

REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
March 20, 2013
Stephen Still, 2013 CAC Chair

The 2013 CAC held its first meeting of the year on March 14. Most of the meeting focused on getting acquainted and discussing activities for the year ahead. The committee also had a briefing and substantive discussion regarding regional freight planning.

Introductions and Get-Acquainted Session

Chair Still welcomed new and returning committee members, and encouraged the CAC members to think of themselves both as a focus group and as an incubator for new ideas. The chair reminded the committee about the CAC selection process, and emphasized the importance of participation of the committee members, since all were chosen for their unique expertise. Chair Still lead the committee through an interactive icebreaker activity. Members introduced themselves and explained their interest in TPB Citizens Advisory Committee and in regional transportation issues.

John Swanson of TPB staff gave a briefing on the CAC and of the TPB. He also introduced members of the TPB staff who work directly with the CAC, including Ron Kirby, Deb Kerson Bilek, Bryan Hayes, Sarah Crawford, and Ben Hampton.

Ron Kirby, Director of Transportation Planning, provided a briefing on upcoming TPB agenda for the March 20 meeting. He also provided background information on committee structure.

Update on Regional Freight Planning Activities at the TPB

Karin Foster of TPB staff provided a briefing on the region's freight planning activities. Her presentation focused on the Regional Freight Plan, upcoming freight projects and initiatives, freight service in the region and its relationship with population and employment growth. She discussed congestion in the context of freight, noting that trucks are the largest freight mode in the region. She mentioned that while regional freight planning is encouraged, it is not required by federal law. She highlighted the TPB's role in regional freight planning, and mentioned the role of the TPB Freight Subcommittee.

CAC members expressed interest in Ms. Foster's presentation, and spent approximately 10 minutes asking technical questions and acknowledging concerns about the ever-increasing amount of freight that uses the region's infrastructure as it passes through the region. CAC members were especially interested in freight service as it relates to increasing regional congestion, and inquired about the projected percentage increase of freight that the region may see as a result of larger vessels visiting the ports of Baltimore and Norfolk. CAC members also inquired about the impact that this anticipated increase in freight may have on the region's roads

and rail lines – particularly on rail lines that also serve passenger rail. The CAC discussed the possibility of creating uniform commercial parking requirements across the region, as well as the possibility of limiting the time of day when freight can use the road.

The remainder of the conversation focused on issues that members felt citizens should know regarding freight. Key issues raised by members of the CAC were:

- One of the biggest challenges in raising public awareness about freight is unpacking the complexities of ownership and responsibility. For example, freight rail lines are mostly privately owned, although the oversight of them is federal. The TPB should consider conducting public education and engagement activities to enhance the general public’s understanding of the players – specifically “who has say over what, and why?”
- It is important for the public to get a sense of the positive and negative economic impacts of freight for the region.
- Members inquired how the region’s road systems can prepare for the anticipated increase in truck travel. Members also asked the extent to which truck freight contributes to overall congestion on the region’s roads.
- A concern was expressed that in the District, trucks can present safety hazards by parking in bike lanes. Regional planners should work to increase understanding between cyclists and freight operators.

Planning for the Year Ahead and Other Business

Based on feedback from the 2012 CAC, the new committee brainstormed ideas for focus in the coming year. Common themes that emerged in the discussion included: spending more time focusing on unconstrained planning; encouraging the TPB to develop performance measures on connectivity between modes at transit or activity centers; and encouraging the TPB to further create and monitor regional best practices for complete streets design standards.

Other issues of interest to CAC members included:

- The need to assess multimodal connections to identify critical gaps in the regional transportation network. Members wondered if people would increase their use of various modes of transportation if the connections were more complete.
- Continuing to monitor and influence the direction of the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan (RTPP) and the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program.
- Encouraging the TPB to incorporate more metrics into the CLRP about connectivity, as well as basic metrics such as the total amount of roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, rail lines, etc. One CAC member noted that the CLRP analysis does not currently include information on miles

of sidewalks. In other words, “We know how the network performs, but we don’t know what the network is.”

- Learning about plans for the next Household Travel Survey and other travel survey activities of the TPB.

ATTENDEES
CAC Meeting, March 14, 2013

Members Present

1. Steve Still, Chair, (VA)
2. Neha Bhatt (DC)
3. Veronica Davis (DC)
4. Justin Clarke (MD)
5. Cherian Eapen (MD)
6. John Epps (MD)
7. Allen Muchnick (VA)
8. Emmet Tydings (MD)
9. Patrick A. Gough (DC)
10. Tracy Hadden Loh (DC)
11. Emily Oaksford (DC)
12. Jeffrey Parnes (VA)
13. Lorena Rios (VA)
14. David Skiles (VA)
15. Tina Slater (MD)

Alternates Present

- Tom Burell (VA)
Andrea Hamre (DC)
Janie Nham (DC)
Rosemarie Helen Savio (DC)
Jarrett Stoltzfus (MD)
Jeffrey Slavin (MD)

Staff and Guests

- Ron Kirby, COG/TPB staff
John Swanson, COG/TPB staff
Deb Bilek, COG/TPB staff
Bryan Hayes, COG/TPB staff
Karin Foster, COG/TPB staff
Christine Green, Safe Routes to
School National Partnership
Bill Orleans, citizen