

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Transportation Commission**  
**April 9, 2019**

The State College Borough Transportation Commission (TC) met on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, in Room 304 of the Municipal Building. Chairman Raymond Najjar called the meeting to order at 12:16 p.m.

**TC Members Present**

Raymond Najjar, Chair; Richard Garis, Vice-Chair; Rick Gilmore; Diana Malcolm; Hugh Mose; and Mieke Haeck

**Others Present**

Deborah Hoag, Director of Public Works; Jasmine Fields, AmeriCorps Member; Alan Sam, Arborist & Environmental Coordinator; Lt. Barrett Smith, State College Police; P. Rick Ward, Director of Parking; Trish Meek, MPO, CRPA; Jackie Sheader, CATA Public Relations Manager; Albert Carlson, PennDOT; Robert DeMayo, Pennsylvania State University (PSU) Transportation; Cory Chapman, PSU; and Stacy Hall, Administrative Assistant

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Najjar asked if there were any corrections to the March 12, 2019 minutes. Mr. Garis motioned to approve the March 12, 2019 amended minutes. Mr. Jovanis seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

**Public Hour**

Mr. Mark Huncik, who resides at 505 East McCormick Avenue and the president of the Highlands Civic Association, stated he thought the TC should request a presentation by the University's traffic consultant on the West Campus Parking Deck Traffic Impact Study (TIS) which had already been presented to Council. He added that he would be a part of the Neighborhood Coalition review taking place on April 12.

Mr. Gilmore made a motion to invite the appropriate representatives from PSU to give a presentation on the West Campus TIS. Mr. Jovanis seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

The second issue Mr. Huncik brought up was the increasing ride sharing issues that were coming up within the neighborhoods involving cars idling and parking on the streets as well as in the bike lanes waiting for their next assignment or pick up which caused narrowing of the streets for extended periods of time. He suggested that signage be placed regarding no standing or idling so that the Borough could enforce such actions. He said that with no level of repercussion, the behavior would continue.

Mr. David Stone, who resides at 539 East Foster Avenue, commented that with increased pedestrian traffic there would be more accidents so pedestrian and student safety needed to be a top priority.

Lt. Smith said the Police Department was working with the Parking Department to possibly update the current ordinance including updating the current signage. Mr. Gilmore inquired if there were places where there was a problem, and if there were, were there places that would be a safer alternative for ride sharing drop offs and pickups? Lt. Smith said a proposal was being requested for a comprehensive downtown parking study that included the possibility of ride share drop off and pick up spaces.

Mr. Huncik added that some of the ride share drivers were not even from State College, especially on event weekends, and that made signage even more important.

## **Discussion Items**

### Borough Parking Supply and Demand Study

Ms. Hoag said the Borough of State College was preparing an updated version of the comprehensive downtown parking study that was completed in June 2015. She said the project background and goals were listed in the agenda for TC members to review. She said the TC would have a chance for input as part of the study to comment on both the current supply and demand of parking in the study area as well as on operational practices.

Mr. Ward said he was going to review the project goals and stated when the study was completed staff was looking at the eventual replacement of the Pugh Street Garage because it was at the end of its useful life. He said several conditions had changed since then and its life had been extended 15 to 20 years. He added since 2015 there had been a lot of development with approximately 3,000 beds added to the downtown area. He reviewed the project goals including evaluation of the current parking conditions, supply and demand for public and private parking, assessing current operational practices of parking programs and identifying potential improvements and estimation of future parking demands based on known and projected future development. He added that recommendations could be provided for updating zoning regulations and the need for future parking facilities.

Mr. Jovanis asked if the study would only focus on the downtown or would the neighborhoods be considered? Mr. Ward said it would focus on commuter parking looking for ways to maximize spaces. Mr. Gilmore asked if the study would help answer who, where and why people were parking as that information seemed critical? Mr. Ward said it would be tough to tell who was parking but could definitely tell how long and where. He added that these questions would be answered at a formal meeting with the consultant. Mr. Mose applauded the Parking Department for thinking ahead and asked Mr. Ward to look at the impact of autonomous vehicles and think of mobility as a service instead of everyone owning their own vehicle. Mr. Ward said it would be a 10-year study and those issues would be reflected. He also confirmed the Downtown State

College Improvement District (DSCID) would be participating in the survey. Mr. Najjar asked if the Borough was looking into electric charging stations for cars and Mr. Ward said there was grant money available and staff had applied for six charging stations that would be installed at the Beaver Garage. He added there would also be a public hearing with more forthcoming information to both the TC and the Planning Commission.

Mr. Huncik said that if parking was made available, expect it to be filled. He added that people would also find creative ways to park. He added that he had noticed parking lots for the new high rises were not entirely full and wondered if that should be looked at before adding more parking structures. He attended a DSCID meeting recently and one of the main topics was parking. He thought there were opposing forces between the DSCID and the neighborhoods. He then referred to the problem with vehicles idling and mentioned that trucks were idling for lengths of time in the streets as well.

Mr. Stone said he seconded the idea about minimizing the number of cars. He added that another issue with parking in the neighborhoods was people looking for free parking who turn around in driveways. He said with the support of the pilot parking program during football weekends there would be data that would help answer questions.

Mr. Najjar asked if the parking study would look at event parking? Mr. Ward answered that all parking data would be looked at and based on that information, recommendations would be given. Mr. Jovanis commented that it was the best time to begin collecting data with the new parking plan being developed.

#### Penn State University Event Parking

Ms. Hoag said that Cory Chapman, Associate AD, Facility and Event Operations and Rob DeMayo, Director of Transportation Services at PSU would be providing a brief review of the planned changes to traffic and parking operations for the 2019 football season.

Mr. Chapman said that for the daytime games the problem was with inbound traffic trying to service over 20,000 vehicles and over 100,000 fans attempting to get to their tailgate and meet up with family and friends and for the night games the problem was with outbound traffic due to fans staying until the end of the game and then trying to leave at the same time. He said many of the parking lots had one way in and one way out which also led to the frustration. He added that some challenges would go unresolved, but key stakeholders had decided to partner with SP Plus to analyze game day parking and come up with a plan to address the challenges.

Mr. DeMayo provided a detailed presentation of the plan and primary objectives. He informed TC members of the implementation of a 4-zone system with numbered parking lots with the pre-sale of general parking permits for specific lots that would provide specific instructions on each permit. He said current gameday traffic signage would be improved and new signage created and effective communication of the one-way traffic pattern times on game day would be pre-determined. He added there would also be consistent locations for rideshare drop offs and pickups. He reviewed the SP Plus

recommendations in detail and concluded the presentation by revealing the 2019 Beaver Stadium Parking Map that would be distributed to ticket holders.

Mr. Jovanis asked if people could choose their own parking lot? Mr. Chapman answered season ticket holders would be asked if they wanted to renew and then asked which lot they would prefer. He said new season ticket holders would be asked next followed by single game buyers.

Mr. Gilmore asked who the community stakeholders were? Mr. Chapman answered they were internal thus far. Ms. Malcom asked if this was more about tailgating rather than people walking directly to the game. Mr. DeMayo answered that none of the parking decks on campus can be tailgated in, but any of the surface lots can, and the plan does include both. Mr. Gilmore suggested that the TC do a post-season evaluation about how these changes had impacted the Borough neighborhoods. Mr. Jovanis asked if the lots that were further away (where people were being bussed in from) were included in the plan? Mr. Chapman said they would continue to partner with the Grange Park, but the other lots were foul weather lots used last year due to the wet season and those lots would not be used again unless deemed necessary due to foul weather. Mr. Jovanis asked if on-campus parking to the west of Atherton Street was considered? Mr. DeMayo said those were RV spaces and would not affect car spaces until the parking deck comes online which would add an additional 800 spaces upon completion. Mr. Mose asked if there would be any changes that would occur on University Drive going up to where buses, taxis and rideshares turn around in front of the Bryce Jordan Center? Mr. Chapman answered it would continue to be normal operations along with trying to do a better job with communications. Mr. Mose asked where the designated drop off and pickup place for rideshare would be located? Mr. Chapman said off Hastings Road in the South Zone.

Mr. DeMayo said PSU would be partnering with the Borough to assist in alleviating the parking conditions in the Highland's neighborhood.

Mr. Huncik said when the drop off was moved to Hastings Street last year, the cars continued to queue in the neighborhoods because the downtown area was too congested. He expressed his concern that no data was given by PSU on where the cash parkers would go if they could not find a spot in one of the lots designated on the map as those were the people who would end up driving around the neighborhoods looking for parking. He thought most of the users of rideshares were already parking some place in the neighborhoods and there was no data on who those users were and where they park. He said it was also unclear what the demand was for the parking permits and if the permit sales were not maximized, the cash parkers would be parking in the neighborhoods. Mr. DeMayo said the numbers he gave included the cash paying parkers. He said queuing for Uber was provided throughout the parking lots and the University had a partnership with Uber to designate where they go. He added that if there were concerns, they could be discussed at the pre-season meeting with Uber. Mr. Gilmore questioned if Uber could be asked to provide data on where people were coming from into the stadium as that could be useful data? Mr. DeMayo said his experience in getting that type of information had been challenging, but encouraged relationship building with Uber and stated he would be happy to facilitate that. Mr.

Jovanis suggested a summary of discussion points from the meeting be brought back and discussed at the next meeting with a motion and then pass them on to PSU and Intercollegiate Athletics. Mr. Najjar agreed.

### Shared Ride Status

Ms. Hoag said that the TC had expressed an interest in preparing for emerging alternative shared transportation modes that were starting to be seen in larger cities and college towns. Borough staff had been monitoring ordinances being developed in other locations as they face the same issues. She said a draft ordinance from Athens, Ohio, which was attached to the agenda.

Mr. Ward said the idea of the ordinance from Athens, Ohio, was to encourage the use of e-scooters and it contained much of the information the Borough needed to consider when creating a similar ordinance. Mr. Ward stated that e-scooters were still illegal to ride on the street in Pennsylvania, so that would not be a pressing issue at the current time.

Mr. Mose commented that the information provided in the ordinance was interesting; however, Athens, Ohio, only had to think about one municipality and the Borough needed to work with adjacent townships and PSU. He added that if everyone did not adopt the same plan, it would not work. Mr. Gilmore asked if there was pending legislation to make the e-scooters legal in Pennsylvania? Lt. Smith said there were some very early proposals, but nothing that had gone on to a bill. Mr. Mose said he was talking with a legislator from Harrisburg who told him a group was going to Baltimore, MD, to get a look at how it works in that city in anticipation of putting something together for Pennsylvania. Mr. Gilmore asked if e-scooters and electric skateboards were using the same sets of rules as bicycles? Mr. Ward said they were not treated the same as bicycles. Ms. Hoag stated that the information had been provided to the TC for informational purposes to prepare for what could happen.

Mr. Gilmore made a motion that the TC recommend to Council a letter be sent to legislative representatives to make legislation on the above point a priority. All were in favor.

### Upcoming Meeting Date

Mr. Najjar announced the next TC meeting would be on Tuesday, May 14, 2019.

### **Liaison Reports**

MPO/CRPA/COG Transportation – No report given.

Centre Area Transportation Authority – No report given.

Penn State Transportation – Mr. DeMayo spoke about the Blue and White weekend coming up and added it was PSU's second year of a three-year contract with Zagster

for bike share and said they would be looking into possibly exploring other options after the end of the contract period.

PennDOT – Nothing to report.

Borough Planning Commission – Ms. Jasmine Fields reported the Borough received the land development plans for the Arboretum Pollinator Garden, West Campus Parking Structure, Henning Building and the 251 South Pugh Street duplex.

Borough Engineer – Ms. Hoag reported that this year for the resurfacing, based on PennDOT plans for Atherton Street, some additional streets were added that could become detours. She said there would be two separate contracts for resurfacing including the underground utilities because the amount of work was more than the crews could do and then the traditional contract done by Public Works staff for curbs and all utilities that would be out for bid later in the season. Mr. Jovanis asked if the resurfacing would be as far as Park Avenue or stay to the south? Ms. Hoag answered it would be a couple hundred feet below Park Avenue. She added there would be a media event at corner of Atherton and Curtin Streets on April 10, 2019, at 1 p.m. to discuss the current Section 152 and future Section 153. She said PennDOT would be presenting the information to Borough Council soon.

Environmental Coordinator – Mr. Sam said the Borough and surrounding municipalities were always looking for ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. He said a professor from the Meteorology Department at PSU contacted him stating his class was working on measuring CO2 and CH4 methane gasses looking for sources and possible natural gas leaks in the area and would like to share their findings with him. Mr. Sam said he would report back.

Parking Office – Mr. Ward said the Blue and White Game would be the first game with the implementation of the pilot parking program in the Highlands. He said there would be a News Flash posted answering questions during the week. Regarding the bike share discussion, he said there would be a survey on Engage State College to determine if bikeshare was something residents would be interested in. He added that the bike share industry was changing rapidly and the ordinance from Athens, Ohio, should be referenced. He said there would be much to consider when entering a bike share agreement.

State College Police – Nothing to report.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Najjar adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Hall  
Administrative Assistant