

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
February 18, 2015**

Members and Alternates Present

Charles Allen, DC Council
Bob Brown, Loudoun County
Ron Burns, Frederick County
Rick Canizales, Prince William County
Helen Cuervo, VDOT
James Davenport, Prince William County
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Dennis Enslinger, City of Gaithersburg
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County/DOT
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Jay Fisette, Arlington County
Seth Grimes, City of Takoma Park
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Neil Harris, Gaithersburg City Council
Konrad Herling, City of Greenbelt
Cathy Hudgins, Fairfax County
Sandra Jackson, FHWA
John Jenkins, Prince William County
Shyam Kannan, WMATA
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria
Dan Malouff, Arlington County
Michael C. May, Prince William County
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Denise Mitchell, City of College Park
Mark Rawlings, DC DOT
Kelly Russell, City of Frederick
Peter Schwartz, Fauquier County
Eric Shaw, DC Office of Planning

Linda Smyth, Fairfax County
Jonathan Way, City of Manassas
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County/DPW&T
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT

MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Gerald Miller
Nicholas Ramfos
John Swanson
Andrew Meese
Rich Roisman
Mark Moran
Anant Choudhary
Michael Farrell
Dusan Vuksan
Andrew Austin
Ron Milone
Daivamani Sivasailam
C. Patrick Zilliacus
Jane Posey
Wendy Klancher
Dan Sonenklar
Ben Hampton
Sergio Ritacco
Lamont Cobb
Dzung Ngo
Debbie Leigh
Deborah Etheridge
Stuart Freudberg COG/EO
Paul DesJardin COG/DCPS
Stewart Schwartz CSG
Jameshia Peterson DDOT
Gregory Matlesky Chairman Mendelson
Mike Lake Fairfax County/DOT
Andrew Beacher VDOT
Norman Whitaker VDOT
Malcolm Watson FCDOT
Matthew Elvin Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Nancy Abeles Public
John Hartline Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
Todd Horsley VA DRPT
Mike Harris Kimley Horn

Maria Sinner
Allen Muchnick
Bill Orleans

VDOT
Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation
Area resident

1. Public Comment on TPB Procedures and Activities

Ms. Clement, representing the Arlington Coalition for Smarter Growth, commented on her organization's disapproval of spot improvements and other projects that would widen lanes on I-66 concurrently with the development of proposed HOT lanes. She said that widening eastbound lanes on I-66 would require additional right of way between East Falls Church and the Ballston area of Arlington County. She said that this additional right of way may require the elimination of portions of the W&OD trail, and may have environmental implications for the Four Mile Run stream and the Chesapeake watershed. Ms. Clement urged the TPB to delay inclusion of the I-66 widening project in the CLRP until further evaluation of the HOT lanes project is complete to justify the widening. Copies of her remarks were submitted for the record.

Mr. Muchnick, representing the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation, highlighted three major concerns with VDOT's proposal for the portion of I-66 inside the Beltway. He said that VDOT's proposal does not adequately provide for: implementation of non-roadway multimodal improvements; neither evaluation of alternatives to widening I-66 nor explored ways to mitigate impacts of widening; and use of congestion pricing and HOV restrictions. He said that VDOT's proposal does not support regional objectives related to congestion, carbon emissions, public transit ridership, or activity centers. He also mentioned that improvements to existing WMATA heavy rail and increased commuter bus service would have a greater effect than widening. Mr. Muchnick requested that VDOT's CLRP amendment address his three points. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

Mr. Birtswistle, representing the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance, expressed his organization's support of the I-66 corridor improvement projects proposed for the CLRP. He emphasized the corridor's importance to the region as Northern Virginia's main street, and a critical link for area businesses, freight and public transit. He said that outside of the Beltway, I-66 must be expanded to three lanes, with additional managed lanes in each direction for HOV, transit and tolling, and reservation for future transit. He also said that the inside portion of I-66 should include three lanes. He urged the TPB to support quick completion of these improvements. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

Mr. Schwartz, representing the Coalition for Smarter Growth, said that his organization was concerned that VDOT under previous administrations had not studied alternatives for I-66 that considered transit and land use strategies through transit-oriented development, traffic demand management and HOV lanes separate from the HOT and public/private partnership approaches that were reflected in the currently proposed projects. He proposed analysis of these alternatives for I-66 outside the Beltway. He also suggested VDOT's CLRP amendment guarantee that widening be considered only after the agency has fully evaluated the HOT/HOV transit approach. He also

proposed two model runs: one with VDOT's current approach and another with transit/TOD alternatives for the entire corridor. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

2. Approval of Minutes of January 21 Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded and was approved unanimously.

3. Report of the Technical Committee

Mr. Rawlings said the Technical Committee met on February 6. The Committee reviewed six items for inclusion on the TPB agenda. Among those items were updates on the major projects submitted for the 2015 CLRP and an update on the draft scope of work for the Air Quality Conformity Analysis or assessment for the 2015 CLRP and FY 2015-2020 TIP. The Committee was also briefed on the COG Cooperative Forecasting Process, drafts of both the 2016 Unified Planning and Commuter Connections work program, and the current status of the TPB regional priority bus project.

The Committee discussed the following informational items: the first meeting of the COG multi-sector working group on greenhouse gas emissions reduction; recent developments regarding USDOT regulations on performance measures under MAP-21; and recent court of appeals decision to change the region's ozone attainment date.

4. Report of the Citizen Advisory Committee

Mr. Summersgill reported that 2015 CAC met for the first time on February 12. The meeting was largely introductory, with briefings on current TPB activities and member introductions. Among other things, the Committee discussed forming subcommittees to address issues of interest.

5. Report of Steering Committee

Mr. Srikanth reported that the Steering Committee met on February 6. The Committee approved two TIP amendments: a request from MDOT for additional funding for projects related to I-70 and MD-5, and a request from VDOT for additional funding to two grouped projects, as well as additional funding for projects in Fauquier County.

Mr. Srikanth noted that the Board had received a copy of a letter sent to the Maryland Governor Jim Hogan, and ranking members of the Maryland Senate by Prince George's County Board and TPB member Mr. Todd Turner on the status of the Purple Line regarding the CLRP.

Mr. Srikanth reported on the Steering Committee's review and discussion of the developments following the January 12 Metrorail incidents near the L'Enfant Metro station. He noted that the COG Deputy Executive Director Stuart Freudberg attended the meeting and briefed the Committee on the various activities the COG is coordinating with WMATA and the first responder community.

COG's public safety committees are working with WMATA and other entities in response to the incident. Mr. Srikanth reported that the Steering Committee had agreed to provide a memo to the Board on the matter. He then reviewed the memo from him to the Board. The contents of the memo included a timeline of events starting with the 1/12/15 metro rail incident and included activities through Feb. 11 including a briefing provided to the COG Board and the region's Emergency Preparedness Council on Feb. 11 and letters from Virginia Senator Mark Warner and Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski. The memo included as an attachment the two NTSB reports issued to date and an annotated listing of the various COG Committees' working on emergency preparedness and incident management activities.

Concluding his report Mr. Srikanth noted that the Steering Committee would work with the COG staff, coordinating the follow-up activities as related to the incident and that COG staff has agreed to keep the steering committee informed of the developments and be available to brief the TPB at an appropriate time in the future when more information is available. He said that as events progress, the steering committee will brief the TPB on any actions that this Board may wish to take.

Mr. Mendelson noted that as the region's Transportation Planning Board the TPB ought to be briefed on the Metro rail incident. Mr. Srikanth responded that the Steering Committee had discussed this and the general sense was that more information would be available after the June NTSB hearing on the incident and at which time perhaps the TPB could be briefed including actions that WMATA has taken. He also noted that if there were any specific topics that were of interest, then staff would work with WMATA to arrange for briefings before June.

While there were no specific topics suggested by members of the Board, Mr. Mendelson asked staff to give a report on this next month.

6. Chair's Remarks

Chairman Mendelson commented that the TPB has reached its 50-year anniversary, and a celebration is scheduled tentatively for June or July. TPB staff will share information about the history of the organization up to this time. He encouraged meeting attendees to consider the past 50 years of work while also looking toward the next 50 years and share with staff thoughts about how to commemorate the anniversary.

The Chairman also commended TPB senior staff member and deputy co-director Jerry Miller on his retirement after 25 of service in the Department of Transportation. He presented Mr. Miller with a plaque and gavel.

Mr. Lovain also commended Mr. Miller for his record of service during the interim period after the death of Ron Kirby.

ACTION ITEMS

7. Review of Comments Received and Approval of Project Submissions for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2015 Financially Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and the FY 2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

TPB Vice-Chair Lovain, who chairs the TPB's Access for All Advisory Committee (AFA), summarized that group's comments on the proposed changes and additions to the CLRP. He referred Board members to a memorandum, which was available at the meeting, for more information.

Mr. Srikanth briefed the Board on comments received from the public on the major additions and changes proposed for the 2015 CLRP. He directed Board members' attention to a memo summarizing nearly 200 comments that were received.

Mr. Srikanth also directed Board members' attention to a revised project description form for the Virginia Department of Transportation's proposals to operate express toll lanes on I-66 inside and outside the Beltway. He told Board members that the revised description form included new details about the multimodal improvements included in the tolling proposal, as well as new information regarding environmental mitigation steps that VDOT intends to take related to the project. He said the changes were provided in response to public comment seeking greater clarity as to multimodal aspects promised as part of the project.

The final item to which Mr. Srikanth directed the Board's attention was a packet including the formal resolution to approve the proposed additions and changes so that they could be included in the federally required Air Quality Conformity Analysis this summer. He said that the packet also included a summary of technical corrections to VDOT's I-66 tolling proposal and the District of Columbia's bike-lane proposal, and that it included executive summaries of three separate studies related to the I-66 tolling proposals.

Chair Mendelson entertained a motion to approve the additions and changes proposed for inclusion in the 2015 CLRP update to be included in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis. The motion was seconded.

Chair Mendelson asked why the cost of VDOT's tolling proposal for I-66 inside the Beltway increased from \$75 million when presented to the TPB at its January meeting to \$350 million at its February meeting.

Mr. Srikanth said that the earlier, lower estimate did not include costs associated with the proposed widening of a portion of the roadway, also included as part of the tolling proposal that was slated for implementation in 2040. He said that the total cost estimate for the project went up when the cost of the widening was included.

Ms. Hamilton, of VDOT, said that in addition the costs for the various multi-modal improvements have been included in the latest cost estimate.

Mr. Fisette expressed his satisfaction with the additional information provided by VDOT about its plans for multimodal improvements in the corridor. He also said he was glad to see that the state, rather than a private firm, would be operating the new express toll lanes inside the Beltway and that all toll revenues would flow back into the corridor and planned multimodal improvements.

Mr. Fisette offered three amendments to the official description of the project, which was included as an attachment to the formal resolution up for Board approval. The first was a friendly amendment to include Falls Church in the list of jurisdictions in which the project would take place. The second amendment was to the “Tolling Policy” section of the description form, under Item 10, to guarantee that all revenues collected would be used in the corridor, and that, in addition to being used to offset design, construction, operating, and maintenance costs of the tolling project, would also provide a funding source for multimodal improvements within the designated corridor, as illustrated on page 5 of the full project description.

Ms. Cuervo noted that while VDOT is amenable to this she noted that related to the matter of Airport users access I 66 there may be a need to install some gantries and other such equipment along the airport access roads and toll revenues would be used for this work and anything we need to do to improve that corridor, and some of which may be somewhat outside of the area depicted in the figure.

Mr. Fisette concurred.

The third amendment proposed by Mr. Fisette was to the formal resolution, requiring an evaluation by VDOT and a report to the TPB on the effectiveness of the tolling and multimodal improvements in the proposal prior to the widening component of the project being undertaken. Ms. Cuervo noted that the proposed widening for additional capacity was in the far-out years, and at that point VDOT would have to be reevaluating the environmental document for the project and as such VDOT is fine with that being noted in the CLRP.

Mr. Fisette’s amendments were all accepted without objection.

Ms. Smyth said she hoped that VDOT’s future study would seek to determine only which segments of I-66 would absolutely require widening, as different segments of the roadway carry different traffic volumes, she said.

Ms. Hamilton confirmed that it would.

Mr. Lovain asked about the feasibility of including two separate versions of the I-66 tolling proposal in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis, one being the current VDOT proposal, and the other a variation without the widening and with increased transit and travel demand management strategies.

Ms. Cuervo said that VDOT has been given clear direction by Governor McAuliffe to pursue the proposal in front of the Board today and that the agency would not support including a second variation in the air quality analysis. She added that such a scenario has been studied before.

Mr. Schwartz said that he did not think the VDOT proposal for tolling I-66 went far enough in terms of providing transit alternatives in the corridor. He said that decades of widening and other improvements to I-66 have resulted in no improvement in traffic conditions. He said that he did not think the proposal was ready for action at the meeting that day and signaled his intention to vote against it.

Ms. Smyth noted that both her district and its residents were impacted by both of the I-66 projects. She said that while her constituents would like to be able to take Metro all the way out to Gainesville and not worrying about adding lanes, she noted that something like that would require another few billions more which was not available. What we have available are these two project proposals. She thanked VDOT for working with county staff, with constituents, with residents in my district, starting early on as the project work progresses and to be sure that we have minimized the impact, the right-of-way takings. She expressed concern about the impacts of construction of the I-66 express lanes outside the Beltway, especially the taking of homes, clear-cutting of trees, impacts on storm water management, and general degradation of the visual and aesthetic landscape in the corridor. She also reiterated her concern, expressed at a previous meeting, that the proposal would be highly disruptive for traffic on several major north-south arterials that cross I-66 and would require major bridge and overpass replacement. She noted that she would like a commitment from VDOT to work to minimize those impacts to the right-of-way, the construction impacts, maintaining the access to the Metro stations and the biking and pedestrian access during construction, on residents, businesses and commuters.

Ms. Cuervo of VDOT noted that VDOT plans to continue to its extensive outreach to hear our citizens to minimize impacts to neighborhoods to work very closely with you and with all the communities that are impacted.

Mr. Elrich echoed Mr. Schwartz's concerns about VDOT's I-66 proposal. He said he thought it needed a much greater focus on transit and demand management. He expressed concern that this and many other projects like it purport to be multimodal but really just perpetuate reliance on automobiles. He also said that he did not think the proposal was ready for action at that day's meeting and signaled his intention to vote against it.

Mr. Herling asked what the impact would be if the Board did not to approve the I-66 proposals that day. He also sought reassurance that the concerns of Ms. Smyth, Mr. Fiset, and Mr. Schwartz would really be incorporated into the project.

Ms. Cuervo explained that any delay at this point could keep the projects from being completed under the leadership of Governor McAuliffe. She reassured Mr. Herling that VDOT would indeed work to address the concerns that Board members had raised. She also reiterated VDOT's position

that it views this project as much more than a road project, with unprecedented focus on new park-and-ride lots and bus services with easy access to the new express lanes.

Ms. Cuervo responded to several comments from the Board's discussion thus far. First, she reassured Ms. Smyth that VDOT would work very closely with elected officials and nearby communities to minimize the impacts of construction. She also said that VDOT is fully aware of the needs related to the bridge and overpass replacements. Second, she explained to Mr. Fisetto that some of the toll revenues collected inside the Beltway might have to be spent outside the corridor, in particular for some toll gantries near Dulles Airport. Third, she told Mr. Schwartz that VDOT would be working closely with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to identify park-and-ride and transit improvements to serve commuters from Fauquier County, including more frequent bus service.

Ms. Hudgins signaled her intention to support the I-66 proposal, due in part to VDOT's extensive outreach with local jurisdictions to address their concerns. However, she said, she also expects by the fall, when the project is up for final TPB approval, much greater demonstration of a commitment to true multimodal improvements as part of the project, citing past experience with other major VDOT projects that did not come through on their promises for expanded multimodal options.

Chair Mendelson brought the motion to a vote. The motion was approved, with two "Nay" votes, from Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Elrich, and one abstention, from Mr. Fisetto.

8. Approval of Scope of Work for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2015 CLRP and the FY 2015-2020 TIP

Ms. Posey said that the Scope of Work memo lists the tasks for the conformity assessment of the 2015 CLRP and the FY 2015-2020 TIP. She said the assessment is scheduled to conclude in September, at which point the assessment will be open for public comment. She said that the schedule for approving the 2015 CLRP is in October.

A motion to approve the scope of work was made. The motion was seconded and was passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. Briefing on the COG Cooperative Forecasting Process

Due to time constraints, Item 9 was postponed until the March TPB meeting.

10. Review of Draft FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Srikanth said that the draft FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the TPB's annual budget and includes all of the federally mandated work activities that the TPB must do to

maintain certification as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). He said that the development of the UPWP and the adoption by the MPO is required by federal regulations, and the UPWP has to be approved by the Feds before the funding will become available.

Referring to the presentation document, he said that the proposed UPWP budget is about \$13.3 million - about 97 percent \$12.8 million of which comes from Federal Highway and the FTA and the remaining 3 percent, about \$450 thousand from Federal Aviation Administration and grant monies from the airports in this region. He noted that next month staff expects to have identified carryover money from the current fiscal year, which would be added to this proposed budget for next fiscal year. Mr. Srikanth said that the budget assumed funding at the same level as the current fiscal year since the federal budget has not yet been appropriated by the US Congress. The TPB's FY 2016 Budget will have to be amended once federal funding amounts have been finalized.

Mr. Srikanth said that one change to the proposed budget is that the three state DOTs agreed to reallocate some funding from their technical assistance accounts to support the core work program. He said that some of this additional money would go to the mandated regional household travel survey that occurs once every ten years, and towards implementing enhancements to the regional travel demand model.

Mr. Srikanth then reviewed the seven program areas of the UPWP. Highlighting some of the new activities, he noted the new performance-based planning and development for the CLRP and TIP as required by MAP-21, the joint TPB and MWAQC multi-sector working group to study greenhouse gas emissions, and the work to compile a list of unfunded projects.

Mr. Srikanth said that the UPWP is up for a thirty-day public comment period, and will be scheduled for TPB approval in March.

Chair Mendelson asked about potential impacts that the uncertainty of federal funding may have on the program.

Mr. Srikanth said that 80 percent of the TPB's budget comes from federal agencies and the remaining 20 percent from the State DOTs and local jurisdictions via their MWCOG dues. He said that changes to the federal funds, would affect the amount of matching money that the DOTs and local jurisdictions would provide to match the federal funding.

Mr. Kannan commended TPB staff and the Board for taking up both the list of unfunded projects and updates to the travel demand model as new tasks in the work program.

11. Briefing on the Draft FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP)

Mr. Ramfos referred to the draft FY 2016 Commuter Connections Work Program (CCWP) and said that the budget will increase about 11 percent to accommodate data collection in 2016 related to the State of the Commute report and the guaranteed ride home program, and adjustments to the carpool incentive offered by Commuter Connections. He said that the work program would also include

money for revising the transportation demand management (TDM) framework methodology. He said that the state DOTs had reviewed and approved the draft work program. In addition, both the Commuter Connections Subcommittee and the Technical Committee provided comment. He said the draft work program was open for public comment and that it will be up for approval by the TPB in March. Once the program is approved, Commuter Connections will work with the states to make necessary TIP adjustments.

12. Briefing on the Implementation of the TPB Regional Priority Bus Project under the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Program

Due to time constrains, Item 12 was postponed until the March TPB meeting.

NOTICE ITEM

13. Notice of Proposed Amendment to the Update Projects and Funding in the District of Columbia Section of the FY 2015-2020 TIP

Mr. Srikanth referenced the notice included in the mailout packet that DDOT is requesting to amend the 2015-2020 TIP for highway, transit, and non-motorized projects in the District.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that the proposed changes primarily adjust D.C.'s proposed funding to match updates as part of the annual process within DDOT. He said that 17 new projects that would also be included.

Mr. Srikanth said that this item would be an action item for the March agenda.

OTHER ITEMS

14. Other Business

Chair Mendelson said that the items that were dropped from the meeting for time would be presented at the March TPB meeting.

No other business was brought before the Board.

15. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.