



Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Regular Meeting Minutes June 21, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission*
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA 24401

Present (14):

Voting Members				Others	
City of Staunton		VDOT		Staff (CSPDC)	
✓	Rodney Rhodes	✓	Don Komara		Ann Cundy
✓	Jeff Johnston	✓	Adam Campbell (Alt)	✓	Zach Beard
	Tim Hartless (Alt)	✓	Cody Huffman (Alt)	✓	Devon Thompson
	Lyle Hartt (Alt)	VA DRPT		✓	Paula Melester
Augusta County		✓*	Grace Stankus	✓	Ansley Heller
✓	Doug Wolfe				
✓	Alidia Vane	Non-Voting Members			
	Elizabeth Goodloe (Alt)			Other attendees	
	Vacant (Alt)	VRT		✓*	Sam Styers
City of Waynesboro		✓*	Steve Wilson	✓*	Jeff Lineberry
✓	Leslie Tate, Chairperson		Phil Thompson (Alt)		
✓	Alisande Tombarge	Federal Highway Admin.			
	Scott Kesecker (Alt)		Kevin Jones		
✓*	Chad Rambo (Alt)	Federal Transit Admin.			
			Michele DeAngelis		
		VA Dept. of Aviation			
			Rusty Harrington		

Call to Order

The meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Ms. Leslie Tate, Chairperson.

Public Comment

Chairperson Tate opened the floor for public comment. There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Tate presented minutes from the March TAC Meeting.

Mr. Rodney Rhodes moved, seconded by Ms. Alidia Vane, to approve the minutes of April 19, 2023, as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Presentation and Discussion: FY 24 SAWMPO Planning Activities

Mr. Zach Beard began his presentation on the upcoming FY 24 SAWMPO planning activities. Mr. Beard explained that the Afton Mountain study is forecasted to take less time than a typical study as it is producing general recommendations rather than specific improvements. As a result, there is time and funding available for an additional small MPO study.

Afton Mountain Site Assessment Transportation Tasks

Mr. Beard reminded the TAC that the Afton Site being studied is owned by a private land owner. Mr. Beard highlighted the regional significance of this area due to its proximity to the Blue Ridge Parkway, and other outdoor recreation.

The property has multiple abandoned buildings and discussions with the landowner have been going on and off for years between Augusta County, the CSPDC, and the landowner. In 2021 - 2022 the landowner restarted the discussion about developing the area. With the renewed discussion, Augusta County began working with the Timmons Group, a local engineering firm, to develop a draft scope of work for a redevelopment plan to apply for funding under an economic development administration grant. The Timmons Group's scope of work addressed the proposed study area and outlined several tasks to complete a master plan and redevelopment plan for the site; including land surveying, utility/storm drainage, environmental impact, planning for preferred future development of the site. The scope of work specifically highlighted two transportation sections.

The first transportation section focused on analyzing the traffic patterns in the area, specifically the network along US 250 and Howardsville Turnpike in relation to new development. The task included general existing conditions analysis looking at AM peak hour traffic, crash analysis, and assessing the existing roadway

infrastructure, access management improvements, and site visits culminating in at least 3 recommendations and a written memo.

The second section of the transportation task is focused on cyclist and pedestrian improvements. The task focused on the bike/ped connectivity improvements which could be made to the site in relation to the nearby outdoor recreation points of interest. This section will also culminate in at least 3 recommendations and a written memo.

This year Augusta County received \$31,000 through the industrial revitalization fund planning grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development and the CSPDC is assisting Augusta County in writing a grant for additional funding with the preferred outcome being a full site assessment, demolition plan, and economic envisioning redevelopment plan to identify the best use for the property. The SAWMPO is positioned to move forward with the transportation tasks outlined by the Timmons Group.

Next steps will involve SAWMPO meeting with Timmons, the City of Waynesboro, and the County to review the transportation elements in the scope and to finalize the roles of each organization.

2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Beard explained that the SAWMPO will begin the 2050 LRTP update this fiscal year. Mr. Beard informed the board that the LRTP is a long range planning document that captures current and projected transportation needs over a 25 year period. Mr. Beard reminded the TAC that the LRTP will start in early 2024 and end in the fall 2025.

Barriers to Safe Access to Transportation Assessment

Mr. Beard explained that between the Afton Mountain Area Study and the LRTP update beginning there is time to start a smaller study. Mr. Beard informed the TAC that MPO staff brainstormed the idea of a potential study studying barriers to Transportation Access, particularly for disadvantaged populations, the elderly, disabled, disadvantaged communities suffering from economic development issues. Mr. Beard explained that the thought process behind the study was to look at our populations in the region since the region's elderly population is expected to exceed the state average. In addition to the region's elderly population the region is also expecting a larger influx of non-English speakers. These populations along with other disadvantaged populations have unique transportation needs.

Mr. Beard stated that the goal of the study would be to engage with seniors, persons with disabilities, and disadvantaged communities as defined by Justice 40, to identify and analyze the daily transportation barriers and issues, identify best practices, and provide recommendations for our region that can be included in other

studies. Mr. Beard detailed some types of transportation access barriers as being limited English proficiency, long travel distances, vehicle access, physical infrastructure, and cultural and perceptual barriers.

Mr. Beard explained that the study would also be useful for adding additional information to upcoming studies already planned by BRITE Transit, as well as building the data into the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan to increase efficiency. The TAC began discussing the usefulness of the study.

Mr. Beard pointed to an example of the planning process carried out by Richmond Connect to study their own disadvantaged populations' access to transportation. Mr. Beard underscored that the Richmond Connect plan would be at a greater scale than would be necessary for the SAWMPO, but that their process could be a useful guideline. Mr. Beard continued to highlight the importance of public engagement in this process, stating that it would be the MPO's goal to have robust engagement.

Agency Updates

VDOT

Mr. Campbell provided the following update:

- The Transportation Alternatives and Revenue Sharing pre-application period closes June 30. The final application intake period is from August 15th through October 1.
- The May CTB Meeting Consensus SMART SCALE Scenario was presented and recommended for approval and incorporated into the SYIP in June. Mr. Campbell told the TAC that Staunton District's CTB members were able to secure more funding for the district using high priority funding, and 3 additional projects were funded. The remaining balance of the district grant program will fund the I-64 94 off ramp project.
- The Waynesboro's Southern Connector project came in underbid, allowing VDOT to put the funding taken from Waynesboro's Broad St. project for the Connector project back into the Broad St. project.

Mr. Don Komara provided the following update:

- Bids were opened on the 262 widening project. A&J Construction was the low bidder for ~\$2.8 million. The project should start sometime in the fall.
- The exit ramp at 235, General Excavation was the lowest with pre-con beginning this week.
- A public hearing date of July 27th is set for the roundabout at Woodrow Wilson.
- Bartlebrooke Road project is going to advertisement next month.
- Kokosan is moving along with the Staunton 81 widening with the design build and it should begin in the late fall.
- The Verona Project has not had successful bids for their projects, but have been in process to find additional TAP money

DRPT

Ms. Grace Stankus provided the following update:

- CTB approved DRPT's six year improvement program which will allocate over \$862 million in funding for rail and transit projects in FY 24.

Transit

Ms. Devon Thompson provided the following BRITE update:

- Evening hours for the Blue Ridge Community College have been reduced to Monday -Friday 7am to 6pm for the North Shuttle and 7:30am to 5:30pm for the South Shuttle. The BTAC approved reducing evening hours at the end of last year.
- BRITE has updated their Title VI Plan. The draft plan was approved and has been sent to FTA for final acceptance.
- The design and engineering phase of the Lewis St. hub moves forward and the 60% plans have been completed and reviewed.

Ms. Paula Melester provided the following Afton Express update:

- Passenger riders continue to grow with the high of 93 passenger trips in a single day. Afton Express is working with UVA market the service to their hospital employees.
- Ms. Melester informed the TAC that Virginia Public Radio ran a feature story highlighting the Afton Express in a series about how CARES funds were used across the Commonwealth.

Locality Updates

Staunton

Mr. Jeff Johnson noted that the City is seeking a temporary location for parking while the Lewis Street Hub is being renovated. Mr. Johnson said that signs announcing the closure of the Lewis lot from 10pm to 5am will be posted.

Augusta County

Mr. Doug Wolfe noted that the Verona Pedestrian Project had gone to bid, and they received two bids but they were still substantially outside of the budget.

Ms. Alidia Vane mentioned that Augusta County was in negotiations with contractors for their Comprehensive plan update. was ongoing.

Waynesboro

Chairperson Tate mentioned that the City of Waynesboro has a bid out for the Fourth Street pedestrian project using Block Grant funds.

Other Business

Chairperson Tate called for any other business; Mr. Campbell confirmed that the cities were aware that they had received their HSIP funding and Mr. Beard reminded the TAC that the joint Albemarle MPO and SAWMPO meeting is scheduled for September 27th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the gymnasium of the Fishburne Military Academy.

Upcoming Meetings

Chairperson Tate stated that the Policy Board is scheduled to meet on July 5th and the TAC on July 19th.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Zach Beard
Senior Planner