



Lehigh Valley Transportation Study

MICHAEL REBERT
Chair, Coordinating Committee

CHRISTOPHER J. KUFRO, P.E.
Chair, Technical Committee

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Secretary,
Coordinating Committee +
Technical Committee

**Lehigh Valley Transportation Study
Minutes from the September 2, 2020
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

**DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA
WEB**

Prior to the meeting being called to order, Mr. Doyle stated that the agenda and materials for this meeting were posted on the LVPC website. He provided directions on how to participate in the virtual meeting and the protocol to allow the meeting to flow smoothly. Mr. Doyle also mentioned that this meeting was advertised in the Morning Call on August 23, 2020, as well as the LVPC website and social media outlets. He explained the procedure for public participants to ask questions or make comments. Ms. Bradley reviewed the meeting agenda.

Mr. Kufro call the meeting to order. He asked for a roll call. Ms. Bradley read the roll call. A Quorum was attained.

Attendees:

City of Allentown	Leonard Lightner (Alt.)
City of Bethlehem	Darlene Heller (Alt.)
LANTA	Brendan Cotter
LNAA	Ryan Meyer
LVPC	Becky Bradley
PennDOT Central Office	James Mosca
PennDOT District 5	Chris Kufro

Absentees:

City of Easton

LVPC Attendees:

Matt Assad
Charles Doyle
Carol Halper
Brian Hite
Simon Okumu
Dave Towsey
Bethany Vazquez

Mr. Kufro welcomed the members of the public and asked them to state their names so they can be recognized.

Public Participants:

David Alas, Rich Ames, Sarah Cassi, Jennifer Crobak (FHWA), Ralph Eberhardt, Heather Heeter, Judith Henckel, Max Inkrote, Amanda Leindecker (PennDOT District 5), Lee Rackus, Jeff Rai, Jen Ruth (PennDOT District 5), Scott Slingerland, Steve Strella, Matt Szuchyt and Richard Wilford-Hunt

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Kufro asked if there were any comments from the public on issues not contained on the agenda. There were none.

Minutes

Technical Committee approval of LVTS Technical Committee Meeting Minutes of July 15, 2020

Mr. Kufro stated that the minutes from the last meeting were included in the packet. Also included are the roll call votes from the last meeting. Ms. Bradley reviewed those votes. Mr. Kufro asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Lightner made the motion and Mr. Cotter seconded it. Ms. Bradley did an abbreviated roll call. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Old Business

WORK PLAN ITEM: PennDOT District Transportation Bridge Status Report

Mr. Kufro reviewed the Bridge Status Report which was contained in the packet and on the slides. He asked if there were any questions or comments from the members or the public. There were none.

WORK PLAN ITEM: PennDOT District TASA/TAP/Multimodal Project Status Report

Mr. Kufro reviewed the TASA /Multimodal Project Status Report which was included in the packet and on the slides. He asked if there were any questions from the members or the public. Ms. Bradley stated we will have to allocate some TASA funds this year since there are funds that will expire, and PennDOT will not be conducting a round of funding this year. Ms. Bradley added that they are hoping at the next Technical Committee meeting or perhaps a special meeting to sort out what we will do with this process. We are working on the internal infrastructure to support this effort now. Mr. Kufro stated it would be best to have a special meeting and thanked Ms. Bradley for bringing up the issue.

ACTION ITEM: PennDOT TIP Adjustments/Amendments, E-Ballots from August

Ms. Ruth reported there were 22 administrative actions on the spreadsheets included in the packet and on the slides. She asked if there were any questions. There were none, however Ms. Bradley explained that August is a busy month for PennDOT, and they need to move funds to keep projects going. Ms. Bradley asked if Ms. Ruth or Mr. Kufro could explain. Ms. Ruth stated that September 30th was the last day of the 2019 TIP and the goal is to tie up every dollar allocated to existing projects. The federal 4232 forms had to be in by Friday. The state has a different timeline; so, there will be more actions at the next meeting. Mr. Kufro explained that for the federal money, three clearances were needed, railroad, right-of-way and utility. They are all needed to lock down the federal money, and once secured, the 4232 forms can be submitted. Mr. Kufro then asked if there were any questions or comments from the public or members. There were none.

Mr. Kufro stated that on August 18, 2020 the LVTS Technical and Coordinating Committees received an email ballot for two TIP amendments. These amendments were requested by PennDOT and they pertained to the 309 and Tilghman Street Interchange Final Design Project Amendment and the Hill to Hill Bridge Preliminary Engineering Project Amendment. He reported that all members of the Technical Committee voted in the affirmative, as noted on the slides.

WORK PLAN ITEM: Truck Parking Roundtable Review

Mr. Doyle reported that on August 12th and 13th, the LVTS in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and PennDOT, hosted a virtual Lehigh Valley Truck Parking Roundtable. There were three sessions over the two days, with presentations by LVPC, FHWA, USDOT, PennDOT and various experts from around the nation. There were more than 100 attendees. Highlights from speakers at the sessions included representatives from the Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana Regional Council of Governments on peer perspective for innovative parking solutions and the American Transportation Research Institute who provided insight into sophisticated analysis techniques for identifying truck parking needs throughout the nation. We are currently waiting for recommendations from the FHWA. Mr. Doyle concluded by sharing some of the information the LVPC provided at the roundtable, which were in the packet and on the slides.

New Business

2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Status Update

Mr. Kufro handed this portion of the meeting over to Jennifer Croback, Planning Program Manager at the FHWA Pennsylvania Division and liaison to the LVTS. Ms. Croback stated that she wanted to provide an update where FHWA is with the 2021 STIP and TIP process. PennDOT compiled all the TIPs from the MPOs throughout the state to develop the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The STIP was adopted on August 13th by the PA State Transportation Commission, as part of the adoption of the 12-year program. These materials are sent to FHWA and FTA. They are now reviewing the documents. FHWA works with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to determine that new projects demonstrate Air Quality Conformity. FHWA is working towards their joint approval by the end of the month so they can move toward with the 2021 STIP on October 1st. There were no questions or comments from the members or the public.

WORK PLAN ITEM: The Eastern Transportation Coalition Multi-State Mileage-Based User Fee Truck Pilot

Mr. Doyle stated that the Eastern Transportation Coalition, formerly known as the I-95 Corridor Coalition, are looking at alternative solutions to funding sources for transportation infrastructure. To that end, they launched a 6-month multi-state truck pilot in October 2018. The pilot program is an ongoing series of studies focused on assessing the feasibility of a pay as you go fee structure for transportation infrastructure investments based upon the number of miles driven, unlike the current structure that primarily relies on an excise fee on barrels of gasoline sold for consumption. Mr. Doyle

then presented the Major Findings from the previous 2018 mileage-based user fee pilot program for commercial trucking: bringing the trucking industry's voice to the table is essential; trucks cannot simply be treated as big cars in an Mileage-Based User Fee system; existing regulations provide guidance for Mileage-Based User Fee implementation and future formulation of potential policy; a one rate for all trucks doesn't work; and there is a need for further education and outreach.

WORK PLAN ITEM: Highway Performance Management System Presentation

Mr. Okumu gave an overview of the Highway Performance Management System (HPMS), which is the traffic count program funded by the US Department of Transportation and PennDOT. He reviewed the equipment used and the safety protocols, especially during the pandemic. The HPMS is a national highway information system that includes data on the extent, condition, performance, use and operating characteristics of the nation's highways. The Roadway Management System or Segment Inventory Program is the primary means for defining and monitoring the state-owned highway network. Mr. Okumu reviewed that a traffic count is a data collection of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, which is conducted along a road, path or intersection. Mr. Okumu also reviewed where the LVPC conducts traffic counts. There are 831 locations in Lehigh County and 850 in Northampton County.

Mr. Hite discussed the types of traffic counts. There are volume counts, classification counts, manual classification counts and continuous counts. He also stated that traffic counts are important because of funding, programming, planning and traffic engineering, highway design and air quality analysis. Mr. Hite shared that the main traffic information conduit for municipalities, planning organizations and state and federal agencies, as well as the public, is the PennDOT Traffic Information Repository website or TIRe.

WORK PLAN ITEM: High-Cube Warehousing Guidance

Ms. Bradley defined high-cube warehouses as typically automated buildings as tall as 180 feet or roughly the height of a 17 or 18 story building. These facilities integrate Automated Storage and Retrieval Systems (ASRS). They are largely staffed by forklift robots or "Forkbots". This system allows for increased accuracy, saves energy and allows for faster turnaround times for trucks. However, the height of these high-cube warehouses can change the character of communities in the region. The LVPC staff is working on a municipal resource and guidance publication. It will outline the issues, opportunities and how municipal governments through zoning, subdivision and land development and building codes can handle proposals for high-cube and automated warehousing.

Communication + Correspondence

Mr. Assad gave a brief overview of the LVPC Morning Call column from August 9th. in which Ms. Bradley wrote about what to expect post-pandemic. The next column will be about the new LVPC Foreclosure and Eviction Tool, which will help direct aid to where it is needed the most. It will be published on September 13th.

Public Engagement and Participation

Mr. Hite stated that due to the pandemic, the LVPC will continue to monitor orders from the Governor. He also reviewed the upcoming LTAP classes, which are all virtual.

At this point, Mr. Wilford-Hunt of Upper Mount Bethel Township, had a comment about high-cube warehouses. The building height in the developer's proposed ordinance change will be a problem. We need these height restrictions. He asked that someone attend the public meeting on September 9th at 7 PM at the Upper Mount Bethel Township Community Park. It is an in-person meeting.

Ms. Henckel entered into the Q&A that she was from Upper Mount Bethel and is also concerned and is interested in receiving more information about high-cube warehouses.

Mr. Hite continued the announcements by stating the WorkshopLV: Multimodal will be October 28th at 3 PM.

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Kufro opened the floor again for public comment. There were none.

Adjourn

Mr. Kufro asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cotter made the motion and Mr. Lightner seconded it. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by
Becky Bradley, AICP, LVTS Secretary and
Carol Halper, Senior Advisor