

Chester County
GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION TASK FORCE
Land Use & Transportation Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2008
4:00PM – 6:00 PM

Location: Government Services Center, Room 270, 601 Westtown Road, West Chester, PA
To participate please call the Chester Planning Commission office at 610.344.6285

Attended: Heath Eddy; Art Zadrozny; Patricia Horrocks; Doug MacBeth; Julia McGovern Lacy; John Murphy; David Ward. Also in attendance: Mark Cassel of TMACC and Shayne Trimbell of GVFTMA.

MEETING #3
AGENDA

- **Introduction of New Members**

All participants introduced themselves, their organization they represented and their interest in serving on the sub-committee. The two Transportation management Associations were introduced and invited to participate in future sub-committee meetings.

- **Revisit Goal Statements**

Each goal as drafted at the February meeting will be the subject of discussion at successive meetings. This meeting's focus was on transit and potential options.

- **Status of Task Force Efforts**

The subcommittee time table was discussed, every subcommittee having met at least 2 times.

- **Preliminary Information**

Background materials were distributed including a listing of draft public transportation policies, and a table of action recommendations prepared by CCPC Transportation staff detailing a series of potential transit supportive actions that can be taken by the County and municipalities.

- **Actions to Implement Transit Goal**

The bulk of the meeting focused on preliminary actions prepared by CCPC Transportation staff and distributed to the subcommittee at the meeting. Comments were provided around a series of topics related to transit, including:

Carpools/vanpools – seen as an initial step to promote group transportation over single-occupant vehicles (SOVs), with the formal or informal use of gathering places such as local shopping centers.

Park and Ride Lots – Tied to either bus transit or to carpooling, these are also limited in capital expense, and should be incorporated at the municipal level into the Land Development process. A combination of local action and legislative support (to minimize landowner liability) would promote this opportunity. LEED credits are also available for the

promotion of carpools, vanpools, and hybrids. Potential locations for lots include commercial sites, churches (i.e. DART), and local municipal parks.

Rail Transit – a series of preferences were stated by the subcommittee, including:

- Maintain the Octoraro rail line for rail service, and tie to local zoning to promote transit oriented development to create incentive for reuse of line*
- R-5 line expansion to Coatesville, Parkesburg and Atglen*
- Schuylkill Valley Metro service*
- R-6 extension should be supported*
- R-3 extension to West Chester should be supported*
- Malvern to Phoenixville service should be explored, as well as rail transit from Chadds Ford to Wilmington*
- The County should identify transit corridors and work with municipalities to secure such for rail service via temporary trails, to avoid complete conversion in the LD process*

Density – the County’s residents and municipalities will need to accept higher densities for transit to work; given the timeframe, the County should promote transitions (from carpooling up to rail). Factors in the promotion of transit should include the amount of time for a trip, vs. cost of personal transport and the volume of traffic on major thoroughfares.

Education/Marketing – SEPTA is preparing a marketing program for Chester County, but this needs to be promoted by the County. Alternatives to driving should be presented as well, including Krapf bus services, cab/taxis, Zipcar/Philly carshare, in coordination with other groups promoting such options (such as CCEDC).

Train Stations – there needs to be a program to attract users who want to use it. There also needs to be local acceptance and promotion of transit oriented development to improve walkability, and to incorporate shuttles to and from transit stations to reduce parking generation at the station. County should promote Location Efficient Mortgages as a financial incentive to get residents closer to transit stations.

Land Use Patterns – related to Density and LEM promotion, land use patterns must match transit to pay for it and make it viable. Municipalities need to more aggressively push for more efficient development that builds in transit orientation, including changes to local design standards to promote greenways, add walkable networks of streets/sidewalks, and incorporate crossings to connect buildings to streets.

Funding – Chester County needs to increase its funding match for transit; right now funding is just the pass throughs from USDOT/PennDOT/DVRPC. County can’t expect more or better transit service without financial commitment to local transit organizations, including SEPTA and the TMAs.

Schools – many schools in the County are not located where there are safe walkable routes to get to school from residential areas. Municipalities, school districts, and parents need to identify routes and pathways that would be able to be constructed to promote walking to school, and use the funding available under the Safe Routes to School Program. Relatedly, parking at high schools needs to be reorganized so that permits are expensive or limited, and

reduce the number of vehicles, as well as create “walking school bus” zones around schools within which driving is not available, or to charge a fee for drivers to capture the carbon cost of each bus and car used to get to school.

Parking – related to County employees, the County should promote carpooling with financial incentives or disincentives to promote reduced driving, or incorporate a separate bus service to link County facilities. For non-County facilities, the objective should be to decouple the price of parking from the price of a house or a commercial product, to get local communities out of the provision of “free” parking.

Buses – consider allowing buses to use shoulders on major highways during peak periods to reduce route times and to increase opportunity for ridership. On turnpikes or other major highways, promote the use of dynamic toll pricing based on the time of day and length of trip.

Municipal support – LEED-ND includes promotion for shelters and sidewalks as well as promotion of transit. These should be incorporated in municipal zoning/land development regulations, or funded via contributions from land development reviews or through municipal general funds. Municipalities should also promote transit via newsletters and municipal websites.

HOV – this method of promoting carpooling likely wouldn’t work in Chester County due to limited rights-of-way and cost prohibitive needs for little additional value.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 22nd at 4:00 PM.