

**Minutes** **GREATER MORGANTOWN MPO** **May 17, 2012** **City Council Chambers**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Asel Kennedy, David Bruffy, Mike Kelly, Anthony Giambrone, Janice Goodwin, Wes Nugent, Jim Manilla, Perry Keller

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Patricia Lewis, Joe Fisher, Eldon Callen, Bill Byrne

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Bruffy called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Mr. Kelly Moved to approve; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Giambrone; the motion unanimously passed.

**IV. FINANCE REPORT:** Treasurer is not in attendance. Mr. Austin stated all invoices are paid to date; balance of \$39,753.00 as of April 2012. Largest expense is for LRTP update. No action taken this month, will be handled at next meeting when Treasurer is present.

**V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**1. Bike to Work Day/May 18.** The MPO has been working with the Bike Advisory Committee, WVU We go, and MountainLine to promote Bicycle Month and Bike to Work Week. This group has established four groups to ride to work; one beginning in Sabraton at Richwood Dairy Mart at 6:50am; Rays Pastries at 7:00 am; Mario's Fishbowl at 7:05am and Morgantown High at 7:10am. All groups will then meet at Hazel Ruby McQuain Park at 7:15am where they will all into Mountaineer Station. Refreshments provided. Mr. Austin was not aware of the exact route they will take to Mountaineer Station but a large portion of the route is on the Rail Trail.

**2. Statewide Project Prioritization Criteria Project.** Mr. Keller has nothing new to report but the process is ongoing. There has been no new information reported back from the consulting team.

**3. Grumbien's Island.** Mr. Austin stated this is still an ongoing discussion between WVU and the City. A small area study needs to be developed regarding pedestrian and vehicular traffic to determine the impact the proposed project would have on traffic and pedestrian safety. WVU is concerned with the speed in that area and how pedestrian flow would work. A project description is being determined to discuss with the State. Mr. Keller asked if the study meets certain performance measures would all

parties be ready for a funding proposal. Mr. Austin explained more definitive statements were needed in order to take the project to the next level to look toward funding. He noted that this issue could be addressed in the scope of work. Mr. Kennedy stated he thought the Grumbein Island project was WVU's idea to begin with. Mr. Austin noted WVU needed to take a look at the utilities in the area, utility relocation is the biggest concern. To that end, it was agreed that WVU and the MPO would work together in funding the relocation and traffic studies. It was also determined it wasn't as expensive as first thought to move the utilities; the ballpark figure is around \$10 million. Mr. Kennedy asked why would monies be wasted on a study if they aren't sold on idea? Mr. Austin advised it is being worked on at a staff level and that no funds would be spent on a study until we could address the University's commitment to the project.

**4. Annual Traffic Counts:** Traffic counts have been completed and data will be ready for the next MPO meeting.

**5. Meeting Time Change.** Mr. Austin stated he's received comments from Policy Board members asking for the MPO meeting to be held at 6PM instead of the scheduled 7PM time. After a brief discussion, the consensus of the group was to keep the 7PM meeting time.

**VI. LRTP Budget Amendment.** Mr. Austin stated the consultants advised due to expenses and work to date, which included updating the traffic models centroid connectors and allocating census information to traffic analysis zones, a budget amendment would be needed. An additional \$3000 is required for unbudgeted expenses outlined above and \$4500 is needed for additional expenses for working with Comprehensive Planning teams for the regional vision. The \$7500 budget amendment is about 2% of the total cost of project. The contract will be amended to include the work and it will also be necessary to amend the Unified Planning Work Program. This works out to about \$700 of local money. The MPO has that much of a cushion to absorb the costs if needed. Mr. Bruffy questioned if there was a contingency line item. Mr. Austin stated some contingency was built in to address issues such as preparing a transit oriented model but not a general contingency line item. Mr. Bruffy requested the consultants provide an hourly breakdown to see where the money is going and who is working on it. Mr. Austin advised he will get an itemized estimate of the work for the Policy Boards consideration at the next meeting.

**VII. MPO Logo.** Mr. Austin stated that he would like the MPO to adopt a new logo to better reflect the inclusiveness of the MPO for the Long Range Plan Update. He noted that the TTAC and the CAC had both recommended alternative three of the logos presented. After reviewing the pictures, Mr. Nugent suggested adjusting the transportation elements to be above the MMPO to make it more squared. It was the consensus of the Policy Board

that alternative three with the adjustments noted by Mr. Nugent is the MPO's new logo.

### **VIII. Impact of Beechurst Improvement/Signalization project.**

Dr. Andrew Nichols of the Rahal Transportation Institute provided a presentation on the updated activities on Beechurst Avenue before and after last summer's construction project to do reconfiguration. (Beechurst to the Waterfront development, which is approximately 1.4 miles).

The project began in the fall 2010 with data collection and modeling. It included the design and installation of a new vehicle detection system at those 8 intersections. Only four core downtown lights from Fayette to Foundry are interconnected, the rest operate independently. The monitoring system operates 24/7.

In the summer 2011, construction to reconfigure University Avenue began; this construction provided two dedicated southbound lanes to Foundry Street; provides a southbound right turn lane from Fayette to Pleasant Street; completion date in August 2011. New signal timings were implemented shortly after the construction was completed.

Mr. Nugent advised he noticed failures at Campus Drive in that it often won't cycle. Dr. Nichols advised there were instances where detections on that lane weren't working because for some reason cars weren't triggering it. He noted that the timing was tweaked to correct the problem.

Mr. Nugent stated the center lane next to the turn lane is pointless and asked if it could be made into a thru lane and dedicated turn lane onto Campus Drive. Dr. Nichols stated that one of the challenges there at that location is that there is a tendency for a driver making a right turn to swing wide. He agreed with Mr. Nugent that the right turn volume there is not heavy, and the proposed change may provide some benefit but he is unsure of that at this time.

Dr. Nichols also added that DOH may be sharing traffic data with the public in real time soon so they may see where there is traffic congestion is in the plan. The DOH is starting a 511 system with Twitter feeds. It will begin hopefully in the fall/winter system.

### **IV. OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Keller noted that Mr. Kennedy had questioned the reconfiguration of the intersection at the new Sheetz at Star City. Mr. Keller stated he spoke with

both the District and Charleston and they both say there are no plans to make any changes to that intersection at this time.

Mr. Kennedy also questioned the new interchange at I-79. (the interchange between Star City and Westover with a new entrance to University Town center. Mr. Austin noted there had been no formal information provided to the MPO on this project at this time. However, he had been in contact with the developer on the project and had been working with him to come forward to the Policy Board on the item. Mr. Kennedy advised the public is well informed of the timing of the project. It was the consensus of the Board that the Chairman be authorized to prepare a letter of support for the project from the MPO, working with Senator Beach. It was noted during the discussion that congestion is a problem at the entrance to the mall. Even though this project is not in the LRTP, Mr. Keller stated, if needed, the LRTP could be amended to include that project and add it to the TIP. Mr. Austin suggested the letter should state the MPO believes the concept may be beneficial to the area, and would work to study including the project on the Long Range Transportation Plan as part of the Plan update. Mr. Bruffy asked that an update on this item be added to the agenda at a later date.

Mr. Buffy advised the Federal Transit Administration Region 3 in Philadelphia is asking MountainLine to rework a portion of their TIP. Mr. Austin stated the next new TIP is not due until next year, but this work can go thru the normal amendment process at the August meeting.

**X. ADJORNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8 PM.