

REPORT

TPB Citizens Advisory Committee

March 15, 2006

Larry Martin, CAC Member

The CAC's meeting on March 9 included a discussion with Michael Knapp, the new TPB chair, and focused on public involvement activities for 2006. The meeting was chaired by Larry Martin of the District of Columbia who has been nominated to serve as a CAC vice-chair for this year. CAC Chair Emmet Tydings was unable to attend.

Discussion with 2006 TPB Chair Michael Knapp

Chairman Knapp spent 45 minutes talking with the committee about opportunities for improved public involvement and other new TPB initiatives. He said this is an exciting time and he described several activities he would like to pursue:

- ***More outreach related to the TPB's scenario study*** (the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study). Chairman Knapp noted that the study has produced a significant amount of data and information, and the key question now is how this information should be presented to the public for discussion.
- ***Improved public involvement techniques.*** Chairman Knapp emphasized the importance of improving and clarifying the information the TPB provides. He also said it was important to expand the TPB's reach into communities and with groups that have not typically been involved in regional transportation issues. He said the TPB's upcoming Community Leadership Institute in April/May would be a good first step in establishing relationships with leaders who can act as conduits for public information and input.
- ***Creating incentives for jurisdictions and agencies to make better use of activity centers.*** Chairman Knapp said he would like the TPB to play a more explicit role in promoting the viability of the regional activity centers that were designated by the TPB and COG. Among other things, jurisdictions and agencies must make sure that adequate infrastructure is in place to accommodate new development. He noted that other metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) in the country have implemented small grant programs to promote "livable communities." He suggested this might be an approach that the TPB, as an MPO, might want to take.

CAC member questions and comments included the following:

- ***A cross-jurisdictional funding program for promoting activity centers should be established.*** Several members emphasized the importance of funding in a potential TPB effort to promote activity centers and livable communities. Chairman Knapp agreed that a small grants program would be worth considering.

- ***The TPB's scenario study (RMAS) should be more explicitly used as a tool to promote activity centers and to fund priority transportation projects.*** Regional leaders should find ways to more explicitly connect the scenario study to decision-making at the local, state and regional levels.
- ***The region lacks a regional institutional structure for transportation/land use coordination.*** A member suggested that a goal of the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study should be for the governors and the mayor of D.C. to establish a regional structure for coordinating land use and transportation.
- ***The CAC discussed local challenges.*** Members agreed that transit use should be promoted. However, one member expressed concern that the increased densities associated with transit-oriented development (TOD) would just create more congestion in her neighborhood.

Discussion on TPB Public Involvement Activities for 2006

John Swanson of the COG/TPB staff briefed the committee on this year's planned improvements in public involvement. He described current public involvement activities and recommendations for improvement that the CAC made in January. He emphasized that the TPB staff is trying to be responsive to these recommendations.

Mr. Swanson said that the new public involvement activities were grouped under the following three broad themes:

- ***Education.*** The TPB would be conducting its first Community Leadership Institute in April and May. This institute will be a series of three workshops in which community leaders will learn how to get involved in transportation decision-making.
- ***Information.*** Based on recommendations from the CAC, the TPB staff had already begun a series of website improvements designed to provide more user-friendly information on the region's Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). This new website was presented to the CAC later in the meeting.
- ***Input.*** Mr. Swanson suggested the CAC's public forums on the TPB's scenario study might be enhanced to become vehicles for public input. He also said the TPB may be conducting public opinion polls later this year.

Mr. Swanson introduced two consultants who have been contracted to assist with the new public involvement activities – Peter Shapiro of the Academy for Leadership Foundation and Jennifer Weeks of the Fitzgerald and Halliday.

CAC members asked what kind of participants were being targeted for the Community Leadership Institute. Mr. Shapiro said the goal was to include community leaders who are not already involved in the TPB process. He said that he believed it was important to make a

special effort to include people of color. However, he said that after talking with TPB members around the region, he realized that other types of people, e.g., soccer moms, were also feeling that they are not represented in the TPB process.

Presentation on the New CLRP Project Submissions

Andrew Austin of the COG/TPB staff said the new projects for this year's update to the Constrained Long-Range Plan (CLRP) had originally been released in February. However, he said that the information on the projects had been incomplete, and therefore the projects were being re-released for public comment at the CAC meeting in March.

Mr. Austin gave a presentation on the new projects. He also handed out a description sheet that summarized the projects and announced that a new website had been created featuring information on the CLRP. He emphasized that these enhancements represented a new effort on the part of the TPB staff to provide user-friendly information on the CLRP. These improvements were driven in part by the recent CAC recommendations calling for improved CLRP information.

A CAC member commented that from the new, simplified project information it was clear that the CLRP is “underwhelming” and does not respond to the transportation challenges the region is facing.

Establishing a Working Group on RMAS and Outreach

Larry Martin announced that the CAC Chair, Emmet Tydings, had asked Mr. Martin to chair a CAC Working Group on the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study. Mr. Martin said that he was particularly interested in expanding public outreach activities related to the study. He said that an email announcement would be sent to solicit members for this working group.

ATTENDANCE
CAC Meeting, March 9, 2006

Members in Attendance

1. Ephrem Asebe, MD
2. Nathaniel Bryant, MD
3. Stephen Cerny, VA
4. Elvin Crespo, MD
5. Harold Foster, DC
6. Allen Greenburg, DC
7. Jim Larsen, VA
8. Grace Malakoff, DC
9. Robin Marlin, DC
10. Larry Martin, DC
11. Allen Muchnick, VA
12. Alexandra Simpson, VA

Members Not in Attendance

1. Stephen Caflisch, MD
2. Dan Malouff, VA
3. Emmet Tydings, Chair, MD

Alternate Members in Attendance

Merle Van Horne, DC

Staff/Others

Michael Knapp, TPB Chair
Peter Shapiro, University of Maryland
Jennifer Weeks, Fitzgerald & Halliday
Julie Ruszczyk, VDOT
John Barr, VDOT
Ron Kirby, COG/TPB
John Swanson, COG/TPB
Andrew Austin, COG/TPB