

Dutchess County Transportation Council

Planning Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 28, 2021

10:00 a.m. via Teams

Meeting Summary

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

2. **Announcements**

a. [RAISE – Notice of Funding Opportunity](#)

Mark provided an update on a new funding opportunity. Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity, or RAISE, is the latest iteration of the discretionary grant program formally known as BUILD and TIGER. Eligible projects include transportation infrastructure that would have a significant regional or local impact. Mark cautioned that the application process can be a heavy lift, but that anyone interested should reach out to DCTC for guidance. Minimum award amounts are \$5 million for urban areas and \$1 million for rural areas, with a required 20% local match. The deadline for applications is July 12th.

b. Surface Transportation Authorization-Member Items ('Earmarks')

Mark discussed the recent solicitation for earmarks, inquiring if any attendees are considering a project or working with Representatives Maloney or Delgado. He noted that this is an exciting possibility for large projects, although nothing is certain at this point. Mark also cautioned that earmarks can be somewhat ill defined, which can lead to challenges when it comes to programming the funds.

Ray Oberly (T/Clinton) asked about deadlines for projects and paperwork. Mark replied that the internal deadline for congressional offices may have been yesterday or could be today; each office has its own deadlines, so it would be best to reach out to individual Representatives for more information. For the Town of Clinton, that would mean Rep. Delgado.

Nick D'Alessandro (T/ East Fishkill) asked what amount of funding is available, and if those funds ever expire. Mark replied that he heard about \$15-\$20 million is available from Rep. Maloney's office, and that funds could have a 3-5-year expiration date. Mark cautioned again that there is much uncertainty in the process and that Congress has yet to approve earmarks, but we should expect that these funds will have an expiration date if approved.

c. NYS DOT Preliminary Cost Estimation Tool (PCET) Training

Mark asked the group if anyone attended this training on April 9th. For those who were unable to attend the live training, there are [PCET training materials](#) available online.

Maria Chau (FHWA), who coordinated this training opportunity, noted that good cost estimation is very important when starting a new project, and that the training went well. Mark added that we hope this tool will be helpful for project sponsors.

d. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD) – Proposed Amendments

Emily Dozier (DCTC) briefly explained that the MUTCD lays out guidelines and requirements for traffic signals, striping, signs, and other traffic control devices. There are proposed revisions to some of these guidelines, including more flexibility in positing speed limits, marking crosswalks and bicycle lanes, and using colored pavement. Comments on proposed revisions are due by May 14th. For more information about the proposed revisions and how to submit comments, see the attached memo.

Ray Oberly commented that street sign reflectivity requirements seem excessive. Sometimes the reflective signs are so bright that it can cause problems for fire and police response at night. Emily encouraged Ray to submit this and any other comments.

3. Old Business

a. Complete Streets and Intersection training

Emily reminded the group about two Complete Streets training opportunities. See the attached flyer for more details. Interested parties should contact [Dan Suraci](#) with Urban Cycling Solutions, even if the deadline has passed.

Nick D’Alessandro stated that East Fishkill is interested in the Complete Streets training. Natalie Quinn (C/Poughkeepsie) added that the training was very useful, and she recommends it. The training is catered to specific streets and intersections in your municipality.

4. Moving Dutchess Forward (2021 Transportation Plan)

a. Plan update & schedule

Mark noted that DCTC remains on schedule for the long-range plan. The Advocate (best practices) section is live on the website. We are working on the Invest piece now, which is the last major section of the Plan.

b. Public engagement

Tara Grogan (DCTC) and Mark reviewed DCTC’s most recent public engagement efforts:

- i. Outreach to local governments – We are working with Town boards to spread the word about the plan. We recently held a 15-minute presentation at Amenia’s Town board meeting, and at our own County Planning Board meeting. Those interested in hosting our presentation should [contact us](#) for more information.
- ii. Comment line & print material – We set up a comment line to provide an opportunity for people to reach out about the Plan via phone. New printed material, which has been posted on County buses and is available through our [Resource Library](#), includes the phone number (845-486-3506) for the new comment line.

c. Flood Vulnerability map

Tara discussed the recent launch of our Flood Vulnerability map, which shows bridges, roads, and transit routes in flood zones, as well as past impacts to transportation infrastructure. She encouraged attendees to explore the map and contribute by [submitting their own pictures](#) of flood events and transportation impacts.

d. [Assess: Transportation Equity](#)

Emily discussed this recent addition to our Assess section and its accompanying [map](#). She explained how we analyzed various focus populations (Minorities, Hispanic, Older Adults, Youth, Low-income, Disabled, Foreign Born, Limited English, Female, and Veterans) to develop a composite index and identify focus areas. She showed how this composite index was used in our map, which helps identify where barriers to safety, reliability, and access intersect with focus populations and areas.

e. [Advocate](#)

Emily reviewed the newest section of our plan, which went live last week, and is divided into three parts:

- i. [DCTC Actions](#) – What we can do directly at the MPO to promote safety, reliability, and access to basic needs. For example, changing how we prioritize projects and planning work to better address equity issues.
- ii. [County Actions](#) – What County agencies can do to improve transportation access in terms of best practices and interagency collaboration. For example, continuing to work together on Complete Streets policy implementation and addressing climate resiliency.
- iii. [Local Actions](#) – Questions that local governments should ask themselves regarding transportation access and barriers, and resources to help them achieve best practices and policies. Emily reviewed some examples of the questions and resources available on this page and encouraged attendees to review the webpage and let us know if they have comments or additional questions.

f. [Invest](#)

Emily discussed this final section of the Plan, which is currently underway. It focuses on how transportation funding works, how much is available, and how much we need to maintain a state of good repair and invest in transformative projects. The Invest section is expected to go live towards the end of May. Emily provided some examples of transformative projects and program packages that are under consideration and asked if the group had any comments or additions.

Chris White (C/Beacon) commented that he appreciates the inclusion of the Beacon-Hopewell Rail Trail on the draft list. Nick D’Alessandro expressed appreciation for inclusion of the Route 82 redesign in Hopewell. Steve Strauss (ESPA) inquired about a rail connection from Southeast to Danbury, but it was pointed out that this is a Putnam County sponsored project, to be funded by NYMTC.

5. Project Updates

a. [Poughkeepsie 9.44.55](#)

Mark explained that the Arterials phase of the project is still underway. The consultant team is working on microsimulations of various concepts and upcoming public outreach plans.

b. [Arlington Main Street Redesign](#)

Mark noted that this study has been completed. The final report has been posted to our website and shared with the Town of Poughkeepsie and County Public Works.

c. [Traffic Count program](#)

Mark noted that the count program is underway. Tara added that DCTC will also be conducting bicycle and pedestrian counts, including on new portions of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail and the Maybrook Trail.

d. [Mid-Hudson Valley TMA](#)

Mark provided some updates on recent and upcoming TMA activities:

- i. FTA Section 5307 call for projects – We have received 5 project applications across the three counties (Dutchess, Ulster, Orange). The review process is currently underway.
- ii. Freight Planning – We have begun preliminary work on regional freight planning. Updates to follow.
- iii. Federal Certification Review – This upcoming review of TMA activities by FTA and FHWA is slotted for the end of September.

Mark opened the floor to the group for final comments and questions. Ray Oberly asked about the status of recommendations for Slate Quarry Road, and about the potential for a Hollow Road safety assessment. Mark replied that he could reach out to DPW about Slate Quarry, and that we may consider the Hollow Road project this fall. Ray inquired if a Hollow Road safety assessment would be considered a transformative project. Mark replied that although a project like this could be locally important, we are considering transformational projects on a larger scale for our long-range plan.

Steve Strauss commented that the MPO should be aware of upcoming opportunities for large amounts of transportation funding and suggested that cities and towns prepare plans and projects so they are ready to apply when the time comes.

There were no further comments. Mark closed by reminding attendees to check out our latest Plan content and reach out with any questions or comments.

6. Next Meeting: Wed, May 26, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

4/28/2021 Meeting Participants:

Name	Organization	Address or Email	Phone
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Nicholas D'Alessandro	T/East Fishkill	dalessandron@eastfishkillny.gov	845-221-4303
Colleen Dorney	Dutchess Tourism	colleen@dutchesstourism.com	845-463-5447
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Steve Strauss	Empire State Passengers Association (ESPA)	straussnyc@verizon.net	