

**MORGANTOWN MONONGALIA**

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD**

**JUNE 19, 2014 MINUTES (DRAFT)**

**Members Present:** Chairman Anthony Giambrone-Star City, Mayor Jennifer Selin-City of Morgantown, Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line, Joe Statler-Blacksville, Randy Hudak-WVU, Councilperson Marti Shamberger-City of Morgantown, Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County, Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Brian Carr-WV DOH. Councilperson Bill Kawecki, Councilperson Janice Goodwin-Westover, Mike Kelly-Board of Education

**MPO Director:** Bill Austin

Members Absent: Commissioner Eldon Callen-Monongalia County, Vice-Chairman Wesley Nugent-Morgantown

**I. Call to Order**

With a quorum present, Chairman Giambrone called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**II. Public Comment**

Andrew Smith, the president of the Windsor Estates Home Owner Association, stated that the Windsor Estates HOA encourages the installation of sidewalk as a part of the road widening project on Van Voorhis Rd from WV 705 to West Run Rd. He mentioned that there is a large number of students walking from West Run Rd to the BB&T intersection. Sidewalk will provide a safer traveling condition for those pedestrians and local residents.

John Socha, the secretary of the Windsor estates Home Owner Association, stated his support for Mr. Smith, and added that Van Voorhis Rd is currently not pedestrian friendly and a sidewalk should be installed on the west side of the road, if possible, to minimize potential pedestrian crossings.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Giambrone then introduced the approval of the Minutes for the June Meeting. Councilperson Shamberger moved to accept the June Policy Board minutes as submitted; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

**IV. Reports**

**a. Citizens Advisory Committee Report**

Mr. Rice, Chair of the CAC, reported that four committee members attended the last CAC meeting, where they recommended approval of the TIP amendment to install street lighting on WV 705 from Monongalia Blvd to the WVU Alumni Center. The committee also discussed the funding for the I-79 Access Study. He urged more constructive communications and coordinated actions among different governmental bodies in the area. Chairman Giambrone asked how many members the CAC currently has. Mr. Rice noted that there are about seven. Commissioner Bloom noted that the County has recently appointed a second person to the CAC and will appoint a third representative soon.

**b. Financial Report**

Chairman Giambrone asked Mayor Lewis to present the finance report. Mayor Lewis presented the MPO's March activities as follows:

-Beginning balance in June \$934.00 with expenditures of \$15,778.97 and deposits totaling \$21,811.95, leaving a balance of \$6,966.98 at the beginning of July. Mr. Kelly moved to accept the June financial report as presented;

seconded by Mayor Selin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed. Mayor Lewis then presented the MPO's July activities as follows:

-Beginning balance in July \$6,966.98 with expenditures of \$26,704.41 and deposits totaling \$44,442.34 leaving a balance of \$24,704.83 at the beginning of July. Councilperson Shamberger moved to accept the July financial report as presented; seconded by Commissioner Bloom. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

### **c. Executive Directors Report**

Mr. Austin noted that he will re-circulate the list of MPO committee members, so the Policy Board can fill vacant CAC seats. Mr. Austin then noted that he attended the Ohio MPO Planning Conference and the TRB Conference for Small-Medium Sized MPOs and learned valuable experience from the practice of other MPOs.

In respect to the new school to be built on Collins Ferry Rd, Mr. Austin noted that a meeting has been scheduled to discuss the traffic impact and site design for the new school on Collins Ferry Rd. Attendees will include representatives of Mylan and NETL, WV DOH and architects from the Board of Education. The meeting will focus on traffic circulation and potential pedestrian accommodation.

Mr. Austin noted that the WV DOH is to hold a meeting with stakeholders to discuss the potential parking spaces and pedestrian accommodation on Monongalia Blvd near the Coliseum. Representatives from the WVU, Star City, Morgantown Engineer Department, and County Commissioner have been invited to attend this meeting. Mr. Austin then noted that the MPO is collecting traffic data for the Greenbag Rd Corridor Planning Study and is to report the existing condition of Greenbag Rd to the Steering Committee members in September. The objectives of this study and public involvement strategies will also be discussed.

Mr. Austin reported that the Bylaws Committee has identified several issues that need to be addressed at a meeting on July 31<sup>st</sup>. This committee is expected to meet in the middle of September and make a recommendation to the Policy Board at the October Meeting.

Mr. Austin noted that the I-79 Access Study is currently on hold, as the County was not able to provide the local matching funding of \$5,400 for this project due to fiscal constraints. The Study is intended to assess the purpose and need for a new bridge over Monongahela River, which is recommended in the MPO's 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. The MPO is identifying alternative financial resources to fund this project. Mr. Austin then noted that he attended a meeting with the Morgantown City Manager, Commissioner Callen and representatives from WVU. They discussed preliminary funding strategies for improvements on University Ave along with the Sunnyside-Up Neighborhood TIF with Secretary Mattox. The potential funding sources discussed include TIF district funding, TIGER Grant funding, as well as funding from the state. Mr. Austin commented that the discussion was informal but productive. He then mentioned that the MPO is considering initiating a corridor planning study for the University Ave Corridor and, in the October meeting, to submit to the Policy Board an outline describing the scope of work for that study.

Commissioner Bloom expressed his concerns that the University Ave maybe too narrow to accommodate increasing traffic due to new construction. He asked how the decision was made on the road width on that segment on University, and how MPO was involved such major transportation improvement project. Mr. Hudak answered that road width was proposed the developer and approved by the city engineer. Mr. Austin noted that when invited by the city and county agencies, MPO staff regularly participate in discussions on potential highway projects and traffic impact studies for major developments. Mayor Selin noted that sidewalk should be integrated in the site plan for this project.

Mr. Austin noted that he will be on vacation from September 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, and attend West Virginia State MPO Planning Conference from Oct 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>.

## **V. Presentation on Emergency Planning-Mike Wolfe, Monongalia County**

Mr. Mike Wolfe made a presentation on Emergency Planning in Monongalia County. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO will coordinate with Emergency Planning. He mentioned that such coordination is required by federal regulations. He suggested that Mr. Wolfe serve on the TTAC.

## **VI. TIP Amendment and Administrative Adjustment**

Mr. Austin introduced the first TIP amendment to install street lighting on Patteson Dr. from Monongalia Blvd to University Blvd. He noted that the total funding for this project is one million dollars covering engineering, right of way, and construction phases, and that the TTAC asked WV DOH to ensure the reconstruction of existing facilities in the area associated with this project comply with the American with Disabilities Act. The TTAC also inquired about the type of lights to be used in this project. Mr. Carr noted that the engineer for this project plans to use standard cobra head LED street lights and the project will be developed in coordination with WVU and other appropriate entities. Mr. Austin commented that this project will have a positive impact for the pedestrian and cycling environment on Patteson Dr. and that both the TTAC and CAC recommended approval of this project. Mayor Selin moved to approve this TIP amendment; seconded by Councilperson Shamberger. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Austin then introduced administrative adjustments as described in the agenda package, including Granville-Bertha Hill Slide Correction, WV7/CR875 Intersection Improvement, Monongahela Blvd Improvement, and West Run Widening Construction. He pointed out that there is no change in the scope and purpose of those projects. Mr. Statler inquired about the cause of funding increase for West Run Widening Construction. Mr. Carr noted that it is due to more accurate cost estimate conducted during the right-of-way phase.

## **VII. Selection of Auditor**

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO's Auditor Selection Committee has reviewed proposals submitted from two certified public audit firms and evaluated these two firms by using the State mandated proposal review procedures. The committee recommended the firm Balestra, Harr, & Scherer to audit the MPO's Finances for the next three fiscal years. Mr. Kelly moved to choose the firm that the Auditor Selection Committee recommended; seconded by Mayor Selin. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

## **IX. Public Involvement Process Amendment**

Mr. Austin stated that after adverting the Public Involvement Process Amendment over 45 days, to date there have been no public comments on this proposed amendment allowing administrative adjustments to the Public Transportation element of the TIP as discussed in the June Policy Board Meeting. Mr. Austin then recommended approval of this amendment to the Policy Board. Commissioner Bloom moved to approve the resolution; seconded by Mayor Lewis. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

## **X. Downtown Morgantown Truck Letter**

Mr. Austin noted that as requested by a Policy Board member, he has written an initial letter to outline the position of the MPO's 2040 LRTP on the issue of trucks in downtown. Mr. Austin then read letter.

Mayor Selin suggested that, if the LRTP has not expressly recommended against limiting truck access to downtown, it is more accurate to articulate that the LRTP is silent on this issue, instead of stating that the LRTP does not recommend limiting truck access to the downtown area. Mr. Statler disagreed and noted that the idea of limiting truck access to downtown has been discussed during the public involvement process of the LRTP in 2012 and was specifically rejected at that time. He noted that the LRTP recommended developing an alternative truck route to solve the downtown truck issue. Mr. Kelly concurred with Mr. Statler's opinion. Mr. Austin noted that concerning the downtown truck issue, the LRTP itself does not state one way or the other. Commissioner Bloom stated that to

avoid misinterpretation of the LRTP, he supports the statement that the LRTP does not recommend limiting truck access to the downtown area.

Mayor Selin stated that if the document does not expressly address this issue one way or the other, it is more accurate to state that it is silent on this issue. Councilperson Kawecki concurred with Mayor Selin's opinion.

Mr. Carr intended to read a letter stating the DOH's position on the truck issue. Chairman Giambrone called a motion to hear the DOH letter. Commissioner Bloom moved the motion; seconded by Mr. Kelly. The motion passed with Mayor Selin and Councilperson Kawecki voting against it. Mr. Carr then read the letter.

Mr. Kawecki noted that this DOH letter stated a position that DOH was adopted two years ago. Mr. Statler commented that the essence of this discussion on the LRTP is to ensure the LRTP accurately interpreted by this Policy Board and understood by the public.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to delete the sentence in the MPO letter, which states that the LRTP does not recommend limiting truck access to the downtown area, and to add a sentence, which states that the LRTP takes no position on the issue of limiting truck access to the downtown area. Mr. Bruffy seconded this motion. Mr. Austin noted that this motion is to clarify the position of the LRTP adopted two years ago and does not reflect the position of this Policy Board on the downtown truck traffic issue. Without further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

#### **X. Other Business**

Mr. Carr asked if the Policy Board intends to take a position on the downtown truck traffic issue. Mr. Kelly suggested that the topic can be on the agenda of the October Meeting. Mayor Selin noted that it is important to define the scope and perspective of this issue and frame the question carefully, if it is to be presented to the Policy Board for vote. Commissioner Bloom agreed that the Policy Board discuss the necessity of taking a position in the downtown truck issue during the next meeting, and define the voting issue if needed.

Chairman Giambrone stated that Star City requests the MPO to conduct a traffic study on the Boyer Ave and University Ave. Mr. Austin noted that MPO accepts this task and is ready to provide such service to communities throughout the region.

#### **XI. Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.