

POLICY COMMITTEE DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 23, 2023 – 7:30 p.m.

406 Princess Anne Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401

www.fampo.gwregion.org

A video recording of the meeting is posted on the Policy Committee web page:

<https://www.fampo.gwregion.org/policy-committee/>

Committee Members Present: *(V) indicates voting member*

Mr. Matthew Kelly, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. Timothy Baroody, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Ms. Meg Bohmke, First Vice-Chair, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Monica Gary, Stafford County (V)
Ms. Crystal Vanuch, Stafford County (V)
Mr. Chris Yakabouski, Spotsylvania County (V)
Ms. Lori Hayes, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Jacob Lane, Spotsylvania County (V)
Ms. Marcie Parker, Representative from the Secretary of Transportation (V)
Ms. Michelle Shropshire, alternate Representative from the Secretary of Transportation (V)
Ms. Susan Gardner, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Mr. Stephen Haynes, alternate Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Ms. Jamie Jackson, FREDericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Ms. Laura Sellers, Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)
Mr. Todd Horsley, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

Committee Members Absent:

Mr. Jason Graham, Chair, City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. David Brown, alternate City of Fredericksburg (V)
Mr. Darrell English, alternate Stafford County (V)
Mr. Tom Coen, alternate Stafford County (V)
Dr. Robert Schneider, Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) (V)
Ms. Cathy Binder, alternate King George County
Mr. Kevin Marshall, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Ms. Deborah Frazier, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Tim McLaughlin, alternate Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. David Ross, Spotsylvania County (V)
Mr. Joe Stainsby, alternate PRTC (V)
Mr. Ivan Rucker, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Ms. Tonya Holland, Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Mr. Craig Reed, alternate FREDericksburg Regional Transit (FRED)
Mr. Adam Lynch, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
Mr. Matthew Rowe, Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC)
Mr. Jeffery Sili, Caroline County
Mr. Jeffrey Black, alternate Caroline County

Others Present (remotely or in person):

Mr. Paul Agnello, Spotsylvania County (remote attendance)
Dr. Pamela Yeung, Stafford County
Mr. DJ Stadler, VPRA
Ms. Laura Sellers, CTB
Mr. Alan Mindlin, Celebrate VA
Mr. Joe Bonds, Celebrate VA
Ms. Kim Jacobs, Celebrate VA
Ms. Fran Larkins, Celebrate VA
Mr. Matt Lehane, Stafford County (remote attendance)
Mr. John Clemente (remote attendance)
Mr. Dennis Eshman (remote attendance)
Ms. Rosslyn Reeder, South Stafford
Ms. Patricia Gaulty, Celebrate VA
Ms. Bonnell Sanders, Celebrate VA
Ms. Peggy Matheas, Celebrate VA
Mr. Andrew Gardner, Celebrate VA
Mr. Rupert Farley Fredericksburg, VA
Mr. Jorge Mansillon, FXBGO
Mr. Robert Malkiewicz, Celebrate VA
Ms. Rae Malkiewicz, Celebrate VA
Mr. Gavin Gordon
Mr. Jay Gillis, Stafford
Ms. Pamela Smith Johnson
Mr. Darren Brown
Mr. Joe Brito
Mr. Gary Wingate
Ms. Ellen Wingate
Mr. Matthew Shilts
Mr. John Klepner

Staff Present:

Mr. Ian Ollis, FAMPO Administrator
Ms. Kari Eaves, Transportation Planner II/Bike & Pedestrian Coordinator
Ms. Becky Golden, Transportation Planning Manager
Mr. John Ridout, Transportation Planner II
Mx. Colie Touzel, Public Involvement/Title VI Coordinator
Mr. Connor Anderson, GIS Technician/Transportation Planner

- 1. Call Policy Committee Meeting to Order – First Vice-Chair**
Meg Bohmke called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
First Vice-Chair Meg Bohmke led the pledge of allegiance.
- 3. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum – Mx. Colie Touzel**
Mx. Touzel conducted roll call and determined a quorum present.

4. Approval of the January 23, 2023, Policy Committee Agenda (ACTION ITEM)

Motion was made to approve the January 23, 2023, Policy Committee agenda.

Motion to approve the agenda: Mr. Kelly; Second: Ms. Vanuch

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

5. Public Involvement

- a. *Public Hearing: FAMPO Intraregional East-West Mobility Study, Phase II Road & Bicycle / Pedestrian Report.*

During the public hearing, multiple residents of Celebrate Virginia voiced their concerns about the possibility of a bridge being built to connect with Celebrate VA Parkway. These concerns included increased congestion, noise, air pollution, crime, safety concerns, emergency response times, environmental effects, historical significance, and property value. Many of the residents are elderly and would feel unsafe walking and driving around a community that has an 'expressway' running through it that connects to a bridge. Ms. Graulty in her opening comments mentioned the residents of Celebrate VA had a petition against building a bridge that 260 people signed. Residents urged the committee to consider other locations for a bridge connection further west of their community, i.e. an outer connector. Members of Celebrate VA also asked if future meetings regarding a river crossing be held in more accessible areas and earlier times.

Other residents of Stafford and Spotsylvania who do not reside in Celebrate Virginia voiced their support for the bridge/river crossing. They stated that not only one, but multiple bridges need to be build west of I-95, as congestion is getting increasingly worse in the region. Mr. Brito mentioned an inner connector plan and the support it has from other Stafford residents.

Mr. Rupert Farley spoke about how congestion is being solved incorrectly if more roads and bridges are being built, and that congestion pricing, along with improved transit options, are the only ways to truly alleviate oncoming congestion issues.

- b. *Regular Public Comment: Comments and questions from members of the public are welcome at this time. Staff will also read comments submitted by the public prior to the meeting.*

There were no regular public comments.

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of November 28, 2022, Policy Committee Meeting Minutes (ACTION ITEM)
- b. Resolution 23-13 Approving a Modification to the FY21-24 Transportation Improvement Program Adjusting GARVEE Debt Service Funding for UPC 111980 #HB2.FY17 I-95 Rappahannock River Crossing Southbound (ACTION ITEM)

Motion to approve the consent agenda: Mr. Kelly; Second: Ms. Vanuch

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

7. **FAMPO Administrator Report** – Mr. Ian Ollis

Mr. Ollis stated that some committee members' assignments have changed since the new year, and he welcomed new PC voting members Lori Hayes and Jacob Lane from Spotsylvania and noted that Tim McLaughlin and David Ross are now alternates. He also welcomed Melody Fowler from FXBGO, a non-voting alternate.

Mr. Ollis told the committee that SMART SCALE went well and FAMPO plus other jurisdictions in the area were awarded substantial amounts in federal grants. He thanked Ms. Eaves for putting together the applications along with former FAMPO staff and VDOT engineers who were also involved with the work on the applications.

Mr. Ollis spoke on the TAP/TA transportation alternatives application. He covered specifics about federal funding within the program, the time cycle, and how Stafford receives some extra funding due to its Transportation Management Area (North Stafford).

He provided an update on STBG/CMAQ scoring and mentioned some problems in scoring methodology. Mr. Ollis allowed applicants a week to modify and correct applications to avoid having projects screened out. This solved the problems and Mr. Ollis asked for pardon from the PC for allowing the extra time.

Mr. Ollis met with VDOT engineers about the possibility of adding a shared use path onto the US 1 Falmouth Bridge during renovation. There is not sufficient width on the steel substructure to accommodate a bike path. VDOT has not found a way yet to construct this. An alternative with a separate multi-use bridge was proposed but is not currently funded.

Mr. Ollis notified the committee of the VA Senate Bill 1137 to create a Regional Transportation Authority which would provide additional funds for larger transportation projects.

Mr. Ollis noted that the US Census Bureau released the new urban areas for the region. Mr. Ollis displayed where growth was seen and the major differences in the geographical boundaries.

8. **Action/Discussion Items**

- a. Virginia Passenger Rail Authority Introduction and Short- and Long-term Future for the FAMPO Region – Mr. D J Stadler

Mr. Stadler gave a presentation on transforming rail in Virginia and the role that VPRA, the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, plays in that. VPRA was created in 2020 by the general assembly to own rail assets, maintain rail facilities, and eminent domain powers in VA. A big focus is to create more infrastructure on the railways. VPRA is working with Amtrak and railway owners to purchase the rights to rail tracks. VPRA will be/is responsible for funding, administration, planning, programming, and policy. Mr. Stadler went over the CSX agreement for transforming rail in VA, the Phase 1&2 improvements, infrastructure improvements, and the doubling of Amtrak service and 75% increase of VRE commuter rail service. He reviewed the Fredericksburg station improvements and the long-term FXBG plans.

Mr. Stadler answered questions from Ms. Gary, Ms. Bohmke, and Mr. Yakabouski regarding where the new tracks will be built, who this will serve in the region aside from commuters, and if VPRA is addressing Wi-Fi issues on the train. In regard to the new tracks, the railway will shift across lines near Franconia so that rails will be built further from residential property. For the non-commuter, VPRA is implementing weekend and late night trains going southbound so that residents in the FAMPO region will have more options if traveling to Washington or Richmond. For the Wi-Fi issues, Mr. Stadler said VPRA is keenly aware of the issue, with problems arising if a train is busy or with certain

cell coverage dark spots along the route, but they are working with cell providers to find solutions like building new towers to improve connection issues.

b. CMAQ/STBG Call for Projects Brief Update – Mr. John Ridout

Mr. Ridout noted that the initial draft scoring and ranking was presented to the TAC and that issues with the scoring methodology have been noted and will be addressed. Results will be finalized in February for March publication. The next steps in the coming months are to validate the results/release full scoring results, receive the budget from VDOT, then begin draft allocation and identify eligibility of existing SYIP projects. The annual schedule was covered. Mr. Ridout reviewed the existing project funding criteria and cost increases.

c. Intraregional Multimodal East-West Mobility Study Roadway Report

1. Phase II - Road & Bicycle / Pedestrian Brief Update of Survey and Public Comments Received - Mr. Ian Ollis and Mx. Colie Touzel

Mx. Touzel and Mr. Ollis reported on the results of the survey for the East-West Mobility Study Roadway report. At the time of the meeting, there were 1,046 responses to the survey. The survey will close on Sunday, January 29. The three roadways' respondents felt most needed to be upgraded/widened were Warrenton Road (US-17), Plank Road (US-3), and Garrisonville Road, all west of I-95. 76% of respondents supported the development of a new river crossing bridge west of I-95 between Central Park and southern Stafford. 41% of respondents did not think the region should invest in the development of a new I-95 interchange, while over 50% wanted either one at Gordon Shelton, Harrison Rd, or both. A majority of respondents supported a pedestrian and bicycle path that connects Fall Hill Ave/Central Park to the Spotsylvania Town Center, as well as a pedestrian and bicycle path on Kings Highway and Chatham Heights Road. Ms. Vanuch requested that for future surveys both zip code and email be required fields. One talking point was the issue of respondents being able to take the survey multiple times. Mr. Ollis stated that in this case staff could filter out responses that had multiple of the same email address to make the data cleaner. There was also a short discussion about who the survey is reaching, and how to reach out more to minorities and other under-represented communities.

d. New River Crossing Research Update – Mr. Ian Ollis

Mr. Ollis provided a short presentation on the River Crossing Research. He stated it is not an engineering and environmental study, but instead, the study is investigating feasibility. He mentioned the staff working group has met twice. Mr. Ollis then presented the analysis of traffic flow and explained how Streetlight Index works -- the data/software used for this analysis which represents a relative volume of trip activity but is not an estimated count of trips or vehicles. Mr. Ollis showed two maps displaying north and south bound trips across the Rappahannock River ending in FAMPO and neighboring jurisdictions. The top destinations for these trips were split up by block groups, and the top 10 groups for each map were highlighted. Mr. Ollis stated that he thinks the intraregional traffic numbers will go up due to the increased amount of people working from home and, therefore, having more flexibility to travel close-to-home during the workweek compared to if they commuted outside our region for work. He then reviewed the next steps (research, planning, funding, etc.) and stated that this process is still in the extremely early stages of research.

e. SMART SCALE Round 5 CTB Score Review – Ms. Kari Eaves

Ms. Eaves provided a quick review of the latest CTB meeting, where CTB staff recommended funding scenarios for SMART SCALE Round 5. The evaluation factors and weighting, as well as the funding distribution for Round 5 were presented. FAMPO and GWRC had 5 recommended projects, with the region having over \$100 million in grants awarded. Ms. Eaves stated this has been our best outcome so far throughout the SMART SCALE rounds. The next steps of the process were covered.

f. Resolution 23-15 Endorsing the FY24-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project List for Air Quality Conformity Analysis (AQCA) (ACTION ITEM)

Motion to endorse the FY24-27 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Project List for Air Quality Conformity Analysis: Ms. Vanuch; Second: Mr. Hayes

Motion passed with unanimous consent.

g. Previous I-95 Corridor Study Overview Presentation – Mr. Ian Ollis

This item was requested specifically by Mr. Ross, because it was an old study done in 2018 that new members of the committee may have not seen and is relevant to the new on/off ramps being built/in consideration for being built on I-95. The report covered information about corridor conditions, interchange project readiness, interchange concepts, and locations of potential projects. No build vs build traffic projections were shown for the impact of a new Exit 131 interchange and Harrison Rd interchange. Preliminary cost estimates were also included in the report and Mr. Ollis mentioned that now the cost estimates would be more accurate if doubled.

9. Correspondence

There were no formal letters written to FAMPO that required immediate action.

10. Staff and Agency Reports

Mr. Ollis introduced new staff member, Mr. Anderson, to the Policy Committee.

11. Board Member and Chair Comments

Ms. Gary said thank you to everyone who came to speak at the public hearing/committee meeting.

Ms. Vanuch and Mr. Ollis also thanked members of the public for coming to speak and encouraged more participation and discussion regarding the river crossing study.

12. Adjourn/Next Policy Committee Meeting: February 27, 2023, at 7:30 p.m.

First Vice-Chair Bohmke adjourned the meeting at 9:50pm.