

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of
September 26, 2016 – 4:30 p.m.
Two Chatham Center • Suite 400 • 112 Washington Place • Pittsburgh, PA 15219

The one hundred twenty-first meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission was called to order by Chairman Chuck Anderson.

Members present were: Charles Anderson, Kevin Boozel, Scott Bricker, Tom Ceraso, Dan Cessna, Gina Cerilli, Dave Coder, Rich Fitzgerald, Jim Gagliano, Jr., Kim Geyer, Kelly Gray, Lynn Heckman, Fred Junko, Clifford Levine, Larry Maggi, Jeff Marshall, Kevin McCullough, Amy McKinney, Erin Molchany, Leslie Osche, Johnna Pro, Mavis Rainey, James Ritzman, Aurora Sharrard, Michael Silvestri, Byron Stauffer, Jr., Jim Struzzi, Archie Trader, Vincent Vicites, and Blair Zimmerman.

Others: Ann Ogoreuc, Allegheny County Economic Development; Court Gould, Sustainable Pittsburgh; and F. Kaid Benfield, presenting before the Commission.

Staff: Jim Hassinger, Kirk Brethauer, Chuck Imbrogno, Vince Massaro, Shannon O'Connell, Dee Pamplin, Doug Smith, Tom Straw, Kay Tomko, Lew Villotti, and Sara Walfoort.

1. Chairman Anderson called to order the September 26, 2016 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

- a. Quorum – There being a quorum present the meeting proceeded.
- b. Any Conflict of Interest Declarations on Action Items – None.

2. Action on Minutes of the June 27, 2016 Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2016 meeting by Lynn Heckman which was seconded by Rich Fitzgerald. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

3. Public Comment – None.

4. Financial Report – Vince Massaro

Mr. Massaro reported on the financials for the fiscal period ending July 31, 2016 which includes the approved budget and reflects the operations of the Commission and the Corporation.

We have an approved budget of \$10.7M. Actual and encumbered to date \$2.7M or 21% of the budget recorded and encumbered to date. The majority of the federal and state funding agreements have been executed. We are waiting for the PREP and EXPORT 2000 Grants which are on their way to the SPC offices to be executed.

The auditors are on their third week at SPC and they will be finishing their field work at the end of September. They will submit a draft audit report by the middle of October. The final report will be presented to the Commission at the December 12th Commission meeting.

The Commission accepted the financial report as presented.

5. Committee Reports

Regional Policy Advisory Committee - Larry Maggi

Commissioner Maggi reported that at the Regional Policy Advisory Committee meeting, Dr. Julie Marshall, Senior Economist for the Appalachian Regional Commission presented information about the coal industry what they're doing about the layoff of miners and the industry in general. And, Denise Brinley, Special Assistant to the Secretary of DCED talked about coal fired plants that are off-line now and the plans on what they intend to do with them.

6. Action on Resolution 14-16 to Amend the 2016-2018 Unified Planning Work Program – East End Rapid Transit Study – Doug Smith

Mr. Smith summarized this Amendment of the Unified Planning Work Program which outlines how planning funds are spent in the region. SPC passed some FTA planning funds through to the Port Authority in the previous UPWP for a study that looks at the feasibility of extending the East Busway. The project was to be completed by June 30th, but it ran into some delays. Working with PennDOT, we secured additional funding so we could continue that work this fiscal year to finish the project. This resolution is to amend the current Work Program to be able to incorporate those additional FTA planning dollars into the Work Program.

There was a question on the resolution, which Mr. Smith responded to saying that the funding would be extended until the end of the fiscal year but SPC and Port Authority expect that the study will be done by the end of the calendar year.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 14-16 by Mr. Ceraso which was seconded by Mr. Bricker. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

Chairman Anderson introduced Mr. F. Kaid Benfield, who will be giving a special presentation to the Commission on “Seven Strategies for a Greener, Healthier, Stronger Future”. Mr. Benfield’s visit was made possible by Sustainable Pittsburgh.

7. Special Presentation: “Seven Strategies for a Greener, Healthier, Stronger Future” - F. Kaid Benfield

Mr. Benfield thanked the Commission for allowing him to bring his strategies before the Commission for moving toward being greener, healthier and stronger. Mr. Benfield began on a personal note by showing a picture of Asheville, a small city in western North Carolina in Appalachia where he grew up. Asheville in the 1960s was not so trendy like it is today. It had two characteristics that were very informative to me. It had and still retains a small but walkable and lively downtown. It was also surrounded by a gorgeous natural landscape. Interestingly, my career ended up being about how to fit those two parts of our environment; the community part and the nature part together in a healthy and harmonious way. We haven't always put them together in a healthy and harmonious way, particularly in the end of the 20th Century. We've allowed our new development to spread haphazardly across the landscape at the same time we tragically disinvested and abandoned many of our older communities and neighborhoods. Our job today is in large measure to repair some of the damage and avoid repeating some of those mistakes. The particular strategies that I want to show you I think you will find very consistent with the vision that is in SPC's plan.

1. Focus on Regions and Neighborhoods

I like to focus not just on jurisdictions and municipalities but also on regions and neighborhoods. I like to focus on regions because they represent the way we actually live

today. He presented background on Atlanta and Pittsburgh City Limits and what some regions look like. Neighborhoods are important because they are the building blocks of our community. Big city neighborhood, a small town neighborhood, commercial district or residential district, neighborhoods are where we encounter our environment on an everyday basis.

2. Guide New Development to Inner Locations

The environmental footprint of a development is not just limited to what goes on inside that development, but also of the traffic that the development generates. In many cases the traffic has the bigger impact. Guide development to inner locations whenever you can.

3. Invest In Walkable Neighborhoods

Obesity – Research shows that our lack of walking is part of the reason for our country’s obesity. We have gone from a country with very low obesity rates to a country with very high obesity rates, with many states now over 30% obese.

- What to Do: Connected Streets
 - Good infrastructure (“complete streets”)
 - Calm traffic
 - Things to walk to (incl. shops, transit & parks)
 - (8-10 lbs/person diff.)
- Walkability Adds Value

4. Integrate Nature Into Community Fabric

- Benefits of Community Nature
 - Softens density
 - Public health
 - Climate resilience
 - Rainwater absorption
 - Summer cooling
 - CO₂ absorption
 - Shade for walkability

5. Respect & Recycle Legacy Architecture

- Continuity of Place
- Civic Vitality
- “The Greenest Building”
- Impact of Demo & Replacement

6. Prepare for an Evolving Future

- We’re Sprawling Less
- We’re Driving Less (Still)
- Why Trends Are Likely to Hold
- Millennials & Housing
 - 2X as likely to prefer a core city
 - 71% seek walkable places
 - 78% seek diverse neighborhoods
 - Seek smaller, more urban at same time as baby boomers are downsizing
- Millennials & Transportation
- 30% of 19-yr-olds do not have a driver’s license

- In the 1980s: 13%
- 1995-2009: miles driven by ages 16-30 dropped 25% per capita
- 2X as likely to use public transit as baby boomers
- Places for Younger Adults

7. Create and Nurture Loveable Places

(Yes, places for trees, flowers, music, shopping and walking with friends)

Chairman Anderson thanked Mr. Benfield for the informative presentation. The next item Chairman Anderson said is regarding SPC's Commissioners' Workshop being held at The Conference Center at Saint Vincent College, Fred M. Rogers Center, Monday, October 3rd.

8. Other business/Announcements – Jim Hassinger

Mr. Hassinger briefly described the SPC Commissioners' Workshop: Our Vision in Action Agenda. The Workshop will be hosted by Chairman Anderson and Commissioners Cerilli and Kopas with a special presentation by Brother Hipps, President of Saint Vincent College. Then we'll have a short overview we are calling the TIP of the Plan. We will focus on how the Plan relates to the TIP. There will be presentations by Rebecca Kiernan; City of Pittsburgh; Amy McKinney from Lawrence County; and Jason Rigone from Westmoreland County. We would also like to ask all attendees and presenters to remember some points made by Mr. Benfield as they relate to our Plan from the regional level to the neighborhood level. Gabe Monzo is the luncheon speaker and will talk about the Arnold Palmer Regional Airport. In the afternoon we will have Alan Blahovec, Executive Director of Westmoreland County Transit Authority and PennDOT representatives from Districts 10, 11, and 12 will give a presentation on what's current in terms of projects. Following the SPC Workshop, PennDOT District 12-0 has a meeting related to work being done in that District.

Next Meeting Date – December 12th

9. New Business – None

10. Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Larry Maggi
Secretary-Treasurer