
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

July 22, 2020

VIRTUAL MEETING

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Jim Sebastian – DC DOT
Mark Rawlings – DC DOT
Lezlie Rupert – DC DOT
Andrew Trueblood – DC Office of Planning
Samuel Stephens – DC City Council
R. Earl Lewis, Jr. – Maryland DOT
Adrian Boafo - Bowie
Jason Groth – Charles County
Patrick Wojahn – College Park
Denise Mitchell – College Park
Ron Burns – Frederick County
Kelly Russell – City of Frederick
David Edmonston – City of Frederick
Neil Harris – Gaithersburg
Dennis Enslinger – Gaithersburg
Emmet V. Jordon – Greenbelt
Craig Moe - Greenbelt
Gary Erenrich – Montgomery County
Evan Glass – Montgomery County
Terry Bellamy – Prince George’s County
Vic Weissberg – Prince George’s County
Deni Taveras – Prince George’s County
Bridget Donnell Newton – Rockville
Kacy Kostiuk – Takoma Park
Mark Korman – Maryland House of Delegates
Mark Sinner – Virginia DOT
Canek Aguirre – Alexandria
Christian Dorsey – Arlington County
Dan Malouff – Arlington County
David Meyer – City of Fairfax
James Walkinshaw – Fairfax County
David Snyder – Falls Church
Robert Brown – Loudoun County
Kristin Umstadd – Loudoun County
Pamela J. Sebesky – Manassas
Jeannette Rishell – Manassas Park
Ann B. Wheeler – Prince William County
Victor Angry – Prince William County
Shyam Kannan - WMATA
Sandra Jackson – FHWA DC
Julia Koster – NCPC

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Kanti Srikanth
Chuck Bean
Lyn Erickson
Mark Moran
Nick Ramfos
Tim Canan
Andrew Meese
Andrew Austin
Bryan Hayes
Sergio Ritacco
John Swanson
Jon Schermann
Jaleel Reed
Dusan Vuksan
Nicole McCall
Deborah Etheridge
Michael Farrell
Abigail Zenner
Charlene Howard
Kristen Calkins – DC Office of Planning
Kari Snyder – Maryland DOT
Mark Phillips - WMATA

1. VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION PROCEDURES, MEMBER ROLL CALL, AND VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Chair Russell called the meeting to order. She said the meeting would use the same procedures for questions, comments, and voting as it used at previous online meetings. She said the first item was a roll call of members followed by public comment.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll call. Members that were present were listed on the first page of this document.

Chair Russell asked if any comments were received from the public.

Ms. Erickson said that 42 comments were received. She referred to all 31 pages of comment shared with the board. She also referred to a memo that summarizes comment. She said comments were divided into two sections. There were comments on the National Capital Trail Network and comments on equity. She said that most of the comments were in support of the National Capital Trail Network. There were additional comments with recommendations for the National Capital Trail Network. She said that the equity comments asked the board to look at gender mainstreaming in policy making, spending, and budget decisions. She said there were also comments urging the safety resolution to incorporate language specifically calling for the road design to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and user with disabilities.

2. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 17, 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Kostiuk made a motion to approve the minutes from the June TPB meeting.

Mr. Jordan seconded the motion.

The motion was approved.

3. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

There were no comments or questions about the Technical Committee Report.

4. CAC AND AFA REPORT

Ms. Abeles said that the CAC met on June 16 and discussed the safety recommendations and the National Capital Trail Network. She said that the committee endorses Resolution R3-2021 to approve a set of regional safety recommendations and actions. Referring to the committee report, she said, “The 2020 Citizens Advisory Committee endorses prompt adoption of TPB’s proposed Safety Resolution (R3-2021). The committee supports inclusion of an equity statement in the resolution and encourages the board and staff to extend an equity perspective to all their work. The committee supports the TPB’s vision and aspirations to reduce and eliminate transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries in the region. The committee is eager to see the resolution and countermeasures applied equitably and consistently within respective jurisdictions and throughout the region. The committee believes that this action is significant and looks forward to working with the board to make the region safer for everyone.”

Ms. Kostiuk said the AFA met in early July. She said the committee discussed equity in the region and expressed concerns related to the east-west divide when it comes transportation. Other concerns include the digital divide and the need for new outreach methods to connect with traditionally underserved communities. She said that the committee was also briefed on the safety recommendations. The committee encouraged staff to collect data on distracted pedestrians and getting more granular data on race and age. She said she also briefed the committee on the TPB’s curbside management forum and the committee discussed its concerns. Those concerns include curbside access, outdoor restraint seating during the pandemic, and a need to have more drop-off zones near Metro stations.

5. STEERING COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND DIRECTOR’S REPORT

There were no comments or questions about Steering Committee actions and the Director’s Report.

6. CHAIR’S REMARKS

Chair Russell recognized Mr. Burns, who is retiring after 34 years. She also recognized Mr. Sebastian who is leaving DDOT. She said these members and their services are appreciated.

Chair Russell said that at the June meeting the board discussed the social unrest following the death of George Floyd at the hands of police on May 25. During that discussion the board acknowledged the social awakening to the regrettable legacy of racism. She said it is the responsibility and obligation of everyone to conduct daily activities thoughtfully, with fairness and respect for one another. She said the TPB will continue its commitment to equity and will work diligently and deliberately to enhance board and staff consciousness efforts to promote equity in everything they do, with the focus of providing fair and equitable mobility and accessibility to all residents and travelers in the region.

Chair Russell proposed a resolution that articulates and reinforces that the TPB as an organization is fully committed to conducting all its activities in a manner that not only promotes equity but is also antiracist. She said a draft of this resolution was shared with the board before the meeting and asked Mr. Srikanth to review the draft resolution.

Mr. Srikanth said that the resolution notes that equity has been an important policy consideration for the TPB and is noted in its Vision from 1998. Equity is reflected in Region Forward’s call to promote prosperity, accessibility, livability, and sustainability for everyone in the region. Equity is also reflected in the TPB’s environmental justice analysis of its long-range transportation plan to determine if the region’s lower-income population and racial minority groups experience any disproportionate or disparate negative burden from the region’s transportation investments. Equity is also the focus of the 2017 identification of Equity Emphasis Areas.

Mr. Srikanth said that the resolution reaffirms that the TPB believes equity is a fundamental value and defines equity as “the commitment to promote fairness and justice in the development and implementation of projects, programs, and policies.” The resolution recognizes that the TPB members are increasingly committing to intentionally consider equity when making policies for delivering programs and services. The TPB condemns inequitable treatment of any group of people on any basis and reaffirms its commitment to equity in all aspects of transportation planning and programming.

Reviewing the resolved clause Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB resolves that: “Every action that the TPB considers, including every debate we have and every decision we make as the region's MPO, must be viewed through the lens of justice, equity, and fairness. We must recognize past actions that have been exclusionary or had disparate impacts on people of color and marginalized communities, and we must take actions to correct or mitigate the resulting unfairness. From infrastructure to education and enforcement, we must act fairly to ensure equitable and true access to safety, accessibility, and mobility.”

Ms. Sebesky made a motion to adopt Resolution R1-2021 to establish equity as a fundamental value and integral part of all TPB work activities.

Ms. Rishell seconded the motion.

Mr. Dorsey said that he appreciates the work to develop this statement. He said it is strong. He referenced the resolution passed by the COG Board of Directors, which uses some different language. He said there is an opportunity to develop a greater connection between COG and the TPB resolutions. He said that because the resolutions use different language, it gives the public an opportunity to ask why are the different? In an effort to better align the TPB’s resolution to the COG resolution, he offered a friendly amendment. He said this amendment does not change the tenor or tone or substance of the TPB resolution. He said his proposed language strengthens the already strong statement and impacts some of the whereas clauses.

The draft language was shared on the screen.

Mr. Dorsey said that this proposed language adds to the original statement by adding the following text: “our work together will be anti-racist and will advance equity including every debate we have, and every decision we make as the region’s MPO; and the TPB affirms that equity, as a foundational principle, will be woven throughout TPB’s analyses, operations, procurement, programs, and priorities to ensure a more prosperous, accessible, livable, sustainable, and equitable future for all residents.”

Mr. Dorsey said the rest of the changes are wordsmithing for sentence structure. He offered these changes as a friendly amendment.

Ms. Sebesky agreed with the amendment.

Chair Russell thanked Mr. Dorsey for these impactful changes to better align COG and the TPB.

Mr. Snyder said he fully supports the amended resolution. With no other comments

Chair Russell noted that the resolution passed with unanimous support.

ACTION ITEMS

7. REGIONAL CAR FREE DAY 2020 PROCLAMATION

Mr. Ramfos referred to his presentation and provided a brief history of Car Free Day. He said that this year Car Free Day is September 22. He said that the event traditionally gets a lot of media coverage. He said that the pledge goal this year is 11,000 people. He said the board is asked to approve a proclamation and the jurisdictions are encouraged to adopt similar proclamations. He said that the event website is carfreemetrodc.org. He referenced the available promotional materials and social media campaigns. He

said that even though there are sponsors, the event counts on local jurisdictions for support and participation. He added that Commuter Connections is aware that the pandemic will impact the event.

Ms. Taveras suggested changing the slogan from “Commute with Confidence” to “Commute Safely.” She said it is important that people wear masks.

Mr. Ramfos said that the Commuter Connections website is full of safety messages and suggestions for commuting safely.

Ms. Taveras encouraged Commuter Connections to translate those materials into Spanish given the large number of Spanish speaking people in the region who are impacted by the pandemic.

Mr. Ramfos said that there is a translation component as part of Car Free Day.

Mr. Wojahn made a motion to approve the Car Free Day 2020 proclamation.

Ms. Sebesky seconded the motion.

The motion was approved by the board.

Chair Russell signed a copy of the proclamation.

8. FY 2021 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES SET ASIDE PROGRAM FOR MARYLAND AND TPB JURISDICTIONS

Mr. Reed said the Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program provides the TPB the opportunity to fund capital improvement programs and actualize regional priorities around pedestrian access, safety for vulnerable populations, and access to economic opportunity. He referred to his presentation and said the slate of project recommendations are for Maryland. He provided more context on the history of the program and the process for selecting projects. He said that there are unallocated funds this year that will be rolled into the available funds for Maryland projects in FY 2022.

Mr. Reed said that there were two project recommendations. First, he said that Prince George’s County would receive nearly \$1.5 million to make targeted improvements to pedestrian accessibility and safety around 19 public schools. These improvements include upgraded traffic signals, ADA-compliant sidewalks, crosswalks, ramps, and signs. Second, the City of Takoma Park would receive funding to continue the city’s Safe Routes to School programming. Funding will include bike rodeo kits, helmets, and a feasibility study to determine whether and how to implement a traffic garden. More specific information on these projects could be found in the presentation and accompanying memo.

Ms. Taveras made a motion to adopt Resolution R2-2021 to approve projects for funding under the Federal Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program for Suburban Maryland for FY 2021.

Mr. Lewis seconded the motion.

Mr. Wojahn said it is unfortunate that there is money unspent and asked why there were not more applications this year.

Mr. Srikanth said that next year the application process will start earlier, and that staff will do additional outreach. He said the pandemic may have impacted the number of applications this year.

Mr. Lewis added that MDOT requested that the TPB not fund projects on a partial basis. This policy change may have also impacted the number of applications. He added that the funds will be carried over.

Ms. Kostiuik said that these projects will be very beneficial for kids. She said the Takoma Park project, in particular, is great because it connects kids to more opportunities to learn about biking.

Mr. Swanson said that staff was concerned about not using all the money. He said extensive outreach next year should ensure more applications and a more competitive process.

The motion was approved unanimously by the board.

9. SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

Chair Russell reminded the board of the briefing and extensive discussion on this topic at the June meeting. She said that she worked with other board members to advise staff on developing the draft safety recommendations for the resolution.

Mr. Srikanth reviewed the resolution. He said it starts with a recognition that the TPB's policy documents recognize that safety is important and acknowledged the new federal mandate to adopt roadway safety targets. The resolution documents the TPB's dissatisfaction with the safety outcomes of the region's roadways. The resolution references the regional safety study and notes that the yearlong process resulted in identifying a set of actions that jurisdictions and agencies in the region could individually and collectively take. The resolution also acknowledges the history of traffic laws related safety enforcement actions where those enforcements have been discriminatory, exclusionary, or have had disparate impact on people of color and marginalized communities. The resolution calls for the unconditional commitment to equity and anti-racism, noting that all safety measures, including those that are attached to this resolution, should be applied with particular attention to Equity Emphasis Areas identified by the TPB.

Mr. Srikanth said that the TPB safety statement says that every action that the TPB considers, including every debate we have and every decision we make as the region's MPO, must be viewed through the lens of justice, equity, and fairness; it must recognize past actions that have been exclusionary or have had disparate impacts on people of color and marginalized communities, and we must take actions to correct or mitigate the resulting unfairness. From infrastructure, to education, and to enforcement, we must act fairly to ensure equitable and true access to safety, accessibility, and mobility.

Mr. Srikanth said that in addition to this statement on equity, the TPB resolution has four sections. He said section 1 has three specific actions that address the predominant cause for fatalities and serious injuries in the region. Section 2 calls on members to identify and implement any and all applicable strategies that could reduce these three types of fatalities and serious injury crashes. Section 3 commits the TPB to establish a regional safety assistance program at about \$250,000 annually. This program is intended to assist TPB member jurisdictions and agencies in their effort to identify and develop safety strategies. Section 4 calls upon TPB member to adopt safety goals consistent with Vision Zero or towards zero deaths.

Mr. Snyder made a motion to adopt Resolution R3-2021 to approve a set of regional safety recommendations and actions.

Mr. Wojahn seconded the motion.

Chair Russell asked for a motion to amend the equity statement in this resolution to reflect the language approved earlier.

Mr. Snyder made a friendly motion to accept the changes to the equity statement.

Ms. Kostiuik said that there was a small group of board members working on concerns about primary seatbelt enforcement provision. She thanked the group for their efforts to improve the resolution. She expressed concerns about the board passing a provision advocating for primary seatbelt enforcement, because of serious concerns about potential impacts on communities of color. She said she would not support the resolution.

Mr. Lewis said it is great that the TPB is working to have a positive impact on vehicle and pedestrian safety. He said that as a person of color he does not want the resolution to adversely impact communities of color. He said that enforcement is still important and that ticketing people for not wearing seatbelts can save lives.

Chair Russell called for abstentions and nays.

Ms. Kostiuik voted nay on the motion.

Ms. Taveras abstained.

The motion was approved by the board.

10. TRANSIT ACCESS FOCUS AREAS

Mr. Swanson referred to his briefing to the board in June, where he spoke about the methodology for developing the draft list of Transit Access Focus Areas. Since then he has worked with board members and jurisdiction staff to revise the list. He encouraged the board to review the presentation and methodology. He said that this is a limited list of 49 station areas that are prime locations for pedestrian and bicycle improvements. These are places where sidewalks, crosswalks, and trails are lacking. These are also places where there is room and a demand for improvement. They have high concentrations of jobs and populations. He referenced the map on slide 7 of his presentation. He said that this list of station access areas is meant to be revisited on a periodic basis.

Mr. Swanson described the contents of the resolution.

Ms. Newton thanked staff for this work. She made a motion to adopt Resolution R4-2021 to approve a regional list of Transit Access Focus Areas.

Ms. Umstatted seconded the motion.

Mr. Kannan said this is fantastic work. He said that these pedestrian improvements that bring access to transit are among the most cost-effective measures we can make to reduce congestion in the region and open up economic opportunity. He said that this list should be used to guide decision-making.

Mr. Srikanth said it took more than 18 months of coordination to develop this list. He agreed that it needs to be used in decision-making. He said it was important to raise awareness of this list with decision-makers in the jurisdictions.

The motion was approved by the board.

11. NATIONAL CAPITAL TRAIL NETWORK

Mr. Farrell referenced the map in the presentation. He described some changes to the map since it was last shared with the board. He said that more than 4 million people in the region live within a half-mile buffer of this trail network. He said that over 2.5 million jobs are accessible in that same area. He said that 136 of the regional activity centers and 308 of the Equity Emphasis Areas are also within a half-mile buffer of the trail network.

Mr. Farrell described the contents of the resolution.

Mr. Jordan made a motion to adopt Resolution R5-2021 to approve the National Capital Trail Network.

Mr. Dorsey and Mr. Brown seconded the motion.

Mr. Harris asked why no trails were shown in Gaithersburg.

Mr. Farrell said the data came from Montgomery County.

Mr. Harris said he will work with people in Gaithersburg to get staff the data they need.

Mr. Wojahn said he endorses this effort and disclosed his job working for the Rails to Trails Coalition. He said the recent pandemic shows how important it is for people to be able to get outside and safely walk or bike for both recreation and transportation.

Mr. Brown thanked staff for reaching out to Loudoun County to get the data.

The motion was approved by the board.

OTHER ITEMS

12. PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO UPDATE PROJECTS AND FUNDING IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SECTION OF THE FY 2021-2024 TIP

Ms. Rupert said the District Department of Transportation is requesting an amendment to the FY 2021-2024 TIP. This amendment would update project and funding information for the duration of the TIP program. This update would align the TIP to the District's annual budget update. She pointed out that some minor corrections had been made to the materials that were originally shared with the board.

13. ADJOURN

Mr. Jordan requested that the TPB materials be prepared as one large PDF instead of individual files for each item. A member seconded that suggestion.

Mr. Srikanth said that staff will explore options to make it more convenient for board members to access all the materials.

No other business was brought before the board.

The meeting adjourned at 2:01 p.m.