

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002-4226
(202) 962-3200

**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
May 21, 2008**

Members and Alternates Present

Andrew Beacher, Loudoun County
Nat Bottigheimer, WMATA
Robert Catlin, City of College Park
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County Council
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Susan Hinton, NPS
Catherine Hudgins, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Sandra Jackson, FHWA
Charles Jenkins, Frederick County
Timothy Lovain, Alexandria City Council
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
David Moss, Montgomery County
Mark Rawlings, DDOT
Rick Rybeck, DDOT
C. Paul Smith, City of Frederick
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
Reuben Snipper, Takoma Park
David Snyder, City of Falls Church
JoAnne Sorenson, VDOT
Kanti Srikanth, VDOT
Harriet Tregoning, DC Office of Planning
Margaret Vanderhye, Virginia House of Delegates
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County
Robert Werth, Private Providers Task Force
Patrice Winter, City of Fairfax
Patrick Wojahn, City of College Park
Chris Zimmerman, Arlington County Board

MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Ron Kirby	
Michael Clifford	
Jerry Miller	
Jim Hogan	
Nick Ramfos	
Debbie Leigh	
Deborah Etheridge	
Andrew Meese	
Andrew Austin	
Beth Newman	
Monica Bansal	
Darren Smith	
Karin Foster	
Erin Morrow	
Michael Eichler	
Dusan Vuksan	
Dave Robertson	COG/EO
Lauren Udvari	COG/OPA
Paul DesJardin	COG/HSPPS
Jeff King	COG/DEP
Bill Orleans	PG ACT
Alex Verzosa	City of Fairfax
Bob Owolabi	Fairfax County DOT
Jim Maslanka	City of Alexandria
Bill Orleans	
Clayton L. Ashby	WMATA
Monica Backmon	PWC DOT
Angelica Betts	Aide, PWC BOCS
Mike Hackett	MWAA
Colleen Mitchell	District Alternate
Lewis C. Miller	MWCOG – Commuter Connections
Steve Still	Supervisor Smyth CLI
Derrick L. Richardson	Community Leadership Institute
Matthew Moskitis	NVTA
Ritch Viola	Arlington County District – DOT
Jack Van Dop	FHWA – EFLHD
Shirley C. Williams	FEMA/DHS
Bob Chase	NVTA
Anthony Foster	PRTC

1. Public Comment on TPB Procedures and Activities

Mr. Chase said the TPB needs to focus on solutions that reflect how people actually live and travel, as opposed to how some would compel them to live and travel. He said two weeks ago legislators from Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads met to determine a course of action for transportation funding. He said Hampton Roads has consensus on seven regional priorities and that no priority consensus exists in Northern Virginia or the National Capital Region because no effort has been made to develop consensus. He said that whether the issue is global warming or transportation funding, planning or prioritization, the focus must be on solutions that offer the greatest chance of success and return on investment, not what makes some people feel good. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

Mr. Zimmerman commented that Northern Virginia has established a strong consensus on a very extensive program that includes not only Metrorail and other forms of transit, but also road improvements and multimodal improvements throughout all of Northern Virginia. He said the Virginia jurisdictions voted to tax and to issue bonds and allocated those funds to specific projects on such a list within the last 12 months. He said funding for the consensus-driven program remains in jeopardy until the Virginia General Assembly meets again on June 23.

Mr. Chase replied that his point was that Hampton Roads has identified seven regional priorities.

2. Approval of the Minutes of the April 16 Meeting

Ms. Smyth made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 16 TPB meeting. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

3. Report of the Technical Committee

Mr. Rawlings said the TPB Technical Committee met on May 2 and reviewed several items on the TPB's agenda:

- Item 9: The committee received a status report on two versions of the draft 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP, with and without the NVTA-funded projects, and related air quality conformity assessment.
- Item 11: Staff updated the committee on the development of two new scenarios developed by the TPB's Scenario Study Task Force.

Mr. Rawlings said the committee also reviewed two informational items: a briefing on a cost-benefit analysis framework which provides a comprehensive approach for assessing transit investments in the Washington region, and a briefing on the draft policy report that summarizes the changes in travel trends and commuting patterns in the Washington region.

4. Report of the Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Martin said the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) met on May 15 and that the normal business meeting was shortened to one hour to accommodate the public forum on the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which was held immediately following the regular meeting.

Mr. Martin said the CAC discussed the committee's priorities for the remainder of 2008, which include providing input to the current phase of the TPB scenario study task force; working with the Regional Bus Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee to determine priorities for improvement and expansion of the regional network of bus service; promoting regional strategies for reducing the energy needs of the transportation sector; encouraging changes to the process of developing the region's CLRP in order to tie the plan more closely to the TPB vision through the use of a regional unconstrained plan; a BRAC transportation review; expansion of intra- and inter-city rail service; and a region-wide complete streets policy to advance and improve multimodal service on new or reconstructed streets. He said the logical way to incorporate these issues is for the CAC to make recommendations for an integrated regional transit plan that identifies the highest transit priorities for the region.

Mr. Martin provided a brief overview of the TPB's Annual Public Forum on the TIP. He said the forum was successful in providing an understanding of how the TIP is created and what information is provided by the departments of transportation (DOTs). He said TPB staff provided financial summaries of the transportation funding for the DOTs and WMATA, and the schedule for approval of the TIP. He said representatives from the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) described how projects are developed, prioritized and funded within their jurisdictions; the process for approving a project for construction; and opportunities for the public to be involved in the project development process.

He said the CAC inquired about how Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) fit into the process of prioritizing DOT projects. He said agency representatives responded that the agencies participate on the TPB and that project submissions for the TIP are required to demonstrate consistency with the TPB Vision. He said he would like to see consensus developed on regional projects through an informed and rigorous TPB debate over competing strategies. He said the CAC recommends that the TPB view the scenario study as a foundation to inform a regional discussion of priorities.

5. Report of the Steering Committee

Mr. Kirby said the Steering Committee met on May 2 and approved an amendment to the FY 2007-2012 TIP, exempt from air quality conformity, to add funding to two projects in Fairfax

County, two in Prince William County, and a project in the Town of Herndon, as requested by VDOT.

Mr. Kirby referred to the letters packet distributed at the meeting, which included a letter from five TPB members to Michael Knapp, chairman of the TPB's Scenario Study Task Force, providing comments on the development of the two scenarios under development. He said a draft letter from the TPB to Charles Badger of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) provides endorsement for a project application by VDRPT to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for federal assistance under the FRAs Capital Assistance Program to construct a 5.9 mile third main line track between Alexandria and Franconia-Springfield. He said the letters packet also contains a letter from Emeka Moneme, DDOT Director, responding to TPB Vice-chair Jenkins' question on procedures for notifying navigation system companies when changes are made to roadway classifications. He said the letter indicates that the companies are very proactive in keeping up on changes; however in this instance, DDOT will reach out to the companies and provide them with the information. He said there is a letter from VDRPT Director Matt Tucker providing \$11,000 in match funding for the Regional Clearinghouse project the TPB has been working on with WMATA.

Mr. Lovain expressed appreciation to the efforts of Ms. Hudgins and Alexandria Mayor Euille in advocating for the \$11,000 in match funding from VDRPT.

Ms. Hudgins thanked VDRPT for its contribution to the Regional Clearinghouse.

Mr. Jenkins said he appreciated the thorough response from DDOT.

Chairman Mendelson said approval of the draft letter to Charles Badger of VDRPT would be treated as a unanimous consent item.

Mr. Rybeck asked if the letter had been vetted by the TPB Technical Committee.

Mr. Kirby said that it had not, as it was received after the Technical Committee met on May 2.

Mr. Rybeck noted that rail impacts are felt regionally. He said that the District of Columbia received a grant from the U.S Department of Homeland Security to study rail freight in the region, specifically looking at rerouting rail freight outside of the District. He said he is unclear as to how the VDRPT proposal fits into a proposal that that was put forward by CSX for a national gateway project. He said he would like to refer this item to the Technical Committee for in-depth analysis before the TPB responds.

Chairman Mendelson said that if there is no objection, the letter will be referred to the Technical Committee.

Mr. Zimmerman asked what the relevant timeframe is for the letter.

Mr. Kirby said he did not believe the request from VDRPT had a deadline.

Ms. Sorenson said the request is for a grant application, which has been submitted and is pending on receipt of a letter from the TPB.

Mr. Zimmerman noted the nature of the request for a grant application and would not like to see VDRPT lose potential funding due to a delay. He echoed Mr. Rybeck's concerns for thorough review, but said that the application addresses a bottleneck in the service that requires attention.

Chairman Mendelson asked if the rail line in question serves commuter passenger rail.

Mr. Kirby said the track would serve both freight and commuter rail and would provide the potential for more capacity.

Chairman Mendelson asked if Mr. Rybeck would entertain an amendment to the last sentence of the letter to read, "The TPB is pleased to endorse this VDRPT project for consideration by the FRA."

Mr. Kirby said that inclusion in the TIP is required for the application.

Ms. Winter asked if the TPB could proceed with the draft letter, noting the need for expanded commuter options. She said the loss of the grant money would be unwise.

Mr. Rybeck said that if other members are not concerned about the regional impacts of the proposed improvement, he would not hold it up.

Ms. Hudgins suggested that the TPB ask that the grant application move forward subject to clarifying the regional implication of the study.

Chairman Mendelson noted that endorsing the grant also means including the study in the TIP, which can be difficult to undo.

Mr. Zimmerman suggested putting off the decision on the letter until later in the agenda and asking staff to obtain more information on the deadline for the grant application. He said he agrees with Mr. Rybeck about the importance of the larger regional project.

Mr. Rybeck seconded Mr. Zimmerman's suggestion to move decision on the draft letter to the end of the TPB agenda.

Chairman Mendelson asked if it would be possible to find this information during the remainder of the TPB meeting.

Mr. Kirby said it would be possible to contact VDRPT and obtain the pertinent information.

Chairman Mendelson asked if VDRPT could also provide information on the interplay with rerouting freight outside the District.

Mr. Rybeck said that if freight continues to move along this route, the additional track would be a huge benefit. He added that if freight is rerouted, the capacity may soon be redundant.

Ms. Sorenson said she had just received information from her colleague that the grant application deadline has passed and that VDRPT has already submitted the application. She said VDRPT was soliciting support from the TPB for the application. She said the project would not be included in the TIP until the study is complete. She suggested the TPB endorse the letter and gather additional details over the coming months.

Mr. Kirby said the last sentence of the letter would be changed to say that the TPB would consider the project for inclusion in a future TIP.

Chairman Mendelson asked if it would be included in the 2009 TIP.

Ms. Sorenson said it would likely be up for the FY 2010-2015 TIP.

Mr. Kirby said the project could be included in the next TIP approved, the FY 2009-2014 TIP.

Chairman Mendelson said the last sentence would be amended to read, "The TPB . . . anticipates the inclusion of this project in the FY 2009-2014 TIP."

Mr. Rybeck said he is uncomfortable with the last-minute nature of the decision.

Chairman Mendelson acknowledged Mr. Rybeck's concerns. The action passed by unanimous consent.

6. Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Mendelson welcomed alternate member Andrew Beacher from Loudoun County.

Chairman Mendelson said that he spoke to participants of the TPB's Community Leadership Institute (CLI) in April, and asked staff to explain the April CLI session.

Mr. Swanson said the CLI was conducted on April 17 and 19, and is a two-day workshop designed to provide community leaders an opportunity to discuss and learn about regional transportation issues. He said participants are nominated by their elected officials, and thanked the TPB members for providing an engaging group of participants for the session. He said

several participants were in attendance at the TPB meeting and would like to say a few words to the TPB.

Mr. Wojahn, an alternate on the TPB from College Park, said he participated in the CLI as a newly elected official to learn more about the transportation planning process and meet other community leaders from around the region. He said participants engaged in interesting and exciting skills-building exercises, allowing them to explore realistic transportation problems and benefit from consensus-building activities. He said it was a very informative workshop and thanked TPB staff for organizing the event.

Mr. Still thanked Ms. Smyth for nominating him to participate in the CLI. He said the CLI gave the participants a great appreciation for the consensus-building struggles that elected officials face on a daily basis. He said the scenario planning activity was a good way to focus on thinking globally and looking at regional solutions. He said high fuel prices require alternatives to driving now more than ever before, and that the work of the TPB is important in creating these alternatives.

Mr. Richardson, nominated by Mr. Knapp, said the CLI reinforced the value of the regional planning process, and emphasized the difficulty the TPB faces in terms of making decisions about what is best for the region. He said many people are unaware of the work that TPB members do and that he looks forward to continuing to be engaged in the regional process.

Mr. Swanson said the CLI was facilitated by Peter Shapiro, former TPB Chair and representative from Prince George's County, and Kathy Porter, former TPB Chair and representative from Takoma Park.

Ms. Porter said the CLI participants were a very engaged group of people who will carry the information they learned back to their communities. She said the CLI is an effort that the TPB should not only continue to do, but should conduct more often. She said the CLI is not only a very effective part of the TPB's outreach efforts, but creates a lot of goodwill for the TPB. She said the CLI goes a long way toward creating the kind of educated leaders that will be ready to face the challenges as transportation funding gets more constrained. She said the participants understand the needs, challenges, and costs, and will help provide the information to the greater community. She said she really enjoyed being involved in the CLI and was glad to work with all the participants.

Chairman Mendelson thanked Ms. Porter and the participants for their comments and presented the three attending participants with certificates.

7. Briefing on the 14th Street Bridge Corridor Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Mr. Van Dop of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provided a PowerPoint presentation on the status of the 14th Street Bridge Corridor EIS. He gave an update on the progress of the study, noting that the final EIS would like be available in early calendar year 2009. He said there has been much coordination for the EIS, mainly through a Steering Committee comprised of VDOT, DDOT, Arlington County, the National Park Service, and the Pentagon. He said FHWA has been conducting public outreach on the EIS.

Mr. Van Dop said the purpose of the project is to reduce congestion, improve safety, and improve traffic operations. He said the study was initiated by congressional directive. He said the study has been broken down into four areas of traffic management, including transit concepts, bicycle and pedestrian concepts, highway concepts, and management concepts.

Mr. Van Dop said the 14th Street Bridges are the most utilized of the three interstate crossings of the Potomac River in the region. He provided information about trip origins for the traffic flowing over the 14th Street Bridges. He said Prince George's County has as many people using the bridges as does Fairfax County.

Mr. Van Dop asked the TPB members for input on the alternatives for the 14th Street Bridge. He said there is a website on the project, as well as a newsletter.

Mr. Zimmerman noted a very wide range of transit concepts, many of which directly relate to the functioning of the bridge. He asked what the process and timeframe were for reducing the set of concepts and analyzing serious options.

Mr. Van Dop said FHWA will be able to narrow the concepts in the next several months. He said the process will be dependent on comments from the TPB, as that feedback may necessitate that FHWA readjust the schedule to accommodate and incorporate TPB input.

Mr. Zimmerman asked when FHWA would provide the next update on the EIS.

Mr. Van Dop said he would return to the TPB at the TPB's discretion. He said FHWA is in contact with the Steering Committee on a day-to-day basis and invited TPB members to be part of that communication.

Mr. Zimmerman said he would be happy for data to be provided to staff sooner rather than later.

Mr. Van Dop said that as soon as the Steering Committee has reviewed new data, he will schedule a time to present the information to the TPB.

Mr. Zimmerman asked how many vehicles cross the 14th Street Bridges on a daily basis.

Mr. Van Dop said about 260,000 vehicles cross each day. He said about 220,000 cross the Cabin John Bridge daily, and about 180,000 cross the Wilson Bridge.

Mr. Zimmerman said that of all the opportunities to impact the flow of traffic in the region, improving conditions on the 14th Street Bridge stands out as a major pinch point. He said that if one of the spans was carrying HOV and buses, as originally designed, it would be possible to move a lot more people over the bridge, not just 260,000 vehicles.

Mr. Weissberg noted with interest the significant portion of Prince George's vehicles that cross the bridge. He said he supports increased use of HOV, bus lanes, and transit, but is concerned about high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes extending over the bridge.

8. Briefing on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program

Mr. Steeg, Chairman of the MATOC Steering Committee, provided an update on the progress of the regional transportation coordination and communication program. He said a consultant is working with the Steering Committee to review the concept of operations for the program. He said that on March 27, the MATOC ad hoc committee had its first official meeting, and it adopted its bylaws at its May 20 meeting.

Mr. Steeg said the Steering Committee adopted a vision for MATOC: to ensure that travel in the National Capital Region is the safest and most efficient in the nation, through effective information dissemination and regional coordination. He reiterated that MATOC is not an entity that will manage incidents, but its mission is to provide situational awareness of transportation operations in the region through the communication of consistent and reliable information to enable the public and the operating agencies to make effective and timely decisions. He added that part of the mission is to develop the tools and processes needed to facilitate a coordinated operating agency response. He described the technology platform designed to collect incident management data from all respective agencies through a common platform.

Mr. Steeg reviewed the objectives of the program: to provide quick and reliable exchange of transportation system information; to provide accurate and timely information regarding transportation system conditions to the public; to enable agency operation staffs to more effectively and reliably coordinate with each other; to continually improve regional preparedness for effectively managing transportation system issues in response to incidents; to improve the region's ability to inform the public and to coordinate management of a system; and to improve the performance of agency operations.

Mr. Steeg discussed the timeframe for the deployment of the MATOC approach, including deploying a proof of concept not later than December 2008.

Chairman Mendelson asked for an explanation of the term “proof of concept.”

Mr. Steeg said “proof of concept” is the notion that MATOC is establishing the means for different transportation agencies to work together through an incident. He said there are several items that need to be completed before the proof of concept is ready, namely to identify the standard operating procedures; implement regional information sharing technology through RITIS (Regional Integrated Transportation Information System); develop personal communications channels; develop a regionally coordinated transportation management response plan; and have the individual agencies review these components for compatibility.

Mr. Lovain applauded the progress of the MATOC program. He asked if the program envisions a single internet site that would provide regional traffic information.

Mr. Steeg said the Steering Committee is considering that option, noting that it is crucial to report each individual agency’s information to a place where people can have access to it.

Chairman Mendelson asked if there have been any incidents thus far that MATOC has handled.

Mr. Steeg replied that the MATOC agreement has allowed for the successful handling of several recent events, including the opening of National’s Stadium, which, while planned in advance, was a good trial for the system.

Chairman Mendelson asked if the tabletop exercises and proof of concept will be developing other scenarios to test.

Mr. Steeg said that is correct, and that additional scenarios would test highway and interchange incidents. He said the Steering Committee would draw from recent incidents to test the system.

Chairman Mendelson asked if MATOC would be limited to information sharing, or will it go further and work at regional coordination.

Mr. Steeg said MATOC is intended to provide communication and coordination during incidents. He emphasized that incident response and decision-making will be handled by the appropriate agency at the incident site, but that the regional communication and coordination process would be handled by MATOC.

Chairman Mendelson reiterated that MATOC would work with the accountable lead agency to provide regional coordination to assist that lead agency.

9. Status Report on Two Versions of the draft 2008 CLRP and the FY 2009-2014 TIP (with and without NVTAFunded Projects), and the Related Air Quality Conformity Assessments

Mr. Kirby distributed the April 16 memorandum on a contingency course of action that would involve two versions of the 2008 CLRP and FY 2009-2014 TIP. He noted the TPB approved the contingency course of action, and staff is proceeding on the air quality conformity analysis with the NVTAFunded projects that were approved by the TPB in February. He said the results of the conformity analysis including these projects will be available for release at the June 12 CAC meeting, and the TPB could approve the conformity analysis and new TIP at its July 16 meeting if funding has been restored for the projects by the Virginia Legislature. The TPB will also release on June 12 a parallel TIP that does not rely on the NVTAFunding. He said that in the event the funding is not restored by the July 16 TPB meeting, the TPB would be able to act on this TIP that does not rely on the NVTAFunding, and staff would move forward in the fall with a new conformity assessment that omits the unfunded projects. He added that he will brief the TPB again in June on the TIP, CLRP, and air quality conformity analysis.

10. Briefing on Commuter Connections' Response to Rising Gasoline Prices

Mr. Ramfos gave a PowerPoint presentation on recent Commuter Connections' marketing efforts to address high gasoline prices, an overview of gasoline consumption and production, and a call to action. He provided statistics on current and past gasoline cost and consumption in the U.S., as well as the federal and consumer response to rising gasoline prices.

Mr. Ramfos said the Commuter Connections Program launched a mass marketing campaign in the spring focusing on high gasoline prices to encourage citizens to find alternative transportation options. He said radio messages were broadcast on 11 D.C. radio stations and five exurban stations. He said the marketing campaign included nontraditional advertising opportunities, such as gasoline pump advertising displays, which are located at over 120 gas stations in the region. Other marketing techniques included internet advertising, bus shelter advertisements, and the distribution of over 370,000 coffee cup sleeves that have information about Commuter Connections services printed on them.

Mr. Ramfos provided a summary of the May 16 Bike to Work Day event, adding that commuter bicycle sales have increased six percent since last year. He said DDOT recently instituted a bicycle sharing program. He reviewed the number of rideshare applications received in early 2007 and early 2008, noting that there was a 37 percent increase in applications in 2008. He provided information on increased transit use in 2008, likely due to rising gasoline prices. He briefly reviewed the programs sponsored by Commuter Connections that allow both employers and employees to save time and money.

Mr. Ramfos noted that in addition to long-term policies being considered to provide alternatives to single-occupant commuting, there are free, short-term actions that commuters can take

advantage of to assist them in saving money. He said these include many of the Commuter Connections services, such as ridesharing, vanpooling, and teleworking. He encouraged TPB members to make their constituents and the local media aware of Commuter Connections services and work with Commuter Connections to continue informing the public.

Mr. Snyder said there is a tremendous opportunity to illustrate commuter costs in many different ways that have not been attempted so far. He suggested that staff work through a variety of cost scenarios to illustrate the true costs of commuting by single-occupant vehicle and more actively publicize them. He said the timing is perfect given the attention to gas prices. He said the more effectively Commuter Connections can respond to consumer's needs for alternatives and illustrate why it's within commuters own interests, Commuter Connections can make a better case to them and better support the call to action.

Mr. Kirby said work on alternative cost scenarios would be undertaken.

Chairman Mendelson asked that the information generated be provided to the TPB.

Mr. Rybeck said that historically Commuter Connections has focused on home-to-work trips, noting that those trips only account for about 20 percent of household trips. He asked if the program has considered branching out to encourage people to use alternative modes for off-peak and non-work trips.

Mr. Ramfos said 50 percent of the vehicle miles of travel are associated with home-to-work trips. He said the program could be expanded to include other trips, and noted that Commuter Connections will provide services for special events and is looking into incorporating climate change issues into the program's initiatives.

Ms. Sorenson said there have been missed opportunities relating to conservation of trips and suggested that the public could be encouraged to take steps to immediately reduce their trips, such as linking multiple trips into one trip.

Mr. Tregoning said gas prices represent a great opportunity to shift some current vehicle trips to walk or bike trips. She said the TPB should encourage people to combine or avoid some of their automobile trips, or to consider biking or walking. She noted that the Commuter Connections website would likely see increased traffic and any information about opportunities to save money would be a great thing.

11. Update on the Development of the "CLRP Aspirations" and "What Would It Take?" Scenarios

Referring to a handout of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Kirby said he would be updating the Board on recent developments in the scenarios and also addressing some comments that have

been received. He briefly described the two scenarios. He said staff is currently working on developing the scenarios and will be conducting analysis in the fall. He said that analysis results should be available at the beginning of next year and public outreach will be conducted after that with the intention of identifying successful strategies to incorporate into the 2010 CLRP update.

Mr. Kirby said that the scenario development activities were being coordinated with the COG Climate Change Steering Committee, the Greater Washington 2050 Coalition, the Metropolitan Development Policy Committee and Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee. Regarding CO₂, he said it was quite possible that a national “cap and trade” program or perhaps a carbon tax would be established within the next year or so. He said such policies would provide a value per ton of CO₂ which will be a useful threshold for cost-effectiveness studies. He said that, at the request of the Climate Change Steering Committee, staff has begun to look at the cost-effectiveness of previous transportation emission reduction measures that were developed for VOC and NO_x and ozone planning and he indicated that his memo had preliminary information on those findings.

Mr. Kirby noted that the Greater Washington 2050 initiative was looking at all the visioning work that has already been done in the region. He said he thought the group would find a lot of consistency among those visions, but the key challenge continues to be implementation.

Mr. Kirby noted that the TPB’s previous scenario analysis found modest reductions in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), but that was not because the scenario strategies are not effective where they were applied, but because the land-use shifts that were analyzed were relatively small—only about 4 percent of anticipated 2030 households were shifted. He said that if you look beyond 2030 and go out to 2050, a wider application of land-use strategies could be applied, which would be much more effective. He noted the example of the Sacramento blueprint visioning exercise which found that new land requirements through 2050 could be reduced by 50 percent through infill and compact development relative to the baseline growth, and that change would have a very significant impact on transit, walking, biking, and VMT and CO₂ emissions.

Referring to the handout of the presentation, Mr. Kirby addressed the comments and questions that have been received regarding the study. He went through the points in his memo, which addressed comments and questions received at the April 16 TPB meeting, from the Climate Change Steering Committee and from the Greater Washington 2050 Initiative. He also provided responses to a letter regarding the direction of the scenario study that was sent by five members of the TPB to Michael Knapp who chairs the Scenario Study Task Force. In his summary of comments, Mr. Kirby said the staff plans to include the following inputs in the study: a variety of transit options beyond Metrorail; new road improvements; significantly higher gas prices; Smart Growth measures; value-pricing; clean vehicles and fuels; strategies that will affect the existing land-use baseline as opposed to only changing the land use around the edges; and major increases in bicycle and pedestrian capacity.

Mr. Kirby also noted that some TPB members have suggested the two new scenarios should be combined, which he said might be appropriate in the future. He noted, however, that the CLRP Aspirations scenario is being designed to put forward strategies whose results will be “within reach” for informing the 2010 update, which will go to the year 2040. Strategies with longer-term benefits that may only be realized in 2050 will be included in the “What Would it Take” scenario. So for the present time, he believed it would be best to keep the two scenarios separate, although there certainly is a possibility of interaction back and forth between them.

Ms. Tregoning said she appreciated the presentation and Mr. Kirby’s efforts to address the comments that have been made in these different venues. She said she understood the analysis challenges that staff was facing, including the fact that developing a travel-demand model that incorporates dramatically higher fuel prices is something that has not been done before. But she emphasized the importance of this exercise because the region is facing a number of major decisions, including important transportation investments. She said she believed that the world is only at the beginning of an upward swing in gas and energy prices.

12. Notice of Proposed Amendments to the FY 2007-2012 TIP that are Exempt from the Air Quality Conformity Requirements to Update Funding for Five Existing Projects and to include Fourteen New Projects as Requested by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Ms. Sorenson explained that notice was being provided for projects that need to be funded or have funding obligated between now and the end of the federal fiscal year. She said the Board would be asked for approval of the amendments at the June 18 TPB meeting.

13. Other Business

Vice Chairman Jenkins asked that a future agenda item include a briefing on the multimodal study on improvements along the I-270 corridor. He said he was concerned that this study has lasted more than 14 years and that it might be stalled.

Ms. Erickson said that MDOT would be able to bring in the projects managers to a future meeting to brief the Board on this study.

Chairman Mendelson asked that this item be placed on the June agenda, if possible.

Mr. Rybeck announced that Mayor Fenty spoke at a press conference that morning announcing a breakthrough with Pepco that will permit design and construction of a missing link of the Metropolitan Branch Trail.

14. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chairman Mendelson adjourned the meeting at 2:05 p.m.