
**TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

July 19, 2017

Updated and amended at the September 20, 2017 TPB meeting

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES PRESENT

Charles Allen, DC Council
James Davenport, Prince William County
Marc Elrich, Montgomery County
Dan Emerine, DC Office of Planning
Dennis Enslinger, City of Gaithersburg
Gary Erenrich, Montgomery County DOT
Jay Fisette, Arlington County
Joshua Fleitman, DC Council
Tawanna Gaines, Maryland House of Delegates
Dannielle Glaros, Prince George's County
Jarrett K. Smith, City of Takoma Park
Jason Groth, Charles County
Rene'e Hamilton, VDOT
Neil Harris, City of Gaithersburg
Konrad Herling, City of Greenbelt
Catherine Hudgins, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
John D. Jenkins, Prince William County
Shyam Kannan, WMATA
Julia Koster, NCPD
R. Earl Lewis, Jr., MDOT
Tim Lovain, City of Alexandria
Dan Malouff, Arlington County
Phil Mendelson, DC Council
Jackson H. Miller, Virginia House of Delegates
Ron Meyer, Loudoun County
Bridget Donnell Newton, City of Rockville
Martin Nohe, Prince William County
Nichole Opkins, DC Council
Mark Rawlings, DC-DOT
Jeanette M. Rishell, City of Manassas Park
Kelly Russell, City of Frederick
Peter Schwartz, Fauquier County
Eric Shaw, DC Office of Planning
Linda Smyth, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Brandon Todd, DC Council
Victor Weissberg, Prince George's County
Mark Wolfe, City of Manassas
Sam Zimbabwe, DDOT
Daid Snyder, Falls Church

MWCOG STAFF AND OTHERS PRESENT

Robert Griffiths	
Lyn Erickson	
Ron Milone	
Ken Joh	
Andrew Austin	
Dusan Vuksan	
Michael Farrell	
Ben Hampton	
Abigail Zenner	
Lori Zeller	
Wendy Klancher	
Erin Morrow	
Dzung Ngo	
Feng Xie	
Arianna Koudounas	
Jessica Mirr	
Debbie Leigh	
Deborah Etheridge	
Kirsten Chase	
Chuck Bean	COG/EO
Paul DesJardin	COG/DCPS
Kari Snyder	MDOT
Bill Orleans	HACK
Sree Nampoothin	NVTA
Nydia Blake	Prince William County
Bob Chase	Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
Stewart Schwartz	Coalition for Smarter Growth
Jeanette Tejeda deGomez	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Alex Hendel	Arlington County
Tom Calcagni	AAA Mid-Atlantic
David Birtwistle	Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
Evan Pritchard	Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance
Michael Forehand	Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce
Monica Backmon	NVTA
Doug Allen	VRE
Pierre Holloman	COA
Andrew Mowry	Loudoun County
Gary V. Hodge	Regional Policy Advisors
Sydney Hawthorne	DC Council
Patricia Happ	NVTC
Allison Hahn	NVTC
Mike Lake	Fairfax County DOT
Susan Swift	SMTA
Andrea Lasker	Prince George's County DPW&T
Caroline Taylor	Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Heidi Mitter	VDOT
Norman Whitaker	VDOT
Tim Roseboom	DRPT
Chloe Delhomme	City of Manassas

1. PUBLIC COMMENT ON TPB PROCEDURES AND ACTIVITIES

Mr. Garson, president of the Seven Locks Civic Association spoke in support of the recommendations of the long-range plan task force including the additional northern Potomac crossing to alleviate congestion.

Mr. Forehand, vice-president of government relations for the Northern Virginia Chamber of Commerce supported the recommendations of the Long-Range Plan Task Force including the Potomac River crossing. He advocated for better road reliability and alleviating congestion to support economic growth.

Mr. Costello spoke on behalf of the American Council of Engineering Companies in the region and supported the acceptance of the recommendations of the Long-Range Plan Task Force.

Mr. Samuel spoke in support of expanded toll lanes to Frederick. He said they could help improve reliability and could help mobility and support transit.

Mr. Raker spoke on behalf of the Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance and supported the inclusion of the northern Potomac River crossing among the initiatives for further study. He said it would aid in relieving congestion in the region.

Ms. Swift also spoke on behalf of the Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance. She spoke in support of keeping the Potomac River crossing in the list of initiatives for further study and said there was support for it from Montgomery County.

Mr. Berliner spoke on behalf of the Montgomery County Council and ask that the Potomac River crossing be removed from the list of initiatives for further study. He presented a resolution passed by the County Council asking the TPB not to study a northern Potomac River crossing. He said it would have adverse effects on the environment and open space.

Mr. Fisher, a resident of Loudoun County opposed the inclusion of the Potomac River crossing for further study. He said it would be too financially burdensome for the county and would not be a benefit for the county by encouraging pollution and sprawl.

Ms. Taylor, executive director of the Montgomery County Countryside Alliance opposed including the Potomac River crossing for further study. She said it would harm the county's open space and destroy the agriculture reserve.

Mr. Rood spoke on behalf of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce. He urged the TPB to consider the confluence of technology and mobility and be sure they were aligned in long-term planning.

Mr. Pritchard spoke on behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance and spoke in favor of including a northern Potomac River crossing in the list of initiatives for further study. He said it was a need that would serve the region and alleviate congestion.

Mr. Calcagni speaking on behalf of AAA-Mid Atlantic spoke in support of including the northern Potomac River crossing for further analysis. He said it would not only provide relief for commuters but would also ensure continued economic vitality and provide an additional route in cases of emergency evacuations or national security threats.

Mr. Schwartz spoke on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth and spoke against the Potomac River crossing remaining on the list for further study. He said it had been studied enough and that it would not help to relieve congestion. He advocated for transit oriented development to help with transit trips.

Mr. Chase spoke in favor of studying an additional Potomac River Bridge crossing saying it would be a truly regional project and that study would show that it would strengthen weak transportation links.

Mr. Whitfield spoke in favor of studying an additional northern Potomac River crossing. He said the re needs to be an alternative when the current bridge crossings are blocked because of crashes or other incidents.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 21, 2017 MEETING

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2017 TPB meeting. The motion was seconded and approved.

3. REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Mr. Davis said that the Technical Committee met on July 7. At the meeting, the committee reviewed two items under consideration by the board. The first was on the 2017 Car Free Day, and the other on the Long-Range Plan Task Force. He said that there were also presentations from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation on how they prioritize their projects and a presentation on a high-speed rail project connecting Richmond, Virginia to Washington, D.C. The Technical Committee was briefed on Visualize 2045, short-range travel modeling improvements, and the Federal Enhanced Mobility Grant solicitation process. The committee was also briefed on a Vision Zero professional development workshop hosted by the TPB in June.

4. REPORT OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND ACCESS FOR ALL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mr. Martin presented the report of the Citizens Advisory Committee. He reported that the CAC discussed three major topics at its July meeting. First, that the committee encourages the TPB's Long-Range Plan Task Force to review and consider initial results from the Visualize 2045 public opinion survey in its deliberations in the fall. The committee also received a presentation about the Vision Zero workshop and discussed how to more effectively weigh in on activities related to Metro later in the year.

5. REPORT OF STEERING COMMITTEE

Mr. Srikanth said that the Steering Committee met on July 7. At the meeting, the committee approved two TIP amendments. The first, requested by VDOT, provides additional funding for the Arcola Boulevard project in Loudoun County. The second, requested by MDOT, updated functional classification for roadways in Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Frederick County, and Charles County. He said that the committee also approved a recommendation from TPB Vice-Chairman Charles Allen on the appointment of Paul Angelone as a replacement for Keith Benjamin on the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mr. Srikanth addressed the letters sent to and received by the TPB. He said that a letter was received from the office of Mr. Berliner, President of the Montgomery County Council, regarding the resolution introduced for Item 8. The TPB sent a letter of support for Montgomery County for an application for federal funding for low and no-emission vehicle deployment. He announced that the TPB will issue a call for grant applications on August 14 for FTA funding for Enhanced Mobility grants. He said the application window is open until November 3. He said that there was a memo about the Commuter Connections Employer Recognition Awards, and another memo summarizing the Vision Zero workshop hosted by the TPB's Bicycle and Pedestrian subcommittee.

Mr. Srikanth finished by referring to a document that was distributed to the board. He said this handout provides the latest status report on the public input survey being conducted by the board for Visualize 2045. He said that the survey is aimed to gather general attitudes and experiences of the region's residents with the transportation system as well as seek their ideas for improvements they would like to see. He said that this information will be included in the Call for Projects for the update to the Long-Range Transportation Plan.

6. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Ms. Newton acknowledged that there were some important action items on the agenda including receiving the recommendations from the Long-Range Plan Task Force. She said she would do her best

to facilitate the discussion. She also recognized the executive director of the Virginia Railway Express, Mr. Allen, and congratulated VRE on its 25th Anniversary.

ACTION ITEMS

7. APPROVAL OF REGIONAL CAR FREE DAY 2017 PROCLAMATION

Mr. Ramfos provided background about Car Free Day. Referring to his presentation, he explained that the day has been celebrated in the region since 2007. And that the event is celebrated in 1500 cities and about 40 countries. In the Washington region, it is promoted by Commuter Connections as a way to remind people to try an alternative to driving alone.

A motion was made to proclaim September 22, 2017 as Car Free Day in the region. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

8. LONG-RANGE PLAN TASK FORCE: PROPOSED INITIATIVES TO BE APPROVED BY THE TPB FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Chairman Newton briefly reviewed the board's activities since 2016 leading up to the proposed action under this item. She said that the board was being asked to consider the recommendations from the Long-Range Plan Task Force for acceptance and further study. She noted how the formation of the task force was based on the board's desire to improve the long-term performance of the region's transportation system and she recalled that TPB analysis of planned and funded transportation projects in the region's CLRP showed that by 2040, congestion is forecast to increase, that access to jobs by car will decrease, and that transit ridership will remain a constant percentage. She said that the task force has recommended initiatives for further study that are not currently in the CLRP, but might have the potential to make significant improvement in our region's transportation system. She said that the recommendations recognize that the region cannot simply keep building transportation projects to address the congestion and accessibility problems we face today and we will face in the future; the recommendations recognize that the region must also look at enacting policies and implementing programs that would result in people making different choices on how they travel or when they travel or where they travel. She noted that the discussions at the task force have been passionate and tough and that Mr. Fisette has done a great job facilitating the discussions where all ideas have been aired, all different viewpoints have been heard, and not everybody has agreed to everything. Based upon these discussions, the task force has developed a recommendation for the board to consider. She asked Mr. Fisette to present the task force's recommendations.

Referring to the staff memo of July 13, Mr. Fisette described the task force's charge, process, and guiding principles. He said that the group brainstormed nearly 80 individual policies, programs, and projects. The group then narrowed that list down to groups worthy of further analysis for potential regional impact. Referring to the "Principles for Selection" section of the memo he spoke about some of the assumptions -- the norms -- upon which the task force based its recommendations. Mr. Fisette highlighted the following principles: (1) each initiative must go beyond what is currently included in the CLRP and were not recommending anything for further analysis that is already in the CLRP; (2) each of these initiatives is regional in nature, meaning the initiatives are not all within the bounds of one locality and would have the potential to make impacts beyond single jurisdictions; (3) the initiatives are worthy of further analysis to assess whether or not there are potential regional impacts on the performance of the transportation system as it relates to the goals that the TPB has put forward; and (4) the initiatives should allow for the analysis of a wide range of options and solutions, trying to cover a range of potential solutions for the future, from projects to technology to programs and policy elements. Mr. Fisette explained various reactions to potential initiatives had been discussed. He said these reactions included "this one isn't viable, this one is not feasible, there is not political support, or the cost is too great." He said the task force had made a conscious choice at this stage of the process to have very

little, if any, consideration of such factors. He said that the task force had agreed that those factors would be relevant in the end, when decisions are made and as such, those considerations were to be saved to a later date.

Mr. Fisette then referred to the resolution. He said that there are three things that the resolution would not do. First, it did not reflect an endorsement of any of initiatives or the elements of those initiatives. Second, it did not guarantee that these individual initiatives will ultimately be endorsed by the TPB later this year or added to the long-range plan. Third, nothing the TPB would do at this meeting or at any point in this process can require any jurisdiction to alter any existing or future plans for transportation projects, land use, pricing, or travel demand. Mr. Fisette then noted the three things the resolution would do. First, it would accept for further analysis these ten improvement initiatives. Second, it would charge the professional staff to analyze how these initiatives would make progress towards achieving the goals embedded in the consensus-approved TPB and COG governing documents. Third, it charged the task force with reviewing the analysis and presenting to the TPB later this year a summary of findings and with presenting to the TPB a recommended process by which the TPB will later endorse a final selection for inclusion in the aspirational element of the region's long-range transportation plan. He said the final endorsement might be none of the initiatives that will be analyzed, it could be one of them, or it could be any number of them. He said that the task force may choose to make recommendations to this body about what that subset should be.

Mr. Fisette made a motion to adopt the resolution. The motion was seconded.

Chairman Newton opened the resolution for discussion.

Mr. Harris said that the list of initiatives is balanced. He said that the reason these initiatives are included is that it is unknown whether they would work for the region or significantly change future outcomes. He said that earlier TPB analysis showed that congestion is expected to get 70 percent worse, and that after investing \$100 billion, congestion will still get 28 percent worse. He said he supports the process to find a solution, and recognized that implementing these proposed initiatives will be difficult.

Mr. Shaw said that he wants to make sure that these initiatives are analyzed for equity, like current CLRP projects.

Ms. Glaros asked why the recommendations call out a northern bridge crossing instead of just exploring added capacity.

Mr. Srikanth referenced the memo which identifies ten improvement initiatives recommended by the Task Force. He said that there are a number of initiatives that talk to the idea of adding capacity and these were grouped in terms of their characteristics. He said that some, like the Regional Express Travel Network, adds both roadway and transit capacity, including additional capacity for the American Legion Bridge across the Beltway and other existing facilities. He said that the initiative for the northern bridge crossing would add highway and transit capacity by building a new facility that would connect the fast-growing outer portions of the region and provide an alternative to the American Legion Bridge.

Ms. Glaros said that she is not the only board member concerned about the northern crossing. She said that the northern crossing is the only recommended initiative that is not regional in nature. She suggested a broader initiative that involves more jurisdictions from the region.

Mr. Elrich moved to eliminate the initiative about the northern river crossing from the recommendations. The motion was seconded.

Mr. Elrich said that the initiative about the northern river crossing sticks out because it would be paid for entirely by Maryland. He said this would also require the state to build new roads that connect with the bridge. He said that people are anxious about this initiative because it has been discretely identified. He said that updating the American Legion Bridge should be the priority. He said that

Maryland and Montgomery County uniformly oppose a northern bridge crossing. He said it is not in the master plans and that it cuts through Montgomery County's agriculture reserve. He added that this initiative ignores focused development areas that are served by transit.

Chairman Newton said that the resolution does not state where the northern bridge crossing would go.

Mr. Elrich said that there are a limited number of locations for a crossing of this sort. He asked why the TPB should study this alternative if it violates master plans and the agriculture reserve.

Mr. Lovain said that he was thankful that improved bicycle and pedestrian connections and access improvements for transit and rail stations were included in the recommended initiatives. He said that these two recommendations are extremely cost-effective. He said that he is skeptical about an additional outer bridge crossing. He said that he believes that it is not possible to build our way out of congestion. He said focusing on land-use, transit-oriented development, and expanding transit all be more effective. He said that he is willing to support the study for a northern bridge crossing. But he said that study needs to address the issue of induced demand and land-use impacts.

Ms. Smyth said that the northern crossing has been studied many times and that it is due to be studied again. She said that the analysis of the initiative recommendations should include some prioritization.

Ms. Hudgins said that if the land-use does not work, the project will not work. She said that she is against increasing transportation projects that simply bring cars across the region and not into the employment and housing centers. She said that the study of the northern crossing will tell the region board what it needs to know.

Mr. Meyer said that the TPB's purpose is to consider long-term plans. He said that it needs to think beyond who is in power now, and recognize that political will changes over time. He said that Loudoun County is focusing development along future Metro stations and transit-oriented development destinations. He said that a northern bridge crossing would connect transit-oriented developments in Gaithersburg and Rockville to ones in the Dulles corridor. He said that people in Virginia and Maryland would like to see this new bridge built. He said that if this board doesn't plan for the long-term it is a disservice to the next generation.

Mr. Kannan said that before the region considers new projects it ought to fully commit to funding existing infrastructure that is quickly deteriorating. He said that properly funding WMATA should happen before the board considers the recommended initiatives.

Mr. Lewis said that it would be a distraction to include the northern bridge crossing since Maryland jurisdictions do not support that project. He said that the other projects are very good.

Mr. Snyder said that he was in favor of removing the Northern Virginia Bridge recommendation because he believes that it would be a bad precedent to move forward with something that the entire Montgomery County board opposes. He said that he will not be supporting all ten recommendations because they are too similar to things already underway in the region and have not worked in total.

Mr. Erenrich said that he was concerned about moving forward to analyze the recommendations because the questions being raised about the northern bridge crossing cannot be answered. He said that two months is not enough time to analyze the recommendations in a way that would yield new information.

Mr. Srikanth disagreed with Mr. Erenrich. He said that after four months the analysis will provide new information on the initiatives, even if that analysis is not detailed or conclusive.

Mr. Herling said that he was concerned that Metro funding is not adequately addressed. He said that prices are going up and that patronage is going down.

Mr. Fisetette said that it is assumed that these recommendations could be funded in addition to existing projects and needs. The goal is not to move forward with initiatives that would result in other projects

going under-funded.

Mr. Nohe said that this is the first time he has heard so much enthusiastic support for adding more capacity to the American Legion Bridge. He said that the whole purpose of the Task Force was to identify game-changing initiatives. He said he is concerned that if some initiatives were removed prematurely then the board would be undermining all the work that has been completed today, and would make it hard for the board to identify possible game changing projects.

Mr. Schwartz said that the Task Force has done a good job overall in preparing the recommended initiatives. He said he had concerns about whether a sufficiently robust modeling process is in place and whether there is capacity to do the types of analysis that need to be complete for these alternatives in the given time frame. He said that he was concerned how future discussion would unfold if the northern bridge project is included in the analysis. He said that the region has a bad track record in conducting analysis of induced demand.

Mr. Fisetto acknowledged Mr. Berliner who was attending the meeting. He reminded the board that approving the recommendations does not mean that the board is endorsing any project, program, or policy stated in the recommendations. Approving the recommendations just means that they will be analyzed. He said that this comparable qualitative analysis will look at issues like congestion, but not just congestion. It would also look at outcomes and goals embedded in TPB plans. He said that based on the analysis, it should be possible to further reduce the list.

Chairman Newton asked Mr. Srikanth to call a roll-call vote.

Mr. Srikanth said that the first vote is on the amendment to remove the additional northern bridge crossing corridor from the recommended initiatives.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll-call vote. There were 12 votes for the amendment, 17 against, and 2 abstentions. The amendment to remove the northern bridge from the list of recommended initiatives did not pass. The votes of individual members are documented in the attachment to these minutes.

Ms. Erickson conducted a roll-call vote to approve Resolution R1-2018 to accept the Long-Range Plan Task Force Initiatives for further analysis. The resolution passed with 24 yes votes. Seven board members abstained from this vote. The votes of individual members are documented in the attachment to these minutes.

INFORMATION ITEMS

9. VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS (VRE) REGIONAL RAIL SERVICE

Representing VRE, Mr. Allen said that Virginia Railway Express (VRE) is celebrating its 25th year in operation. He said that VRE was created in the 1980s by an agreement between the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission. VRE serves the nation's capital and the core of the region with commuter train service. VRE operates 22 trains with bi-level cars on tracks owned by other operators including CSX and Amtrak. He said that VRE serves commuters by running during rush hour. He said VRE is known for quality service and safe operations. He said that by operating during peak commuting hours, VRE helps to remove cars from the road and free up space on other transit services. He said that the VRE operates on the Long Bridge across the Potomac.

Mr. Allen said that at present VRE operates at roughly 80 percent capacity and plans to add capacity in the future. He said that this plan has two phases. In the first phase VRE will run longer trains, up to ten cars instead of six to eight cars. The second phase is to solve funding issues and run additional trains. He said this is important because VRE ridership continues to grow. He said that the Long Bridge is part of VRE's long-term plans. He said that VRE has collaborated with DDOT, VDRPT, and CSX to improve the

bridge. Other projects in the plan include station enhancements, additional tracks, and construction of maintenance and storage facilities. He said that VRE already has \$600 million in capital funding for these projects and that they were awarded an additional \$128 million for the expansion of the Manassas line. He thanked the TPB for its ongoing support.

A member of the board said that he appreciates what VRE brings to the region.

Mr. Zimbabwe said that DDOT has enjoyed collaborating with VRE on the Long Bridge.

Mr. Schwartz said that people living in Fauquier County appreciate VRE.

Mr. Herling asked about parking lots at VRE stations and the possibility of adding bus service.

Mr. Allen said that most VRE passengers drive to the station. He said that there are some bus connections, mostly in Fairfax County. He added that the closer people live to the center of the region the more likely they will take a commuter bus.

Mr. Herling asked if the long-range plan could be updated to include bus service.

Mr. Allen said that could happen as VRE adds capacity.

10. CRITICAL URBAN FREIGHT CORRIDORS

This item was postponed until a future meeting.

OTHER ITEMS

11. ADJOURN

No other business was brought before the board. The meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.