

Meeting 3 Minutes

Newtown Township Municipal Building
Thursday, March 16th
8:30 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.

Meeting Objectives: Provide municipalities along the corridor with the tools necessary to brainstorm corridor improvements. Identify what would make Enhanced Bus Service (EBS) along the corridor a viable investment for SEPTA.

Agenda

1. Introductions/Coalition Member 2-minute Reports

- Attendees gave news updates on current news with their organizations.
- Cecile Charlton (CC), Executive Director at DCTMA, said that SAP is working with DCTMA to run a shuttle to and from the Bryn Mawr Regional Rail Station to SAP's North America headquarters in Newtown Square. Employees are not satisfied with public bus service.
- Mark Cassel (MC), Manager of Suburban Service Planning and Schedules, stated that SEPTA will soon be holding Operating Budget hearings at the Delaware County Courthouse and West Chester Borough Hall.
- Bill Deguffroy (BD) and Heather Martin (HM), Transportation Planners at CCPC, spoke about CCPC's Transportation Improvements Inventory, which is in progress, and asked for municipalities to submit their transportation improvements to inform the TIP.
- Rick Smith (RS), East Goshen Township Manager, said that East Goshen is installing adaptive signals at ten intersections on Route 3 from East Strasburg Road to Route 352.

2. Roosevelt Boulevard Enhanced Bus Service

a. Planning Process – DVRPC

- Andrew Svekla (AS), Senior Planning and Design Analyst at DVRPC, and Amy Bernknopf (AB), Senior Transportation Planner at DVRPC, presented on the Roosevelt Blvd. enhanced bus service planning process. They said that the initial phase of transit improvements along Roosevelt would result in a 13-minute travel time reduction for bus trips and as many as 4,500 new riders. The BRT-Lite service will be branded. SEPTA is exploring all-door boarding with SEPTA Key. Stations will be very different from current stops on Roosevelt. The new service will be implemented in Fall 2017. Some reconfiguration of Neshaminy Mall will be necessary. The Roosevelt Blvd. coalition is now about more than just transit improvements, it is focused on comprehensive corridor improvements.
- Byron Comati (BC), Director of Strategic Planning at SEPTA, said that the Roosevelt Blvd. project went from planning to implementation quickly. All the stations have been designed. They are large, landscaped, and have large signage with embedded real-time information. The BRT-Lite line will be branded as the Direct Bus, and only buses with that branding will run that route. It is the first line of its kind in the region. SEPTA will learn from Direct Bus on Roosevelt Blvd. and apply

what they learn to evaluate the viability of similar transit services elsewhere, including West Chester Pike (WCP). However, WCP is different than Roosevelt Blvd. in many ways, including the fact that Roosevelt has 12 lanes to work with, presenting more opportunities for transit lane dedication and vehicular movements. WCP is also less dense and fewer transit lines cross it than Roosevelt Blvd. Philadelphia is doing most of the station design and construction with CMAQ. BC stated that there are two parallel efforts: the implementation of Direct Bus, and the Route for Change study for dedicated bus lanes on the corridor, half of which is funded by TIGER funds. Bike planning and pedestrian and general safety are also key features for Roosevelt Boulevard.

- MC said that one challenge will be getting new riders to try Direct Bus when it is first introduced. They will use the experience to inform future similar initiatives. Also, all-door boarding may not be part of the initial introduction because of complications with SEPTA Key.
- BC said it will take time to work out the kinks for the new service, and SEPTA will focus on getting Direct Bus right on Roosevelt Blvd. before trying out similar services in other places.
- MC said that coordinating improvements between multiple municipalities along a corridor can slow the pace of implementation. Therefore, coalitions like WCP Coalition are very important.
- CC stated that a challenge for the DCTMA is that it is difficult to get people to see transit as "sexy." Branding Direct Bus service should help with that. Wifi would be great. She asked when some branded bus service could come to WCP.
- MC said that a challenge to enhanced service on WCP is that there are employers located just off the Pike that want bus routes to travel directly to their workplace. Diversions from the Pike will not work for enhanced bus service. Pedestrian connections need to be made to employers from WCP.

3. Funding Opportunities for Municipalities – CCPC and DCPD

- BD went over the various funding sources provided in the meeting handout.
- MC stated that entities can use funding from some of these programs to improve pedestrian connections to transit on WCP.
- AB said that the Safe Routes to Transit program was designed for municipalities to identify places where connections to transit need to be improved and get help from DVRPC in making those connections.
- AS said that three stations were selected in the previous round. The earliest it will be available again is some time in 2019.
- RS said that Green-Light-Go funds were used for East Goshen's adaptive signal project.
- MC said that SEPTA needs to be made aware of locations where signal improvements are made, so they can make the necessary adjustments to transit schedules and operations in the area.

- BD asked about the status of the DCTMA micro-grant program. CC said that it received few applicants and may not be continued.

4. Future Business – 20 minutes

a. 2017 Meeting Schedule

- Karen Whitaker (KW), Transportation Planner at DCPD, introduced the 2017 Meeting Schedule and described the meetings.
- CC said that she could put SAP in contact with DCPD to schedule a presentation.
- AB offered to supply DVRPC transit surveys to serve as a template for the survey to be sent to private entities produce in a later meeting.
- MC said SEPTA could also provide some assistance in the creation of the transit survey, since they often do similar surveys.
- BC said that the Coalition should identify a mission and agree upon some common goals. It should be clear what kind of investments the group is willing to make in improving the corridor. There is a lot of funding available, and a lot can be achieved with it if a coordinated plan is developed and acted upon. The Coalition could improve its chances of getting projects funded by showing that specific projects meet priorities that were identified and agreed upon by members of the Coalition.
- Tom Shaffer (TS), Transportation Manager at DCPD, said that the survey can include questions about the group's priorities.
- AS said that a mission was identified for the Coalition when it was formed, but it would be good to revisit it at each meeting.
- BC said that Meeting 5 on the updated schedule, which includes a presentation on Direct Bus implementation by Philadelphia and SEPTA, should occur after Columbus Day because by then, the project will be implemented.
- AS said that the Coalition meetings should serve as an information clearinghouse, and municipalities should share as much as they would like to share about local projects and issues related to new developments along the corridor.

b. Online Survey Follow-Up

c. Call for Volunteers to Present at Next Meeting

- Coalition members, particularly municipalities, are requested to present their vision for the corridor, as well as design and implementation ideas at the next meeting.

d. CCPC Website Page for Coalition

- BD said that CCPC will develop a website for Coalition activities. He hopes to have the website up by the next meeting.

- CC asked whether the website would be public or just for members of the Coalition. BD replied that the website could be public or not, depending on how the Coalition felt. It would definitely be good to share information about the Coalition with the public as the group got closer to implementation.
- Stephen Nease (SN), Newtown Township Manager, suggested that DCPD could host a link to the Coalition website, since CCPC would be hosting it. TS said that DCPD could host a link for the website.

5. Next Meeting – 5 minutes

- BD asked whether the group would like to meet quarterly. The group agreed.
- MC suggested June 1, 8, or 15.
- BD will send out a Doodle poll to schedule the June meeting.
- Paul Lutz (PL), Senior Civil Engineer at PennDOT, said that the previous fiber installation was 10 years ago, and Fiber was installed underground. The Department is now pursuing all projects along the corridor to place new fiber overhead on utility poles. Then, PennDOT will own and maintain the Fiber Trunk line. This trunk line will be available for Transportation-related projects.
- BD said that the counties can map transportation improvement projects along the corridor.
- MC stated that a separate email should be sent out after the meeting to collect transportation improvement projects along the corridor, so they can be mapped.
- SN said that the room the Coalition has traditionally met in at the Newtown Township Municipal Building may be unavailable for the next meeting, but he would like to locate another meeting place in Newtown for the next meeting. He would be happy for Newtown to continue to serve as a meeting place.

6. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 9:40.

West Chester Pike Coalition

East Goshen | Edgmont | Haverford | Marple | Newtown | Upper Darby | West Chester | West Goshen | Westtown | Willistown

Newtown Township
Municipal Building

Meeting 3 (3/16/17)

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