

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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Meeting Notes

FREIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: July 8, 2010

TIME: 1:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.

PLACE: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Room 1

CHAIR: Victor Weissberg, Department of Public Works and Transportation
Prince George's County

ATTENDANCE:

Andrew Bielak, Maryland Department of Transportation
Debbie Bowden, Maryland Department of Transportation
Brandon Buchanan, American Bus Association
Randy Carroll, Maryland Department of Environment
Eulois Cleckley, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
Ed Cohen, Transit Riders Action Coalition
Richard Easley, E-Squared Consulting
Elizabeth Hinman, Norfolk Southern Corporation
Christine Hoeffner, Virginia Railway Express
Sandra Jackson, Federal Highway Administration
Joung Lee, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
Murat Omay, Sabra, Wang, & Associates
Jon Schermann, Cambridge Systematics
Chris Smith, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
Irv Varconyi, American Public University
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County
Bill Weger, Equals Three Communication

MWCOG STAFF ATTENDANCE:

Michael Farrell, MWCOG
Karin Foster, MWCOG
Ron Kirby, MWCOG
Andrew Meese, MWCOG
Eric Randall, MWCOG

Victor Weissberg, Freight Subcommittee Chairman—

Mr. Weissberg welcomed attendees and asked for introductions. Following introductions, the special guest speaker, Mrs. Anne Ferro, Administrator of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, was introduced.

Anne Ferro, Administrator, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)—

Mrs. Ferro began with a brief background of her career. Prior to her role as FMCSA Administrator, she led the Maryland Motor Truck Association as President and CEO from 2003-2009. Prior to that, Mrs. Ferro served as the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration Administrator from 1993-2003.

Mrs. Ferro spoke briefly on many topics that the FMCSA is involved in. The agency's mission is to eliminate severe crashes and fatalities for trucks and buses. She noted that at the FMCSA, they live and breathe safety, and Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood's emphasis is on livability and safety. Mrs. Ferro also mentioned Secretary's LaHood campaign against distracted driving.

The FMCSA has 1,100 employees and offices in every state. Mrs. Ferro spoke of the greater enforcement for trucks and buses needed to increase safety on the roads. For example, the credential to obtain a commercial drivers license will become more thorough and difficult, requiring a classroom and behind the wheel component. Mrs. Ferro noted a problem that many truck companies "reincarnate" after they have been identified as having received violations that they are unwilling to address. These truck companies take on a new business license, new name, and perhaps a new state.

Mrs. Ferro will work to improve the Motor Carrier Safety Information System Database. One aim is to be able to better identify and prioritize high risk carriers in order to get them off the roads and to make sure employers do not hire drivers with a bad record.

The Administrator concluded with some remarks about the need to incorporate motor vehicle needs into the livability community discussion and for motor carrier demand that will be generated to be considered in new construction projects. Additionally, Mrs. Ferro distributed an article on an incentive-based program in New York for truck drivers to make deliveries at off-peak hours at night. The program provided incentives for the receiver to receive shipments during these off-peak night hours. The program was coordinated with Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Questions and Comments:

Jon Schermann, of Cambridge Systematics, asked about trends in the existing safety numbers. Mrs. Ferro noted that fatalities and serious injuries have decreased by double digits.

Ed Cohen, of TRAC, asked about off-hour delivery and if there was small business resistance. Mrs. Ferro replied that the New York example was a great idea and worked. The lock box concept where deliveries are made to a lock box on the site for the receiver has been tested, but has not been as popular as the incentive program for off-peak night

time deliveries. Mr. Cohen also asked about the expansion of use of auxiliary power units (APUs). Bill Wegner replied that the EPA SmartWay helps finance APUs to make them more affordable.

Andy Meese, MWCOG staff, asked Mrs. Ferro for her thoughts on the role of MPO freight planning. Mrs. Ferro replied that MPO-level planning provides value-added by creating a forum for regional dialogue and perhaps being able to find regional solutions to bottleneck relief.

Ron Kirby, MWCOG DTP Director, asked Mrs. Ferro about the 10 percent heavy duty vehicle National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) partnership on heavy duty vehicle greenhouse gas standards. Mrs. Ferro noted that while the new standards are pending, the increasing number of sales of new trucks meet the 2010 engine requirements.

Joung Lee, AASHTO, asked Mrs. Ferro about the budget and resources available to FMCSA and her perspective on reauthorization. Mrs. Ferro noted that the 2011 budget adds resources to augment staff, and the FMCSA is waiting to see what comes out of the Senate and House reauthorization.

Richard Easley, E-Squared Consulting, asked the Administrator about the establishment of a Good Driver Recognition Program as a way to promote FMCSA goals. A program could offer drivers Good Driver Recognition, a spokesman role, and maybe rewards, such as a free holiday. Mr. Easley noted the misunderstanding on the laws and how this might be helpful. Patrick Zilliacus followed up with a remark that on the thruway to New York there is a lot of signage on diesel idling laws.

Bill Weger, Equals Three Communication, Idling Campaign Briefing—

The campaign's mission is to decrease diesel emissions from idling bus and trucks and to improve air quality in the metropolitan Washington-Baltimore regions. The campaign is being led by MWCOG in collaboration with DDOE, DDOT, and MDE.

As of the meeting date, Mr. Wegner listed accomplishments made:

- Communications audit to analyze past and current MWCOG communication materials;
- Media analysis to better understand how media covers idling issue in the region;
- Environmental scan to gain understanding of the overall industry;
- 4 stakeholder meetings;
- Interviews; and
- Online surveys

Mr. Wegner listed the next steps:

- Launch Event/Press Conference at MWCOG July 13, 12:30
- Post Launch Stakeholder Meeting
- 4 Street Team and Promotional Activities
- Six Flags Promotional Event
- Continued Media Campaign via radio, print ads, trade publications
- Driver Recognition Program

Mr. Wegner concluded by showing some of the promotional material created for the campaign, posters, brochures, t-shirts, air fresheners and providing the event details.

Karin, Freight Program Update—

Ms. Foster distributed two handouts: 1) 2010 National Capital Region Freight Plan and Next Steps; and 2) Memo on Comments Received and Staff Responses. Handout #1 first outlined the timeline of presentations given on the Freight Plan and the date of presentation to the TPB. In the comments memo, Ms. Foster noted that it was distributed at the July 1, 2010 Technical Committee meeting. The comments memo incorporates Technical Committee member and freight stakeholder feedback. Ms. Foster noted to the Freight Subcommittee that once the Freight Plan was approved, the next steps were to work with the Subcommittee to come up with a list of top ten projects from the freight project database. Ms. Foster proposed a method to narrow projects down to top 10 rail and top 10 highway projects via online vote and then to evaluate these projects further to come up with the region's to 10 projects, 5 rail and 5 highway. More detailed discussion on the process would follow in subsequent meetings.

Next Meeting TBD