

Dutchess County Transportation Council

Planning Committee Meeting

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

10:00 a.m. via Teams

Meeting Summary

1. Introductions – Mark Debald welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced himself and attendees. See attached list.

2. Announcements

a. [Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act \(CRRSAA\)](#)

Mark shared that the latest COVID relief package has been passed by Congress and includes \$10 billion in funding for Highway (State DOTs) and \$14 billion for Public Transportation. This entails allocations of \$2.2 and \$3.9 million for highway and public transportation, respectively, to the Poughkeepsie-Newburgh Urbanized Area. The funding is 100% federal, and we are awaiting information on further sub-allocations to our area.

Nick D’Alessandro (T/East Fishkill) asked what happens after the suballocations are released – how will the funds be used for projects? Mark explained that the amounts are relatively low for the three-county area, so the cost of a new project may exceed the amount that is available, but existing projects could potentially receive some of this funding to help offset any cost increases. Whatever the amount made available, funds should be available for obligation through FFY 2024.

Dylan Tuttle (DCTC) mentioned that some interesting figures have come out related to COVID transportation impacts. As of December, parking utilization at the Beacon train station is down from 97% to 30%, and County Public Transit is at 50% ridership. There are long term struggles on both sides. Mark related that this challenge appears to be recognized by Congress, and that the new \$1.9 trillion bill under consideration may reflect that in the form of additional transit funding.

b. [NYS Transportation, Economic Development, and Environmental Conservation \(TED\) Bill](#)

Mark explained the Governor’s executive budget for SFY 2022 has not yet been approved, but that there are two notable transportation components, Part A and Part B, that are likely to pass.

- i. Part A proposes increased fines for illegal vehicles on State parkways (i.e. over-height vehicles using the Taconic State Parkway), and the prohibition of general consumer GPS for routing commercial vehicles, both of which could help increase drivers’ awareness of vehicle restrictions on certain roads.
- ii. Part B addresses work zone safety and proposes increased fines for drivers found to cause injury to pedestrians and bicyclists while failing to exercise due care.

c. [Infrastructure for Rebuilding America \(INFRA\) Grants](#)

Mark notified the group of an INFRA funding opportunity for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021. This funding supports transportation projects of national and regional significance, and applications are due by March 19th. There is a \$5 million minimum grant for small

projects, and \$25 million minimum for large projects. Mark emphasized that there are also two new program objectives to consider: climate change and environmental justice.

d. **NYSDOT Preliminary Cost Estimating Tool (PCET) Training**

Mark announced that there is a cost estimating tool training in the works that will be a good learning opportunity for engineers, project sponsors, planners, DPW, MPO members, and others. The two-hour virtual training session is scheduled for Spring 2021. It is recommended that interested parties send a representative to this training. For those interested, there is also a [Preliminary Cost Estimating Tool Training Series](#) from NYSDOT available online. Ray Oberly (T/Clinton) asked if a link for the training series can be provided to attendees. Mark replied that yes, a link will be shared.

e. [Bridge NY Program](#)

Mark reminded attendees that the Bridge NY solicitation is still open and reiterated some important details:

- i. Total funding is \$200 million, with approximately \$16.2 million targeted to the Hudson Valley.
- ii. Draft applications are due to NYSDOT by April 14th and May 4th for bridges and culverts, respectively. Mark highly recommended that applicants take advantage of this draft review opportunity.
- iii. Final applications are due on May 19th and June 9th for bridges and culverts, respectively.

Nick D'Alessandro shared that the Town of East Fishkill is applying. They had to form a three-person internal committee as designated by the application paperwork. They also had to pass a resolution. Mark added that this is a good example of why applicants should begin the process early.

f. [AARP's Livable Communities Program – Community Challenge Grant](#)

Mark presented a funding opportunity from AARP that could benefit projects of all sizes as there are no minimum or maximum award amounts. Eligible transportation projects include those that increase and support connectivity, walkability, bikeability, and access to transportation options. Applications are due April 14th. Mark offered that DCTC could assist with any background data needs.

3. Old Business – Mark discussed three resolutions to be voted on by February 26th.

a. **Draft DCTC Resolution #21-01 - [SFY 2021-2022 Unified Planning Work Program \(UPWP\)](#)** –

Resolution to approve the UPWP, DCTC's annual statement of tasks for SFY 2021-2022.

The 30-day comment period for the UPWP ended on February 17th with no comments.

- i. Mark noted that there are no new or large consultant or planning studies on the UPWP due to COVID. Main tasks will include the final stages of ongoing planning efforts for *Moving Dutchess Forward*, the Poughkeepsie 9.44.55 study, the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan, and the Arlington Main Street Redesign Initiative. DCTC is also contemplating a CR 14-Hollow Rd safety assessment, potentially in late 2021. The Traffic Count Program will continue, and DCTC will also look into how we can implement recommendations of *Moving Dutchess Forward*.

Greg Totino (T/Fishkill) introduced himself as the aide to the Town of Fishkill Supervisor. He raised concerns about the impact of the NY Yankees affiliate baseball team coming to Dutchess Stadium. He pointed out that additional spectator traffic could affect the interchange at Route 9D and I-84, and problems at the interchange could be further exacerbated by a longer baseball season. Greg said that this has been an issue for Fishkill residents for a long time, and the Town would like to see some studies and collaboration with NYSDOT to address congestion during rush hour. Mark acknowledged that this location has been on DCTC's radar, as it was identified as a priority in our previous long-range plan. He also noted and that we are scheduled to meet with Beacon's new City Administrator, Chris White, who may have further insights regarding local impacts. Mark asked if there has been any reduction in congestion resulting from COVID. Greg replied that there is no hard data, but that any benefit from reduced traffic could be negated by the lane closure on the bridge due to work on the westbound span. Greg also noted that the Town is encouraged to see other large projects underway, such as the Poughkeepsie 9.44.55 study. Mark concluded that DCTC would have to coordinate with the County Executive and also NYSDOT to discuss possible planning work for the 9D/I-84 interchange.

Mark reminded attendees that the entire backlog has been programmed to protect it from potential recissions. He also reviewed the budget broken down by task, noting that long range planning accounts for more than half of program funding.

- b. **Draft DCTC Resolution #21-02 - Safety Performance Measures (2021)** – Resolution to approve NYSDOT safety performance measure targets for 2021, including for fatalities, fatality rate, number of serious injuries, serious injury rate, and number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries.
- c. **Draft DCTC Resolution #21-03 - [FFY 2020-2024 TIP Amendment #20-03](#)** – Resolution to approve amendment to the TIP for the Route 82 bridge repair/replacement in East Fishkill. This project is sponsored by NYSDOT. The 15-day comment period ended on February 17th with no comments.

Sandra Jobson (NYSDOT) informed the group that the amendment process allows them to begin obligating federal funds, which come from Region 8 funding used for regionwide structures. The MTA appears to be open to alternatives for this project, and NYSDOT is working with the Town to scope and assess options. Mark added that this is an old bridge and the area serves as a gateway to the hamlet and rail trail.

4. [Moving Dutchess Forward \(2021 Transportation Plan\)](#)

- a. Plan update & schedule: Mark noted that DCTC remains on schedule for the long-range plan – our section on Basic Needs is close to going live, and then we will continue work on Goal 3: Advocate, and then Goal 4: Invest. DCTC anticipates approval of the plan in June.
- b. [Public engagement](#): Mark noted that DCTC has been working with a consultant team to reach stakeholders, and although COVID has impacted in-person events, the virtual platform has allowed for greater public participation. Mark went over some major points on public engagement:

- i. Our transportation survey closed out with approximately 360 responses and results are being analyzed. Some quotes from participants are displayed on the website.
 - ii. A virtual public meeting is scheduled for March 11th at 4:00pm. The meeting will run for about one hour and provide an overview of our MPO, the long-range plan, and things we've learned so far. Mark encouraged participants to save the date and noted that we hope to show a short version of the presentation at some local Town Board meetings.
 - iii. Mark noted that the next email update will include information about our upcoming section, Barriers to Basic Needs. Mark encouraged participants to share this information with their constituents, and to make sure they are registered for email updates.
- c. [Goal 2 – Assess: Barriers to Reliable Access](#)
Mark reviewed the latest details on our newest plan material, which was recently announced via email. Mark encouraged participants to check out the website for themselves, and then discussed the available content, which includes barriers to reliable bus, train, walking and bicycling access, and traffic congestion, and the MPO's role in addressing shortcomings in each of these areas. Mark pointed out that readers will benefit from seeing this information on the interactive map viewer, which includes data layers for bus service frequency, sidewalk coverage, high congestion traffic segments, and more.

5. Project Updates

- a. Mid-Hudson Valley TMA
Mark informed the group of the latest TMA meeting on February 19th, which included representatives from the Dutchess, Ulster, and Orange County transportation councils, FHWA, NYSDOT and MTA. Topics covered during the meeting included:
 - i. [FTA Section 5307](#) call for projects –
Mark advised that there is about \$15 million in funding available for regional transit projects. There will be a call for projects in early March and a six-week application period. Mark noted that the funding could assist transit operators who are hurting due to COVID. He also highlighted some other details, including that funding must flow through a designated recipient, and funding would be awarded in the spring of this year.
 - ii. Regional freight planning –
Mark noted that the TMA is considering a consultant-led regional freight plan. Before making that determination, we will first form a subcommittee to assess data availability and explore the role each MPO could play.
 - iii. Federal certification review –
Mark pointed out that the TMA is up for a certification review by FHWA and FTA. Certification reviews occur every four years, and the [last report from 2017](#) is available on our website. The review will likely be virtual this year, extending for a few days during September.
- b. [Arlington Main Street Redesign](#)
Mark noted that once the report is finalized, it will be posted on our website, and we will notify the Town of Poughkeepsie and County Public Works.

- c. [Poughkeepsie 99.44.55](#)
 Mark explained that the Interchange concepts and analysis (Chapter 3) has been posted on the website, and that the Arterials concepts and analysis is in progress. It is too early to discuss specifics of the Arterials analysis, but there will be an advisory committee meeting this afternoon.
- d. Mark opened the floor to the group for additional questions or public participation. There were no further comments

6. Next Meeting: Wed, Mar. 24, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

2/24/2021 Meeting Participants:

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