

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WILMAPCO Hybrid-format Meeting, April 13, 2026

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth Espinal.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce representative and PAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: 13

Robin Bullock, Holloway Terrace
Tracy Chamblee, Southern New Castle County Alliance
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Patricia Folk, Cecil County
Richard Janney, Southern New Castle County
Mike Kaszyski, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and PAC Chair
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Peggy Schultz, League of Women Voters of Delaware
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance
Joshua Solge, City of Newark
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance

Members Absent: 3

Mark Blake, Greater Hockessin Area Development
Sarah Lester, Cornerstone West
Vic Singer, New Castle County Civic League

Staff Members: 6

Leonard Bonarek, Senior Planner
Elizabeth Espinal, Administrative Assistant
Dawn Stant, Outreach Coordinator
Colleen Stroud, Transportation Planner
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Jake Thompson, Senior Planner

Guests: 0

2. Approval of the October 20, 2025, Meeting Minutes

ACTION: On Action by Mr. Bill Dunn and seconded by Mr. Glenn Pusey, the meeting minutes were approved by the PAC.

Approval of the December 15, 2025, Meeting Minutes

ACTION: On Action by Mr. Bill Dunn and seconded by Mr. David Tancredi, the meeting minutes were approved by the PAC.

Approval of the February 9, 2026, Meeting Minutes

ACTION: On Action by Mr. Bill Dunn and seconded by Mr. David Tancredi, the meeting minutes were approved by the PAC.

3. Public Comment Period:

Ms. Peggy Schultz raised concerns regarding the lack of bike racks near the building entrance. Ms. Espinal responded that several bike racks are located around the building, including one near the entrance between the ambulance bay and the front doors. Ms. Schultz suggested that, given WILMAPCO's shared office space in the building, an additional bike rack should be installed directly in front of the entrance to improve accessibility. Mr. Josh Solge clarified that the city of Newark does not have jurisdiction on University of Delaware property.

Mr. Bill Dunn commented that transportation and land use planning in Virginia Beach appeared to be more proactive and coordinated than in New Castle County. He stated that infrastructure and roadway capacity were constructed in advance of major residential growth as opposed to New Castle County, where many roads were built decades ago for significantly lower traffic volumes and later became overburdened by continued growth. Mr. Dunn also criticized current development and transportation improvement processes, including the reliance on developer contributions and delayed roadway upgrades.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski agreed that similar transportation challenges exist throughout New Castle County and attributed much of the growth pattern to the extension of sanitary sewer infrastructure and suburban development practices beginning in the 1950s and 1960s. Planned communities in other regions, such as Maryland or Virginia, had more integrated transportation and land use planning. Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) were intended to address these issues through long-term planning, but implementation has been inconsistent.

Ms. Peggy Schultz and Mr. Dunn further discussed the need for stronger coordination between development, infrastructure, and long-range planning to better manage future growth.

Mr. Dave Tancredi commented that transportation planning metrics should focus more on travel time and commuting patterns than solely on level of service. He emphasized the challenges created by north-south commuting patterns associated with residential growth in southern New Castle County and noted the importance of integrated "live-work" communities with multimodal transportation options. He also discussed broader housing affordability concerns, including the relationship between housing demand, infrastructure, and future development pressures.

The discussion concluded with comments regarding the potential impacts of artificial intelligence, data centers, and increasing energy demands on future infrastructure planning.

4. Executive Director's Report:

Ms. Dawn Stant shared the following public outreach information:

- Starting with the March 12th Council meeting, the Council released the draft FY 2027–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for public comment and approved the 2026 Regional Progress Report. The meeting also included presentations on the FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Route 9 Service Plan, and the Delaware Rail Plan.
- Since the February meeting, the Ardens Monitoring Committee held a joint meeting with civic leaders regarding the Harvey Road lane reduction over I-95 concept.
- On February 19th, staff participated in Downes Elementary School's Family Safety Night.

- On March 2nd, the Ardens Monitoring Committee met, and a public workshop was held for the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study.
- On March 10th, staff supported DelDOT's Route 9 Redefined Public Workshop to assist with implementation of the Route 9 Master Plan.
- Workshops for the Regional Sidewalk Gap Analysis were held on March 17th for the Bridge Street area in Elkton; on April 6th for North DuPont Road in Wilmington; and on April 13th for the DuPont Highway corridor in New Castle.
- On March 19th, the Route 9 Monitoring Committee met.
- On March 26th and 27th, staff participated in Downes Elementary School's Safety Stations program.
- On April 17th, TROPO will represent the Air Quality Partnership at the Wilmington Earth Day and Arbor Day event at Cool Springs Park.
- On April 20th, a Transportation Open House Workshop for the TIP is scheduled from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Health Sciences Atrium on the STAR Campus.
- On April 27th, the Southern New Castle County Growth Area Land Use and Transportation Plan Scenarios Workshop is scheduled from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Odessa Fire Hall.
- On April 30th, the East Elkton Paths Plan will host a pop-up youth event at Elkton High School during lunch periods.
- On May 4th, the Ardens Monitoring Committee is scheduled to meet.
- On May 11th, the Kirkwood Highway Land Use and Transportation Plan Monitoring and Implementation Workshop is scheduled from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Cranston Heights Fire Hall.
- On May 13th, the Maryland 272 Monitoring Committee is scheduled to meet.

Lastly, Ms. Stant announced that Mr. John Sisson, Chief Executive Officer of the Delaware Transit Corporation and Chair of the Council, had announced his retirement. His final Council meeting is scheduled for May 7th, and a luncheon in his honor would be held, with PAC members invited to attend.

ACTION ITEMS:

5. Public Outreach Portion of the Draft FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Ms. Dawn Stant presented the FY 2027 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which outlines WILMAPCO's planning activities, responsible agencies, costs, and funding sources for the fiscal year running from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027. She noted that the UPWP serves as the organization's annual budget document and is required for the expenditure of federal planning funds. The document is currently available for public comment through May 1st, and Ms. Stant encouraged PAC members to share the information with their organizations and communities to promote public review and comment.

Ms. Stant stated that staff were seeking PAC approval of the public participation portion of the UPWP prior to consideration by Council in May. She explained that federal and state requirements mandate public involvement in the transportation planning process and emphasized that meaningful public engagement helps ensure transportation decisions are effective, valuable, and implemented in a timely manner.

Ms. Stant summarized the public participation activities included in the UPWP, which encompass public outreach and education efforts, public meetings and workshops, health and safety events, and coordination with civic organizations and partner agencies. She noted that outreach efforts are conducted in ADA-compliant venues and are designed to reach residents where they are located while addressing the needs of underrepresented communities.

She further explained that the budget also supports public information materials, quarterly newsletters, monthly electronic news updates, multimedia presentations, videos, website management, and social media outreach through platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, and Nextdoor. Additional activities include school safety education programs conducted in partnership with DelDOT, Safe Kids Delaware, the Urban Bike Project, and the Newark Bike Project.

ACTION: On Action by Mr. Dave Tancredi and seconded by Mr. Bill Lower, the Public Outreach Portion of the Draft FY2027 UPWP were approved by the PAC.

6. Public Outreach Process for the Draft FY 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Jake Thompson clarified the approval process for the FY 2027–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), noting that the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) was being asked to endorse the public outreach portion of the TIP, followed by review by TAC and final Council consideration on May 7th.

Mr. Thompson explained that the TIP is a federally required document identifying transportation projects anticipated to receive funding over the next four fiscal years and is updated biennially. The draft FY 2027–2030 TIP includes 33 Delaware statewide projects, 45 New Castle County projects, and 15 Cecil County projects. He noted that 79% of funding is allocated to statewide projects, 14% to New Castle County projects, and 7% to Cecil County projects. By mode, the TIP allocates 56% of funding to multimodal projects, 8% to transit, 12% to roadway projects, and 3% to bicycle and pedestrian projects. Mr. Thompson further stated that 54% of funding is dedicated to preserving the existing transportation system, while 24% supports system management improvements and 5% supports system expansion projects.

Mr. Thompson noted that the draft TIP contains no new projects compared to the adopted FY 2025–2028 TIP and that overall FY 2027–2030 funding is approximately \$316 million lower, although Cecil County funding increased by \$40 million. He stated that the TIP was released for public comment in March, with comments accepted through April 30th, and that a public workshop would be held on April 20th at the University of Delaware Health Sciences Atrium.

Mr. Bill Dunn expressed concern regarding the limited public comment received to date and questioned how recommendations from recent corridor studies, including Kirkwood Highway, Concord Pike, Augustine Cut-Off, and Churchman’s Crossing, would be reflected in future TIP funding allocations. Mr. Thompson responded that the TIP is primarily based on DelDOT’s Capital Transportation Program (CTP) and that many of those projects had not yet advanced into the current funding cycle.

Mr. Dave Tancredi and other PAC members discussed the need for improved public outreach and education regarding the TIP process, noting that the broad and regional nature of the TIP can make public engagement more difficult than project-specific planning efforts. Ms. Dawn Stant encouraged PAC members to provide suggestions for expanding outreach during the open public comment period, while Mr. Mike Kaszyski emphasized the importance of expanding engagement through civic and grassroots organizations.

Mr. Tancredi suggested that PAC revisit the TIP periodically following adoption to strengthen future public participation efforts.

ACTION: On Action by Mr. Dave Tancredi and seconded by Mr. Bill Lower, the PAC endorsed the public outreach portion of the FY 2027–2030 TIP, with the abstention of Mr. Bill Dunn and Ms. Peggy Schultz.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

7. Southbridge Truck Bypass Study

Mr. Bill Swiatek presented an update on the Southbridge Truck Bypass Study, which is focused on addressing truck traffic impacts within the Southbridge neighborhood of Wilmington. He explained that truck traffic is the community’s primary transportation concern due to safety issues, property damage, roadway deterioration, and negative health impacts associated with heavy truck volumes traveling through residential streets.

The study, funded through the federal Reconnecting Communities Program with support from DeIDOT and the City of Wilmington, seeks both short- and long-term solutions to reduce truck traffic within Southbridge while improving freight movement efficiency throughout the Wilmington area. The study area extends beyond Southbridge to capture freight movement patterns connected to the Port of Wilmington and surrounding industrial areas.

An Advisory Committee representing community organizations, churches, local businesses, freight operators, government agencies, and civic leaders has been guiding the study. Community liaisons appointed by the Southbridge Civic Association support outreach efforts and serve on the Advisory Committee.

To develop alternatives, staff analyzed more than a year of truck travel pattern data using transportation analytics software. The study also incorporated extensive community engagement and emphasized implementation of both immediate and long-range improvements.

Mr. Swiatek reviewed early action recommendations that are moving toward implementation. These include directional signage to direct trucks toward Terminal Avenue and Christina Avenue rather than through Southbridge, improved signage on US 13, restrictions on illegal truck parking, and other improvements identified in the Southbridge Transportation Action Plan.

He discussed proposed railroad crossing warning systems to reduce truck use of neighborhood streets to avoid rail delays. Both a virtual warning system to notify dispatchers and drivers of train activity and a physical roadside warning system were evaluated. The virtual system is recommended as the initial approach due to its lower cost.

Mr. Swiatek then outlined long-term alternatives, including reconstruction of Christina Avenue, reconstruction of Christina Avenue with a rail overpass, construction of a connector roadway between New Castle Avenue and Christina Avenue, and a New York Avenue connector. Estimated project costs ranged from \$6 million to \$40 million depending on the alternative and scope of improvements.

During discussion, Mr. Bill Dunn asked about anticipated implementation timelines and funding sources for the larger projects. Mr. Swiatek responded that major capital improvements would likely require federal funding and acknowledged concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of transportation funding.

Mr. Dave Tancredi commented on the environmental impacts associated with some alternatives, including potential disturbances to wetlands and contaminated lands. Mr. Janney

asked whether the majority of truck traffic was local or through traffic, and Mr. Swiatek explained that most truck traffic is through traffic associated with freight movement to and from nearby facilities and the port, with a single freight hauler accounting for approximately half of the truck trips through the community.

Ms. Peggy Schultz raised concerns regarding vehicle emissions and public health impacts on residents living near truck routes. Mr. Swiatek acknowledged that air quality concerns were a major factor in securing the federal grant and noted that the study also addresses roadway safety, pedestrian impacts, and quality-of-life concerns. Ms. Schultz also asked whether trucks using alternative fuel technologies were being considered, and Mr. Swiatek clarified that the study focused on truck routing and land use strategies rather than vehicle technologies.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski commented on the longstanding industrial and residential land use conflicts in the area and noted the increasing volume of truck traffic along Route 9 and surrounding corridors. Mr. Swiatek agreed, describing the situation as a legacy land use issue resulting from the close proximity of residential neighborhoods and freight-generating industrial uses. Mr. Swiatek also discussed ongoing coordination with the City of Wilmington regarding land use and zoning considerations aimed at limiting future truck-generating uses adjacent to residential areas.

He concluded by outlining the remaining study schedule, which includes continued community surveys, youth outreach activities, short-term implementation planning, and development of final recommendations. A final public workshop is anticipated later in the year, and residents were encouraged to complete the community survey before the April 27th deadline.

To view the presentation in its entirety, [\[click here\]](#) (18m. 27s.).

8. 2026 Public Participation Plan Update

Ms. Dawn Stant presented a draft update to WILMAPCO's Public Participation Plan. The document is in development prior to formal public review. She thanked Ms. Sarah Lester for participating in a subcommittee meeting and assisting with development of the draft plan.

Ms. Stant explained that the Public Participation Plan serves as the overarching framework for WILMAPCO's public engagement efforts and is updated periodically in response to legislative changes and evolving public involvement practices. The revised plan was written to be more flexible, user-friendly, and accessible to audiences outside the transportation planning field.

The presentation included an overview of WILMAPCO's committees, particularly the role of the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) in reviewing outreach strategies, evaluating public materials, serving as a liaison to community organizations, and advising Council on public engagement efforts.

Ms. Stant reviewed the plan's public participation objectives, which include improving access to information, strengthening partnerships with stakeholders, encouraging broad and early public involvement, and maintaining transparent two-way communication. She also discussed outreach methods such as public workshops, surveys, presentations, newsletters, social media, school outreach, and coordination with partner organizations and community groups.

In addition, Ms. Stant summarized federal public participation requirements and explained how the plan addresses accessibility, language assistance, ADA compliance, and outreach to

traditionally underrepresented communities. She also highlighted updates related to website accessibility standards and digital engagement tools.

The draft plan also outlines public outreach procedures for WILMAPCO's major planning documents, including the Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and Congestion Management Process. Ms. Stant concluded by inviting PAC members to provide comments and suggestions prior to the draft plan being released for a 45-day public comment period later in the month.

To view the presentation in its entirety, [click here](#) (15m. 41s.).

Following the presentation, Ms. Peggy Schultz asked whether the glossary defined the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Ms. Stant referred to the definition of the UPWP in the glossary at which point, Ms. Schultz suggested that the glossary be enhanced to improve clarity regarding management plans. Ms. Stant agreed. Ms. Schultz also asked about the distinction between the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). Ms. Stant explained that the TIP is a federally required document that identifies projects funded over a multi-year period and noted that the update cycle is typically every two years.

Mr. Dave Tancredi recommended strengthening the plan's language regarding equity and outreach by more explicitly describing how low-income and underserved communities are identified using census and socioeconomic data to guide targeted engagement. Ms. Stant responded that staff would review the section to ensure compliance with federal requirements.

Ms. Schultz further suggested incorporating more visuals and ensuring that digital versions include functional hyperlinks. Ms. Stant responded that the plan already includes embedded links in the digital format and stated that additional graphics would be considered.

Ms. Stant concluded by reiterating the Public Participation Plan will be released for a 45-day public comment period, returned to PAC for endorsement in June, forwarded to TAC, and subsequently presented to Council for adoption in July. She encouraged members to review the document and submit any additional comments via email or direct contact.

9. Other Business

10. Adjournment

The PAC adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

Attachments: (0)