

Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission
Rural Transportation Technical Committee
Minutes of May 7, 2008

Attendees: Marshall Barron (VDOT, Culpeper District); Matthew Bolick (VDOT, Culpeper County); John Cooley (Culpeper County Planning); John Egertson (*Vice Chairman*; Director of Planning, Culpeper County); John Giometti (VDOT, Culpeper District, Planning & Land Development); Sue Hromyak (RRRC); Patrick Mauney (RRRC); Harriet Parcels (RRRC); Ray Parks (RRC SB); Paul Russell (VDOT); Jeff Walker (RRRC).

Guests: Joe Springer (Parsons)

I. Welcome, Agenda, Minutes and Matters from the Public

Mr. Egertson, Acting Chairman in the absence of Chris Mothersead, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. He asked if there were any amendments to the agenda. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the agenda. A motion was made and seconded and the agenda was approved. Next, Mr. Egertson asked if there were any changes to the minutes. There were none. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and approved. There were no matters from the public.

II. Phase II-Long Range Transportation Plan: Meeting with Parsons, consultant on the LRTP

Chairman Egertson introduced Joe Springer of Parsons to the Committee members. Mr. Springer talked about the work that Parsons would be doing for the state and the PDC's to assist them with development of their Long Range Transportation Plans. Mr. Springer said that Parsons has been retained by VDOT Transportation Mobility Planning Division (TMPD) to combine the metropolitan transportation plans with the rural plans into a comprehensive statewide long range transportation plan. As part of that effort, Parsons will be working on identifying and then analyzing "STARS" (short-term affordable roadway) projects, or intersections and other discrete locations with congestion and safety concerns. The STARS projects are categorized by VDOT operational districts, which places PD9 within the Northern Virginia OD.

Parsons will also be working with the PDCs on providing technical assistance on the development of the Regional Long-Range Transportation Plans (RLRPs). As part of that, Parsons will conduct traffic studies of priority "hot spot" locations that were identified as safety and congestion trouble spots in each PDC. The consultant will also provide varying technical assistance, as needed, on narrative writing and formatting of the Plan. They will develop a template of standardized chapters to be included in each long range transportation plan to ensure a level of consistency across the state, and complement the information provided by the MPOs. Lastly, Parsons will provide communications assistance in the form of two public information sessions:

- the first, as envisioned, to be held in February 2009 to gather input from the public on existing infrastructure deficiencies (roadways and other modes as well), and
- a second public information session to be held in August 2009 at which the draft Long-Range Transportation Plan will be presented for public review and comment.

In discussion with the Committee, Mr. Springer said that he had received PD9's list and mapping of prioritized "hot spots." He noted that since some of the locations are already the subject of other studies, the region might wish to identify *yet additional* locations for inclusion in the list.

In closing, he suggested that the final report will present the transportation information by topic as well as by jurisdiction to enable each county to pull out information specific to its boundaries.

III. Long-Range Transportation Plan Deliverable: Travel Time Survey presentation by Patrick Mauney

RRRC staff Patrick Mauney gave a Powerpoint presentation of the data that was collected on the 2008 Travel Time Survey of Route 15. The information was presented in three corridor sections: Corridor A (26.89 mile southern segment of Route 15 and through the Town of Orange); Corridor B (5.8 mile middle segment of Route 15 and through the Town of Culpeper) and Corridor C (4.3 mile upper segment of Route 15 and through the Town of Warrenton). Mr. Mauney said that two morning peak hour runs in the northbound and southbound direction were conducted for each segment and two afternoon peak hour runs in each direction. Data for the morning runs was then averaged, as was the afternoon data to arrive at morning and afternoon average travel speeds, and average travel times. Mr. Mauney pointed out some locations where the greatest delays had occurred. The data will become part of the baseline collection of travel times being assembled for key roadways across region, and will be helpful, among other uses, in developing a Congestion Management System Plan.

IV. Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan Deliverable: Draft Congestion Management System Plan presentation by Harriet Parcels

Mrs. Parcels said that rural regions, like PD9, are not required to prepare a Congestion Management System Plan. However, given its increasing population, accompanying traffic growth in the region, and that of adjoining jurisdictions, it was timely for the region to begin giving consideration toward development of a preliminary CMS Plan that will help manage inevitable congestion. Mrs. Parcels presented the outline of the draft Plan. She indicated that the network was inclusive of the region's arterials (regional and local arterial roadways). The Travel Time data that will be collected each year will provide a vital source of data for the success of the congestion management strategies as they are implemented in the future.

Mrs. Parcels said that a review of other CMS plans showed that they generally used Level of Service "E" as the point at which CMS strategies are implemented. Marshall Barron noted that in rural areas like PD9, a higher level of service might be appropriate (ie, Level of Service C). She said that the Plan provides for Monitoring and Data Collection which could be overseen by a Congestion Management System Committee, as proposed, a subcommittee of the RRRC Rural Transportation Technical Committee. She said that additional baseline data will also need to be developed against which the success of various strategies can be measured, and highlighted the various strategies that would be appropriate for a rural region like PD9. These were grouped under: Transportation Demand Management strategies; Traffic Operational Improvement Strategies; Traffic Calming Strategies; Transit Improvement Strategies and Intelligent Transportation System Strategies. Finally, Mrs. Parcels said that the Plan provides for a means of evaluating the strategies and modifying them where needed.

V. Announcements and Other Business

--Preliminary Scoping Meeting of the recently Multimodal Office-Awarded PD9 Regional Freight Study: Mr. Walker said that on May 5, the Commission had hosted a preliminary scoping meeting with area stakeholders, Chamber of Commerce and other officials, VDOT District Office representatives, and VDOT On-Call Consultants Baker Corporation, and Trans Systems. He discussed the Freight Advisory Committee that has been assembled and overall nature of the study, slated to start shortly, with the start of the coming Fiscal Year.

--Report on the April 24 Piedmont Rail Coalition meeting at the Culpeper Depot: Mr. Walker said that a well-attend meeting had been held at which Meredith Richards, former Charlottesville City Councilor and Director of CvilleRail, and others gave presentations about the potential for implementation of proposed additional daily Amtrak passenger rail route from Lynchburg to Washington D.C. He said that Amtrak has studied its feasibility and with a commitment of state funds and support of Norfolk Southern, could become operational in about 2 years. An alternate and mutually exclusive route vying for consideration, runs from Richmond to Washington D.C.,with both contingent on state funding.

--Report on DRPT/draft budget inclusion of requested funding for proposed PD9 Mobility Enhancement Program, and Regional Commuter Bus Startup Assistance: Mr. Parks said that the region was seeking funds under the New Freedom program to help coordinate human service transportation among the various providers in the region. He also reported that the RRCSB had been allotted funds to replace 4 of its vans. Mrs. Hromyak indicated that she had attended a recent DRPT hearing in Harrisonburg, and encouraged approval of both projects, with the referenced Commuter Bus Startup, a demonstration project that would transport commuters between Warrenton's Park and Ride Lot and Northern Virginia/Washington D.C. She said that RRRC Commuter Services receives calls on a daily basis inquiring about the availability of such a service, and that the requested funds would be the start-up and initial subsidization—until ridership can be established—only.

--Comprehensive Human Services Mobility (CHSM) Planning: Mr. Walker said that the Commission will also host a DRPT meeting on June 12, from 10:00-noon, at the Commission offices to continue development of the required CHSM plan, and receive information on an upcoming New Freedom funding follow-on round.

With no further business, Mr. Egertson adjourned the meeting at 2:15.