

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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Meeting Notes

FREIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: September 15, 2011

TIME: 1:30 P.M. to 3:30 P.M.

PLACE: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Room 2

CHAIR: Victor Weissberg, Department of Public Works and Transportation
Prince George's County

ACTING-CHAIR: Eulois Cleckley, Transportation Policy and Planning
Administration, District Department of Transportation

ATTENDANCE:

Debbie Bowden, Maryland Department of Transportation
Amber Carran-Fletcher, District Department of Transportation
Randy Carroll, Maryland Department of Environment
Eulois Cleckley, District of Columbia Department of Transportation
Lyn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation
Ed Daniel, Montgomery County Police Department
Chip Dobson, CSX Transportation
Stephen Flippin, CSX Transportation
Nathan Hutson, Cambridge Systematics
Jon Schermann, Cambridge Systematics
Jim Shapiro, Thunderbolt Global Logistics, LLC
Bradley Smith, Maryland Department of Transportation
Robin Williams, ITT Corporation
Darrell Wilson, Norfolk Southern Corporation

CALL-IN ATTENDANCE:

Barbara Nelson, Richmond Metropolitan Planning Organization
Christine Hoeffner, Virginia Railway Express
Valerie Pardo, Virginia Department of Transportation

MWCOG STAFF ATTENDANCE:

Michael Farrell, MWCOG
Karin Foster, MWCOG
Ron Kirby, MWCOG
Andrew Meese, MWCOG

Eulois Cleckley, Freight Subcommittee Acting-Chairman—

Mr. Cleckley, acting Chairman, welcomed attendees and asked for introductions. Mr. Cleckley invited Jim Shapiro, Director of Thunderbolt Global Logistics LLC to present.

Jim Shapiro, Thunderbolt Global Logistics LLC—

Mr. Shapiro is the Director of Thunderbolt Global Logistics LLC, a Baltimore-based logistics company. He spoke to the TPB Freight Subcommittee about moving goods in the National Capital Region. He described his company as a “travel agent for freight.” His company focuses on exports and Mr. Shapiro praised President Obama’s goal to double exports. Typical export products moved by Global Logistics LLC include wastepaper, logs, and chemicals. Mr. Shapiro highlighted the advantages of the Port of Norfolk and the Port of Baltimore. The Port of Norfolk offers eight ocean carrier services, however, entering and exiting the port requires more time. The Port of Baltimore is up the Chesapeake Bay, making the trip for a cargo ship one week longer. The Port of Baltimore also has limited bays, however, the ability of the Port to move commodities in and out of the Port of Baltimore is faster. Mr. Shapiro spoke about the Port of Norfolk being a game-changer for the East Coast especially after the Panama Canal Expansion, primarily because of the established rail infrastructure and its deep water port. The demand for truckers to haul commodity is so high that a firm like Mr. Shapiro’s must book at least one week in advance for Norfolk. Mr. Shapiro also spoke about air cargo that moves through BWI and Dulles and the “freight integrators” FedEx and UPS. He noted the problems with congestion to Dulles. One solution to congestion introduced at Los Angeles/Long Beach is the PierPass Program, where trucks can enter the port for a discount during off-peak hours.

Questions and Comments:

Ron Kirby, TPB Director of Transportation Planning, asked Mr. Shapiro for his perspective on tolling. Is there an interest in tolls if it would mean improved service? Mr. Shapiro responded that the LCL (less-than-container load) truckers such as Yellow, ABF, and Old Dominion are always under pressure to deliver on time and may be more amenable to tolls than the trucker hauling a container, which may have more flexibility. Mr. Shapiro noted that Baltimore is raising the tolls for its tunnel.

Debbie Bowden, Maryland Department of Transportation, Office of Freight and Intermodalism, asked about the Los Angeles/Long Beach Pier Pass Program and whether that led to a shift in warehouse/distribution hours so truckers could work off-peak. Mr. Shapiro noted this policy enabled more containers to be trans-loaded to truck from the port. Mr. Shapiro went on to comment that finding a trucker is getting more and more difficult across the country. Young people do not want to drive a truck. Finding a truck and driver in the Midwest is most difficult because of the weak economy.

Lynn Erikson, Maryland Department of Transportation, asked what would it take to make the Port of Baltimore more attractive to shippers/receivers? Mr. Shapiro responded that the Port of Baltimore is a prisoner of its geography and it will require constant dredging to maintain the 50 foot channel. For example, some equipment from the Mid-Atlantic is being shipped to Russia for the Olympics, however, it will be transported overland and then shipped through New York because they have the best pricing.

Robin Williams, ITT Corporation—

Robin Williams is a Logistics Manager at ITT Corporation. Mr. Williams spoke about how ITT Corporation is building out a new Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADSB) technology for tracking aircraft as part of the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) federal requirement. ADSB will provide: (1) 1 second aircraft updates versus 30 seconds with radar; (2) More airplanes in the routes; (3) More direct routes and lower routes with less fuel consumption and pollution; (4) Better tracking in more areas; and (5) better reliability with multiple radio sites tracking versus one radar.

Mr. William's presentation focused on the expansion of this network and the transportation and security issues ITT comes across. ITT manufactures and has assembly facilities in Colorado. Site materials assembly facility and AT&T router coding occurs in Virginia. ITT has radio tower sites all over the country including the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska. ITT ships telcom cabinets, generators, radio racks, and pallets of materials to these sites. Travel is a challenge, particularly in the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska. Air freight is expensive, weather is fickle, and wildlife sometimes gets in the way. A typical Gulf of Mexico delivery is by helicopter or boat to an oil platform (at a time convenient to the oil company). A typical Alaska delivery is a truck from Colorado or Virginia to Seattle. A barge from Seattle to a major city in Alaska. A bush plane or helicopter to a site or staging point. And sometimes a snow mobile to the site. Tower climbers are paid for time on the ground and between \$2,000 and \$3,000 for each tower climb, therefore, schedules are critical and delays can be costly.

Questions and Comments:

Karin Foster, TPB Freight Program staff, asked for more details about the FAA mandate and whether there will be a complete transition to satellites or a mix of satellite and radar use? Mr. Williams replied that most, but not all radars will go away.

Glenda Parker asked if ITT shipped any of its products by rail or ship. Mr. Williams replied that most shipments are time sensitive and are therefore moved by truck or air.

Lynn Erickson asked about the ITT company, its size and revenue. Mr. Williams replied that it has more than 50,000 employees and does more than \$10.8 billion in sales. However, ITT will be splitting in the next few months into three companies. Telcom will fall under the new ITT Defense.

Chip Dobson and Stephen Flippin, CSX Virginia Avenue Tunnel Update—

Chip Dobson and Stephen Flippin spoke about a public meeting held September 14th on the Virginia Avenue Tunnel.

The NEPA process is underway for the Virginia Avenue Tunnel project with Purpose and Need. The FHWA is the lead for the NEPA document because the Virginia Avenue Tunnel construction is proximate to eight highway exits and air rights.

Stephen Flippin noted 114 signed in at the event.

www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com

Questions and Comments:

Lynn Erickson, Maryland Department of Transportation, suggested a presentation to the TPB on this topic.

Ms. Erickson also asked if members of MARC and VRE were involved in the tunnel public meetings and commenting.

Ms. Foster asked about the major concerns raised by public commenter's regarding the tunnel. Mr. Dobson replied that the primary concerns that continuously come up relate to train horn noise and access to nearby garages.

Karin Foster, Freight Program Updates—

Ms. Foster briefly touched on her work on the Freight Scans to collect freight-information from each county. Ms. Foster also commented on her work in assisting Mr. Kirby to develop Performance Measures for the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan. Ms. Foster also announced two upcoming CSCMP meetings, one on Peak Oil and one a tour of the Maryland Food Center Authority.

Roundtable Updates—

Amber Carran-Fletcher, District Department of Transportation, announced a new Freight Newsletter for the District Department of Transportation.

Debbie Bowden, Maryland Department of Transportation, announced that the Commercial Vehicle Safety Summit was September 17th.

Randy Carroll, Maryland Department of Environment, noted that the agency is wrapping up its Air Climate Action Plan.

Eulois Cleckley announced that the District Department of Transportation will undertake a new Truck Safety Enforcement Study to study the \$20 million toll trucks have on roads.

Next Meeting November 10, 2011