

January 5, 2012

Ms. Brigid Hynes-Cherin
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration Region III
1760 Market Street
Suite 500
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Mr. Ernest Blais
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration New Jersey Division
840 Bear Tavern Road #310
West Trenton, New Jersey 08628-1019

Ms. Renee Sigel
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration Pennsylvania Division
228 Walnut Street - Room 558
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101-1720

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin, Mr. Blais, and Ms. Sigel:

In response to your letter of December 19, 2011, I am writing to assure our federal planning partners that DVRPC is meeting public participation mandates required by 23 USC 134, 49 USC 5303, and 23 CFR 450.316. The overarching theme of these federal mandates is that MPOs must provide adequate and timely information regarding regional planning and transportation issues, as well as reasonable opportunity for the public to comment on its activities. These basic tenets of public participation are enacted by DVRPC in a variety of ways:

- Online Commenting Feature for Board Action Items (includes digital files of all related material to Board Action Items, including all TIP amendments). All materials are posted on our website 10 days before the Board meeting. Any comments received are responded to directly and all comments are transmitted directly to the Board members at each meeting.
- Public comments at each Board meeting for any Action or non-Action item, including any TIP amendments. Members of the public may attend and comment on any action before the Board at that meeting, or may present comments on non-agenda items.
- Public participation and commenting at other DVRPC technical committee meetings, including the Regional Transportation Committee.

- Regional Listening Sessions, held four to five times a year during the evening in various county locations. These sessions provide an opportunity for DVRPC staff to present current work, and for members of the public to provide feedback and comments.
- Environmental Justice Work Group, meets quarterly. Next meeting in February 2012, and will be responsible for reviewing any EJ issues with staff.
- Regional Student Forum, composed of undergraduate and graduate planning students from around the DVRPC region; meets 4 times a year.
- Public meetings and other outreach for DVRPC Work Program projects, as needed.
- 2040 Long-Range Plan stakeholder outreach. First stakeholder meeting held in December 2011. Broader public meetings will begin in Spring 2012 and continue through adoption of the Plan.
- Extensive public information on www.dvrpc.org.
- Monthly newsletters and other announcements via our website, emails and Twitter. Our email distribution list for newsletters and other items is now over 7,000 individuals within the region.
- Public and legal notices, as appropriate.
- Public comment periods, including the current public comment period for adoption of our FY2013 Unified Planning Work Program. The draft Work Program is available on our website, and hard copies have been distributed to over 30 public libraries across the region. All public comments received are shared with Board members prior to adoption of the Work Program.

As you know, federal public participation mandates do not require MPO's to have citizen advisory committees. The DVRPC Regional Citizens Committee (RCC) was created many years ago when the Internet was not available to provide information, and email was not in use as a way to receive public comments. In recent years, the RCC became just one part of the Commission's extensive public participation activities. As part of the Commission's ongoing evaluation of these activities (noted in our current Public Participation Plan), it was determined that the Regional Citizens Committee was not offering the diverse voices required for viable public participation, and did not reflect the region as a whole in its composition. This was noted by your agency representatives in DVRPC's federal certification review. While DVRPC develops the Public Participation Task Force, which will replace the Regional Citizens Committee, and updates its Public Participation Plan, the Commission will maintain its public participation activities as listed above, and will continue to strive to reach all residents of the Greater Philadelphia region.

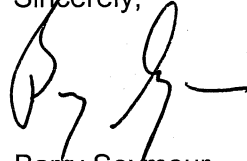
DVRPC has coordinated our efforts with your staffs as decisions have been made throughout the past four months and we have been assured that our decisions have been sound.

Currently, staff plans to ask the DVRPC Board to approve a 45-day public comment period for an updated Public Participation Plan at its January 26, 2012 meeting, with an adopted Public Participation Plan approved by the Board on March 22. We also anticipate the Public Participation Task Force to start meeting by June.

In addition, the DVRPC Board will be asked at its January 26, 2012 meeting to revise the Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) between DVRPC and Pennsylvania (via PennDOT and SEPTA) and New Jersey (via NJDOT and NJTransit) to reflect current public participation practice for the review of minor TIP amendments. These MOUs will then need to be further revised in July 2012 as part of the adoption process for both the Pennsylvania TIP and the New Jersey TIP.

DVRPC remains fully committed to providing broad opportunities for public engagement with our planning process, while meeting and exceeding all federal regulations and guidance. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 215-238-2831 or bseymour@dvrpc.org with any additional questions. If you have any additional guidance regarding these matters, DVRPC welcomes your involvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Seymour', with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Barry Seymour
Executive Director