

MORGANTOWN MONONGALIA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION POLICY BOARD
MARCH 19, 2015 MINUTES (DRAFT)

Members Present: Chairmen Wes Nugent-City of Morgantown, Anthony Giambrone-Star City, Commissioner Edward Hawkins-Monongalia County, Randy Hudak-WVU, Brian Carr-WV DOH, Councilperson Janice Goodwin-Westover, Mayor Patricia Lewis-Granville, Councilperson Bill Kawecki-City of Morgantown

MPO Director: Bill Austin

Members Absent: Mike Kelly-Board of Education, Joe Statler-Blacksville, Commissioner Eldon Callen, Mayor Jennifer Selin-City of Morgantown, Councilperson Marti Shamberger-City of Morgantown, Commissioner Tom Bloom-Monongalia County, Dave Bruffy-Mountain Line.

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Chairman Nugent called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Chairman Nugent noted that after the Approval of Minutes, a public comment session will be added to the original agenda of this meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Nugent introduced the approval of the Minutes for the January Meeting; seconded by Councilperson Goodwin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

3. Public Comments

None

4. Reports

a. Finance Report

Chairman Nugent asked Mayor Lewis to present the finance report. Mayor Lewis noted that:

-- Beginning balance in January \$10,699.12 with expenditures of \$15,811.36 and deposits totaling \$16,638.21, leaving a balance of \$11,525.97 at the beginning of February. Mr. Giambrone moved to accept the January Finance Report; seconded by Councilperson Goodwin. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

-- Beginning balance in February \$11,525.97 with expenditures of \$14532.31 and deposits totaling \$4,646.55 leaving a balance of \$1,640.21 at the beginning of March. Commissioner Hawkins moved to accept the February Finance Report; seconded by Mr. Hudak. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

b. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Rice, Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee, reported that the CAC has recommended approval of all proposed TIP Amendments in the March meeting. He stated that the committee

has also recommended approval of the Greenbag Rd Corridor Study and noted that the study does not include the intersection Greenbag Rd/WV 7 and the intersection of US 119 and CR 73.

Mr. Rice then noted that the CAC has recommended approval of the scope of work of the University Ave Complete Street Project. He went on to note that this study includes the Beechurst Ave and Campus Dr intersection.

c. Executive Directors Report

Mr. Austin noted that MPO staff has been working with consultants and stakeholders to develop the scope of work for the University Complete Street Study and the I-79 Access Study. Mr. Austin then noted that he has been re-elected as the chairman of the WV MPO Association.

Mr. Austin went on to note that the MPO has held a stakeholder meeting on the Van Voorhis Rd Improvement project. Attendees include representatives from the City of Morgantown, WV DOH, and Morgantown Utility Board. He stated that the project is mainly a drainage improvement project, but it does include some paved shoulders, and that the engineering design of this project will be completed in a month. Councilperson Kawecky pointed out that the coordination among involved entities is key to the success of this project.

5. TIP Amendments

Mr. Austin noted that three projects are included in the proposed TIP Amendments. The Deckers Creek Pedestrian Bridge project is proposed by the City of Morgantown. It connects the Greenmont and South Park neighborhoods to the Deckers Creek Trail. The Westover Park Loop project is for Westover's walking path around the park. It is proposed by WV DOH and originally appropriated from 2012 funds. The MPO is working with WV DOH to clarify specifics of this project. Both Deckers Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Westover Park Loop projects are primarily funded through federal Transportation Alternatives Funding and are opportunities to enhance multimodal transportation facility in the metropolitan area.

The proposed modification to West Run Widening Project is for increasing funding for additional cost incurred by the right-of-way acquisition on West Run Rd between Van Voorhis Rd and Riddle Ave. Mr. Carr concurred with the description of proposed TIP Amendments.

Mr. Kawecky moved to approve the TIP Amendments as presented; seconded by Councilperson Goodwin. During the discussion session, Mr. Giambone inquired about the timeline of the West Run Project. Mr. Austin noted that the construction is expected to begin in this summer. The segment to be improved is from Van Voorhis Rd to Riddle Ave. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

6. Status of Greenbag Road Study

Mr. Austin noted that the executive summary of the Greenbag Rd Corridor Study is included in the agenda package of this meeting and the internet link of downloading the full report has been shared with board members.

Mr. Austin then summarized the main components of this study, including public involvement, planning process, and major recommended projects and programs. Mr. Austin commented that the proposed improvements from this study are feasible and cost-effective.

Councilperson Kawecki move to adopt this study; seconded by Councilperson Goodwin. In the discussion session, Councilperson Kawecki asked about the concept of multi-use path proposed in this plan. Mr. Austin noted that multi-use paths connecting neighborhoods along the corridor have been identified as long term improvement in this study. It requires further studies to identify the most appropriate route and to evaluate its benefits and impact to the neighboring communities. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

Mr. Austin noted that he would appreciate any comment on the format used in the Greenbag Rd Corridor Study Report. The format will be a model for to future MPO studies. Mr. Austin then commended Mr. Zhang for his work on this project.

7. University Ave Complete Streets Study Consultant Selection and UPWP Amendment

Mr. Austin noted that the University Ave Complete Streets Study was initiated through close cooperation among WVU, City of Morgantown, WV DOH, and the MPO. The purpose of this study is to develop a unified and comprehensive approach to address the growth of Sunnyside-Up TIF district and the growth in the area.

The scope of this study encompasses both transportation and land-use issues along the corridor. Besides improving traveling condition for motor vehicles, the study will explore opportunities for enhancing alternative transportation models, such walking, bicycling, and public transit along the corridor. Stantec has been selected as the consulting firm for this study by the Consultant Selection Committee. The time frame of this study is 9 months and its total proposed cost is approximately \$225,000. Eighty percent of funding will come from Federal transportation planning funds and twenty percent will come from the University and the Sunnyside-Up TIF District. Mr. Hudak noted that this study is important to both the University and the City and he expects its outcome will bring positive changes to this critical corridor. Mr. Austin then expressed this appreciation to the City, the University, the Sunnyside-Up District, and WV DOH for their collaboration and support in this project.

Mr. Austin recommended that the policy board to amend the current UPWP to increase \$60,000 for this study. He noted that both the TTAC and CAC have reviewed and recommended approval of this amendment. Commissioner Hawkins moved to approve the authorization for the chairmen and the Executive Director to sign the contract with the selected consulting firm and the proposed UPWP Amendment as presented; seconded by Mayor Lewis. During the discussion session, Councilperson Kawecki noted that this study is of great importance to the community and it should be conducted in a careful way. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

8. I-79 Access Study Consultant Selection

Mr. Austin noted that the I-79 Access Study is to document the purpose and need for additional access to I-79 over the Monongahela River, as a part of the environmental evaluation process stipulated by the National Environment Policy Act. The scope of this study includes extensive traffic modeling and significant public outreach and it will enhance the traffic modeling capability of the MPO. Mr. Carr noted that the study will determine whether a bridge is needed

to meet the growth of this area and provide better understanding of the growth pattern of this region.

Mr. Austin noted that the TTAC and CAC have recommended the selection of HDR to perform the I-79 Access Study and to authorize signing the contract with the firm when the scope of work is finalized. Commissioner Hawkins moved to adopt the Resolution as presented; seconded by Mayor Lewis. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

9. Resolution Supporting the Rails to Trails Conservancy

Chairman Nugent introduced Ella Belling, director of the MRTC. Mrs. Belling introduced a proposed resolution to demonstrate the support from local government entities for completing a long distance trail corridor connecting WV to the greater Pittsburgh area and ultimately to the Washington DC/Northern Virginia area. This resolution has been presented to and adopted by County Commission and Morgantown City Council. Chairmen Nugent inquired about the missing links of proposed trail corridor. Mrs. Belling noted that most missing links on the West Virginia side are located in Fairmont County and Harrison County, totaling 25 miles. On the Pennsylvania side, 30 miles of trail are missing.

Councilperson Kawecki moved to adopt the Resolution as presented; seconded by Mayor Lewis. With no further discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

10. Other Business

No other business.

11. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.