

**MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
OF THE DVRPC PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TASK FORCE
MARCH 14, 2013**

Attendees: Lorraine Bradshaw, David Cohen, Harry Fox, Jim Hopkins, Morgan Hugo, Rhonda Wardlow Hurley, Martin Johnson, Elise Mannella, Charles Romick, Andrew Seligsohn, Joyce Smith, Tahirih Smith (PPTF members); Andy Sharpe, Dennis Winters (guests); Jane Meconi, Candace Snyder, Elizabeth Schoonmaker, Alison Hastings, Joseph Fazekas (staff)

Welcome and Meeting Overview

Candace Snyder, DVRPC Director of Public Affairs, welcomed PPTF members and guests to the meeting, and reviewed meeting procedures. Jim Hopkins, PPTF Chair, facilitated the meeting.

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Elizabeth Schoonmaker, Manager, DVRPC Office of Capital Projects, presented the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP is the near-term expression of the Long-Range Plan and is the agreed upon list of multimodal priority projects that are regionally significant, as well as all other projects seeking federal funds. Developing and maintaining the TIP is what makes the region eligible to receive and spend federal transportation dollars.

The Pennsylvania TIP and the New Jersey TIP contain a total of \$5.5 billion over four years. The TIP is financially constrained and is not a grant of money, but is based on reimbursements. The TIP is developed jointly by DVRPC, cities and counties, the DOTs, transit operators and citizen representatives. The New Jersey TIP is updated every year and the Pennsylvania TIP is updated every other year. Before the TIP is approved by the DVRPC Board, a subcommittee negotiates a draft program, and there is a comment period for the public to review the TIP. In recent years, DVRPC has added an online, searchable, and mappable database of projects so that the public can easily find and comment on TIP projects.

The FY 2013 Pennsylvania TIP includes 385 highway projects totaling \$2.3 billion and 42 transit projects totaling \$1.4 billion. The FY 2012 TIP for New Jersey includes 91 highway projects at \$1 billion, 50 transit projects totaling \$796 million, and 15 study and development projects.

The TIP is a constantly evolving document, and every month, amendments to the TIP may go before the DVRPC Board for approval. The public may comment and ask questions as part of the monthly Board actions.

Task Force members asked how TIP projects are evaluated, and what kinds of metrics are used to measure success.

Camden Food Economy Study

Alison Hastings, DVRPC Manager of Strategic Partnerships, presented the Camden Food Economy Strategy, a two-year project currently underway. The Camden Food Economy Strategy is a co-investment between the Campbell Soup Company and DVRPC. Through coordinated work and research with a team of partners, the project's goal is to create a strategy that identifies stakeholders, funders, current projects/investments, and strategies that are improving, or will improve Camden's food system and economy.

Ms. Hastings presented a brief history of DVRPC's regional food system planning, which began in 2007, and highlighted different aspects of the local food economy. She also discussed existing conditions in Camden, recent studies completed in Camden, and issues already identified in the community regarding the food economy.

With PPTF members, Ms. Hastings tested a stakeholder exercise that she will use as the study progresses. The goal of the stakeholder exercise is to gather opinions and input on current conditions and recommendations for moving forward. These responses will be compared with findings from stakeholder interviews that were conducted. Initial conclusions included:

- Healthy food access is of paramount concern;
- Access is both an issue of supply and demand;
- A lot of great things are already happening in Camden;
- Economic development and job creation are key; and
- Everyone (individual, organization, industry, business) has different perspectives and needs.

Upcoming Outreach, Events, and News

- DVRPC launched an online submission page for the general public to share comments and questions with DVRPC. The comments page may be found at: <http://www.dvrpc.org/GetInvolved/Comment/>
- DVRPC will table at the Living Local Expo in Lawrenceville, NJ on March 23. Brett Fusco will also be presenting the Long-Range Plan at a public participation session during the Expo.
- On April 24, DVRPC will be hosting a public participation workshop on the Chester County Transit Plan.
- DVRPC will be participating in the Delaware County TMA Municipalities Conference on March 21 at Drexelbrook.
- DVRPC presented the Long-Range Plan update to the Bucks County Workforce Investment Board at PPTF member Liz Walsh's request. If any other PPTF member would like DVRPC to present at an upcoming community event, please contact Jane Meconi.
- A DVRPC EJ Work Group meeting is scheduled for April 23 at 9:00 AM in DVRPC's Conference Room. Mike Boyer will be presenting the Long-Range Plan. An additional long-range plan public meeting will be scheduled in May.
- On April 22, DVRPC will be participating in the Amtrak Earth Day Festival at 30th St. Station.
- In May, there will be two meetings scheduled for the Camden County Bicycle Plan.
- There will be two public comment meetings during the public comment periods for the TIP update and the Long-Range Plan.

One Minute Reports from PPTF Members

Harry Fox commented on the incredible amount of work that goes into developing and maintaining the TIP.

Andrew Seligsohn directed DVRPC to organizations that are regional in scope and may be beneficial for potential partnerships: the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development, which is a consortium of 32 colleges and universities engaged in neighborhood planning; and the United Way.

Chuck Romick was happy to see the Direct Connection project (I-295, I-76, and Rt. 42) underway, as it is a high accident, high congestion area. However, the “Missing Moves” project appears to be languishing, and this project is also important to the area.

Rhonda Hurley was happy to be back and looking forward to working on the PPTF.

Tahirih Smith reiterated an invitation to the 6th Annual Living Local Expo. This year’s topic areas include food and transportation.

Joyce Smith announced that the East Parkside neighborhood worked with the Community Design Collaborative on a community plan. Also, there will be City Council hearings next week regarding tax installment agreements; Legal Services has been working with the Department of Revenue on legislation.

David Cohen announced that Cheltenham Township has released its Act 537 plan, which addresses sewer capacity issues. The study was released working with surrounding municipalities. A larger issue is that there are many communities, particularly inner ring suburbs, which cannot add additional sewer capacity; this in turn inhibits economic development. Perhaps this is an issue that DVRPC can address to identify these municipalities and work with appropriate state agencies to address replacing old infrastructure and adding new capacity.

Elise Mannella will work with DVRPC staff on developing an opportunity for DVRPC to present the Long-Range Plan update.

Marty Johnson announced that his organization is working with others on developing an information portal regarding urban agriculture. Also, Amazon is opening a distribution facility in Mercer County, and transportation access to the facility is a job access issue. Job access is also an issue regarding reconstruction efforts for Hurricane Sandy-damaged areas, as are transportation equity issues in the region as a whole.

Morgan Hugo announced that a vacant land “bank” bill has been introduced to City Council which would create an entity to hold and manage vacant land in the city.

Public Comments and Questions

No members of the public submitted any comments or questions.

The next PPTF meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2013.