



Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

The Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore Region

BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**MINUTES OF THE 212th MEETING OF
THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

DRAFT

**March 23, 2010
9:00 A.M.**

EMPOWERED MEMBERS

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

Iain Banks (for Jon Arason, Director)
City of Annapolis Department of Planning & Zoning

Diane Franks
Air Quality Planning Division
Maryland Department of the Environment
(Non-voting member)

Janet Gleisner (for Tony McClune, Deputy Director (Vice-Chair))
Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning

Harvey Gold, Senior Transportation Planner
Anne Arundel County Office of Planning & Zoning

Emery Hines, Manager
Transportation Planning
Baltimore County Department of Public Works

Frank Johnson, Legislative Director (Chair)
Carroll County Government

Jamie Kendrick, Deputy Director
Baltimore City Department of Transportation

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

David Whitaker, Manager, Transportation Planning
Maryland Department of Planning
(Non-voting member)

OTHERS PRESENT

Kwame Arhin, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Regina Aris, Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Charles Baber, BMC
Jamie Bridges, BMC
Tyson Byrne, BMC
Ben Cohen, BWI Partnership
Sandra Conner, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Vice-Chair
Dr. Russell Dickerson, University of Maryland
Joan Gorsuch, BMC
Charles Grant, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)
Monica Haines Benkhedda, BMC
Bob Hellauer, Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC)
Barbara Herron, BMC
Dami Kehinde, State Highway Administration (SHA)
Dustin Kuzan, Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Todd Lang, BMC
Mary Leary, Easter Seals, Project ACTION
Jody McCullough, BMC
Leslie Mergner, Citizen
Theo Ngongang, MDOT
Ben Pickar, Howard County Department of Planning & Zoning
Kevin Racine, Citizen
Bernice Seiden, League of Women Voters
Mike Shepperd, SHA
Ron Skotz, CMRT
Greg Slater, SHA
Sara Tomlinson, BMC
Heather Weir, Citizen
Jim Wilkinson, Maryland Department of the Environment

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 A.M. by the Chair, Mr. Frank Johnson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A request for a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2010 BRTB meeting was made by Mr. Johnson. A motion was made by Mr. Carl Balsler to approve the minutes and seconded by Mr. Jamie Kendrick.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY:

Ms. Leslie Mergner, citizen, noted that she is formerly from Montgomery County but now lives in Harford County. She noted that Montgomery County was a more convenient locale to live in because it was easier to get from county to county while living there with their buses and rail system. Ms. Mergner stated that she would like to have more buses operating in the Harford County area.

Mr. Kevin Racine, citizen, said that he met Ms. Mergner last weekend and she asked for his assistance in getting around the region. He stated that he and Ms. Mergner discussed their home communities and she had indicated that she was a very active transit user. Mr. Racine said that he is interested in getting some trains and buses going into Harford County and the Newark area. He also mentioned that he was appointed to a 4-year term to the Maryland Bicycle/Pedestrian Group and said that he now serves on every type of transit committee, from a walker to a biker to high-speed rail rider, and not only in this region but in the Delaware region. Mr. Racine noted that he will be working with someone on mobility issues from Delaware Transit which falls in line with what he has been working on with the MTA.

REPORT FROM CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Ms. Sandra Connor, Vice-Chair, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), said that at the March 3rd meeting, they discussed the Vision Kickoff which was held at the University of Maryland BioPark and noted that 5 CAC members were pleased to attend the event. She said that the CAC appreciates the way that they are being included with the BRTB and they were excited about having the opportunity to be involved and engaged. Ms. Connor noted that suggestions for the next phases include invitations to the media, the engagement of legislators, greater participation by local elected officials at events, and inclusion of public events and announcements about Vision activities in e-newsletters of local government and community organizations. Subcommittee activity included Membership reviewing applications for 2 openings; Policy reviewing key planning documents and prioritization criteria in an effort to develop a list of core principles; and Public Involvement with a process of updating a glossary of transportation terms and promoting comment periods. Ms. Connor concluded her report by saying that the CAC is looking for the public involvement consultant to come to their meetings and talk to them about the Vision and the long-range transportation plan process.

REPORT FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: Mr. Ben Pickar, Chair, said that the Technical Committee (TC) met on March 3rd and reviewed Resolutions #10-15 and #10-18 and recommended them to the BRTB for adoption. He noted that Resolution #10-17, the Jobs Bill – Stimulus II – was withdrawn by MDOT. Mr. Pickar summarized the Technical Committee's discussion of Resolution #10-18 and said that bus rapid transit could not fit into the MD 175 corridor due to the corridor being very tight with regard to right-of-way. He stated that the State Highway Administration (SHA) worked very hard to put bikeways and pathways into the project. He also noted that fixed rail transit was explored but due to its isolated area, it is expensive and hard to maintain.

REPORT FROM THE INTERAGENCY CONSULTATION GROUP: There was no March meeting of the ICG.

REPORT ON PUBLIC COMMENT AND ACTIVITY – MARCH 2010: Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda reported on two public comment periods currently open: the Draft Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program and the Draft Annual Work Program & Budget for Fiscal Year 2011 and stated that no comments or requests for public meetings have been received to date. She also stated that the BRAC (Harford County) & Vail Street (Baltimore City) Amendments to the 2010-2013 TIP and Transportation Outlook 2035 closed on March 16th with no comments. Ms. Haines also mentioned that two general public comments on bicycle-related projects were received and passed on to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator who informed the appropriate local contact.

Mr. Johnson requested that this report become part of the normal agenda for future BRTB meetings under “Reports” as an agenda item.

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO OUTLOOK 2035 AND THE 2010-2013 BALTIMORE REGION TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: Mr. Johnson introduced Resolution #10-15 to the BRTB. The purpose of the resolution is to approve interchange improvements at MD 715 on US 40 in Harford County and the New Vail Street Extension in Baltimore City. Mr. Johnson asked for a motion to approve Resolution #10-15. Mr. Kendrick made a motion to approve the resolution with Mr. Balser seconding the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved. (New Vail Street will not be added to the TIP until a stimulus or other financial package is available; Mr. Kendrick indicated that discussions were underway with congressional representatives to include the project as an earmark.)

APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT TO THE 2010-2013 BALTIMORE REGION TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TO INCLUDE FUNDING FROM THE JOBS BILL OF 2010 – STIMULUS II: Mr. Johnson said that this agenda item has been withdrawn since Congress has not passed the anticipated funding. On a related note, Mr. Johnson asked Mr. Mike Nixon what the federal funding situation for transportation overall was like for this calendar year and Mr. Nixon responded that he understood SAFETEA-LU was extended until December 31, 2010.

APPROVAL OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE AND CONCEPTUAL MITIGATION FOR MD 175 FROM MD 295 TO MD 170: Mr. Johnson introduced Resolution #10-18 to the BRTB. He noted that this resolution was recommended to be forwarded to the BRTB by the Technical Committee. Mr. Johnson asked for a motion to approve Resolution #10-18. Mr. Balser made a motion to approve the resolution with Mr. Harvey Gold seconding the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION ON URBAN HEAT ISLAND EFFECTS: Dr. Russell Dickerson of the University of Maryland presented the results of a study on the impact of upstream urbanization on urban heat island effects, the local climate, and atmospheric pollution levels. He began the presentation by explaining what the urban heat island effect is: with lower reflectivity, a larger heat capacity, and less available moisture for evaporation, urban areas typically are warmer than surrounding rural areas. Larger cities are generally hotter than smaller cities. However, recent data shows that Washington, D.C. is cooler than Baltimore. A study performed by researchers at the University of Maryland, and funded by MDE, explored the causes of this phenomenon. An important factor related to the higher temperatures in Baltimore is the fact that higher ozone pollution concentrations are correlated with higher temperatures.

The hypothesis of the study was that warmer air and higher ozone concentrations observed in Baltimore result primarily from the exacerbated urban heat island effects by upstream urbanization. Modelers at the University of Maryland performed sensitivity runs, modeling the effect of land use in the Washington, D.C./Baltimore regions on surface temperatures, and looked at how this would affect atmospheric temperatures. One of the lessons that can be taken from the study to date is that trees upwind of Baltimore, even in the suburbs, can reduce the City's pollution levels. Board members asked a few questions regarding whether permeable asphalt would potentially help to mitigate the urban heat island effect. Dr. Dickerson had heard about research being performed on permeable asphalt but is unaware of the results. While the cost of collecting data and running the model is quite expensive, Dr. Dickerson responded to a question saying UMD could potentially evaluate the impact of the most probable vision scenarios on air quality in the region. The members thanked Mr. Dickerson for sharing the results of the study, especially in light of the fact that the region is undergoing a transportation and land use vision process.

[Handout: The Urban Heat Island Effect in Baltimore: Does Washington Exacerbate Heat Waves?]

REPORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION EFFORTS: Mr. Greg Slater, Director of Planning and Preliminary Engineering at the State Highway Administration (SHA), provided the BRTB with an update on climate-related legislation, the Maryland Climate Action Plan, and climate change planning activities that SHA is initiating. Mr. Slater reminded the BRTB of the greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets in the Maryland Climate Action Plan, completed in 2008. Targets include reductions 10% below 2006 levels by 2012, 15% by 2015, 25-50% by 2020, and 90% by 2050. The Plan includes eight strategies related to transportation and land use assigned to MDOT as the lead agency. These strategies were evaluated by working groups in 2009 and an implementation status report was submitted to the Governor in November 2009. They include land use and location efficiency; transit; intercity travel; pay-as-you-drive insurance; bike and pedestrian infrastructure; incentives, pricing and resource measures; transportation technologies; and, evaluating GHG's from major projects. Mr. Slater also mentioned that the "incentives, pricing and resource measures" category is

one of the most impactful although expensive categories for meeting GHG reductions. Additionally, SHA has initiated a climate change program. They are in the process of developing a GIS tool to identify SHA and MdTA infrastructure that is vulnerable to sea-level rise. SHA staff was available at the meeting to present an example of the sea-level rise mapping.

In response to a question regarding coordinating with local governments on climate change planning, he mentioned a meeting in Woods Hole, Massachusetts attended by MPOs as well as MDOT, MDE, and SHA. There was a question regarding the fifty/fifty match requirement for Transportation Enhancement Program funding. He stated that the federal requirement is an eighty/twenty match; the fifty/fifty match requirement is specific to Maryland. Mr. David Whitaker asked that SHA look at the match requirement again. There was another comment that certain local jurisdictions have stopped applying because of the match requirement and the extensive project work required. In response to a concern from Ms. Janet Gleisner on outreach for the Liberty Road bridge project, Mr. Slater said that SHA is planning outreach on alternative modes of transportation for commuters in this area. He said that once there is a media plan, he would get it to the BRTB.

UPDATE ON THE PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Last month, Mr. Jamie Bridges provided details of an advance notice of funding availability (NOFA) and request for comment on the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. Since the deadline for comment on March 12, the EPA/DOT/HUD Partnership has started to refine the specifications of the program in response to the comments. Mr. Bridges provided a brief summation of comments submitted by the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC). In general, both organizations favored regional organizations as lead and/or required partners in the grant program. Both called for a flexible approach in administration and, in particular, in fund-matching requirements. Mr. Bridges recommended that the Board review the comments in preparation for the publication of the official Notice of Funding Availability, (NOFA) expected around April 12.

[Handout: Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and National Association of Regional Councils letters]

UPDATE ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION VISION PLAN: Mr. Johnson updated the BRTB on the regional transportation vision plan. He said the kickoff started the public participation on March 2nd at the University of Maryland, BioPark. He said that he appreciated BRTB members and staff coming out for this event. The public involvement consultant, Portfolio Associates with Kittleson & Associates, is moving ahead with the initial step of assessing values in a series of workshops and online. Mr. Johnson said that the group is in the process of developing a marketing plan and the public participation consultant will be assisting with this. There is also a contractor who is helping with implementing the technical components of using INDEX with the public. The Committee is working out timelines and much is going on.

A GUEST SPEAKER WILL GIVE THEIR PERSPECTIVE FOR THE REGION'S

VISION: Ms. Mary Leary, Director of Transportation Projects for Easter Seals *Project ACTION*, gave a presentation on Accessible Community Transportation. The focus of the presentation revolved around the benefits of Accessible Community Transportation to not only the disabled population but their caregivers and businesses in general. She pointed out that 9.4% of Marylanders have some type of disability and the cost of lost work by care givers in business productivity ranges from \$17.1 to \$33.6 Billion. Livable and sustainable communities are beneficial to disabled populations. The BRTB's Vision Objectives are in line with Livability Principles. She asked the BRTB to work to include the school system, students, people of limited income and the housing industry in the vision process. She concluded by indicating that the disabled population wants to live a spontaneous life that allows them to access all eight life satisfying activities. The BRTB thanked Ms. Leary for her presentation.

[Handouts: Accessible Community Transportation In Our Nation – The Return of the Community: Livability For All PowerPoint; UPDATE – The Official Newsletter of Easter Seals Project Action; Accessible Community Transportation in Our Nation Pocket Guide]

OTHER BUSINESS:

[Handout: Letter from BMC to MDOT dated March 2, 2010 re: Administrative Modification to FY 2010-2013 TIP]

Ms. Janet Gleisner reminded everyone that the meeting next month will be on April 27th at 4:00 P.M. with the elected officials. She asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Balsler made a motion to adjourn with Mr. Emery Hines seconding the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd R. Lang, Secretary
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board