

BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES OF THE 173RD MEETING OF THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DECEMBER 19, 2006
9:00 A.M.

EMPOWERED MEMBERS

Carl Balsler, Chief
Division of Transportation Planning
Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning

Jeff Drinkwater (for Al Foxx, Director)
Baltimore City Department of Transportation

Kwaku Duah (for Jon Arason, Director)
City of Annapolis Department of Planning & Zoning

Diane Franks (for Tad Aburn, Director)
Air & Radiation Management Administration
Maryland Department of the Environment
(Non-voting member)

Harvey Gold (Chair)
Senior Transportation Planner
Anne Arundel County Office of Planning & Zoning

Emery Hines
Transportation Planner
Baltimore County Department of Public Works

Jeanne Joiner (Vice Chair)
Project Coordinator
Carroll County Department of Planning

Tony McClune, Assistant Director
Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning

Mike Nixon (for Samuel Minnitte, Director)
Office of Planning & Capital Programming
Maryland Department of Transportation

Bihui Xu (for David Whitaker, Deputy Director)
Manager, Transportation Planning
Maryland Department of Planning
(Non-voting member)

OTHERS PRESENT

Bala Akundi, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Kwame Arhin, Federal Highways Administration
Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Charles Baber, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Gene Bandy, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Harvey S. Bloom, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Dunbar Brooks, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Tyson Byrne, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Edward K. Cohen, Transit Riders Action Council of Metropolitan Baltimore
Karin Foster, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Patrick Fleming, Maryland Transportation Authority
Joan Gorsuch, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Monica Haines, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Mark Harris, Maryland Department of Transportation
Victor Henry, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Phyl Lansing, Baltimore County League of Women Voters
Dr. Hani Mahmassani, University of Maryland at College Park
Jason Miller, Procopio & Associates, Inc.
Gail Moran, Maryland Transit Administration
Ben Pickar, Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning
Kevin Racine, Citizen
Lauren Robbins, Maryland Energy Administration
Eileen Singleton, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Kevin Sullivan, Baltimore City Department of Transportation
Sara Tomlinson, Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Jim Wilkinson, Maryland Department of the Environment

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Harvey Gold.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2006 Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) meeting was made by Mr. Gold. A motion was made by Mr. Drinkwater to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Balser. The minutes were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY:

Mr. Edward Cohen, President, Transit Riders Action Council (TRAC), noted his attendance at a public meeting in Annapolis sponsored by the Transit Funding Steering Committee. The Committee was created as per the 2006 General Assembly enactment of Senate Bill 850. According to Mr. Cohen, the Committee is focusing on a limited number of transit investments and, thus, excluding some much needed long-term transit improvements. Such projects excluded from the discussion include a new MTA bus depot, a new freight tunnel, extensions of the DC metro rail system and additional trackage on the Penn or Camden lines. Mr. Cohen also stated that the Committee is

exploring new revenue sources to support transit such as an increase in state sales tax, but is not considering increases in parking and/or fuel taxes. Mr. Bloom noted a scheduled presentation on this subject area to be presented by the Maryland Department of Transportation would be deferred from today's agenda.

REPORT FROM CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: In the absence of the Chair, Ms. Monica Haines reported on the Citizens Advisory Committee's (CAC) December meeting. She noted that the CAC voted on the BRTB's Participation Plan and looked at the 2007 Baltimore Regional Transportation Plan (BRTP), focusing on the Plan's goals and policies. Ms. Haines said that at the January meeting, the CAC will finalize its comments on the goals and policies.

REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: Mr. Ben Pickar, Chair of the Technical Committee (TC), said that the TC met on December 5, 2006 and recommended approval of Resolutions #07-10 and #07-11 and endorsement of Resolution #07-12, all to be voted upon at today's meeting. Mr. Pickar also noted that the Technical Committee recommended approval of the Policy criteria for scoring of candidate projects for the 2007 BRTP.

REPORT FROM FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION AGENCIES: There was no report from the Federal Highway Administration.

REPORT FROM THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Ms. Jeanne Joiner reported that the Executive Committee met on November 28, 2006 to discuss the items included on today's agenda. She said that the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) requested Resolution #07-10 in support of the functional classification of the roadway network in Carroll County and Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) staff requested the discussion of alternative fuels and redundancy. Ms. Joiner also noted that the Committee discussed the Human Service Transportation Coordination Plan and it was agreed that before any further action should occur, the BRTB should seek clarification on funding for the Baltimore region.

APPROVAL OF FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF THE ROADWAY NETWORK FOR CARROLL COUNTY: Mr. Bloom introduced Resolution #07-10, in support of the updated roadway network in Carroll County. A request for a motion to approve Resolution #07-10 was made by Mr. Gold. A motion was made by Ms. Joiner for approval and seconded by Mr. Balsler. The resolution was unanimously approved. Mr. Mike Nixon noted that MDOT has completed the necessary work in Baltimore City and Baltimore County to finalize the functional classification of their roadways and asked for their cooperation in securing BRTB approval.

APPROVAL OF DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL HUMAN SERVICES TRANSPORTATION PLAN:

Ms. Regina Aris said that the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) asked BMC to prepare a resolution that indicates that the Baltimore Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) would be working in coordination with MTA to develop a regional Human Services Transportation Plan. She said that based on the comments from the Executive Committee meeting regarding the status of funding, Ms. Aris spoke to the regional Federal Transit Administration (FTA) representative to seek their understanding of the pending final guidance regarding the distribution of funds. Since guidance will not be final until April 2007, FTA could not provide a conclusive position. Ms. Aris did find language in earlier guidance that suggested that job access for reverse commute funds in an urban area should not be transferred elsewhere in the state. Mr. Drinkwater asked for the referenced language and Ms. Aris provided a copy of the circular to the Committee. A request for a motion to approve Resolution #07-11 was made by Mr. Gold. A motion was made by Mr. Balsler for approval and seconded by Mr. McClune. The resolution was unanimously approved. Mr. Nixon thanked BMC staff for working with MTA to resolve any outstanding issues and staff's willingness to assist MTA in the development of a regional Human Services Plan.

[Handout: Proposed FTA C Circular]

APPROVAL OF BALTIMORE REGIONAL PROTECTIVE ACTION COORDINATION GUIDELINES:

Ms. Eileen Singleton provided an update on the Regional Protective Action Coordination Guidelines document. The purpose of the project is to develop strategies for regional coordination during a large-scale event requiring protective actions. These types of events are non-routine and would affect multiple jurisdictions or the entire region. The primary project participants include the BRTB (seven local jurisdictions), State agencies (particularly MDOT, Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and Department of Disabilities), and the American Red Cross. The products developed for this project include an Agreement, the Guidelines, and a Next Steps Memorandum. The Agreement is an addendum to the Baltimore Region Emergency Assistance Compact. It provides coordination concepts in five areas (command and management; communications; public information and warning; evacuation; and reception and shelter). The Agreement is a public document. It will be signed by the BRTB jurisdictions and MEMA. The Guidelines document expands on the coordination concepts in the Agreement, focusing on actions that need regional coordination. The distribution is likely to be "For Official Use Only." Project documents are posted on the secure project web page. The next steps to be pursued include determining the "owner" of the document (i.e., who is responsible for updating), determining who has access to the Guidelines, and selecting follow on projects to expand on the work begun in the Regional Protective Action Coordination Guidelines document. A request for a motion to approve Resolution #07-12 was made by Mr. Gold. A motion was made by Mr. Balsler for approval and seconded by Mr. Drinkwater. The resolution was unanimously approved.

[Handout: PowerPoint describing Regional Protective Action Coordination Guidelines]

PRESENTATION ON ALTERNATIVE FUELS FROM THE MARYLAND ENERGY ADMINISTRATION:

Ms. Lauren Robbins, the Maryland Clean Cities Coordinator for the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA), presented information on alternative fuels, particularly ethanol and biodiesel. Biodiesel is an alternative fuel that is typically made from soybeans and can be used in diesel engines. There is currently one biodiesel production plant in Maryland, located in Berlin (Worcester County). The State Highway Administration (SHA) is purchasing biodiesel for their fleet. Ethanol is another alternative fuel. In the U.S., ethanol generally is produced from corn. There is one ethanol plant that is currently going through the state's licensing and permitting process. There could be another biodiesel and ethanol plant in Maryland in the future. Around 70,000 vehicles in Maryland can run on E85. All gasoline vehicles can run on E10, which is now being used in place of Methyl Tert-Butyl Ether (MTBE) as an oxygenate in reformulated gasoline (RFG) areas.

The MEA has announced a request for proposals for the Maryland Biofuels Grant Program. This program will provide up to a total of \$100,000 in grants to commercial refueling stations to install ethanol and/or biodiesel pumps. The goal is to get increased use of biofuels by the public. Applications are due January 1, 2007. In response to a question about the energy balance from ethanol and biodiesel, Ms. Robbins responded that biodiesel has a good energy ratio; however, there is controversy about the energy ratio of ethanol. In response to a question about the impacts of biodiesel on nitrogen oxides emissions, Ms. Robbins responded that it was previously believed that biodiesel could increase these emissions slightly; however, EPA is no longer saying this due to inconsistent evidence.

PRESENTATION ON TRANSIT FUNDING STEERING COMMITTEE: This topic was deferred until next month.

STATUS REPORT ON 2007 BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN:

Ms. Karin Foster drew the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board members' attention to the final Existing and Committed list of projects for the 2007 Baltimore Regional Transportation Plan. Existing projects are projects through Year of Operation 2007 and committed projects are projects with Year of Operation from 2008 to 2012 that have funds allocated to support them. Ms. Diane Franks had a comment on the Policy Prioritization criteria for Environmental Quality. She preferred the points reflect the same point distribution for air quality noted in the 2004 Plan. Discussion followed and a motion was passed to support Ms. Franks' proposal. Ms. Foster also reminded jurisdictions to submit their candidate projects which are their projects from 2013-2035.

[Handout: BRTB Existing and Committed Project List, 2000-2012]

STATUS REPORT ON REGIONAL REDUNDANCY STUDY: Mr. Bloom introduced Dr. Hani Mahmassani, Director, Maryland Transportation Initiative at the University of Maryland, who is providing support and guidance on the development of a

DYNASMART model for the Redundancy Study. Before Dr. Mahmassani began his presentation, Mr. Akundi noted that the Redundancy Study was initiated in the summer of 2005 as a Homeland Security initiative to test for transportation system redundancy in the event of a major disaster that would disrupt the transportation network for an extended period of time. The Redundancy Study Subcommittee developed nine scenarios that are to be tested in early 2007 once the base model is calibrated and validated.

Dr. Mahmassani noted in his presentation that the DYNASMART-P platform overcomes limitations of conventional planning tools and provides combined network assignment and traffic simulation capability for large networks. The model requires five categories of data (network, control, demand, scenario, and system) of which the first three groups are critical for setting up the network and the last two are critical for scenario analysis. Dr. Mahmassani gave a very quick overview of the work that has gone into network development, calibration and testing and the estimation of time-dependent origin-destination (O/D) matrix. He demonstrated to the Board members an operational view of the model running for an hour during the AM peak period and pointed out the development of queues along the Baltimore Beltway. As part of the calibration efforts, he also showed graphs depicting preliminary O/D estimation performance on selected links. Dr. Mahmassani noted that the O/D estimation and calibration process needs to be completed in the next few weeks after which the model will be available for scenario testing. He added that there are other potential applications for the regional DYNASMART model such as before and after corridor improvement project evaluations, as a decision support tool for integrated corridor management, work zone planning and management, and as a platform for future activity-based models.

In response to an inquiry from Mr. Pickar, Dr. Mahmassani noted that the model is currently being calibrated using available data for about 76 links. This effort focuses on the extracted subarea model which has fewer links and zones, than the entire regional model. Dr. Mahmassani noted that further refinements in terms of signal control and timing continue to be made to make the model work more efficiently.

[Handout: Dynasmart-P Project Update]

OTHER BUSINESS:

There being no other business, Mr. Gold asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Drinkwater made a motion to adjourn with Mr. Balsler seconding the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:50 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Harvey S. Bloom, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board