

## **PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

WILMAPCO Hybrid-format Meeting, April 14, 2025

Minutes prepared by Elizabeth Espinal.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski, PAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

### **1. ROLL CALL**

#### **Members Present: 8**

Tracy Chamblee, Southern New Castle County Alliance  
Patricia Folk, Cecil County  
Richard Janney, Southern New Castle County  
Mike Kaszyski, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and PAC Chair  
Bill Lower, Committee of 100  
Peggy Schultz, League of Women Voters of Delaware  
Josh Solge, City of Newark  
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance

#### **Absent: 11**

Serene Abiy, University of Delaware  
Mark Blake, Greater Hockessin Area Development  
Robin Bullock, Holloway Terrace  
Cecil County Board of Realtors  
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP  
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County  
Sarah Lester, Cornerstone West  
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council  
Anna Quisel, League of Women Voters of NCC  
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance  
Vic Singer, Civic League for New Castle County

#### **Staff Members: 4**

Elizabeth Espinal, Administrative Assistant  
Dave Gula, Principal Planner  
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner  
Dawn Voss, Outreach Coordinator

#### **Guests: 2**

Robert Bager, MDOT SHA  
Sue Wyndham, Landscape Architect

### **2. Approval of October 21st, and December 16th, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Mike Kaszyski requested a correction to the roll call: Great Hockessin should be Greater Hockessin in both the October and December Meeting Minutes.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Dave Tancredi, and seconded by Mr. Josh Solge, PAC approved the October and December 2024 Meeting Minutes.

**Motion Passed.**

**(04-14-25-01).**

### **3. Public Comment Period:**

None.

### **4. Executive Director's Report:**

Mr. Dave Gula shared the following public outreach information:

- On January 9th, the Council met and approved an amendment to the FY 2025–2028 TIP to include funding for the Cecil County Mid-County Transit Hub project. Staff also participated in a research forum on sea level rise and flooding.
- On February 6th, the Advisory Committee for the Kirkwood Highway Corridor Study convened.
- On February 10th, the first public workshop for the Rocky Run Underpass Feasibility Study was held, with 33 community members in attendance.
- On February 20th, Staff provided pedestrian safety instruction to approximately 40 students at Downes Elementary School during a Healthy Family Night event.
- Staff attended the Brandywine Flood Study public workshop on February 20, followed by a project team meeting on February 21.
- On February 24th, the final workshop for the Kirkwood Highway Corridor Study was conducted, drawing 100 participants.
- On February 26th, Staff met with the Management Committee for the Newport Transportation Plan to provide updates on ongoing projects within the study area.
- On March 3rd, the first public workshop for the Augustine Cut-Off Reconfiguration Study was held, with approximately 60 attendees. An online survey was also launched for broader public input.
- On March 11th, Staff met with newly appointed Cecil County Executive Adam Streight.
- On March 13th, the Council met and reviewed three action items: amendments to the FY 2025–2028 TIP for the I-95/SR-896 and US-40/SR-896 improvements, and approval of the 2025 New Castle County TAP project prioritization. Presentations included updates on the UPWP outline, the Augustine Cut-Off Corridor Multimodal Improvement Study, and the Claymont Area Master Plan.
- Staff were invited to join the Transportation Core Team for Delaware's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan Update, contributing to statewide transportation policy development.
- On March 19th, Staff attended the Wilmington Initiatives meeting and will coordinate with City staff to host a Walkable Community Workshop for Lancaster Avenue and 2nd Street. Staff also participated in the Churchman's Crossing Monitoring Committee winter meeting.
- On March 20th, the Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee convened.
- On March 20th, staff also joined a webinar on public participation hosted by the AMPO Core Product Interest Group.
- On March 25th, a public engagement pop-up event for the Maryland Route 272 Corridor Plan was held at the North East Library.
- On March 26th, Staff met with the new Mayor of Wilmington, John Carney.
- On March 28–April 1st, Staff attended the APA National Planning Conference.
- On April 3rd, Staff participated in the Salem Church Road Workshop.
- On April 9th, Staff presented on the intersection of planning and community development during a session at the Mid-Atlantic Community Development Institute.
- On April 10–11th, a pedestrian safety station was hosted by staff at Downes Elementary School.
- On April 15th, Staff are scheduled to attend the New Jersey TransAction Conference.

- On April 16th, the Concord Pike Master Plan Monitoring Committee will meet and provide an update on the Rocky Run Underpass Feasibility Study.
- On April 17th, Staff will participate in the Wilmington Earth Day event alongside TROPO.
- On April 17th, the Route 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee will also meet.
- On April 21st, the East Elkton Plan Monitoring Committee will convene.
- On April 28th, the Advisory Committee for the Claymont Area Master Plan will meet.
- On April 29th, a public workshop for the Maryland Route 272 Corridor Plan will be hosted.
- Staff continues collaboration with DVRPC on the Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Climate Action Plan for the Philadelphia MSA.
- On May 5th, the Ardens Transportation Plan Monitoring Committee will meet.
- On May 6th, the Rocky Run Technical Committee will convene.
- On May 8th, the Southbridge Truck Bypass Feasibility Study will begin with a Management Committee meeting.
- On May 12th a public workshop for the Churchman's Crossing Plan will be held.
- On May 14th, the Claymont Area Master Plan Workshop is scheduled at the Waterfall.
- On May 15th, the Augustine Cut-Off Advisory Committee will meet again.
- On May 31st, Staff will participate in the Wilmington Open Streets event on New Castle Avenue.
- On June 2nd, the Concord Pike Master Plan public workshop will be held, including an update on the Rocky Run Underpass Feasibility Study.
- On June 10th, the second public workshop for the Augustine Cut-Off Reconfiguration Study will take place.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

##### **5. To approve the Public Outreach Portion of the Draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Plan.**

Ms. Dawn Voss presented the Public Participation component of the FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which serves as WILMAPCO's annual budget and outlines planning activities, associated costs, and funding sources for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. The UPWP is required annually for the expenditure of federal funds and is currently open for public comment at [www.wilmapco.org/upwp](http://www.wilmapco.org/upwp) through April 24, 2025.

The public participation process is designed to ensure inclusive, equitable, and accessible engagement in the transportation planning process. This includes public meetings, workshops, walkable community events, health and safety education, and outreach at public events. All events are ADA-compliant, with accommodation and interpretation services available upon request.

Outreach strategies are tailored to specific communities, with an emphasis on clarity, cultural relevance, relationship-building, and community empowerment. WILMAPCO employs a range of communication methods including newsletters, social media, printed materials, civic presentations, and a regularly updated website that serves as a hub for participation opportunities.

Educational initiatives with schools and coordination with partner agencies, such as the Air Quality Partnership of Delaware which expands engagement and promotes broader public awareness. The organization also supports cycling safety through collaborations with the Urban Bike Project and Newark Bike Project.

Ms. Voss concluded by stating that the complete FY 2026 UPWP will be presented to the Council for adoption at its May meeting. PAC approval is currently sought for the public participation portion.

Ms. Schultz inquired about the availability of an air quality report referenced during the presentation.

Ms. Voss explained that the Air Quality Partnership is a statewide organization focused on public outreach to raise awareness of air quality issues. While the partnership does not produce a formal report, it carries out various public participation activities related to air quality education.

Mr. Swiatek added that while there is a report related to transportation conformity, it is a separate matter from the partnership's outreach efforts. He advised visiting [www.wilmapco.org/aqs](http://www.wilmapco.org/aqs) for more information on the Air Quality Subcommittee's activities.

Mr. Tancredi asked whether there were any concerns about the availability of federal funding under the current administration, referencing earlier comments about federal funding being a prerequisite for certain planning efforts.

Ms. Voss responded that, to her knowledge, there are currently no concerns, but noted that she was not entirely certain about the details of how funding is processed. She offered to follow up with Sharen or Tigist to provide a more definitive answer.

Mr. Gula added that, at present, operations are proceeding as usual and that funding for current initiatives has already been secured. He acknowledged some concerns about the future of certain discretionary programs, such as grants, but clarified that the grant funding for projects like the Southbridge Truck Bypass Feasibility Study had already been secured through DeIDOT and was therefore not at risk.

**ACTION:** On motion by Mr. Dave Tancredi, and seconded by Mr. Josh Solge, PAC approved the Public Outreach Portion of the Draft FY 2026 UPWP.

**Motion Passed.**

**(04-14-25-02).**

## **PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **6. MD Route 272 Corridor Transportation Plan**

Mr. Swiatek provided an update on the Maryland 272 Corridor Plan, which is currently at the midpoint of its planning process. The next public workshop is scheduled for April 29, and PAC members were asked to assist in promoting the event, particularly those within Cecil County.

The study is guided by a diverse steering committee, including local and state agencies, WILMAPCO, law enforcement, schools, advocacy organizations, and community representatives. Public engagement efforts to date have included a workshop with 41 attendees, a survey with 183 responses, and a pop-up event. A second survey and workshop are upcoming. A third and final public workshop is planned for the summer.

Key mobility concerns vary across the corridor:

- Northern Segment (Cecil College to US 40): congestion, heavy truck traffic, and lack of pedestrian/cycling facilities.

- Downtown Northeast: congestion, tourist traffic, and concerns over parallel parking on Main Street.
- Southern Segment: speeding, tourist traffic, unsafe shoulder passing, and pedestrian/cyclist safety.

Draft recommendations include a shared-use path, traffic safety and flow improvements downtown, and speed-reduction strategies in the southern section. Additionally, 26 maintenance issues were identified for immediate attention (e.g., signage, lighting, vegetation clearance, and damaged infrastructure).

The public is encouraged to participate via [wilmapco.org/272](http://wilmapco.org/272), where the survey will be available. Survey participants will be entered into a drawing to win a \$25 gift card.

**To view the presentation in its entirety, [\[click here\]](#) (11m. 55s.).**

Following the presentation, Ms. Peggy Schultz expressed concern regarding the safety of existing bicycle infrastructure, sharing that she had recently been struck by a vehicle while biking in a crosswalk along Route 273. She emphasized the hazards associated with unprotected bike paths, particularly those that intersect with business driveways, and questioned the effectiveness of such paths in ensuring real safety for cyclists.

Mr. Swiatek acknowledged Ms. Schultz's experience and emphasized that the study aims to increase cyclist safety by relocating bike lanes off-road wherever possible. He noted that an existing bike lane north of US 40 on MD 272 is currently on the road, but that the project proposes shifting it off-road for increased separation from vehicular traffic. He added that more promising opportunities involve off-road connections between neighborhoods, removing the need for cyclists to travel along high-traffic corridors, but that is beyond the scope of this current effort.

Mr. Tancredi inquired about congestion in downtown North East during tourist season, specifically asking whether the plan includes reevaluating parallel parking on Main Street to encourage walking and reduce traffic delays. He also mentioned the traffic impacts caused by nearby ship construction, which sometimes diverts traffic and creates bottlenecks.

Mr. Swiatek responded that the plan has not focused heavily on parking, but prior survey data from the town's comprehensive plan suggested that most residents prefer to park within a five-minute walk of their destination. He acknowledged the relevance of parking concerns and noted opportunities for future consideration.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski commented on the broader challenges created by recent and ongoing development in the area, which he said contribute to local traffic congestion and infrastructure strain.

Ms. Pat Folk asked whether the plan includes bike lanes within the town limits of North East and expressed skepticism about fitting such infrastructure on Main Street due to the narrow right-of-way and existing parking. She indicated that while Main Street may be unfeasible, Maudlin Avenue might be a more appropriate location.

Mr. Swiatek confirmed that on-road bike lanes within the Downtown are being considered, but only along Maudlin Avenue. He also noted that the town received a state bike grant to study

improved east to west connections, which may support additional improvements. He also confirmed that Main Street is not currently being proposed for bike lanes due to spatial limitations.

Ms. Folk emphasized the significant traffic generated by weekend tourism, particularly near popular destinations such as Woody's Crab House, and acknowledged the difficulty of balancing traffic flow and safety.

Mr. Josh Solge asked about the possibility of formalizing informal paths; commonly used pedestrian shortcuts known as "goat paths" through proper easements or right-of-way.

Mr. Swiatek replied that while this is not within the immediate scope of the corridor study, it is a valuable recommendation. He expressed interest in incorporating such improvements into future planning efforts, especially as the area becomes more urbanized.

## **7. Augustine Cut Off Multimodal Improvement Study, Phase 2**

Mr. Dave Gula presented an update on the Augustine Cut-Off Multimodal Improvement Study, which began in late fall. He outlined the study's objectives: to address safety, mobility, and community concerns along the corridor through a holistic, multimodal planning approach.

Key highlights include:

- **Project Background & Scope:** Augustine Cut-Off connects Concord Pike in New Castle County and the City of Wilmington. The corridor has seen changes in traffic patterns due to prior modifications and remains heavily traveled with high speeds and multiple intersections, including three signalized ones.
- **Study Goals:** Improve safety and mobility for all users—pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and drivers. The corridor's design contributes to high travel speeds and safety concerns, prompting the need for comprehensive traffic calming, pedestrian and bike facilities, and contextual sensitivity.
- **Public Engagement:** Strong civic and public involvement has shaped the study. A June workshop will present conceptual alternatives; the third public workshop is planned for August.
- **Safety Concerns:** Speeding is a persistent issue, with recorded speeds often 9–10 mph over posted limits. There have been multiple crashes, including pedestrian fatalities. The study emphasizes lowering vehicle speeds and improving roadway design to enhance safety.
- **Previous Work & Planning Context:** The corridor has been part of several regional plans. A Phase 1 feasibility study in 2018 proposed separated bike and pedestrian facilities; the current effort builds on that foundation to evaluate the entire corridor.
- **Design Approach:** The study follows a federally accepted "safe system" framework, evaluating all travel modes equally and using tools like Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) to identify the most appropriate intersection treatments.

- Next Steps: Crash data is being updated, and alternatives are under development. The project team will refine concepts before the next public workshop.

**To view the presentation in its entirety, [\[click here\]](#) (20m. 43s.).**

Mr. Bill Lower provided historical context about the origin of the name Augustine Cut-Off. He explained that after World War II, suburban expansion from Wilmington followed three main corridors: Market Street (leading to Penny Hill and Philadelphia Pike), Washington Street Extension (toward neighborhoods such as Mount Pleasant, Mayfield, and Northwood), and Concord Pike. The name Augustine Cut-Off was developed when a direct connection was created between the Fairfax neighborhood and the City of Wilmington. Previously, travelers had to use indirect routes via Broom Street and 18th Street, which often flooded near Salesianum School. The Augustine Cut-Off served as a more direct route, essentially the right-angle triangle connecting Fairfax and the Concord Pike corridor while bypassing traffic congestion and complex routing.

Mr. Mike Kaszyski inquired about the availability of previous traffic studies. Mr. Dave Gula confirmed that three traffic studies had been gathered and would verify completeness. Mr. Kaszyski noted that he had authored the original road diet plan, reducing the roadway from four lanes to two, and emphasized the fair but concerned input from nearby residents. He cited Rockwood Road, just before the AstraZeneca campus, as a problematic intersection, noting that DeIDOT had identified it as a future capital project.

Mr. Kaszyski also mentioned that the design included a shared-use path but faced issues with stormwater management due to extensive underground infrastructure. Mr. Gula acknowledged this could remain a challenge, though he believes the existing right-of-way-width fragment of the earlier four-lane design should accommodate most of the proposed improvements without invading private property. He also remarked that some residents mistakenly consider the public right-of-way to be part of their front yards, which could create resistance during implementation.

Mr. Gula noted a shift in public opinion since earlier studies. There is now more support for traffic calming measures, including interest in roundabouts at locations such as Alapocas Drive and Edgewood Road. However, some intersections, such as Edgewood, may not be feasible for roundabouts. He emphasized the need to slow traffic before it reaches residential areas.

Mr. Kaszyski added that when the road diet was implemented, DeIDOT still used 12-foot lanes. Current standards allow for 11-foot lanes, which could enhance traffic calming. He recalled earlier evaluations of roundabouts at Augustine & 18th Streets and near Cantera Road.

Mr. Gula explained that DeIDOT has since revised its roundabout design standards, making them slightly smaller and more accommodating, particularly if truck traffic can be rerouted. He believes alternative designs, including roundabouts, can be effective in reducing speeds and improving safety.

Mr. Dave Tancredi asked whether residents had been consulted about speed limits. Mr. Gula replied that a 2021 survey from Phase 1 gathered feedback indicating a strong desire to reduce speeds. Though lowering the speed limit from 35 mph to 25 mph has not been formally proposed, the road should suggest a slower pace. Law enforcement representatives from Troop 1 also advocated for design changes over strict enforcement.

Mr. Tancredi raised concerns about whether such changes would be feasible for a long, high-volume roadway like Augustine Cut-Off, comparing it to Harvey Road. He suggested considering pedestrian safety models like those used in Minnesota. Mr. Gula agreed and advocated for a hybrid approach. While truck access must be preserved, roundabouts naturally slow traffic and reduce conflict points from 32, in a traditional intersection, to 8. They also improve safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

Mr. Kaszyski noted that truck traffic studies had been conducted in partnership with Insight, and another major concern was school bus operations, particularly at the 18th Street intersection. Mr. Gula acknowledged the challenges of that intersection due to topography and limited space but emphasized the importance of maintaining clear pavement markings to alert drivers to bike lanes and crosswalks. Where feasible, the project team aims to relocate bicycles off-road to minimize conflicts.

Mr. Kaszyski mentioned the broader difficulty of pedestrian connectivity, especially around bridge crossings. He suggested a potential road diet for the bridge. Mr. Gula replied that designs are already progressing, and plans include a separate bike track, though the exact configuration is still to be determined.

Ms. Schultz asked whether grade separation was under consideration. Mr. Gula clarified that while intersection control evaluations do examine a range of solutions: from stop signs to grade separation; there is no intention to implement overpasses or underpasses on Augustine Cut-Off due to relatively low traffic volumes.

Ms. Schultz also inquired about the use of backyard space for separated paths. Mr. Gula responded that they believe the existing right-of-way is sufficient, though some homeowners have treated this public land as private, which may require negotiation. A transparent and public planning process will help support DeIDOT if reclaiming this space becomes necessary.

Finally, Mr. Solge asked whether the study team is considering a two-way bike lane on the west side of the road. Mr. Gula replied that such options remain under discussion and will be presented to the public in upcoming workshops for further input.

## **8. Kirkwood Highway Land Use and Transportation Plan**

Mr. Dave Gula presented an overview of the ongoing Kirkwood Highway Corridor Study, a collaborative effort involving WILMAPCO, DeIDOT, New Castle County, and DART, supported by a diverse advisory committee. The study area spans approximately 8 miles, from Route 72 near Newark to the City of Wilmington. The initiative emphasizes extensive public engagement, including targeted outreach to Hispanic and limited-English-proficiency communities through partnerships with organizations such as the Latin American Community Center, Saint Paul's Church, and the Holy Angels Church.

Key concerns identified along the corridor include car-centric design, high traffic speeds, aging infrastructure, limited walkability and bikeability, and a lack of public open spaces. Many areas exhibit characteristics of stroads, a hybrid roadway that attempts to serve both through-traffic and local access but does neither well. Although transit service is strong, safe pedestrian and bicycle access remains insufficient, especially between neighborhoods and commercial centers.

A total of five public workshops and multiple advisory meetings were conducted, with over 400 individuals engaged. Community feedback helped shape the study's eight core focus areas: land use and economic development, road and street typologies, major and secondary

intersections, extended roadway connections such as potential Churchman's Crossing link, key surrounding roads, transit infrastructure, and bicycle/pedestrian networks.

Several redevelopment opportunities were noted, particularly at underutilized shopping centers such as Midway Plaza and Prices Corner. Safety concerns were highlighted at key intersections; most notably Kirkwood Highway and Limestone Road, one of the state's most crash-prone and congested locations. Mr. Gula shared that grade-separated solutions and service roads were discussed as potential long-term remedies.

The study categorizes recommendations by time horizon: short-, medium-, and long-term; and cost level, with improvements ranging from small-scale enhancements like improved crosswalks and repaving, to major infrastructure investments. While some projects can proceed with routine maintenance or state coordination, others will require dedicated funding through mechanisms like the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the CTP/TIP.

Public feedback has been largely favorable, with survey responses indicating support for the proposed strategies. The final report will be available for public review and comment, and additional community engagement is planned before the study's conclusion.

**To view the presentation in its entirety, [\[click here\]](#) (19m. 04s.).**

Mr. Solge referenced his previous residence in Austin, Texas, where hybrid pedestrian crossings were successfully implemented in areas where intersections are spaced far apart like segments of Kirkwood Highway. He asked whether similar mid-block pedestrian crossing treatments, such as hybrid beacons, are being considered in Delaware.

Mr. Dave Gula responded that due to the high vehicle speeds on Kirkwood Highway, any mid-block pedestrian crossings would need to use high-visibility systems such as HAWK (High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk) or rapid flashing beacon signals. He noted that while these are not widely used or actively promoted by DelDOT, they do exist in certain areas such as along Route 1 near Rehoboth Beach. Mr. Gula explained that although HAWK signals are effective in theory, some installations, such as one near the University of Delaware farm area on Route 72, have proven problematic due to nearby roadways. These create additional conflicts, such as turning vehicles taking advantage of the stop caused by the signal, reducing pedestrian safety.

Mr. Solge agreed and observed that pedestrians frequently cross Kirkwood Highway in unsafe areas due to the distance between intersections, a behavior that is commonly observed. Mr. Gula acknowledged this and stated that while HAWK signals could be appropriate in some sections, finding suitable locations is challenging due to the number of driveway entrances, which introduce additional vehicular conflicts. He affirmed that the team would continue evaluating such options as the study progresses.

Mr. Kaszyski mentioned the use of flashing beacons and successful pedestrian signals in Newark, such as those near the University of Delaware and shopping centers. He emphasized the effectiveness of consolidating crossings to one well-designed point rather than having multiple unsignalized pedestrian crossings.

Mr. Gula concurred and elaborated that in some areas, such as near Holy Angels Church on Kirkwood Highway, the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, and lighting presents significant barriers to pedestrian safety. Residents often walk from nearby bus stops along unsafe routes. He noted that ongoing outreach helps identify these types of issues, which may not be evident from data

alone. Mr. Gula added that improved monitoring such as installing traffic cameras could support the case for further improvements along this corridor and possibly encourage broader implementation of similar treatments elsewhere.

Mr. Chamblee raised a question regarding business involvement in the planning process, particularly near heavily trafficked areas like Prices Corner. He noted that potential disruption from construction and traffic changes could significantly impact local businesses.

Mr. Gula responded affirmatively, highlighting that input from the business community is valuable and welcomed. He recounted a conversation with a local restaurant owner who expressed strong support for improvements, citing the poor conditions of the corridor and the need for a more walkable, aesthetically pleasing environment. He reiterated that businesses are encouraged to participate in the public engagement process to help shape outcomes that benefit both economic and community development.

## **9. Other Business**

Mr. Richard Janney formally requested that meeting minutes be mailed to him, stating that he does not have regular access to a computer as his wife primarily uses it.

He also reiterated a previous request made approximately one year ago, on behalf of the local Senior Center, for DelDOT to consider establishing a bus route along Cedar Lane Road near Middletown, Delaware. Mr. Janney emphasized that more than 1,000 residents live in the area and would benefit greatly from improved public transportation access.

## **10. Adjournment**

The PAC adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

**Attachments: (0)**