

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, January 7, 2009

BMC Conference Room

5:30 P.M.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Members/Staff**

Regina Aris – Baltimore Metropolitan Council  
Michael Benelli – Anne Arundel County Disabilities Commission  
Art Cohen – b'more mobile  
Matt DeCerbo – Citizen, Baltimore County  
David DiQuinzio – Annapolis Planning Commission  
Colin Furneaux – Citizen, Carroll County  
Monica Haines – Baltimore Metropolitan Council  
Brian Holmes – MD Highway Contractors Association  
Doug Howard – Carroll Area Transit System  
Michael Klasmeier – Citizen, Anne Arundel County  
Jack Knox – AARP Maryland, Executive Council  
Jud Malone – Citizen, Howard County  
Raine Mullan – Beyond the Boundaries – Archdiocese of Baltimore  
Foster Nichols – Valleys Planning Council  
Calvin Peete, Jr. – Citizens Planning and Housing Association  
Irene Poulson – Neighborhood Design Center  
Kevin Racine – Citizen, Harford County  
Michele Rosenberg – Citizen, Baltimore City  
Charlotte Steward St. Pierre – Morgan State University – Institute for Urban Research  
Saul Wilson – Transit Riders Action Council of Metropolitan Baltimore

**Guests**

Ted Rosenberg – Citizen, Baltimore City  
E. Lee Moser – Friends of Patapsco Valley and Heritage Greenway, Inc.

New CAC Chair, Mr. Jud Malone, called the meeting to order at 5:43 P.M. and requested that agenda items #1 and 2 be switched. Members agreed to this change to the agenda.

**1. UPDATE: ELECTION OF 2009 CHAIR AND VICE CHAIRS**

Ms. Monica Haines thanked the members for casting their votes for election of the 2009 Chair and Vice-Chairs using an online survey. The results confirm election of Mr. Malone as Chair and Ms. Raine Mullan and Mr. Colin Furneaux as Vice-Chairs.

## **2. INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Malone noted that there were five new members (Matt DeCerbo, Michael Klasmeier, Doug Howard, Calvin Peete, Jr., and Charlotte Steward St. Pierre) at tonight's meeting and invited them to share a bit about themselves and their interest in the CAC. The other CAC members and BMC staff were then invited to briefly introduce themselves to the new members.

## **3. ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2008 MINUTES**

The CAC voted unanimously to approve the minutes for October and November 2008.

## **4. REPORT ON RECENT AND UPCOMING BRTB MEETINGS**

Ms. Regina Aris reported on the December BRTB meeting with elected officials. The meeting began with six members of the public sharing their thoughts with the elected officials. Following the public comment opportunity, County Executive Jim Smith made a motion for the BRTB to initiate a local government / state agencies partnership to develop an overall transportation and land use "vision" to serve as a guide for future transportation investments that support economic, environmental, and mobility priorities in the Baltimore region. The BRTB unanimously approved the motion. Ms. Aris noted that the BRTB is currently working out details regarding this vision process and would keep the CAC updated on a regular basis.

Additional highlights of the meeting included presentations by Mr. John D. Porcari, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation and Ms. Shari T. Wilson, Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment.

Ms. Aris noted that the next meeting of the BRTB is scheduled for January 27, 2009 at 9 a.m. at BMC. At that time, the BRTB will be considering two resolutions. Details can be found on the BMC web site.

### **Questions**

- *Why was Mayor Dixon not at the December BRTB meeting? It is frustrating when elected officials do not attend the once per year meeting of the BRTB.* – Ms. Dixon was out of town.
- *Is the upcoming BRTB Retreat open to the public and is the agenda online?* – Yes, the retreat is open for public observation. The agenda is available on the BMC web site.
- *What is the BRTB's view on the recent cuts to the MD Transit Administration budget and services? Will they be reviewing/discussing the changes?* – The BRTB has not issued any formal statement regarding these cuts, but members in the local jurisdictions have been actively engaged in reviewing and submitting comments.

## **5. SUBCOMMITTEE BRIEFINGS AND ACTION ITEMS**

The following subcommittee reports were given:

- **Membership** – Ms. Mullan welcomed all of the new members and thanked them for their interest in volunteering to serve on the CAC. Ms. Mullan also reported that one of the new members has submitted a resignation due to personal matters. As a result, the committee will be revisiting the applications on file and making a recommendation to the full CAC at a future meeting.

**Action – Membership Subcommittee:** *Make recommendation to fill 1 vacancy on CAC.*

- Public Involvement – Ms. Irene Poulson reported that the subcommittee has drafted some recommendations for updating and improving the Public Participation Plan (PPP). Ms. Mullan recommended that the committee revise the document by separating recommendations which are related to products (ex: advertisements) from those which relate to process (ex: BRTB meeting times). Additional discussion focused on the goals of the PPP, advertising policies, and the possibility of the CAC reviewing a revised PPP prior to public review.

After discussion, members voted to share the recommendations with the BRTB as a “work in progress” and finalize the recommendations at the next meeting.

**Action – PI Subcommittee:** *Make changes to the draft based on CAC input.*

**Handout:** *Draft Recommendations to the BRTB Regarding Update to “Guidelines and Expectations for Public Involvement in the Baltimore Regional Transportation Planning Process” (Public Participation Plan), 7 January 2009*

- Policy and Legislation – Mr. Foster Nichols reported that the committee is seeking new members. Anyone interested should contact Mr. Nichols or notify BMC staff. Mr. Nichols also reported that the committee is interested in supporting the BRTB in their vision process and is eager to be kept up-to-date as planning for this activity progresses.
- Ad-Hoc Committee on Transportation Outlook 2035 – Mr. Saul Wilson requested the CAC’s support for endorsing the draft preferred alternative for the amendment to *Transportation Outlook 2035*, out for public review through January 23, 2009. Mr. Wilson cited several reasons to support the amendment, including the BRTB’s open process during the development of the amendment, as well as the BRTB’s support for additional transit funding, as requested by the CAC and members of the public during prior *Transportation Outlook 2035* public review and comment periods. Mr. Art Cohen suggested that the CAC consider this at a later time, after reviewing additional public comment. Members voted to revisit the topic at the February meeting and asked that a draft resolution be submitted in advance.

**Action – Ad-Hoc Committee on Transportation Outlook 2035:** *Provide a draft resolution for the CAC to consider at the February meeting.*

## **6. DISCUSSION: CAC ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Mr. Malone handed out a summary of the CAC’s activities and accomplishments for 2008, pulled together by Ms. Haines. He asked that members review, but due to time limitations, discussion was postponed to a later date.

**Handouts:** *Citizens Advisory Committee 2008 Accomplishments and Activities*

## **7. FEBRUARY AGENDA, OTHER BUSINESS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members discussed potential topics for the February meeting.

- February Agenda – Mr. Malone proposed that the CAC consider a new format for CAC meetings, suggesting that every other month the agenda for CAC meetings would change to include an abbreviated meeting to address any action items and the remainder of time would be designated for subcommittee “work sessions”. He suggested this may assist members with tight schedules to be able to participate in the subcommittees without having to schedule additional meetings. Members

agreed to this proposal and suggested that the February agenda include time for subcommittee breakouts.

Members also identified the following action items for the February agenda: Statement on *Transportation Outlook 2035* Amendment; Finalize comments on Public Participation Plan.

- Transportation For America - Mr. Art Cohen reported that a new coalition – *Transportation for America* – has been formed and will focus on the 2009 federal transportation funding program. He offered members copies of a handout about the coalition, which can also be downloaded online at [http://t4america.org/docs/aboutus\\_brochure.pdf](http://t4america.org/docs/aboutus_brochure.pdf).
- BRTB Notes - Ms. Haines reported that the new edition of the BRTB Notes is available and asked that members take extra copies to distribute in their communities (libraries, meetings, etc).
- Transportation Outlook 2035 public review and comment period - Ms. Haines reminded members that public comments will be accepted on the amendment for *Transportation Outlook 2035* through January 23, 2009. Members were given a copy of a flier advertising the public review and comment period and asked to post in their community.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M. The next meeting of the CAC is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, 2008 at 5:30 P.M.

DRAFT

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO BRTB REGARDING UPDATE TO  
“GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN  
THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING  
PROCESS” (PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN)**

from the

**BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD CITIZENS ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE**

*7 January 2009*

**DOCUMENT CONTENT**

Commit to involving the public in planning before and during the development of plans.

Explicitly lay out more opportunities for citizens to be educated in the transportation planning process and promote strategies that foster truer public engagement.

Create a process by which the public can influence transportation policy positions at the jurisdictional level.

Include more special meetings/workshops/forums of BRTB officials with CAC and the public, including annual workshops for regular processes like TIP.

Widely disseminate a clearer timeframe of annual activities and opportunities for public input and engagement.

Restore quarterly attendance of BRTB elected officials at BRTB meetings at which agendas feature issues of public interest and major policy votes.

BRTB meetings should be in the early evening, locations should rotate around the region, public comment regarding items scheduled for vote should be received by officials prior to voting, and meetings should be videotaped and aired on public-access TV, online, and in libraries/media centers.

Improve transparency of decision-making by ending use of closed Management Committee meetings and opening Executive Committee meetings to the public.

Improve method of acknowledging public and CAC comments by reading in summary at BRTB meetings and entering into the public record.

Provide more considerate written responses to public suggestions that indicate that input is actually being used.

Increase use of print media in public notification.

Improve Website and its maintenance.

Evaluate PPP effectiveness prior to annual review and update.

## **DOCUMENT FORMAT**

Reduce the length of the document by eliminating repetitive statements and condensing information onto as few pages as possible (examples: consolidate writing on cover and pages 2-3 into one Purpose page; one Principles page can consolidate BRTB principles and federal regulations; incorporate items from the “Public involvement toolbox” into revised contents sections noted below).

Improve clarity by reorganizing the document into the following sections:

- Table of Contents with page numbers
- Purpose
- Regional Transportation Planning Process
- Principles of Public Involvement
- Public Involvement Opportunities
  - Public Input
  - Public Review & Comment
  - Attending Meetings
  - Other Involvement Opportunities (focus groups, workshops, open houses, surveys, etc.)
- Public Information and Education (accessing info, speakers bureau, special outreach, etc.)
- Appendices
  - Transportation Lingo
  - Making Comments at BRTB Meetings
  - Federal Requirements
  - Excerpts from the Code of Federal Regulations

## **JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The current Public Participation Plan (PPP) needs to go further in promoting and improving public awareness, education, engagement, and involvement. Navigating the document is difficult due to lack of clear sections, repetition, lack of page numbers in the table of contents, and length. Appendices C and D, which relate to the public’s ability to understand BRTB terminology and speak at BRTB meetings are positioned after federal requirements of less direct public interest.

It is important that the PPP embody a commitment to a planning process that involves the public before and during, rather than after, development of planning documents. The CAC has previously noted the importance of fostering truer public engagement in its

"Resolution on Public Participation from the CAC to the BRTB and the BMC" presented to the BRTB at its May 27, 2008 meeting.

A better educational component and process is necessary to help citizens offer informed comments, and the PPP should more clearly address this. Citizens need more up-front information regarding transportation planning in general and the UPWP, TIP, strategic plan, long-range plan, MDOT annual budget, MDOT/MTA annual budget, annual BMC budget, related BRAC planning, as well as the connections and consultations between these. An updated schedule of BRTB business should be better-publicized so that the public and CAC know well in advance about timeframes for involvement and comment periods. Special public workshops (such as those associated with the Transportation Outlook 2035 Amendment process) are useful in educating the public, encouraging dialogue and allaying public concerns. Some topics, like the UPWP and TIP, could be covered in annual workshops hosted jointly by BRTB and CAC. At least one joint meeting of BRTB officials and CAC should be considered annually that would promote discussion on topics of special concern to citizens. The public also needs to be more involved in planning at the local level that influences regional transportation planning. CAC suggests that the BRTB officials form citizen transportation planning groups within their jurisdictions in order to increase citizen involvement in and input to local decisions that influence selection of the TIP and long-range plan projects. It is important that these sessions be accessible and advertised and that local elected officials and the empowered representative attend.

The elected officials on the BRTB meet only once a year, providing little opportunity for citizens to know their views on transportation issues or to interact with them. CAC urges BRTB to restore the required meeting attendance of officials to four times a year and have those agenda focus on issues of public interest (perhaps solicited through public surveys or comment) and voting on major policy questions. Public access to BRTB meetings--with regard to time and location [23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(v)] and in terms of who can attend--remains a concern. Eleven of the BRTB meetings are held in the morning, precluding attendance by working people. An early evening time is preferable. Meetings, currently held only in Baltimore, should be held in a variety of locations across the region. To further improve access and awareness, BRTB meetings should be videotaped, aired on public-access television and online, and transmitted live to libraries or videoconference center across the region.

To increase transparency and more fully comply with the Open Meetings Act, the Executive Committee of the BRTB should be explicitly included as being covered and its meetings announced publicly, and BRTB should avoid making regional transportation decisions in closed-door Management Committee sessions.

The method by which public comments are received and used by decision-makers needs to be improved. BRTB Notes should mention upcoming BRTB meetings and

agenda vote items. In the current system, issues are discussed before the empowered representatives and then the vote is taken—although empowered reps have already been instructed how to vote. Elected officials need to be made aware of public sentiment before voting decisions are made. Topics that attract significant public comment should be voted on by the BRTB officials, not the empowered. Public and CAC comments received in writing should be noted at each BRTB meeting and be made part of the public record. PPP should explicitly state that all citizen comments regarding plans will be responded to prior to voting. Written responses by the BRTB to public comments should include how these were used or provide rationale if they were not (“The BRTB thanks you for your comment” is not adequate). More frequent surveys of the public could inform BRTB well in advance on various planning initiatives and voting. A procedure to evaluate how comments are responded to and used should be established to document progress toward the goal of better citizen inclusion.

The PPP should more clearly promote additional public forums, meetings, and workshops that allow the public to engage in discussion with their elected officials and each other.

The existing PPP shows a heavy reliance on e-mail to spread information regarding the BRTB. Print media remains key to reaching those without computer access.

Comments should be solicited from CAC and citizens regarding accessing information on the current website. One example is the accessibility and understandability of the project database for the Transportation Improvement Program.

Annual review and update of the PPP should be preceded by an effective evaluation of strengths, weaknesses, success, and accomplishments and shared with the CAC and the public.

## **CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2008 Accomplishments and Activities**

- Monthly reports at BRTB meetings by Chair and/or Co-Chairs
- Began using Google Calendar and Google Groups for CAC communications and scheduling
- Submitted comments on the 2009 Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP)
- Formed Ad Hoc Subcommittee on *Transportation Outlook 2035* to submit comments on *TO2035* planning process for additional funding.
  
- *Resolutions*
  - Amending *Transportation Outlook 2035* Plan (Commit All New Funding to Transit)
  - Immediate Transportation 2040 Plan.
  - Public Participation
    - Led to the development of a BRTB-CAC Public Participation Task Force
  - First Draft 2009-2012 TIP
  - Final Draft 2009-2012 TIP
  - Proposed Amendment to Transportation Outlook 2035
  - Preliminary Draft Outline for a Comprehensive Strategic Transportation Plan for the Baltimore Region for 2040
  
- *Membership Committee:*
  - Developed new CAC application
  - Reviewed and made recommendations on 2009 members
  - Submitted recommendations for 2009 Chair and Vice-Chairs
  - Monitor member attendance
  
- *Policy and Legislation Committee:*
  - Drafted Transportation Strategic Planning Process
  - Drafted potential vision for region
  
- *Public Involvement Committee*
  - Drafted recommendations for updates to 2007 Public Participation Plan
  - Comments on UPWP (public involvement, transportation equity)
  - Recommendations for additions to BRTB mailing lists
  - Drafted Statement Regarding Federal Certification of the Baltimore MPO
  - Drafted PI Subcommittee Recommendation regarding Transportation Outlook 2035 public workshops
  
- *Presentations*
  - Clean Commute Month activities
  - 2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
  - Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
  - Congestion Charging - Colin Furneaux
  - Mayor's Red Line Summit
  - 2008 Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Certification Review
  - 2009 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
  - Greater Baltimore Committee Regional Transportation Summit
  - Transportation Outlook 2035 amendment process
  - Regional Housing Sales And Affordability