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LEHIGH VALLEY TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Wednesday, February 1 at 10:00am

LVPC Conference Room

LVTS Coordinating Committee Minutes

The LVTS Coordinating Committee met for its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at 10:00am in the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's conference room located at 961 Marcon Blvd., Suite 310, Allentown, PA 18109.

Mr. Rebert chaired the meeting.

Members in attendance: Becky Bradley, Brendan Cotter, Dave Hopkins, Jennifer McKenna, Matt Dorner, David Hopkins, Rick Molchany, Stan Rugis, Mike Rebert

Members absent: James Ritzman, Larry Shifflet, Steve Neratko, Michael Alkhal, Sal Panto, Tom Muller, John Brown, Owen O'Neil, Charles Everett

Public present: Dan Walston, Brian Hare, Richard Young, Carol Harper, Ralph Eberhardt, Kerry Fields, Jennifer Ruth, Steve Turoscy, George Kinney, Mike Donchez, Brian Hite, Erin Willis

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR: none

MINUTES

Mr. Rebert stated that the minutes of the December 19, 2016 joint Technical and Coordinating Committees are attached. Mr. Cotter made a motion to approve the Coordinating Committee minutes. Mr. Hopkins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

STATUS OF TIP HIGHWAY PROJECTS

Mr. Rebert gave a highway status report update. The I-78 Auxiliary Lane project is due to be let the tail end of April of this year. It is located at the I-78/Route 22 interchange in Fogelsville. The US 22 widening project has a let date of 2022. We're early in PE, going through the scoping field views. We're looking at a Divergent Diamond Interchange at MacArthur Road. This project runs from just short of 15th Street out to Route 378. The Route 100 Section 13M Betterment Project through the Fogelsville area has a tail end of 2018. One of the biggest things is the Maintenance & Protection of Traffic (MPT), reconstructing that road in concrete and maintain the level of service. The SR 222 and Shantz and 863 Improvements is approaching final design with right-of-way plans submitted and finishing up hydraulics. This intersection will have at least one roundabout, maybe two. The SR 309 Sec 14M Betterment where the 4-lane piece of Route 309, north of Route 22, ending up near the LCCC Campus, is going to add some turn lanes because of how difficult it is to get through there during rush hour traffic. The SR 309 & Tilghman Interchange project is working through alternatives right now after looking at a lot of different things out there trying to figure out the best way to move traffic in that limited space. The SR 412 Connector Road project team just met with the City of Bethlehem on these plans to see what we can do to move this forward as the project is idle currently. The SR 1004 Lehigh-Race Street Intersection in Catasauqua is still in preliminary engineering but there is a scope everyone has

agreed upon with widening on Race Street and Lehigh Street, and will try to add some turning lanes. The Schoenersville Road and Easton Avenue Corridor Improvements is trying to coordinate signals along the corridors to make traffic run smoother through there. The Center Street Betterment goes out later on this year which runs from the end of the Fahy Bridge out to Route 522 with a year of doing ADA ramps. Mr. Donchez asked about the schedule for the FedEx roadway improvement project. Mr. Rebert said he does not have the schedule with him but he can send it out. Mr. Rebert stated that this is two different projects for them. One being the permit work which will be going on Race Street and up Willowbrook by highway occupancy permit and then working on Airport Road which is being done as a department project with funding that was acquired out of Harrisburg. There was some back and forth on right-of-way along Airport Road. Ms. McKenna wanted to thank PennDOT for reconsidering the sidewalk on the Water Street Bridge in Hellertown. Mr. Rebert stated that they know there's a lot of pedestrians there and knows it's not an easy project but it's realized that they need to try to make that accommodation.

TIP AMENDMENTS

Mr. Rebert stated that the Coplay-Northampton Bridge, which is co-owned by Northampton and Coplay, has a construction cost increase just shy of \$5 million. There was a pretty big increase on the Penn Street project down in the City of Reading and now this one here which has to do with the demolition of the existing bridges which concerns the contractors where our estimates are off from what they are able to do the work for. So an adjustment needs to be made on future projects. There's a couple more coming through here, one being the Tilghman Street Bridge which we'll be bidding on. For the Coplay-Northampton Bridge, there are river restrictions that needs to be put in place by early April.

Ms. Fields talked about the Coplay-Northampton Bridge having an increase in construction costs of over \$4 million. This is due to the removal of the existing bridge where blasting is not permitted. Also, the bridge is such a large project which changes the bid amount to more than what it came in as. It has limited access and they have to keep up with continual permit compliance. The funding sources for the project are The Hill-to-Hill Bridge and 309 Resurface along with Highway Bridge Reserve line item and the Urban line item. Funding sourced from these two projects will not slow down their project schedules. Mr. Molchany made a motion to accept the cost increase. Ms. McKenna seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Freight Advisory Committee Meeting – February 1st @ LVPC @ 11:30am

Mr. Rebert stated that there will be a Freight Advisory Committee meeting following the Coordinating Committee today at 11:30am. Mr. Kinney said they will be going over the adoption of the Critical Urban Freight Corridors, talking about the process and recommendations from our MPO to PennDOT Central Office. Then there will be a presentation on autonomous vehicles along with what Mr. Kinney and Ms. Bradley learned at the Mega-Region Conference they attended a few months ago. Finally there will be a presentation by Kevin Stewart, President of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association about truck parking studies that were conducted. At a future Freight Advisory Committee, there will be a doctor from New York to talk about deliveries and logistics and how they occur in urban areas with complete streets. Ms. Bradley stated that there will be another future presentation on June 8th at the Transportation Summit by Edward Humes, who wrote *Door to Door*, which explains the transportation system in an easy to read style for anyone. He uses really good examples like how many countries the iPhone goes through before it gets to your door and what it takes to get a cup of coffee to your local coffee shop. It

explains the global economy and how that affects us since clearly freight is one of our biggest issues. Ms. Bradley said that we are hoping to have 300 attendees at that event which will be held at ArtsQuest. Mr. Rebert asked about the time frames for the state corridors, about when a determination will be made. Mr. Kinney stated he expects it to get up to the federal level in late spring, early summer. Ms. Bradley said that we have been meeting with the state legislators and we're trying to schedule with federal legislators on what the CUFC's are and what that means for us.

CORRESPONDENCE - None

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Ms. Harper mentioned that Ms. Elaine Chao was confirmed as the new Secretary of Transportation so hopefully that will bring some stability to the transportation roles in Washington. Congressman Charlie Dent was appointed to the Transportation/HUD Subcommittee of Appropriation.

Mr. Rugis brought up the MPO consolidation and asked Ms. Bradley what else there is that we can do to make sure we are not in Philly or Northern New Jersey. The County Executives are a little afraid of what this could mean. Ms. Bradley said that this is now policy at the USDOT, so unless that is undone by an act of congress, there isn't a whole lot we can do. It also affects LANta which would have a forced consolidation with SEPTA as a result of that. It is all contingent on each states governor at the time. 2024 is when this will all take official affect so we will be required to create a joint TIP, joint planning documents, basically joint everything which means we will have to pool our money. We may get one seat on a DVRPC board or JTPA board. We would lose all control of our money that's on the table. If the governor in 2024 says it's fine because the counties are already coordinating, the next governor can come in and say no, it's not fine which would create government issues. Then there's the national situation where, what do you do with DVRPC overlapping the North Jersey Transportation Authority – North Jersey Transportation Authority overlaps into New York State – New York State overlaps Connecticut – Connecticut goes into Rhode Island. Then there's the reverse with Delaware going into Maryland into Virginia into DC. It needs to be undone and the severity of what the former Transportation Secretary did at the end of his reign is bad for us as a region but at least there is broad-based support amongst our entire Federal representation in the house and senate. Ms. Harper stated that Secretary Chao has a wealth of information that came through and is just in her place now so there are a lot of other items in the National Agenda right now but they are not hers since she is Transportation. So the hope is that she focuses on transportation and this MPO Reform will be brought to her attention.

ADJOURN

Mr. Rebert asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cotter made a motion to adjourn with Mr. Hopkins seconding that motion.

Submitted by,
Erin Willis, Executive Secretary