

MPO Technical Advisory Committee

Minutes: May 19th, 2020

Committee- Voting Members

Julian Bivins, *Albemarle County PC*

Kevin McDermott, *Albemarle County*

Dan Butch, *Albemarle County*

Rory Stolzenberg, *City of Charlottesville PC*

Jeanette Janiczek, *City of Charlottesville*

Juwhan Lee, *CAT*

Bill Palmer, *UVA*

Chuck Proctor, *VDOT Culpeper District*

TJPDC Staff

Chip Boyles

Jessica Hersh-Ballering

Nick Morrison

Sandy Shackelford

Lucinda Shannon

Gretchen Thomas

Guests:

Bill Emory

Neil Williamson

Paul Josey

Sean Tubbs

Call to Order:

Mr. Stolzenberg called the virtual meeting to order at 10:05

Matters from the Public:

Mr. Stolzenberg opened the matters from the public.

Paul Josey stated concerns over the proposed Route 20 bike and pedestrian trail project placing a trail in the median and removing the planted memorial trees as an ill-conceived location with little public participation and would encourage looking at a different alignment. He also stated that he was not in favor of the proposed Preston Ave project alignment.

Mr. Emory cited concerns over the Route 20 bike and pedestrian trail project, noting that there were numerous other projects identified in the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and how this particular project was prioritized over other projects. He noted that the destruction of trees planted by the Tree Stewards in the Route 20 median for a new trail would be detrimental and that greater outreach needed to be done with stakeholders.

Mr. Tubbs stated that the MPO's Public Participation Plan should be updated and community engagement efforts should be looked at.

Approval of Minutes:

A draft of the March 17th meeting minutes was not available for review

Staff Updates:

Ms. Shannon provided an overview of the May 13th public engagement workshops that the MPO and PDC held to solicit feedback on the Smart Scale projects being submitted this round. The City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County staff also participated in the workshop. Over 50 comments were submitted ahead of the workshop and numerous comments were submitted during the session. Ms. Shannon has created an inventory of all of the comments received and is working to categorize each comment and they will all be published for the public to review. The comments will be published once the comment period closes. She also noted that the Public Participation Plan is slated to be updated and the MPO is working to increase public engagement efforts.

Mr. Stolzenberg asked if there would be an opportunity for the public to comment again once the comments are published. Ms. Shackelford said that there likely wouldn't be a formal comment structure in place, but all MPO staff contact information would be made available to make sure that comments could continue to be received. All of the comments will be made available by the July MPO meetings. Mr. Stolzenberg noted that the engagement efforts were well attended.

Ms. Shannon added that the Frays Mill RCUT project has surpassed the number of comments received from the Route 20 shared use path project. Mr. McDermott added that the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors will meet June 17th and that the public is invited to provide comments directly to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. McDermott noted that the project designs were preliminary and if they moved forward to funding, further design refinement could occur.

Mr. Stolzenberg asked where we were in the process of the Route 20 trail project. Ms. Janiczek stated that most of the Smart Scale projects from the City have followed lengthy public processes and that they have been identified in past planning efforts. Ms. Hersh-Ballering added that the Bike and Pedestrian Coordination Committee was the stakeholder group that worked with VDOT to improve bicycle and pedestrian connections between the City and Albemarle County.

Ms. Shackelford presented on the FY-21 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). VDOT and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) had both reviewed the draft UPWP. The MPO Policy Board will then review and approve the UPWP. Mr. Stolzenberg asked how billing for each project worked and how staff allocates work between the programs. Ms. Shackelford said that VDOT is looking at more specific invoicing requirements. Mr. Bivins noted that there was a date error in the document and that it should be corrected. Mr. Stolzenberg asked about bike and pedestrian counts and if there were more innovative ways to count. Ms. Hersh-Ballering said that there were automatic counters that VDOT has offered for use and that volunteer counts would also be used.

Mr. Stolzenberg asked for a motion of approval of recommending the FY-21 UPWP. Mr. Bivins provided a motion and Mr. Proctor provided a second. The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval.

Community Engagement Case Study and Open Discussion:

Mr. Morrison gave a brief presentation on VDOT Lynchburg’s success using virtual public engagement efforts for the update process of the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Proctor noted that VDOT has seen an increase in the number of responses when using the MetroQuest online survey platform.

Mr. Bivins noted that there was no demographic information and it would be interesting to know more about who was engaged with. He added that efforts would need to be made to engage with those who are less comfortable engaging in the more formalized channels of government.

Mr. Morrison spoke about past engagement efforts that used more innovative approaches, such as the Cherry Avenue Small Area Plan and tailoring engagement to fit the community need. Discussion then focused on surveying efforts and partnering with organizations that are more specialized in survey design. Mr. Boyles added that there are existing partnerships in existence that can help lower the cost of surveying.

Action Items:

Mr. Stolzenberg asked what the next steps were for the Public Participation Plan. Ms. Shackelford said that it will move through the MPO process and will be open for public comment and review.

Mr. Stolzenberg added that he would like to see the virtual meeting recordings posted and be easy to access for the public.

Additional Matters from the Public:

There were no additional matters from the public and the meeting was adjourned at 11:22.