

UPPER MERION TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
April 13, 2016

The members of the Upper Merion Transportation Authority met for their regular meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2016 in the Township Building, 175 West Valley Forge Road, King of Prussia, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and commenced with the pledge of allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

Tom Kohler, Chairman
Marvin Meneeley, Treasurer
Carlton Stuart, Secretary
Ian Kingsley, Asst. Sec. /Treasurer (arrived 7:20 p.m.)
David G. Kraynik, Executive Secretary
Edward J. O'Brien, Director of Public Works
Greg Philips, Supervisor Liaison
Jack Smyth, Jr., P.E., Consulting Engineers, Boles Smyth Associates, Inc., (BSA)
Nicholas Hiriak, Director of Finance
Rita Ann Pfeiffer, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Lou Zotti, Vice-Chairman

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Kohler stated the Authority met in Executive Session on March 29th to discuss potential legal matters.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL:

It was moved by Mr. Stuart, seconded by Mr. Kohler, all voting "Aye" to approve the meeting minutes of March 9, 2016 as submitted. None opposed. Motion approved 3-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Solicitor

Mr. Kohler stated at the January 13th meeting this Authority by a vote of 3-2 moved to explore an RFQ for Solicitor. As a matter of public record, Mr. Kohler went through the timeline of the RFQ process.

On January 20, 2016, an RFQ was prepared by township staff and made available to Authority members for review. The week of January 25th the RFQ's were sent out to 12 law firms including the existing Solicitor. At the February 10th meeting the former Solicitor informed the Authority he did not intend to bid for the position and offered to stay on until the search process was complete.

RFQ's were due on February 16th. Six proposals were received and preliminary summaries were emailed to all Authority members the next day. Packets were available for each Authority member to review on each bid. On February 26th the selection notification process was discussed. On March 3rd the Authority, by email agreed to choose three firms to interview. At the executive session held prior to the March 9th regular meeting of the Transportation Authority the three selected firms were interviewed. On March 15th a consensus was reached on a date for an executive session to meet

and discuss the interviews and ultimately come up with a recommendation. The three members in attendance at that meeting recommended the appointment of Rudolph Clarke, LLC to serve as Solicitor for the remainder of 2016 at the former Solicitor's rate of \$135 an hour.

Authority comment:

Mr. Stuart commented a thorough RFQ process was conducted and the input and views of all Authority members were considered.

Mr. Meneeley said he is already on record expressing his concern about political affiliations.

Authority Action:

It was moved by Mr. Stuart, seconded by Mr. Kingsley to approve the firm of Rudolph Clarke, LLC as Solicitor for the Transportation Authority for the remainder of 2016 at the rate of \$135 an hour. Mr. Stuart and Mr. Kohler voted "aye" and Mr. Meneeley noted "nay." Motion approved 2-1.

A brief discussion followed the vote after which new counsel provided legal basis to confirm a 2-1 vote is valid.

Additional Authority comment:

Mr. Kohler welcomed Supervisor Greg Philips back as Board Liaison to the Authority after serving our country for the past year. He said upon his return Supervisor Philips was given a hero's welcome by the township's emergency services personnel. On behalf of the Authority, Mr. Kohler expressed appreciation to Supervisor Philips for his service to our country and best wishes upon his safe return.

Presentation for Valley Forge PA Turnpike Interchange Westbound Slip Ramps

Mr. Smyth stated the King of Prussia Business Improvement District (BID) is requesting the support of the Transportation Authority to join in their effort to get the Westbound Slip Ramps at the Valley Forge Interchange into the capital budget for the Turnpike Commission. Since BSA worked on the ultimate concept configuration, BSA was approached by the BID to develop this early phase concept which is the focus of this presentation to the Authority.

On the first page of the handout the ultimate concept was shown which was developed as part of the Montgomery County Turnpike Corridor Reinvestment study. Traffic projections were done by DVRPC and the subsequent county report is the starting point for consideration of each of the proposed interchanges.

The BID is looking at the Valley Forge Interchange as their primary objective for direct access to Moore Road/First Avenue into the Freedom Business Center and asked BSA to review the Westbound off ramp and on ramp options. Utilizing the map handouts, Mr. Smyth detailed the various preliminary design elements associated with this interchange. He also reviewed the associated issues of traffic speed on the curve and traffic volumes. It was noted, Pennoni Associates has existing and projected peak hour traffic volumes associated with a Road Diet on First Avenue.

The new westbound off ramp has about 1,000 vehicles projected in the morning; overall there are projected to be over 10,000 vehicles on a weekday. Some are being diverted from the existing ramp

to the toll plaza but about 5,500 of those may be new trips. There were certain local roads with a decrease in traffic as a result of better access from the Turnpike. Mr. Smyth reviewed the DVRPC projections out to 2040 for a no build condition without the ramps and a build condition with the ramps. He said 5,500 potentially new trips would be important to the Turnpike Commission because they are also justifying the expenditures based on revenue expectations. With all seven interchange concepts the Turnpike is balancing cost versus added revenue, when will they break even and get in the green.

Mr. Smyth said when it is just the off ramp a direct left turn is possible into Freedom Business Center before reaching First Avenue. He pointed out this would be possible because there is not a lot of traffic circulating around the interior road system, but when the on ramp is added a direct left movement is not advisable. Whether or not it is signalized is something that would be put through a warrant analysis.

Mr. Kohler mentioned the American Baptist Church "Holy Donut" property which is currently up for sale and is projected for redevelopment. He said warrants or traffic patterns should be factored in before anything was decided.

Mr. Smyth stated the Road Diet is now a project through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) which is moving forward. Mr. Smyth asked the BID if the Road Diet is proposed between Moore and North Gulph Road. Pennoni's report indicated the intersection at First and Moore was the lowest performing section of the Road Diet and the reason it worked was because the drive does not have a lot of volume associated with it. Adding traffic with the new westbound slip ramps will negate this reason.

Mr. Philips commented from the supervisors' perspective it is contrary to their vision of the Multi-Use District because more cars are being pushed into this area. He pointed out the whole idea of the Road Diet was to calm traffic so that people could live there and walk to work. Mr. Smyth said the projected 5,500 cars are new traffic for the turnpike – not new traffic to the area. It was noted the turnpike is looking at it from their standpoint. One of the biggest drops in traffic is North Gulph Road between the toll plaza and First Avenue. The traffic projection went down by over 20%. With regard to the Road Diet, Mr. Smyth said his question was the section between Moore and North Gulph Road, but between Moore and Allendale Road it works well.

Following a discussion about the Road Diet, Mr. Smyth said the TAP project of which the Road Diet is the first step is more of a work within the curb and a readjustment of lane widths to get bike lanes and center turn lane. He pointed out this will provide a nice bikeway along First Avenue from Allendale to Moore and it may make sense to send people up Moore because that will get them to the Heuser trail.

Mr. Smyth stated the BID is looking for a resolution in support of the Valley Forge Pennsylvania Turnpike westbound slip ramps.

Mr. Meneeley expressed concern over the radius of the off ramp curve. Mr. Kohler stated he was also going to mention the radius of the curve. He said the stormwater management basin that is there is for an existing building owned by Brandywine that will be demolished. He asked if it would be possible to shift the basin north to make it possible for a straight off ramp. Mr. Smyth responded BSA looked at the straight off ramp as well to come into the intersection and that option had raised concern associated with deceleration speed.

Mr. Kohler asked if the ramps are based on open road tolling or if this is with EZ pass. Mr. Smyth responded that is one of the questions from a timeline perspective; however the assumption is the ramps would be designed for All Electronic Tolling.

Mr. Stuart said this resolution is not asking the Transportation Authority for approval of a specific design. Mr. Smyth said the BID is just asking for the Transportation Authority's support as they go to the Turnpike Commission to get the westbound off and the westbound on ramp onto the capital program. Mr. Kohler indicated this was just a preliminary design for the ramps and how the BID gets there is to be determined.

A discussion ensued discussing the potential benefits of getting off and on the ramps at the same spot. Mr. Smyth noted BSA did a cost estimate for the turnpike which amounted to approximately \$12 million for the off ramp and \$9 million for the on ramp. Both ramps require retaining walls which are a major element of the cost.

Mr. Kohler asked if people approaching the new on ramp would suddenly realize it is a toll road or they realize it is not going eastbound like they thought it was because that is where they got off in the morning. Mr. Smyth responded there would be a warning to direct traffic in the proper direction and they would have the ability to turn right into the local road network.

Authority Action:

It was moved by Mr. Stuart, seconded by Mr. Meneeley, all voting "Aye" to approve Resolution 2016-01 in support of the King of Prussia Business Improvement District's presentation to the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission for a Phase 1 project to construct the Valley Forge Interchange Westbound Slip Ramps. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

Mr. Kohler noted Mr. Kingsley arrived during this presentation [7:20 p.m.].

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Development Plan Updates

Brandywine Properties: 935 First Avenue - previously approved for a second office building at that location. All approvals are in place but the applicant returned since it was several years since the application was approved. According to Rob Loeper he estimates this development will generate approximately \$200,000 in transportation fees for the Transportation Authority.

LeCesse Development: 750 Moore Road - 248 apartments. It was noted Mr. Loeper would provide information on how much in transportation fees this development will generate.

Development Plan re: Yard House Restaurant, King of Prussia Mall – Reconfiguration of portion of former Sears for a full service restaurant and construction of 1,816 square foot deck. Issues have been resolved and the plan will be considered at the Board of Supervisors business meeting on April 21st.

Development Plan O'Neill Properties Group – 2701 Renaissance Boulevard; 300-unit Multi-Family Residential Building, 10.9 acres. Public Hearing for conditional use since property is zoned SM-1. If conditional use is granted, it is anticipated land development plan will be considered by the Board of Supervisors in the next few months.

Losty Subdivision Plan, 231 Matsonford Road – 10 acres, 7 residential lots (1 existing). If approved this Subdivision Plan will generate about \$70,000 in fees for the Authority.

Mancill Mill Road, Revised Development Plan – 112-unit Hotel on 7 acres. Previous plan was for a warehouse, office facility and two hotel buildings. If approved this development plan will generate approximately \$180,000 in fees for the Authority.

Mr. Kohler asked if it is correct that the previously approved office building on First Avenue will have no changes based on the new zoning. Mr. Kraynik responded in the affirmative.

Joint Meeting with Board of Supervisors

Mr. Kraynik reminded Authority members that there will be a Joint Meeting with the Board of Supervisors on Thursday, May 12th at 9 p.m.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Multi-Use Trail Bridge over the Schuylkill River (SR 3051 Section C22) – Construction Phase

Construction of Sullivan's Trail Bridge is in the final phase. Contractor will have the trail paved in May on the Upper Merion side of the trail section PA 23 including the area down to the Rapid Flashing Beacon. Contractor is actively working on bridges doing deck concrete pours on the main bridge and also working on the Schuylkill River Trail Bridge on the West Norriton side. Opening of the trail is anticipated around the July 4th to mid-July time frame.

Relocated North Gulph Road, SR 0023 Section 2NG

BSA has been coordinating Aqua utilities with the larger US 422 project that will soon be in construction to ensure Aqua facility design is compatible with the Relocated North Gulph Project. The portion of North Gulph Road is being realigned in front of Valley Forge Park away from the Park towards US 422 and widened to allow for better traffic operations through this area.

BSA is coordinating with PennDOT and the National Park Service regarding requested additional work that PennDOT would like to add to the project. The pavers in front of the Memorial Arch are in bad shape and require a total reconstruction. PennDOT is asking for a supplement to this contract to complete this work.

Mr. Kohler asked if PennDOT is paying for the additional work. Mr. Smyth responded in the affirmative.

Church Road Bridge over SEPTA Route 100 Line

The foundation plan for the culvert is currently in review.

Trout Creek Bridge

Attended project kick-off meeting at PennDOT on March 30th to evaluate and update project design standards and environmental elements from where it ended in 2008. Issues included re-evaluation of Beidler Road's design which was converted to a westbound one-way adopted through the Pro Team Session as the preferred alternative in 2008. At the request of the Transportation Authority and the Township plans call for keeping Beidler two-way. Another major consideration is signalization of Mancill Mill Road so that it can warrant a signal in the future.

BSA coordinated with Township Planner to determine required parking numbers for the existing land use at Fifth Avenue since cuts will be made into the end property on Fifth Avenue and the lower tier parking lot (approximately 15 spaces will be removed). This is a critical right-of-way issue as it relates to the feasibility of the design. The Zoning Officer responded via email to indicate the site requires 63 spaces and has over 100 spaces with the property's existing zoned use.

BSA coordinated with PennDOT to initiate the environmental clearance process and have begun coordinating with utilities for updated utility verification plans.

The bridge is on a new alignment which softens the PA 23 curve. BSA making the design simpler by not following the curvilinear roadway between Moore and Mancill Mill Road and instead utilizing simpler curves and straight tangent. Because of the newly opened Heuser Trail, instead of the 16 foot outside lanes previously proposed to accommodate a shared lane for bikes, 14-foot lanes are now proposed to provide a 50 foot curb-to-curb alignment for the length of roadway reconstruction. There will be two lanes coming west to maintain the two-lane continuity and one lane headed east with left turn lanes for Mancill Mill Road and Beidler Road.

Sidewalks were always proposed on the westbound side (north) and that has been maintained, but a sidewalk is now proposed on the eastbound side (south) from the bus shelter at Mancill Mill Road through the project limits to Vandenburg.

Mr. Philips asked about the railroad. Mr. Smyth responded the railroad would be a major determination on the profile of the bridge because it would be optimal to raise the bridge and achieve better flow underneath. This would eliminate the need to do two spans on the bridge.

Mr. Kohler pointed out Beidler Road is winding, steep and narrow in the vicinity of PA 23. He asked if there would be regrading and/or making it a safer width. Mr. Smyth responded the original project involved the majority of the roadway up the hill. He said that opportunity exists because it is within the project limits that were determined in the previous study.

Mr. Kohler asked if there is any way of taking the trees out and shaving off just enough to change the sight line at that blind corner. Mr. Meneeley commented any safety changes that could be made without changing the scope of the project or significantly increasing the cost would be appreciated.

Mr. Smyth stated one of the elements of the Beidler Road intersection is that it is actually lengthening Beidler Road. Valley Forge Road is being realigned such that there is additional area for Beidler Road to have a safer curve going up the hill. Mr. Smyth said he will take a look at the proposed alignment.

Mr. Smyth noted sidewalks are another project consideration. Because of the new development at Vandenburg and their trail system, a comprehensive bike/walk network will be evaluated from the Valley Forge intersection at Vandenburg into and around the perimeter of the apartments to get to Beidler and Vandenburg.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

None.

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR MARCH 2016

Mr. Nick Hiriak, Finance Director, reviewed the financial report for March 2016. Fed Ex paid its assessment in its entirety \$522,734 six months in advance. Mr. Hiriak noted this takes the Act 209 account from \$80,000 to \$603,316.

REQUISITIONS – APRIL 2016

Boles, Smyth Assoc., Inc.	\$ 637.34	Multi-Use Trail Connection on Port Kennedy Road for work performed 2-1-16 thru 2-29-16 INVOICE #21
Boles, Smyth Assoc., Inc.	\$ 2,673.87	Construction Phase Svcs. For Multi-Use Trail Bridge over Schuylkill River Project for work performed 2-1-16 thru 2-29-16 INVOICE #24
Boles, Smyth Assoc., Inc.	\$ 777.92	Relocation of North Gulph Road (SR 3039) for work performed 2-1-16 thru 2-29-16 INVOICE: #29
Boles, Smyth Assoc., Inc.	\$ 643.37	Final design of E. Church Road Bridge over SEPTA for work performed for the period 1-1-16 thru 2-29-16
TOTAL:	\$4,732.50	

Authority Action:

It was moved by Mr. Meneeley, seconded by Mr. Stuart, all voting “Aye” to approve the April 2016 requisitions in the amount of \$4,732.50. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

Issue regarding flooding at ramp on east side of the Mall

Mr. Meneeley mentioned there is inadequate drainage (icing in winter) that occurs at the PA Turnpike ramp on the east side of the Mall (near the former Sears).

Following up on Mr. Meneeley’s comments, Mr. O’Brien reported he texted the Highway Superintendent and he does realize it floods in that location on occasion due to the drains on North Gulph Road. It is a PennDOT/Turnpike issue creating this situation. Mr. Kohler asked if something could be done to notify them. Mr. O’Brien responded appropriate maintenance personnel are notified when the township becomes aware of a problem.

Issue regarding problematic egress from former Sports Authority

Mr. Meneeley expressed concern over the egress from the Fortunoff Store with people making lefts onto Henderson north. He pointed out the barriers that were installed on the other side of US 202 by TD Bank at the request of the Transportation Authority a few years ago and something similar should be done at the opposite problematic egress.

Mr. Kohler commented he is in agreement that this is a safety issue.

Mr. Kraynik provided an update on the warrant analysis to turn the light in front of the Wawa into a full directional signal. He said the owner of the Wawa property is going back to PennDOT with a new traffic study.

Vote for Solicitor

Since Mr. Kingsley missed the vote for Solicitor, he asked to go on record in support of the firm of Rudolph Clarke, LLC for Transportation Authority Solicitor.

Prince Frederick Extension

Mr. Philips asked if there is any progress extending Prince Frederick Street between Henderson Road and Saulin Boulevard. Mr. Kohler responded Mr. Smyth has been working on this in conjunction with the Montgomery County Planning Commission and the Montgomery County Transportation Authority to make sure they are aware this is a planned project on the Act 209 and does not preclude what is happening with the Chester Valley Trail.

A discussion followed regarding pending issues associated with the proposed Prince Frederick Extension. During this discussion Mr. Kohler mentioned incorporating a trail along the new Prince Frederick Extension out to the new sidewalk built by the township and eventually widening that to make a connector trail between the Chester Valley Trail, the Township Building and the park. He said this would possibly allow some multi-modal funding to come into play for the Prince Frederick project. Mr. Smyth commented having a trail incorporated into the project opens the door for grants that much wider.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Authority, the meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

DAVID G. KRAYNIK
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

THOMAS KOHLER
CHAIRMAN

Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered: