

Meeting Minutes for May 19th, 2010
Transportation Technical Committee Meeting
Regional Enterprise Tower - Pittsburgh, PA

Attendees:

- Steve Shanley, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
- Darin Alviano, Armstrong County Planning Commission
- James Camp, Beaver County Public Works
- Joel MacKay, Butler County
- Arthur Cappella, Fayette County Planning Commission
- Kevin Gray, Greene County
- Jeff Raykes, Indiana County Planning Commission
- Jeff Leithauser, Washington County Planning Department
- Chris Bova, Westmoreland County Planning Department
- Patrick Hassett, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
- Kevin McCullough, PennDOT Central Office
- Dave Cook, PennDOT District 10-0
- Dan Cessna, PennDOT District 11-0
- Rob Miskanic, PennDOT District 11-0
- Stephanie Spang, PennDOT District 11-0
- Stacey Rabatin, PennDOT District 12-0
- Angela Saunders, PennDOT District 12-0
- Mavis Rainey, Oakland Transportation Management Association
- Lynn Manion, Airport Corridor Transportation Management Association
- J.D. Fogarty, Port of Pittsburgh Commission
- Chuck DiPietro, SPC Staff
- Sara Walfoort, SPC Staff
- Doug Smith, SPC Staff
- Dan Bernazzoli, SPC Staff
- Domenic D'Andrea, SPC Staff
- Matt Pavlosky, SPC Staff
- David Totten, SPC Staff
- Karen Franks, SPC Staff
- Ryan Gordon, SPC Staff
- (Indicates Voting Member)

1. April 15th, 2010 TTC Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)

Chuck DiPietro called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. The April 15th, 2010 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. FHWA/PennDOT Central Office Reports

a.) STC's TAC Transportation Funding Study Report (Attachment B)

Kevin McCullough reviewed Attachment B, which was a press release from the Program Center announcing the STCs Transit Advisory Committee's Transportation Funding Study. Kevin noted that the study is available at the link provided in Attachment B. Dan Cessna encouraged everyone on the TTC to review the document in order to be informed on the current transportation funding crisis. Kevin also encouraged everyone to take the time to read the full document, which basically proves that the needs associated with maintaining the state's transportation infrastructure are far outpacing the available resources. Chuck DiPietro reiterated that the document is a must-read and stated that the TAC will hold a hearing on June 18th in Monroeville and June 17th in Clarion to discuss the transportation funding crisis. Kevin noted that the TAC report does include some analysis and numbers on the local needs as well. Kevin noted that if there are any questions associated with the TAC report contact either the Program Center or the Districts. Chuck noted that on May 28th Secretary Biehler and Representative Markosek are speaking at the Rivers Club on Grant Street on the state transportation funding crisis.

b.) Leveraging the Partnership: DOT, HUD, & EPA Programs for Sustainable Communities (Attachment C)

Chuck DiPietro referred to Attachment C and noted that it came from Deborah Suci-Smith at FHWA. Chuck noted that the cooperation between these three agencies and the content of the guide are an indication of the direction that the current administration is going with regards to the next transportation authorization legislation and visible focus on the concepts of livability and sustainability.

c.) PennDOT Project Delivery Quarterly (Handout 1)

Chuck referred everyone to Handout 1, which was the Project Delivery Quarterly for Spring 2010. Chuck noted that it is a user friendly way of providing information on overall project delivery performance at PennDOT and includes information on the

progress of the Accelerated Bridge Program and ARRA projects.

d.) Draft U.S. DOT Strategic Plan

Chuck DiPietro recommended that everyone view the Draft U.S. DOT Strategic Plan at www.dot.gov. The document focuses on the major policy themes of the U.S. DOT in transportation authorization legislation such as safety, economic development, sustainability, livability, and multimodal approaches.

e.) SPC TIP Quarterly Progress Report (Handout 2)

Kevin McCullough reviewed Handout 2, which was the FFY 2010 second quarter progress report. Kevin noted that in this report the actual base funding obligations are shown lagging behind the established targets. Kevin expects this to be corrected through the next quarter as lettings continue to pick up going into the summer months. Kevin specifically pointed to the TE line showing an actual obligation of zero. Kevin explained that there were a lot of advance construct TE projects that were not actually obligated until April, and therefore did not show up on this report. Chuck DiPietro noted that the cover letter of the report explained some reasons why the obligations are below historic average. Chuck noted some of the regions obligation percentages versus the statewide rates noting the region is behind the state average through two quarters in many categories.

f.) Pending PCTI upcoming call for projects (Handout 3)

Chuck DiPietro stated that he and several members of the TTC attended the annual TMA statewide meeting on May 7th. At the meeting, one of the presentations was on the PCTI program and included the slide shown on Handout 3 announcing the second round of PCTI funding. The application process and guidance will be made available later this summer. Chuck noted that the region has gone after these funds aggressively in the past and he anticipates the same for this new round. Chuck stated that any information about the program will be shared at the TTC in the coming months.

4. Action on Amendments and Modifications to the 2009 to 2012 TIP

The current administrative action and amendment procedures are attached following these meeting minutes.

Kevin made a general note about ARRA adjustments that will be coming through the TTC in the next several months. Kevin elaborated stating there is a lot of movement of funds between these ARRA projects in order to utilize obligations. The ARRA funds come with a stipulation that they must be fully obligated by August 31, 2010. PennDOT has the goal of obligating every dollar of ARRA funds that PA received. Kevin noted that this is important because if these funds are not

fully obligated they can be rescinded from the state by FHWA and potentially redistributed to another state. Conversely, if PA fully obligates the ARRA funds it may be eligible to gain additional ARRA funds. Kevin noted that there is a possibility that cost overruns on ARRA projects may have a slight impact on the TIP, but that overall the ARRA funding has been positive and that additional funds may end up coming to PA. Dave Cook clarified that some other federal or state funds may be utilized on these ARRA projects. Dan Cessna clarified that ARRA funds are different from normal funds because PennDOT cannot deobligate the funds and roll them into another project.

a.) PennDOT District 10-0 (Attachment D and Handout 4)

Dave Cook of PennDOT District 10-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 10-0 had nine amendment requests this month:

- Theater Road Realignment – Final design and right-of-way phases add to the TIP. Dave noted that this is a new project that came out of a study phase of the 422 expansion project.
- Judge Graff Bridge – add construction phase to the current TIP. Dave noted the project was possible due to savings from the Act 44 funds.
- District 10 Low Guide Rail - Dave noted the project was possible due to savings from the Act 44 funds.
- Type A sign upgrades - Dave noted the project was possible due to savings from the Act 44 funds.
- State Gamelands 95 Bridge – Add preliminary engineering to the current TIP.
- Little Creek Bridge #3 – Add the preliminary engineering to the current TIP.
- Garrets Run Bridge - Add the preliminary engineering to the current TIP.
- Spur Run Bridge - Add the preliminary engineering to the current TIP.
- Cramer Bridge #4 - Add the preliminary engineering to the current TIP.

Dave noted some additional information about one administrative action, which was the US 119 bridge over US 422 beam removal. The project is to remove a cracked beam in the bridge thought to have been caused by a truck collision.

Karen Franks noted that the Judge Graff Bridge would normally require a public comment period and Commission approval, but this project just last month went through a public comment period and Commission approval associated with the JC2 project list so it is considered approved.

Kevin McCullough noted that the intent is to obligate the spike funds associated with the US 422 Theater Road realignment before the end of the fiscal year.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 10-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP.

b.) PennDOT District 11-0 (Attachment E and meeting handout)

Chuck noted that District 11-0 had only administrative actions this month. The administrative actions were all straight forward and there were no questions. TTC approval was not required.

c.) PennDOT District 12-0 (Attachment E)

Stacey Rabatin of PennDOT District 12-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 12-0 had two amendment requests this month:

- o D12 Bridge Rehabs in Cecil and West Finley townships, Washington County – Add the construction phase to the current TIP.
- o Washington County signal (SR 0088 and SR 2073) – Add the construction phase to the current TIP.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the District 12-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP.

5. Linking Planning and NEPA Update (Handout 7)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the status of the ongoing PennDOT statewide initiative to redesign the project development process to integrate linking planning and NEPA principals. Chuck reported on the Linking Planning and NEPA summit that was held in District 9-0 on May 17th. Chuck summarized the meeting as successful and that the consensus is to move forward with the process. Chuck noted that everyone has acknowledged that will be a lot of growing pains in fully implementing the process and that a lot of testing, vetting, and adjusting of the process is still required. The initiative will result in a new process for project development in Pennsylvania and will include major revisions to the Design Manual 1 and 1A, the EIS Handbook, the EA Handbook, and the CEE Handbook as well as several new guidance publications. Chuck noted that a new PennDOT long-range plan guidance document for individual MPO/RPO use has been drafted and is in a review period. Dan Cessna stated that there is a lot of guidance that can be extracted and applied to the current update of the LRP. Dan noted that everything will now be focusing on the plan and projects will have to be on the plan prior to starting design. Chuck noted that the LRP process is already underway with some of the Regional Operations Plan update work and asset management work.

Chuck pointed to the latest Smart Transportation Quarterly (meeting handout) for a good concise summary of the goals of the Linking Planning and NEPA initiative. Chuck noted the

bullets on page two that summarized the feedback from the Harrisburg summit in April. Chuck noted that SPC staff is actively involved in the work groups of the initiative. Chuck noted that Asset Management work group is being chaired by Dan Cessna and the Communications work group is being chaired by Joe Dubovi.

Chuck stated the new process involves the use of project screening forms to collect problem information and analyze the needs, environmental constraints, and planning factors. Chuck referred everyone to Handout 7, which was a one-page summary of the screening forms. Chuck noted there was a lot of discussion on the forms at the District 9-0 summit and he believes that the forms can bring in needs data that be used to improve both the LRP and TIP processes. Pat Hassett stated that in collecting data on needs you have to be cautious of the perceived needs versus the real needs. Jeff Raykes asked what the forms do as a planning tool. Chuck DiPietro responded that they help in determining the needs and a review of those needs with planning, environmental, and fiscal factors early in the planning process. Jeff Leithauser asked what would happen to the information on the forms become outdated. Kevin stated that probably the projects accepted onto the long range plan would gain some status that would allow for the information to be updated and projects without status would be dismissed or on hold. Kevin noted that there is more development work required at the regional level and the forms are a work in progress and the automation and capabilities related to the forms are still under development. Kevin noted there are opportunities for integration with the TE and CMAQ processes and overall thinks the process will help in project selection and prioritization.

Chuck stated there will be work sessions in each district with Central Office staff, SPC staff, and county planning staff to work on the operational details of the new process. This coordination will be critical. Chuck noted that all the MPOs and RPOs have different characteristics and processes so the overall process will build in flexibility. For example, some MPOs may defer totally to the county planning offices to shortlist the screening forms that are submitted.

Chuck expects a multi-month review period for the process and accompanying design manuals and guidance documents. Chuck then expects a lot of education/training/work sessions on the new process for the Districts, the MPO/RPOs, and the planning and public works departments across Pennsylvania. The schedule anticipates the release of the new process, design manuals, and guidance books by the end of September. Chuck added that we will continue to keep the TTC updated on the developments of the Linking Planning and NEPA statewide initiative.

6. Closure on 2011-2014 TIP Update

- a.) Draft 2011-2014 TIP Project Listing (Handout 8 and 9)

(Attachment A)

Karen Franks referred everyone to Handout 8, which was the draft transit TIP and Handout 9, the fiscal summary and summary by district tables associated with the highway TIP. Karen noted that today we also distributed the individual county project list to each of the county planners for their use. This is the TIP version that will be going out for public comment by mid June. Chuck noted that the environmental justice and air quality analysis is currently underway with a 30 day plus long public comment period to follow.

b.) Transportation Enhancements Appendix (Handout 10)

Doug Smith reviewed the transportation enhancements appendix to the TIP (Handout 10). Doug noted that if anyone has any comments on the appendix to get them to him by May 27th. Chuck DiPietro stated that this TE appendix will also be going out for public comment along with the Draft TIP.

c.) TIP amendment procedures (Attachment G)

Karen Franks reviewed Attachment G, the Draft TIP amendment procedures for the 2011-2014 TIP. The TIP amendment procedures have been discussed at previous TTC meetings and have gone through an extensive review. Karen pointed to the changes that have been made in the amendment procedures indicated in various highlighting. Karen noted specifically two significant changes:

- Changes in 100% state projects can now be approved as administrative actions regardless of the amount.
- Transfers from a statewide line item to a new project or new phase are now considered TIP amendments.

Kevin McCullough noted that FHWA requested the second provision because of PennDOTs increasing use of statewide line items.

d.) Scheduled Activities thru July 26th Adoption (Attachment H)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the schedule for the remaining activities in advance of the request for Commission adoption of the TIP on July 26th. Chuck noted that the analysis for both the air quality conformity and environmental justice compliance are underway.

e.) PPP/Public Comment Meeting Dates (Handout 11)

Matt Pavlosky reviewed the schedule for public comment and the public meeting calendar for June. Matt noted that the comment period runs from June 9th thru July 13th. Matt stated that the public meeting dates for Indiana County and for Greene County will

be confirmed by the end of the week. Matt stated that a lot of work has gone into educating the PPPs and the public that this is a maintenance-only TIP. Matt will be in touch with the counties and PennDOT District personnel to review the format and procedures for the meetings. Sara Walfoort noted that different counties have different preferences on meeting format so the format may differ slightly from county to county. Chuck DiPietro noted that in addition to the TIP, the public meetings will provide information on both SPC's Long Range Plan development underway and the findings of the TAC funding study regarding the magnitude of the transportation funding crisis.

7. Other Business

a.) May 12th Ped/Bike Meeting

Sara Walfoort briefly reported some of content of the recent Ped/Bike Meeting. Sara reviewed the ongoing negotiations involved with the Armstrong Trail and the Kiski Junction Railroad. Sara thanked PennDOT on the progress on the trail section between Washington's Landing and Millvale in the Route 28 corridor. Sara mentioned that this week is National Bike to Work Week and noted the upcoming Walk Pittsburgh activities.

Sara noted the upcoming update of SPC's public participation plan later this year.

b.) Operations and Safety Committee

Doug Smith reviewed the proceedings of the May 18th Operations and Safety Committee meeting. Doug described the meeting as the kick-off to the update of the regional operations plan. The progress made under the current regional operations plan was discussed including developments in SPC's regional signal program. Doug noted there were a lot of ideas discussed and expects more developments in the plan in the months to come.

c.) Joint TTC/TOC Meeting

Chuck invited all the participants at the TTC to join the lunch and Joint TOC/TTC immediately to follow.

d.) Next TTC Meeting – June 17th

e.) Next Commission Meeting – June 28th

Attachment: Current TTC administrative action and amendment procedures

For general information purposes, SPC is using the following administrative action and amendment procedures:

Administrative Actions

To be considered as an administrative action a proposed change must meet the following criteria:

- Exempt from air quality testing
- Does not add or delete an existing project
- No significant change in project scope or design concept
- Maintains overall and year-to-year fiscal balance

Administrative actions may include any of the following types of changes:

- Adds a project for emergency relief purposes except those involving substantial, functional, location, or capacity changes
- Correction of a misprint or data entry error
- Addition or correction of local match funds
- Schedule change, for projects or phases in any of the first three years of the TIP
- Incidental ROW changes
- Change in the funding source
- Exempt projects

New or Deleted Phase

The technical committee can approve an administrative action to add a new phase or delete a phase if the phase cost is \$5 million or less for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project.

Line Items

The recognition/programming on the TIP of specific projects within an approved line item (i.e., betterments, rail-highway crossings, Transit Section 5310 Program, transportation enhancements, local bridges, etc.) is an administrative action as long as the line item is reduced by the same amount as the eligible project. Line item-based actions require technical committee

approval.

For a betterment line item or a rail-highway crossing line item there are no restrictions based on project cost; identification of projects of any amount can be considered as an administrative action. It is also permitted as an administrative action to remove funding from a “line item” project (betterment or rail-highway only) as long as the funds are returned to the respective line item.

Cost Changes

Changes in the cost of a project or project phase can be handled as an administrative action if the cost change is \$5 million or less. A project sponsor is permitted to make an administrative cost change \$1 million or less by reporting the change to the technical committee for informational purposes only. The technical committee must approve a cost change greater than \$1 million but less than \$5 million for a highway project. The action becomes effective when it is forwarded by the technical committee to PennDOT and FHWA or FTA.

Administrative actions do not require Federal approval but FHWA and FTA reserve the right to disallow an administrative action if it is not consistent with federal regulations or the MOU. The project sponsor must provide full documentation prior to SPC acceptance of the requested change and reflecting it on the TIP. SPC and PennDOT will work cooperatively to address and respond to any FHWA and/or FTA comments on these actions.

TIP Amendments

Any project change that cannot be processed within the rules governing administrative actions must be handled as a TIP amendment. A proposed change must be considered as a TIP amendment if it meets any of the following criteria:

- Affects air quality conformity (regardless of funding source)
- Adds or deletes a project (regardless of project cost, except for existing approved line item changes that are considered administrative actions)
- Adds a new project phase or deletes a phase that exceeds \$5 million for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project
- Creates a new line item
- Involves a major change in the project scope of work or design concept
- Changes the project selection status

New or Deleted Project

The technical committee can approve an amendment to add a new project or delete an existing project if the total cost change is \$10 million or less. Total cost changes that exceed \$10 million for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project require approval by the Commission.

Cost Changes

For changes in the cost of an already approved project or project phase, the dollar level of the change will determine the procedures that are required for approval. Changes of \$5 million or less are administrative actions. Changes that exceed \$5 million are amendments. Cost changes of \$10 million or less can be approved by the technical committee. Changes that exceed \$10 million require approval by the Commission.

Air Quality

Amendments with an air quality impact require air quality testing and a 30-day public comment period including a public meeting before they can be presented to the Commission.

Major Fiscal Impact

Amendments with a fiscal impact that exceeds \$10 million are subject to a 30-day public comment period before they can be presented to the Commission.