

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

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**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
September 17, 2008**

Members and Alternates Present

Andrew Beacher, Loudoun County
Nat Bottigheimer, WMATA
Muriel Bowser, DC Council
Robert Catlin, City of College Park
Daniel Drummond, City of Fairfax
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County
Brian A. Glenn, FTA
Lyn Erickson, MDOT
Catherine Hudgins, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Charles Jenkins, Frederick County
Michael Knapp, Montgomery County
Timothy Lovain, Alexandria City Council
Michael C. May, Prince William County
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Mark Rawlings, DDOT
Rick Rybeck, DDOT
C. Paul Smith, City of Frederick
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Reuben Snipper, City of Takoma Park
David Snyder, City of Falls Church
JoAnne Sorenson, VDOT
Patsy Ticer, Virginia Senate
Harriet Tregoning, DC Office of Planning
Todd M. Turner, City of Bowie
Margaret Vanderhye, Virginia House of Delegates
Jonathan Way, City of Manassas
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County
Patrick Wojahn, City of College Park

Bill Wren, City of Manassas Park
Christopher Zimmerman, Arlington County

MWCOG Staff and Others Present

Ron Kirby
Michael Clifford
Jim Hogan
Nick Ramfos
Bob Griffiths
Andrew Meese
Michael Farrell
Debbie Leigh
Deborah Etheridge
Andrew Austin
Michael Eichler
Beth Newman
Monica Bansal
Darren Smith
Erin Morrow
Tim Canan
Karin Foster
Feng Xie
Paul DesJardin COG/CPS
Dave Robertson COG/EO
Joan Rohlfs COG/DEP
Jeff King COG/DEP
Bill Orleans PG ACT
Bob Owolabi Fairfax County DOT
Tom Biesiadny Fairfax County DOT
Jim Maslanka City of Alexandria
Alex Verzosa City of Fairfax
Angelica Betts Prince William County
Greg McFarland NVTC
Dan Malouff Arlington County DOT
Kiman Chot Maryland Department of Planning
Monica Backmon Prince William County DOT

1. Public Comment

Bob Chase, Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance, said that reductions in carbon dioxide emissions will be achieved largely through technology, not through behavioral changes. He said

technological improvements were largely responsible for recent and anticipated improvements in ozone emissions. He said that the same advocates who had misrepresented the reality of the air quality problem in the past were now embracing global warming and climate change as a way to stop important road projects. He said the adoption of a regional plan for reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) should not proceed until an evaluation has been conducted of the cost-effectiveness and the benefits of potential CO₂ reduction measures. Copies of his remarks were submitted for the record.

2. Approval of the Minutes of July 16, 2008

Mr. Zimmerman made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2008 TPB meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

3. Report of the Technical Committee

Referring to the mailout material, Mr. Rawlings said a number of items were reviewed for inclusion in the TPB agenda. The Technical Committee provided comments on these items:

- The 2009 authorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Programs;
- The COG Climate Change Report;
- The Washington region's Car-Free Day;
- The schedule for the 2008 Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP), the FY 2009-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and associated air quality conformity analysis;
- The public forum on the TIP that was held September 11 at the Citizen Advisory Committee meeting;
- The draft Call for Projects document and the schedule for the air quality conformity assessment for the 2009 CLRP and the FY 2010-2015 TIP; and
- The development of the CLRP Aspirations and "What Would It Take?" scenarios;

The Technical Committee also reviewed and discussed the following items not the TPB agenda:

- The status of the Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) program;
- A new financial analysis to be performed in 2009 in preparation for the major update of the 2010 CLRP.
- An amendment to the FY 2009 UPWP to revise the budget to reflect the final funding allocations to be provided by DDOT, MDOT, and VDOT, and to modify certain work tasks. This amendment was approved by the TPB Steering Committee at its meeting on September 5;
- An update on the status of the recently completed regional household travel survey; and

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- An update on the current activities of the travel forecasting subcommittee.

4. Report of the Citizens Advisory Committee

Referring to the handout report, Mr. Martin said the CAC has been very active in the past months. He noted that instead of holding the CAC's regular monthly meeting the previous Thursday, a forum on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) had been conducted. Panelists at the forum included representatives from the state DOTs and WMATA. Each DOT representative provided an overview of the organization's process for approving a budget, including how projects are selected and funded. The panelists also provided information about ways in which the public can become more actively involved in the project selection process. He said that for some time the CAC has been concerned with how the public can get involved in project selection. He noted that last year the committee had recommended that a TIP forum should be convened at the beginning of the TIP process, as opposed to the end, and the committee appreciates the TPB's responsiveness to this recommendation.

Mr. Martin said that comments and questions by members of the public and the CAC focused on the process for developing the TIP and the extent to which this reflects regional priorities and consensus. The panelists acknowledged that regional coordination is always a challenge, but they noted some of the ways in which coordination occurs among agencies and jurisdictions to develop and implement regional plans and how the TPB serves as an effective arena for this coordination.

Some attendees also made recommendations on how to improve public information about regional transportation plans, including a suggestion that the TPB focus attention on the development of the CLRP at these forums, not just the TIP. Mr. Martin said that panelists also addressed questions regarding specific projects.

Regarding the scenario study, Mr. Martin called attention to the CAC report which included a memorandum with recommendations from the committee. He said the CAC has convened a subcommittee to examine the process for the design of the scenarios. He said this subcommittee met in August and has been in frequent contact since then via email.

Mr. Martin emphasized the committee's interest in seeing the scenario study used as a forum for regional priority-setting for transportation planning in the region. He said it has sometimes been difficult to see how the study is being used for this broad, strategic objective. However he noted that at the Scenario Study Task Force meeting that morning, he was pleased to see a level of discussion in which participants were beginning to grapple with serious issues related to priority-setting.

Mr. Martin briefly explained the six recommendations on the scenario study in the CAC memorandum:

1. The development of the scenarios should be tied more explicitly to the TPB Vision.
2. Transportation planning must take a more targeted approach for assigning land use shifts among activity centers in both the Aspirations and What Would It Take scenario.
3. The transportation component for the Aspiration scenario should focus highway and transit accessibility improvements on prioritized activity centers identified by a more targeted land use development approach.
4. There should be a clearly articulated interaction between the Aspirations and the What Would It Take scenarios so that the conclusions from the What Would It Take scenario can be used to further explore options in the Aspiration scenario.
5. External factors such as gas prices and housing issues must be addressed either through change to the model or by using other tools to analyze the potential effects of these factors.
6. The scenario study process should be used to support the creation of a financially unconstrained transportation plan of regionally prioritized projects.

Chairman Mendelson thanked Mr. Martin for the report.

Mr. Jenkins said he was hearing from members of the CAC who are frustrated that the committee is unwilling to shake out of its modus operandi. Specifically, he said that dissatisfied members of the committee would like to have meetings outside the COG offices so that committee members could learn about issues and concerns in different corners of the region. They are also interested in holding meetings once every three months that would last three to four hours, instead of the monthly two-hour meetings that the committee currently holds.

Mr. Martin said these comments were first raised in June and were briefly discussed at the July meeting. However, he said the CAC had not had a chance to discuss them since because the committee did not meet in August and the September meeting was devoted to the TIP Forum. He said that the concerns would be discussed at the October meeting. He noted that the CAC has conducted meetings around the region in the past and at that time, many members of the committee found it more difficult to get from one side of the region to another than to get to a central location like COG. But he said that perhaps this issue could be addressed if the meetings were accessible by transit. He also noted that the committee has tried to be sure that people have a chance to participate in its subcommittee work via conference call and email.

Mr. Jenkins said that if meetings were held in places like Frederick they could be televised on the local cable television station, which would provide more exposure for the CAC.

5. Report of the Steering Committee

Mr. Kirby said the Steering Committee met on September 5, 2008, and approved an amendment to the FY 2009-2014 TIP to include a sidewalk project in Vienna, VA, and a traffic information project at Tyson's Corner Mall. He said the committee also approved an amendment to the 2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to reflect the final budget allocation numbers from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). He said the net reduction from UPWP the TPB approved in March was \$148,000.

Mr. Kirby referred to the letters packet included in the mailout. He said the Metro Board of Directors sent a letter committing \$150,000 for the TPB's Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education Campaign. He said the second item in the packet was an update on the progress of the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program. He said the chairman of the MATOC Steering Committee will provide the TPB with a full briefing at its November meeting, prior to the December rollout of the MATOC Program. He highlighted some areas of recent progress outlined in the update.

Mr. Kirby said he had included an article from the Washington Post on the California Bill SB 375, which will enact a program to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions into the metropolitan planning process, specifically designating Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in California to prepare strategies focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through transportation and community planning. He said staff will closely review this legislation as the TPB moves forward with work on the "What Would It Take?" scenario. Mr. Kirby said the final item in the letters packet is an announcement noting that the Senate approved the \$8 billion restoration of funding from the general fund to the Highway Trust Fund. He said this action does not address the long-term funding problem for transportation, but it deals with a very critical short-term problem.

Mr. Kirby referred to the information distributed at the TPB meeting concerning the next session of the TPB Community Leadership Institute (CLI), which will be held in November 2008. He said that based on the positive response from elected official Patrick Wojahn of College Park, who attend the CLI in April, TPB staff has been working with former TPB Chairs Kathy Porter and Peter Shapiro to design a CLI specifically geared to elected officials. He asked Ms. Porter to say a few words about the initiative.

Ms. Porter said she would like to encourage TPB members to think of people on their legislative bodies or other local officials that would benefit from the opportunity to better understand the regional transportation planning process. She said the CLI is designed for people who know little about the TPB, adding that she is looking for attendees who may be new members of the TPB, an alternate, or a local official interested in transportation. She asked the TPB to review the information in the handout and contact her or Darren Smith of TPB staff with questions or recommendations for participants.

Mr. Wojahn said he encourages new members of the TPB to attend the CLI. He said he found it useful in providing a good overview of the transportation planning process. He added that it is a good way to network with other community leaders interested in regional issues.

Mr. Jenkins asked for clarification regarding the TIP amendment requested by the Virginia Department of Transportation for five to seven plasma screen installations at a cost of \$400,000.

Ms. Sorenson said the screens are part of the transportation management planning for the Dulles rail and Capital Beltway HOT lanes projects to help people find out what is going on with both projects. She said the screens will also alert motorists to the latest maintenance or traffic issues and how to avoid delays.

Ms. Hudgins added that the cost of the screens is part of the congestion mitigation and public relations for the project. She said Mr. Jenkins could inquire further from VDOT about the actual cost of the public relations component of the project.

Mr. Turner asked if the handouts pertaining to the Community Leadership Institute could be sent electronically to TPB members.

Mr. Kirby said the TPB would receive an electronic version of the information.

Mr. Knapp thanked Mr. Kirby for including the article on SB 375. He noted that this type of conversation has occurred at the TPB on a smaller scale surrounding the Transportation/Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program. He asked if it would be possible to provide the TPB with a short overview of SB 375 in the coming months. He said it would be helpful for TPB members to understand the principles and elements of the bill, especially in light of the coming reauthorization of the federal transportation bill.

Mr. Kirby said staff would prepare a short briefing for the TPB on SB 375.

Chairman Mendelson referred to the schedule for the Metropolitan Area Transportation Operations Coordination (MATOC) Program that was included in the mailout, and asked why the initial meeting of the executive committee would not occur earlier.

Mr. Kirby said the executive committee has committed to the funding and agreements for the MATOC Program and that the purpose of the meeting is to brief them on the operational aspects of the program.

Chairman Mendelson said it would be better to have the meeting sooner rather than later, so that any potential issues could be worked out in a timely fashion.

Mr. Kirby said the scheduling of the meeting in late fall reflects the difficulty of coordinating the schedules of executive committee members, but that he will ask the chairman of the MATOC committee to accelerate the date of the meeting.

Chairman Mendelson thanked Mr. Kirby and noted that hardly a week goes by when there are not a number of incidents where agency partners and the public would benefit from better regional coordination. He noted that the memorandum was drafted on September 10, seven years after the attacks of September 11, 2001, which was the impetus for the MATOC Program.

6. Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Mendelson chose not to make remarks at this time.

7. Approval of Policy Principles for the 2009 Authorization of Federal Surface Transportation Programs

Mr. Kirby noted that the TPB received a briefing at its July 16, 2008 meeting on the report of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission related to the 2009 federal surface transportation program authorization. He said that a memorandum from the July 16 TPB meeting reviewing other authorization-related activities was included in the packet for today's meeting, with minor updates. He noted the recent action by Congress to make up an \$8 billion shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund, but said that it was a one-time fix and shortfalls are still projected for future years if new revenues are not found. He reviewed other related proposals mentioned in the memorandum, including those to create national infrastructure banks, along with legislation to address climate change. He also described the recently formed Metropolitan Mobility Caucus in Congress, and noted that several members from jurisdictions in the region have joined the Caucus.

Mr. Kirby said that he had drawn out common themes from the various authorization-related reports along with previous comments by TPB members to draft the set of proposed TPB authorization principles, which were included in the mailout packet. He then summarized the draft principles and invited discussion.

Mr. Snyder moved to adopt TPB Resolution R6-2009, approving the set of policy principles for the 2009 authorization of federal surface transportation programs. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Snyder moved to amend the policy principles cited in Resolution R6-2009 to add the phrase "and to ensure that it is operated efficiently and safely" to the end of principle two. He said that the language should make it clear that it is not just new facilities that are needed, but also new technology and other tools to get the most out of the existing infrastructure and ensure maximum safety.

The amendment was seconded and approved without discussion by unanimous consent.

Mr. Rybeck asked if Mr. Kirby could address the idea of auctions of emissions allowances, which was discussed at the September 5 meeting of the TPB Technical Committee, but which Mr. Rybeck noticed was absent from the draft principles document.

Mr. Kirby said that his inclination was not to include that topic in the draft because it could open a broad discussion on a relatively new concept, and that given the uncertainty about it and other specific climate change policy strategies, it was unlikely to be implemented in the near term at a large scale. He also noted that this idea, along with other strategies proposed in climate change legislation, could necessitate a separate accounting of transit funding, which potentially conflicts with the mode-neutrality advocated in the draft principles.

Mr. Rybeck said he appreciated the concern about potential complications with implementation, but said that the same applies to other ideas included in the draft principles. He said the concern could be ameliorated by just taking the perspective that it is a general exploration of new sources of revenue.

Mr. Rybeck moved to amend the policy principles cited in Resolution R6-2009 to add a fourth bullet under principle five that would read "Auction of pollution emission allowances."

Mr. Lovain said that he had some misgivings about the amendment because he saw it as something that would be implemented under climate change legislation as opposed to the transportation authorization bill, which is the focus of the policy principles.

Mr. Smith said that he also objected to the amendment, as he is not in favor of implementing an emissions auctioning process. He said that even if a more concrete linkage between carbon emissions and climate change is established, he was not ready to advocate a measure that would be that far-reaching.

Ms. Tregoning said that the issues of carbon emissions and climate change could very well find their way into the transportation bill, and that as such it may be useful for the TPB to have a stated position.

The amendment was approved by voice vote.

Mr. Rybeck moved to amend the policy principles cited in Resolution R6-2009 to add an additional (fifth) bullet under principle five that would read "Value capture." He said that the State of Virginia has been active in using value capture as a source of funding for transportation projects, it has been used in the District to fund the New York Avenue Metro Station, and is being contemplated as a funding source for a new Metro station in the Potomac Yards area in Alexandria and Arlington County. He described value capture broadly as the notion that particular property owners get a specific benefit related to transportation investments, and that

these property owners are willing and able to help pay for those investments. He said that including this bullet would help convey the idea that there are several different possibilities for funding transportation investment. The motion was seconded.

Chairman Mendelson asked Mr. Rybeck if value capture was potentially a substantial funding source for the federal government, or just at the local level and at a project-specific scale.

Mr. Rybeck said that studies of the Metrorail system have shown that the appreciation in land value around the stations, excluding general land-value inflation, has more than equaled the cost of constructing the original system. He said that instead of primarily being a windfall to land owners around the stations, that value could have been used to make Metrorail practically self-financing. He said that in terms of the federal transportation authorization, the federal funding formulas can be changed to incentivize state and local governments to pursue certain strategies, such as value capture.

Mr. Snyder said that while he does not oppose the concept of value capture, he is concerned that including it in the TPB policy principles would give decision-makers at the federal level an excuse to again shirk their obligation to provide the funding necessary for critical infrastructure. He said he did not favor Mr. Rybeck's proposed amendment.

The amendment failed on a voice vote.

Mr. Zimmerman said that the draft policy principles were too watered-down to have much of an impact, or be very memorable even to the TPB members themselves. He said that if it is just a matter of being formally on record, then the document suits the purpose, but if the intent is to be influential in the process as a body, then the statement needs to be shorter and more explicit. He said that it could simply state that more money is needed, and it is needed now. He said that even if it mentions other potential funding sources, it should clearly advocate for raising the gas tax, and call for authorization to occur on time so that additional funding is not delayed.

Mr. Zimmerman said that the assertion in principle three should be made more pointed, to clearly state that transit projects should not be subject to a different, more cumbersome process for funding than highway projects. He said that the issue of modal parity is the most significant issue for the TPB to raise as part of the authorization process. He said that he would advocate delaying approval of the policy principles until next month so that the draft could be made more succinct, but that short of a delay, he would like to see the wording of principle three be made much more direct to emphasize modal parity.

Ms. Tregoning concurred with Mr. Zimmerman, and said that given the financial crisis and higher transportation costs for families, the TPB should also be making the policy argument that investing in transportation, particularly in transit, can help stabilize property values by providing low-cost access to jobs and daily needs.

Mr. Lovain said that the authorization process could present a real opportunity to redirect a significant share of transportation funding resources away from the states and to metropolitan regions, as advocated in principle four. He said that this would be an improvement over the current structure, and that many proposals envision greater resources going to Metropolitan Planning Organizations like the TPB. He said that under these proposals MPOs would be able to make decisions between investments in various modes under mode-neutral criteria, though transit advocates are concerned about how fair such criteria would turn out to be. He also said that while the process for obtaining transit funding needs to be streamlined, he would not want to see the federal New Starts program be put on a formula basis.

Mr. Drummond moved to table the motion to approve Resolution R6-2009 and postpone further consideration of the motion to the October 15 TPB meeting. He said that he would like to see the statement of policy principles be more assertive and to the point, especially given the urgency of the need for funding.

Mr. Way said that some of the suggestions made by members to make the document more pointed and succinct would move it away from being a true policy document, and potentially make it less inclusive for TPB members.

Mr. Snyder concurred with Mr. Way, and said that while the TPB may have opportunities in the future to make stronger statements about specific federal policies under consideration, the draft document is a good first step in setting forth policy principles.

Ms. Erickson said that she had circulated for the information of members a draft document representing an effort by MDOT to establish policy principles for authorization, similar to the TPB document. She said that many other agencies and groups are putting together similar documents just to initiate discussion about general policy principles, as the draft TPB document would. She said that given the activity by other bodies, approval of the draft document today by the TPB would be timely.

Mr. Zimmerman asked Ms. Erickson to clarify the portion of the MDOT document that was comparable in purpose to the TPB's draft policy principles. He asked if page six of the document contained the federal-level policy goals.

Ms. Erickson said that page five of the draft MDOT document discusses the 20-year statewide Maryland Transportation Plan as a basis for the federal-level goals, which are on page six. She said these include funding and financing strategies, and that MDOT is soliciting comments from elected officials in the state while the document is in draft form.

Mr. Zimmerman said that the MDOT example was closer to what he had in mind for the TPB document, as the list of goals is succinct and specific.

Mr. Smith said that while perhaps some of the points in the draft TPB policy principles document could be made more specific, principle one dealing with reform of environmental processes is as specific as possible given the complexity of the issue, and raises a very important point. He said he would like to move forward with a vote on the document today.

Chairman Mendelson asked Mr. Kirby about the time-sensitivity of the item.

Mr. Kirby said that he concurred with Ms. Erickson about the timeliness of TPB action given that the conversation about federal authorization is already underway, and it would be good for the TPB to establish general points of agreement at this time and then follow up with more specifics. He said that returning with a more succinct yet more specific document would be quite difficult because of the level of complexity of the issues. He said that there is more time to add specifics and that the statements already included in the document are fairly strong. He said that the specific points Mr. Zimmerman raised about advocating for modal parity and for an increase in the gas tax are both included in the current text.

Mr. Wojahn said that given the scope of the changes to the federal program that are advocated in the draft TPB policy principles document, it was important for the TPB to act quickly so that members can start to work towards building support for the changes and forming consensus among similar organizations.

Chairman Mendelson said that as a proposed statement of policy, the proposed document was likely to be too general for some and too specific for others. He said that the document will be referred to again at the TPB and possibly added to or revised over the next year as Congress takes up the authorization discussion. He said that he finds the positions to be consistent and clearly articulated in the draft document, and supports approval of the document today.

The motion to table Resolution R6-2009 to the October 15 TPB meeting failed on a voice vote.

The motion to adopt Resolution R6-2009 passed on a voice vote, approving as amended the set of policy principles for the 2009 authorization of federal surface transportation programs.

8. Briefing on the Review Draft of the COG Climate Change Report, and Approval of TPB Comments on the Report

Ms. Rohlfs, Chief of Air Quality Planning at COG, provided a presentation on the results of the Draft COG Climate Change Steering Committee's Report on Climate Change that was out for public comment until September 30, 2008. She said the Climate Change Steering Committee was created by the COG Board of Directors in April 2007 and tasked with developing a regional inventory of greenhouse gases, recommending regional greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures, and preparing a report for the COG Board of Directors on climate change principles. She said the report contains a best practice section that illustrates current practices of local

jurisdictions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. She said the Climate Change Steering Committee supported a number of advocacy positions on climate change.

Ms. Rohlfs reviewed the United States' contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. She provided an overview of increasing global surface temperatures and the vulnerability of the Washington region to projected sea-level rise. She said one third of the greenhouse gas emissions in the region result from the transportation sector. She said that emissions are expected to increase by 45 percent between 2005 and 2050.

Ms. Rohlfs said the Climate Change Steering Committee proposes multiple recommendations to address rising greenhouse gas emissions. She briefly reviewed the recommendations for energy, transportation, and land-use.

Chairman Mendelson asked TPB members if they had any comments on the draft letter containing TPB comments on the COG Climate Change Report to the COG Board of Directors.

Ms. Tregoning made a comment on the second page, first full paragraph of the letter concerning a recommendation in the Climate Change Report suggesting collaboration with the TPB to evaluate how a regional process modeled after the current regional conformity process for air quality planning might be adapted to address greenhouse gas emissions. She noted that the paragraph concludes: "the TPB does not support pursuing a regional conformity process for greenhouse gas emissions at this time." She stated that no one is suggesting that we pursue conformity, but rather that we try to determine what the implications are for our region.

Chair Mendelson surmised that the intent of the recommendations in the Climate Change Report is that the TPB look at greenhouse gas emissions as part of the current air quality conformity process. He asked whether the paragraph could be reworded.

Mr. Tregoning said she thought that the intention of the Climate Change Report is not that the TPB adopt a new conformity process, but that the TPB use the existing process to better understand the implications of greenhouse gas emissions and how they might be addressed through, for example, a cap and trade system.

Mr. Kirby said that the Climate Change Report recommends that the Climate Change Steering Committee coordinate with the TPB to evaluate how a regional process modeled after the current regional conformity process, which is part of the Clean Air Act requirements for ground-level ozone and particulates, might be adapted to address greenhouse gas emissions. He said that the draft letter states that the TPB does not support pursuing a regional conformity process for greenhouse gas emissions at this time, but would be open to further discussion and examination as more information becomes available on the applicability of Clean Air Act provisions for greenhouse gas regulation.

Chairman Mendelson asked for clarification between what the EPA is proposing in terms of increased regulations for greenhouse gas emissions and what the TPB is recommending in the draft letter related to developing a regional process modeled after the conformity process.

Mr. Kirby said that based on the views expressed in the attached letter to EPA from four federal agencies, the regional conformity process may not be appropriate for greenhouse gas emissions because the conformity process is based on metropolitan level standards, whereas greenhouse gas emissions are global in effect. He said that until the issue is resolved, the TPB is recommending cost-effectiveness and cost benefit approaches for evaluating alternative strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He also noted that he understood that the approach to greenhouse gas reduction included in the California bill SB 375 is a “negotiated targets and incentives” approach rather than the “standards and penalties” approach of the Clean Air Act.

Chairman Mendelson asked Ms. Tregoning to craft specific proposed amendments to the language in the letter while other members commented.

Ms. Hudgins referred to the second full paragraph on page two of the letter regarding cost-effectiveness and cost/benefit analysis. She suggested adding a sentence to the end of the paragraph that would allow for flexibility by jurisdiction based on individual preferences of each jurisdiction. She suggested adding: “In addition, the ultimate selection of strategies should recognize that some strategies are easier for the region’s local governments to control than others.”

Chairman Mendelson asked if there was any objection to adding this sentence. He said it was accepted, hearing no objection.

Ms. Hudgins referred to the last sentence of the third full paragraph on page two and asked to omit or reword the sentence, as it contradicts activities conducted with WMATA.

Mr. Kirby suggested substituting that sentence with one referring to park and ride lots.

Ms. Hudgins said she would prefer to take the sentence out entirely.

Chairman Mendelson asked if there was an objection to deleting the last sentence of the third full paragraph on page two. There was no objection and the last sentence was deleted.

Mr. Zimmerman said it is a mistake to refer to a specific numeric amount for a cost per ton threshold. He said his staff was unable to determine how the analysis was derived, particularly for the CNG buses. He noted that while jurisdictions may not be able to accomplish the larger changes given limited resources, smaller items also have benefits. He said there should not be a standard that discourages jurisdictions from doing something that would address both greenhouse gas emissions and other community benefits.

Ms. Tregoning proposed an amendment to the first full paragraph on the second page. She proposed keeping the first and last sentence and inserting the following sentence in between: "The TPB supports a broader evaluation of a regional process for air quality planning that also includes cap and trade, and an allocated VMT budget. The TPB agrees to make recommendations to the COG Board based on its evaluation."

Ms. Sorenson said that the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee should be reviewing the cap and trade option rather than the TPB. She added that something like allocating VMT budgets should be discussed more comprehensively by the TPB before endorsing the concept in a letter. She said she would not support the amendment.

Mr. Rybeck clarified that the TPB would not be endorsing a VMT budget, but just asking that it be analyzed.

Ms. Tregoning confirmed that the new language would not be an endorsement, but a demonstration that the TPB will analyze these things.

Ms. Sorenson said she objected to the amendment.

Chairman Mendelson asked for a vote on the amendment. Eleven supported the approval of the amendment and eleven did not support the amendment. He said the motion failed on a tie and the first full paragraph of page two would not be amended.

Mr. Jenkins asked that his vote against the amendment be recorded. He said he does not believe in the inevitability of man-made global warming.

Chairman Mendelson called for a voice vote on the letter as amended. The letter as amended passed. Mr. Jenkins wished to be noted as voting against the motion.

9. Briefing on a Proposed Metrobus Priority Corridor Network

Chairman Mendelson suggested postponing discussion on Item 9 until the October TPB meeting.

Mr. Hamre said he would be happy to come back in October and share information about the priority corridor network that the WMATA Board will be considering this fall.

Mr. Bottigheimer said WMATA has already begun conversations with other elected bodies in the region. He told TPB members that WMATA would be happy to come to their local elected boards or community meetings to present information about how the bus priority corridor network can be advanced appropriately in each jurisdiction.

10. Briefing on the September 22 Washington Region Car-Free Day

Mr. Ramfos provided a presentation on Car-Free day, an annual worldwide event that is a celebration of alternatives to driving alone, reducing congestion, and addressing air quality challenges. He said Car-Free Day first took place in Europe and will be celebrated in 1,500 cities worldwide, including for the first time in the Washington region. He said the effort is targeted to non-commute activities as well as commuting.

Mr. Ramfos said residents of the region are asked to pledge on the Car-Free Metro DC website that they will not use their cars on September 22, or will use their cars only sparingly. He said the goal is to achieve 10,000 pledges. He said there will be special events hosted around the region on Car-Free Day. He said the TPB Officers participated in a press event on September 2 that included promotion of Car-Free Day. He said this event was timed with the announcement of Commuter Connections' new ride-matching site, which he said will help commuters find alternatives to driving alone. He said there is a 60-second radio advertisement, as well as other promotional materials, that have been circulated to promote Car-Free Day.

12. Briefing on the Draft Call for Projects and Schedule for the Air Quality Conformity Assessment for the 2009 Financially Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP) and FY 2010-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Austin summarized the draft call for projects and said the TPB will be asked to approve the call for projects document at the October 15, 2008, TPB meeting. He said the purpose of the call for projects is to solicit detailed information on new projects for the CLRP and TIP as well as updates to existing project information. He said the documentation outlines the federal regulations, as well as the TPB Vision and policy guidelines that frame project selection.

Mr. Austin said the proposed schedule calls for project submissions by December 5, 2008. He said the public comment period on the project submissions for the draft CLRP and TIP will be between January 15, 2009 and February 14, 2009. He added that April 24, 2009, is the deadline for the TIP project update information and the funding data. He said the draft TIP will be released for a 30-day public comment period on June 11, 2009 and the TPB will be asked to approve the new CLRP and TIP on July 15, 2009.

Chairman Mendelson asked that Items 11 and 13 be included in the agenda for the October 15, 2008, TPB Meeting.

14. Other Business

There was no other business.

15. Adjourn

Chairman Mendelson adjourned the meeting at 2:01 p.m.