
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

May 15, 2019

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Martin Nohe, Chair – Prince William County
Canek Aquirre – City of Alexandria
Charles Allen – DC Council
Ron Burns – Frederick County
Libby Garvey – Arlington
Dannielle Glaros – Prince George’s County
Bill Goddard – City of Laurel
Jason Groth – Charles County
Rene’e N. Hamilton – VDOT
Catherine Hudgins – Fairfax County
Sandra Jackson – FHWA
Sakina Khan – DC Office of Planning
Julia Koster – NCPD
Kacy Kostiuk – City of Takoma Park
Phil Mendelson – DC Council
David Meyer – City of Fairfax
Ron Meyer – Loudoun County
Heather Murphy – MDOT
Bridget Donnell Newton – Rockville
Mark Rawlings – DDOT
Rodney M. Roberts – City of Greenbelt
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick
David Snyder – City of Falls Church
Dolly Turner – DC Council
Lezlie Rupert - DDOT
Kristen Umstattd – Loudoun County
Victor Weissberg – Prince George’s County

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Lyn Erickson
Tim Canan
Nick Ramfos
Andrew Meese
Paul DesJardin
Mark Moran
Brandon Brown
Deborah Etheridge
Jackie Sellman
Sergio Ritacco
Abigail Zenner
Dusan Vuksan
Ken Joh
Stacy Cook
Michael Farrell

Jon Schermann
Jessica Mirr
Matthew Gaskin
Arianna Koudounas
Eric Randall
Jaleel Reed
Steve Kania
Nicole McCall
Andrew Austin
Tahari Johnson – CLI Prince William County
Gabriel Goldberg – CLI Fairfax
Vincent Fusaro – CLI Fairfax
Ray Wright II – VDOT
Regina Moore – VDOT
Bob Brown – Loudoun County
Mike Lake – Fairfax County DOT
Andrew Mowry – Loudoun County
Chris Laskowski – DC Council
Tim Kerns – MDOT MHSO
Kari Snyder – MDOT TSO
Toria Lassiter – MDOT SHA
Mark Phillips – WMATA
Kristin Calkins – DC Office of Planning
Will Pines – MDTA
Jim Maslanka – Alexandria
John Peng – Clean Air Partners
Dan Malouff – Arlington
Angela White – CLI
Ashley Sharp – Prince George’s County
Daniel Papiernik – CLI
Bill Orleans – public observer

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON TPB PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

Vice Chairman Kelly Russell began the meeting. No members of the public signed up to submit public comment.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 17, 2019 MEETING

A motion was made to approve the minutes for the April TPB meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

3. REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Rawlings said that the Technical Committee met on May 3. He said that the committee reviewed three items on the board’s May agenda: takeaways from the federal certification review, a briefing from MDOT on Maryland’s safety program, and applications recommended for funding under the FY 2020 Transportation Land-Use Connections program. He said that the committee was briefed on the process, schedule, and requirements for an update of the Air-Quality Conformity Analysis of the FY 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He said that the committee was also briefed on the regional transportation data clearinghouse, TPB committee and subcommittee missions, and a preview of the technical feasibility for the VRE/MARC run-through service.

4. REPORT OF THE CAC AND AFA

Mr. Jackson said that the Citizens Advisory Committee met on May 9. At the meeting the committee discussed TPB communications efforts. He summarized committee feedback, saying that Visualize 2045 was very readable, and that the committee encourages TPB staff to continually put out more information to try and make the TPB and TPB activities more accessible to the public. A full summary of the discussion can be found in the report. He said that the committee also discussed topics it was interested in focusing on in 2019. He said that the main topic of interest was transportation safety. He said that the committee is also interested in encouraging people to use mass transit and making the inner and outer parts of the region work together better. He said that the committee heard from its members who participated in the recent Community Leadership Institute and about the FY 2020 TLC project recommendations.

Ms. Kostiuk said that the Access for All Advisory Committee met on May 9. She said that there was a presentation on health disparities, uneven opportunities, and how conditions for wellness vary across the Washington area. She said the report found that life expectancy varies by 27 years across the region. She said the committee discussed how changes in any single factor could have impacts on health-related outcomes overall. A summary of the discussion can be found in the committee report. She said that the AFA was briefed on the TPB's 2019 Enhanced Mobility Solicitation, which will provide \$5.6 million in federal matching grants for projects that improve access to transportation services and expand options. She said there was also a briefing on the recommended TLC projects. She said the committee also discussed dockless bicycles and scooters in preparation for the upcoming TPB workshop. She said these devices – both parked and used on sidewalks – cause many problems for people with visual and other disabilities. She said that the committee thinks that the disability community should be involved in planning for future rollouts of dockless technology.

5. REPORT OF STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR

Ms. Erickson said that the Steering Committee met on May 3. At the meeting the committee approved amendments to the FY 2019-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The first amendment added about \$71 million in federal, state, and local funds for the Virginia Route 28 widening in Prince William County. More details about this amendment were included on pages 5-9 of the director's report. The second amendment reinstated a project and added \$1.5 million for the I-395 sign structure improvements. Details were on pages 11-14. She said that the committee reviewed a request to amend the TIP from MDOT. She said that the committee reviewed MODT's amendment request to add \$186 million to the TIP for the Governor Harry W. Nice / Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge Replacement Project. She said the committee recommended that the board approve the amendment request, which would be discussed further in Item 8.

Ms. Erickson turned to the announcements and updates section of the report. She said that on page 17 there was a reminder that the Transportation Alternatives Program deadlines were approaching. On page 19 there was a reminder that Bike to Work Day would be on May 17. On page 21 there was information about a dockless vehicle workshop, which would be held at COG on May 30. Page 23 had information about public outreach underway as part of the bus transformation study.

Ms. Erickson said that the letters sent and received section of the report included three letters from the TPB in which the board endorsed grant applications to the Federal Transit Administration on behalf of Prince George's County, the District of Columbia, and Montgomery County for no- or low-emissions buses and infrastructure. Other announcements included a presentation to the Region Forward Coalition about the TPB's equity-based accessibility targets. There was also a TPB presentation on land-use, demographics, and long-range transportation planning at VDOT's annual land development summit. She said that a number of TPB staff and transportation professionals from around the region participated in the Federal Transit Administration's Simplified Trips on Project Software (STOPS) training. She said this software is used by FTA for checking the reasonableness of forecasts.

Mr. Allen said that he frequently hears from constituents about challenges related to dockless scooters. He said that these vehicles can provide an affordable way to get people a little further. He said that the benefits should be part of the discussion, in addition to the challenges.

Ms. Kostiuk said that the benefits of scooters were part of the AFA discussion. She said she would bring up this point at the workshop.

Ms. Erickson said that staff are still working on the agenda for the workshop.

6. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

No remarks were made at the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

7. APPROVAL OF FY 2020 TRANSPORTATION LAND-USE CONNECTIONS (TLC) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS

Ms. Koster said that the TLC projects this year do a great job at making connections, whether it is to Metro, to schools, or filling in missing links. She said staff did an excellent job in supporting the selection panel. She encouraged jurisdictions to continue submitting applications in the future.

Ms. Bond provided some history of the TLC program. Referring to her presentation, she said that the TLC Program got its start in 2006 and has funded 117 projects with about \$4.5 million in technical assistance. She said that projects this year will receive \$680,000 in technical assistance. She said that Maryland projects were eligible for an additional \$260,000, and in Virginia there is an extra \$160,000. She said that applications were accepted between February and April. She said that 25 applications were submitted. She said that the selection panel reviewed and scored the projects individually, and then met to determine its recommendations.

Ms. Bond said that 13 projects were recommended for \$680,000 in technical assistance for FY 2020. She said that these projects touch upon a number of TPB priorities: 12 are in activity centers, 13 are near high-capacity transit, and 9 are in Equity Emphasis Areas. Referring to the memo, she summarized the 13 projects.

Mr. Harris made a motion to approve the TLC technical assistance recipients under the FY 2020 TLC Program. He added that one of these projects will help address a major gap in Gaithersburg's bicycle network.

The motion seconded and approved.

8. APPROVAL TO AMEND THE FY 2019-2024 TIP TO UPDATE FUNDING APPROVED IN THE MARYLAND CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FOR THE GOVERNOR HARRY W. NICE / SENATOR THOMAS "MAC" MIDDLETON BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT, AS REQUESTED BY MDOT

Ms. Murphy said that MDOT and MDTA are requesting that the project be referred to by its new name, the Governor Harry W. Nice / Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge project. She said that more than \$186 million in funding needs to be added to the FY 2019-2024 TIP for the project. She said that MDTA intends to pursue a TIFIA loan, so they do not want to wait on this action. She said that the funds will come from MDTA and hopefully the that a TIFIA loan will cover 30 percent. She said that the project is expected to start construction in 2020 and will be completed in 2023. She said that there currently is a process underway that requires qualified bidders to look at two different options: one bridge with a barrier separated bicycle and pedestrian path, and a bridge with bicycles riding in the right lane of traffic. She said that MDTA received more than 6,000 comments on this project, including from the TPB,

and that they all will be factored into MDTA's board decision.

Ms. Murphy made a motion to approve Resolution R18-2019 to amend the FY 2019-2024 TIP. The motion was seconded.

Ms. Newton said she was concerned about whether board input in the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on the bridge is being adequately considered.

Mr. Allen said that the board never heard back from MDTA about the TPB comments submitted in October 2018. He asked if a barrier-separated option was being considered.

Ms. Murphy said that two options are being considered on the bids. One includes the separated lane, the other does not. She said that the biggest concern is cost.

Mr. Allen asked why safety is not the primary concern.

Ms. Murphy said that both of the proposed options are safe, and that one could be much more expensive.

Mr. Allen said he sees a lot of value in having a safe bridge. He recognized that the separated lane is an option, but he is concerned that cost is the primary deciding point.

Ms. Murphy said that the state agencies are not necessarily looking only for the option that costs less, but she said that the magnitude of the difference in the cost between the two options was a factor.

Mr. Allen said that he was uneasy supporting this resolution, because the TPB never got a response to its previous request.

Ms. Murphy said that a written response would not differ from the verbal responses that Mr. Lewis has shared with the TPB.

Mr. Roberts spoke about roads with signs indicating that "bicycles may use full right-lane." He said he personally would not be inclined to cycle in such lanes. He said he is disappointed that Maryland is considering an option that does not include a separated lane.

Mr. Weissberg asked what assurances can be provided to the TPB that the separated lane option will be taken seriously. He also asked why it is important for the TPB to vote at the meeting that day.

Mr. Pines said that in order to be eligible for the TIFIA loan, MDTA needs to go through a lengthy process. In order for construction to start in 2020, the amendment needs to be approved so this process can move forward. He said that the TPB letter was written in a way that did not demand an immediate response. He said that they are happy to provide a written response. He said that the expected level of bicycle usage may not justify an additional \$50 to 60 million cost. He said that board meetings are public and that the project has received many comments, some from as far away as England. He said that based on that feedback, the public would like the option of a separated bike lane to be given fair consideration.

Mr. Weissberg asked if there would be another point in this process when the TPB would be asked to weigh in.

Mr. Pines said that after this amendment is approved, there likely would be no additional approval required from the TPB.

Ms. Newton said that she is troubled that \$50 million would be put up against 50 lives. She said that as the mayor of Rockville she is familiar with how difficult it can be to collaborate with MDOT. She said that the non-separated option would be very dangerous, and she urged MDOT to consider other more cost-effective options for separation. She said she would be voting against this amendment.

Mr. Nohe asked what would happen if the vote were to be deferred for a month.

Ms. Erickson said that if the vote is deferred this will likely impact the cost of the project. She said that

the more this process gets deferred, the more the TIFIA loan will cost.

Mr. Meyer asked about the timeline for receiving bids.

Mr. Pines said that the price proposals are planned for August 2019.

Mr. Meyer asked about the impact of delaying a vote until September.

Mr. Pines said that this would make the project cost more. He said theoretically this would mean that the project would no longer be feasible.

Mr. Meyer asked if there is an on-call contractor who could provide a better estimate on the cost of the separated lanes.

Mr. Pines said that the costs have been checked through a variety of manners, including planning estimates. He said that this is the source of the additional estimated cost of \$50 to 60 million for separated lanes. He said that the shared-lane option does include other features that will make the bridge safe for cyclists, including bridge joints, ITS signs, and other features.

Mr. Meyer said the discussions about this bridge replacement should be easy compared to discussions about other bridges that MDOT is not willing to have. However, he said it makes sense to postpone making a decision until better information is provided.

Ms. Garvey said that the language in the amendment document describes the project as “a new four-lane bridge north of the existing bridge with a barrier separated two-way bicycle / pedestrian path.” She said it sounds like the separated lane was already planned.

Mr. Pines said that the separated lane option was a bid alternate approach, which was one of two options for which bidders would prepare estimates.

Ms. Garvey said that the language of the resolution for the amendment does not make it clear that there are two options.

Chair Nohe said he would not call for a vote to approve this amendment. He said it was clear there was not enough support for passage. He said that, in the least, the language of the resolution needs to be updated to reflect that the state of Maryland is considering two options. He said that the TPB should not be in a place where the board approves a project based on a description that may later be changed without consultation. He said that the longer this is delayed, the more it will cost to build this new bridge. He asked when this item can be brought back to the board.

Ms. Erickson said that the item could be back before the board in June.

Mr. Burns raised a point of order. He asked if the chair has the authority to not permit a vote once a motion has been made and seconded. As a second point, he said he understood that if MDTA decided not to pursue a TIFIA loan and to not pursue federal funding, the project would not need to be included in the TIP.

Mr. Pines concurred.

Chair Nohe acknowledged that there was motion and a second on the table. He asked if MDOT wanted the vote to be taken.

Ms. Murphy said that they are willing to have the vote taken.

Ms. Glaros asked where this project is in engineering and design.

Mr. Pines said that the bid alternate process was selected because of the tight schedule, and because the bridge structure is off-alignment. He said that they are currently in the procurement phase. He said that contractors will prepare their proposals and submit them for evaluation.

Ms. Glaros said that if this conversation happened earlier, the board might have been more prepared for approval at the meeting. She said that comments from the board reflected a belief that the two

alternatives are not a complete set of alternatives. She said that it is easy for public good to be lost in a process like this. She said she suspected that if the vote proceeded, it would be a “no’ vote.

Mr. Pines said that MDTA considered a variety of bike options early in the process. He said that they are trying to adequately evaluate both alternatives.

Mr. Meyer made a substitute motion to table the vote until the June TPB meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by the board.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. FEDERAL CERTIFICATION REVIEW OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Ms. Jackson said that the certification process is not yet complete. She said she was sharing preliminary observations. She said that she worked with staff in October 2018 to identify risks, threats, and opportunities and to help develop a scope for the review. She said the review was held on April 10 and 11. She said that this meeting included a site visit, meeting with states, and the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Ms. Jackson said that the TPB is very-proactive and innovative in fulfilling their requirements for transportation planning. She said that Visualize 2045 was noteworthy, especially the engagement and aspirational initiatives. She said that the update to the constrained element was to be commended. She also noted the extensive public involvement and public discussion that was part of the process. She also commended the TPB for the multi-year strategic plan for the travel demand model to advance travel monitoring methods. She added that the creation of the Equity Emphasis Areas was noteworthy. The final commendation was about attainment of the 2012 standards for PM2.5

Ms. Jackson said that there are three recommendations for improvement. First, the 2004 agreement with FAMPO should be updated so it is aligned with the FAST Act requirements. Second, FAMPO should be reviewed as part of the oversight of the statewide planning process in Virginia. The final recommendation was that the TPB use a language translation service and not rely on Google Translate on their website. She added that staff should continue their efforts to evaluation public participation on a schedule.

10. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Mr. Hayes said that 15 community leaders from across the region came together to learn about transportation decision-making on the local and regional level. He said that seven of those CLI participants are at the meeting to be acknowledged by the board. He said that there were three CLI sessions, where people engaged in role playing, mapping, and facilitated discussions to learn about the nuances and challenges that decision-makers face when making decisions about transportation planning in the region.

Ms. White thanked the board. She said that after completing the CLI she has an appreciation for the knowledge gap between experts and the public. She said she also has appreciation that as a member of the public she has a role to play in informing and commenting on transportation decision-making. She said that everyone belongs to multiple communities, and that those communities can be leveraged to give the broadest possible input. She said that there needs to be a greater emphasis on accessibility and interoperability in the region. She said she was grateful for the opportunity to participate and thanked staff for their efforts.

Mr. Hayes said that all the people who participated in the recent CLI are listed in his presentation. He introduced the participants that were present, and they received a certificate from Chair Nohe.

The board applauded the participants.

11. ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS SAFETY CHALLENGES IN THE REGION: MDOT

Mr. Schermann introduced the speakers for this item.

Mr. Kerns said that his presentation will address the behavioral side of transportation safety. He said that for years Maryland has been a Towards Zero Death state, with the goal of getting to zero transportation deaths. He said that no deaths are acceptable. He said that the state strives for this goal through projects and building partnerships with local, state, and community efforts. He said that Maryland does this through the Strategic Highway Safety Plan, which will be updated in 2020. He referred to his presentation and said that the safety plan can be divided into different emphasis areas including: aggressive driving, distracted driving, occupant protection, pedestrians and bicyclists, impaired driving, and highway infrastructure. He referred to his presentation and used data to show how reductions in serious injury and death. He said that 60 percent of motor vehicle fatalities are related to behavior, like people not wearing seat belts, speeding, and driving impaired. He said that the state seeks to change driver behavior through a number of programs, including education, enforcement, and supporting engineering activities and local EMS agencies. He said that in recent years, the Highway Safety Office has obligated \$12 million to a variety of programs that address education, enforcement, engineering, and EMS activities.

Ms. Mookherjee said her presentation would cover traffic safety engineering programs that Maryland has implemented over the last few years. She said that the state has two emphasis areas which have a strong engineering focus. These are the highway infrastructure emphasis area and the bicycle and pedestrian emphasis area. She said that on average 276 fatalities and more than 2,100 serious injuries can be attributed to highway infrastructure issues. She said that this includes run-off-the-road crashes, intersection-related crashes, and work zone crashes. She said that bicyclists and pedestrians average 110 fatalities a year.

Ms. Mookherjee said that to mitigate these fatalities and injuries, the highway infrastructure emphasis area has three broad strategies: spot improvements, system-wide improvements, and commercial vehicle improvements. She referred to her presentation and provided examples of these strategies. She said that the state conducts pedestrian roadway safety audits, which often result in recommendations for improvements. She said that the sidewalks program is focused on adding missing sidewalk connectivity. She said the state is also updating crosswalk designs to make them easier to see and maintain. She said that in 2018 her office spent \$53.5 million statewide, with \$20.7 million going to the Washington area.

Ms. Kostiuk said she appreciates increased focus on pedestrian safety and lowering speed limits. She said that the state legislature passed a bill changing Toward Zero Deaths to a Vision Zero Policy. She asked how that might change what the department is doing. She added that she is concerned that 60 percent of fatalities are related to infrastructure.

Mr. Kerns said that the plan is to incorporate the Vision Zero policy in the 2021-2025 Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Ms. Mookherjee said that her department is well situated for a change to Vision Zero, because of work they are already doing to lower speed limits. She said that a lot of the infrastructure in the state is old and retrofitting it is not easy. She did list a variety of treatments and new projects to address the role that infrastructure plays in fatalities.

Mr. Kerns added that a lot of the fatalities are caused by multiple behaviors. He said that it is likely that these behaviors were the lead cause may be a bigger factor than the infrastructure itself.

Ms. Kostiuk said that Vision Zero emphasizes infrastructure and design improvements over behavior.

Mr. Kerns said that looking at infrastructure and behavior is something that will happen.

Mr. Snyder asked that the DOTs get together and make some recommendations to the TPB that it can

take to help significantly reduce fatalities and serious injuries. He said he would like to hear more about how these three agencies are sharing information.

Ms. Garvey mentioned trucks on the highway that are unsafe. She said she is unaware of a mechanism in place to address these trucks.

Ms. Mookherjee said that Maryland works with neighboring states on the issue of unsafe trucks.

12. 2017/2018 REGIONAL TRAVEL SURVEY UPDATE

The presentation on the 2017/2018 Regional Travel Survey will be postponed until the June TPB meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

13. ADJOURN

No other business was brought before the board. The meeting was adjourned at 2:13 p.m.