

South Western Region
Metropolitan Planning Organization

APPROVED SWRMPO MINUTES

For the 1/23/2017 Meeting
Held at the Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association
27 Governor Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877

Chairman Jayme Stevenson - Vice Chairman Robert Mallozzi

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Darien	First Selectman Jayme Stevenson, Chairman
Greenwich	First Selectman Peter Tesei
New Canaan	First Selectman Robert Mallozzi
Norwalk	Chief of Staff Laoise King
Stamford	Chief of Staff Michael Pollard
Weston	First Selectman Nina Daniel
Westport	First Selectman James Marpe
Wilton	First Selectman Lynne Vanderslice
Transit	Norwalk Transit Chief Executive Officer Kimberlee Morton
CTDOT	Supervising Planner Roxane Fromson (non-voting)
MPO Staff	Executive Director Francis Pickering (non-voting)

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bethel First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker, Brookfield First Selectman Stephen Dunn, New Milford Mayor David Gronbach, Newtown First Selectman Patricia Llodra, Redding First Selectman Julia Pemberton, Ridgefield First Selectman Rudy Marconi, HARTransit Development Director Richard Schreiner, HARTransit Planner Harrison Wenchell and Operations Manager Robert Yastremski, and Newtown First Selectman's Intern John Board.

Also, Norwalk Transit Manager of Planning Stephanie Scavelli, Eversource representatives Tracy Alston, Cathy Larson and their Associate, Brookfield Project Manager Greg Dembowski, Ellen Grant of Senator Blumenthal's office, other citizens, WestCOG staff members Robert Brinton, Patricia Payne, Elizabeth Esposito, Kristin Hadjstylianos, Nicole Sullivan, William Kenny, Patty Payne, Robert Sachnin, Carl Zimmerman and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Jayme Stevenson called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM which was immediately after the Legislative Breakfast.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Update on Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP): Rob Sachnin provided an update on the TAP application process, the prioritized recommendations for which were approved by the MPO at its December 15th meeting. Initial reactions are expected from CTDOT in April, he said.

Before that date, CTDOT will be contacting applicants for additional information as may be needed. The state staff review is to include confirming project purpose and need, reviewing cost estimates, and assessing “critical path” issues such as sequencing of permits and utility coordination. A discussion followed.

Congestion Management Process (CMP) Reports: Rob Sachnin reviewed two short reports distributed to members and entitled “CMP Executive Briefing for I-95” and “CMP Executive Briefing for I-84.” Joint products of the WestCOG GIS and Transportation Departments, he said the reports serve as tools for evaluating deficiencies within the transportation system and the effectiveness of improvement projects over time.

Francis Pickering noted that the I-84 data will feed into the staff’s involvement with the recently initiated I-84 Danbury widening study. Average speed change diagrams for both corridors were also presented.

The I-95 report documented that congestion has worsened since 2014, with the average southbound speed in 2014 of 53.5 mph decreasing to 48.8 mph in 2015. And on I-84 through Bethel, average travel speeds decreased by at least 10 mph for westbound vehicles, Mr. Sachnin said.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of 12/15/2016 Meeting Minutes: After review and on a motion made by Peter Tesei and seconded by Lynne Vanderslice, the minutes of the SWRMPO meeting of 12/15/2016 were unanimously approved.

Transportation Improvement Program Amendments: As requested by Jayme Stevenson, Rob Sachnin reviewed two CT DOT requested TIP amendments. These were attached to the agenda as a memo entitled “SWRMPO FFY2015-2018 TIP” and were summarized by him as follows:

First within **SWRTIP #Am2017-001**, for CTDOT Project #170-3439 statewide, request of funds from the STPA federal category at \$660,000 total of which 80% is federal and 20% state, for federally eligible engineering charges for CTDOT and their consultant VHB such as project oversight, administration and review. These resources will allow for processing of recently submitted TAP projects, the current services contract with VHB expiring soon, he said.

Second within **SWRTIP#Am2017-001** was CT DOT’s Merritt Parkway Project #102-0296. This CTDOT requested TIP amendment is for resurfacing, bridge and safety improvements on 6.1 miles of the Merritt Parkway, from Exit 37 at Route 124 in New Canaan easterly through Norwalk, to the Newtown Turnpike in Westport near Exit 41.

An agenda attachment noted this project is the final stage of Parkway maintenance, the eighth in a series, carefully designed to preserve character and aesthetics in conformance with Merritt Parkway Guidelines.

The planned Parkway maintenance includes selective pavement replacement and resurfacing, bridge improvements, shoulder widening, drainage improvements, guiderail replacement, and removal of fixed objects within the recommended clear zone or their protection with new guiderail.

The request is for funding of the preliminary design phase, at a total of \$2,000,000 of which 80% is to be federal and 20% state. Final design and construction will be part of the new 2018-2021 TIP expected to be released this Spring or Summer, he said.

Jim Marpe commented that this Westport section of the Parkway is considered quite accident prone. There is also a question in Westport as to what extent the project for replacing the Newtown Turnpike Bridge is impacted or related to the Merritt Parkway work under discussion here. It was agreed Rob Sachnin will obtain that information.

Then on a motion made by Rob Mallozzi and seconded by Jim Marpe, the SWRMPO unanimously endorsed the two amendments using Resolution #2017-001.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was a second opportunity provided for public comment, of which there was none.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Jayme Stevenson stated that the next meeting would be held at 11:30 AM before the WestCOG meeting scheduled for 2/23/2017 at the Ridgefield Visiting Nurse Association in Ridgefield. Then on a motion duly made and seconded it was voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 AM.