation projects and an additional \$36.2 million for transit. He noted that the overall anticipated spend over the (4) year planning period is \$136.8 million.

Mr. Pusey stated that the MPO TAC recommended approval of the FY 2024 – FY 2027 TIP at its Feb. 6, 2024, meeting and Staff also recommends approval.

Chairman Creamer asked if there were any questions, and seeing none, asked for a motion. Mr. Byrne made a motion to approve Resolution 02-2024, and Mr. Luffman seconded the motion. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

Long-Range Transportation Plan – Draft (Resolution 03-2024)

Ms. Heather Coons (Rossi Group)

Chairman Creamer welcomed Heather Coons with The Rossi Group.

Mr. Hall stated that the LRTP is federally-required, and is fiscally-constrained, meaning that the projects contained in the Plan have an identified funding source. He stated there was an effort to obtain public input through advertising of public informational meetings and through social media, and he noted that this update was not a complete revamping of the Plan, but does meet all federal requirements for the Plan's update. He also pointed out that the Plan was advertised for 30 days and no public comments were received.

Ms. Coons provided information on the importance of transportation planning and gave an overview of the transportation planning process, beginning with a vision and goals and continuing through to project implementation. She noted that the LRTP for the S/WMPO, entitled "Connect 2050" is federally-required and is updated every four (4) years. The Plan's update began in March 2023 and contains a listing of prioritized transportation projects for the region over the next 25 years. Projects cover all modes of transportation, including auto, transit, freight, waterways, biking and walking. The LRTP was developed after obtaining input from interested stakeholders including transportation officials and the general public. A public informational meeting was held in May 2023, a public survey was available on the MPO Website and the MPO's Facebook page from April through August 2023, and interviews were conducted with stakeholders in the region in July 2023.

Ms. Roisum stated that she has heard news reports recently about the possibility of passenger rail in Delaware and possibly being extended to Salisbury. Mr. Hall responded that the two (2) Delaware MPOs in Dover and Wilmington, along with DelDOT, received a grant to conduct a feasibility study of passenger rail, and he noted that Delaware does have existing rail lines in place, but that currently this project is only in the feasibility study and there is a lot that needs to occur before any future construction would happen.

Chairman Creamer asked if any Council members had questions. Hearing none, he asked for a motion. Mr. Luffman made a motion to approve Resolution 03-2024, and Mr. Evanson seconded the motion. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

Member Updates

Chairman Creamer noted that we had a new member representing the City of Salisbury and he introduced and welcomed Sharon Dashiell, City Council member.

S/WMPO Updates

Chairman Creamer asked if there were any MPO updates that Mr. Hall would like to share.

Mr. Hall noted that the MPO is initiating three (3) studies that will be underway soon as follows:

- 1) Six-Points Intersection Study – On behalf of the City of Salisbury, this study will be initiated for the intersection that includes Long Avenue, E. Main Street, Mt. Hermon Road and E. William Street;
- 2) Wor-Wic Community College U.S. 50 Egress Study – After 10 years of being on the County’s Annual Priority Letter that is submitted to MDOT, we will be studying the possibility of Wor-Wic having egress on to U.S. 50. Mr. Hall noted that MDOT will require this study as part of their review to determine whether egress is warranted; and
- 3) U.S. 13 & MD 54 Pedestrian Improvements Study – For the Town of Delmar, the MPO will undertake a study to determine what pedestrian improvements can be implemented at this busy intersection to improve safety.

Mr. Hall stated he would be reaching out to all member jurisdictions concerning the Carbon Reduction Program and what funding opportunities are available for shovel-ready projects.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

Chairman Creamer thanked everyone for attending. Mr. Hall asked everyone to mark their calendars for the next meeting which is scheduled for April 17, 2024. There being no other business before the Council, upon a motion by Mr. Luffman, seconded by Mr. Evanson, with all participating Council members voting in favor and none opposed, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 P.M.