

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, February 4, 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  
Neil Curran – Citizen, Baltimore City  
David DiQuinzio – Annapolis Planning Commission  
Colin Furneaux – Citizen, Carroll County  
Monica Haines – Baltimore Metropolitan Council  
Frank Johnson – BRTB Liaison, Carroll County  
Michael Klasmeier – Citizen, Anne Arundel County  
Jack Knox – AARP Maryland, Executive Council  
Brenda Latney-Lee – Southwest Development Committee  
Raine Mullan – Beyond the Boundaries – Archdiocese of Baltimore  
Tamara Rain Neff – Citizen, Baltimore City  
Foster Nichols – Valleys Planning Council  
Albert Pietrolungo – Central Maryland Council of the Blind  
Irene Poulson – Neighborhood Design Center  
Saul Wilson – Transit Riders Action Council of Metropolitan Baltimore

Vice Chairs, Mr. Colin Furneaux and Ms. Raine Mullan, called the meeting to order at 5:45 P.M.

**1. INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME OF NEW CAC MEMBER**

Ms. Mullan asked new member, Tamara Rain Neff to share a bit about herself and her interest in the CAC.

**2. REPORT ON RECENT AND UPCOMING BRTB MEETINGS**

Ms. Regina Aris reported that the January BRTB meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather. The next meeting of the BRTB is scheduled for Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 9 a.m. at BMC.

**3. SUBCOMMITTEE BREAKOUTS**

Members broke out into their various subcommittees to discuss upcoming business and action items, as well as to begin developing work plans for 2009.

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

The following subcommittee reports were given:

- Public Involvement – Mr. Michael Klasmeier presented draft recommendations for updating and improving the Public Participation Plan (PPP) and asked for members to endorse the recommendations.

Although there was not a quorum present, the 14 members present at the meeting voted to send the recommendations to the BRTB for their consideration.

Mr. Klasmeier also presented the members with a copy of a memo issued by the Obama administration regarding “Transparency and Open Government”. The committee noted their hope that the BRTB could consider this memo (and the points it raises) as they review the Public Participation Plan and consider future public involvement activities.

***Handouts:*** *Draft Recommendations to the BRTB Regarding Update to Public Participation Plan, 26 January 2009; Memorandum for the heads of executive departments and agencies (Subject: Transparency and Open Government).*

- Policy and Legislation – Mr. Foster Nichols shared the subcommittee’s draft work program for 2009. Activities include the BRTB Vision process; the next long-range transportation plan, and development of a calendar for CAC members to use in planning for review and comment on plans and programs.

Mr. Saul Wilson presented the following resolution on *Transportation Outlook 2035* for the CAC’s endorsement:

*Whereas, the current long-range planning process and the current TO2035 plan is deeply flawed; and*

*Whereas, the CAC will propose a process for better long-range planning; and*

*Whereas, the TO2035 Amendment is an improvement upon the TO2035 plan;*

*Now be it therefore resolved, that the CAC recommends that the BRTB approve Resolution #09-14.*

Although there was not a quorum present, the 14 members present at the meeting voted to send the statement to the BRTB for their consideration.

In addition, members suggested that Attachment 1 of Resolution #09-14 include the dollar amounts for each item being funded. Ms. Aris agreed to add this information for clarification purposes, although this information is in the full text of the preferred alternative for the amendment to *Transportation Outlook 2035*.

***Handout:*** *Policy and Legislation Subcommittee Work Program for 2009*

- Membership – Ms. Mullan reported that the committee reviewed 4 applications for new membership and recommends Ms. Sharonlee Vogel of Howard County to fill the open slot on the CAC. Because there was not a quorum, a vote on this recommendation was postponed to the next meeting.

The lack of quorum was discussed by all members and concerns were raised about the inability to conduct business due to a lack of quorum. Members discussed the pros and cons of various alternatives, including online voting or changing the number of votes required to pass a resolution or statement. The Membership Committee agreed to further review the matter and provide recommendations for the CAC to review.

Ms. Mullan also reported that the committee will focus on the following tasks this year:

- o New member orientation;
- o Mentor program for new members;
- o When, where, and how to advertise for the 2010 CAC openings;
- o Bylaws review regarding quorum voting.

**Action – Membership Subcommittee:** *Research alternatives to quorum voting and if needed, draft recommendations on necessary changes to the CAC bylaws.*

#### **5. ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2009 MINUTES**

Due to a lack of quorum, this item was postponed to the next CAC meeting.

#### **6. MARCH AGENDA, OTHER BUSINESS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members discussed potential topics for the March meeting.

- MTA Service Reductions – Members noted their concern over MTA's recent announcement that area transit service would be reduced. Members requested that a speaker from MTA present information on these modifications at a future meeting.
- Federal Stimulus Package – Members were interested to find out more details, if available, about the anticipated federal stimulus package and its impact on transportation plans and programs in Maryland.

Members also identified the following action items for the March agenda: Approval of application for Sharonlee Vogel; January and February minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M. The next meeting of the CAC is scheduled for Wednesday, March 4, 2009 at 5:30 P.M.

DRAFT

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO BRTB REGARDING UPDATE TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN**

**from the**

**BALTIMORE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD CITIZENS ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE**

***26 January 2009***

### **A. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS**

#### 1. Public Involvement

- a. Create a process by which the public can influence transportation policy positions at the jurisdictional level.
- b. Widely disseminate a clearer timeframe of annual activities and opportunities for public input and engagement
- c. Develop method to evaluate PPP effectiveness, and do so annually (prior to updating).

#### 2. Public Education and Information

- a. More special meetings/workshops/forums of BRTB officials with CAC and the public, including annual workshops for regular processes like TIP.
- b. Increase use of print media in public notification.
- c. Improve Website and its maintenance.

#### 3. Transparency

- a. Restore quarterly attendance of BRTB elected officials at BRTB meetings at which agendas feature issues of public interest and major policy votes.
- b. Schedule BRTB meetings in the early evening and rotate these around the region
- c. BRTB meetings should be videotaped and aired on public-access TV, online, and in libraries/media centers.
- d. Cease closed Management Committee meetings
- e. Open Executive Committee meetings to the public.

#### 4. Public Input

- a. Public comment regarding items scheduled for vote at BRTB meetings should be received by officials prior to voting

b. Public and CAC comments should be read in summary at BRTB meetings and available online.

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

*above changes should be illuminated in revised document content*

## **B. DOCUMENT CONTENT REVISIONS**

### **1. Public Involvement**

Stronger language reflecting commitment to involving the public in planning before and during the development of plans and to legitimately consider and weigh public input before voting. PPP should also lay out additional explicit strategies fostering truer public engagement.

### **2. Public Education and Information**

More fully describe additional opportunities for citizens to be educated in the transportation planning process

### **3. Transparency**

Language should note commitment to increasing public's access to elected officials who serve on the BRTB and to public comments and records.

### **4. Public Input**

Document should acknowledge steps taken to ensure that public suggestions and comments are taken seriously, used, and available in the public record.

## **C. DOCUMENT FORMAT**

### **1. Reduce document length**

a. eliminate repetitive statements

b. condense 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).

### **2. Reorganize document to improve clarity**

a. Table of Contents with page numbers

b. Purpose

c. Regional Transportation Planning Process

d. Principles of Public Involvement

e. Public Involvement Opportunities

- (1) Public Input
- (2) Public Review & Comment
- (3) Attending Meetings
- (4) Other Involvement Opportunities (focus groups, workshops, open houses, surveys, etc.)
- f. Public Information and Education (accessing info, speakers bureau, special outreach, etc.)
- g. Appendices
  - (1) Transportation Lingo
  - (2) Making Comments at BRTB Meetings
  - (3) Federal Requirements (or excerpts)
  - (4) Excerpts from the Code of Federal Regulations

## **RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The current Public Participation Plan (PPP) needs to go further in promoting and improving public awareness, education, engagement, and involvement. 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 plan 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. 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 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.

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 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.

Navigating the current PPP 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.

**MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**  
**SUBJECT: Transparency and Open Government**

My Administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. We will work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of **transparency, public participation, and collaboration**. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in Government.

**Government should be transparent.** Transparency promotes accountability and provides information for citizens about what their Government is doing. Information maintained by the Federal Government is a national asset. My Administration will take appropriate action, consistent with law and policy, to disclose information rapidly in forms that the public can readily find and use. Executive departments and agencies should harness new technologies to put information about their operations and decisions online and readily available to the public. Executive departments and agencies should also solicit public feedback to identify information of greatest use to the public.

**Government should be participatory.** Public engagement enhances the Government's effectiveness and improves the quality of its decisions. Knowledge is widely dispersed in society, and public officials benefit from having access to that dispersed knowledge. Executive departments and agencies should offer Americans increased opportunities to participate in policymaking and to provide their Government with the benefits of their collective expertise and information. Executive departments and agencies should also solicit public input on how we can increase and improve opportunities for public participation in Government.

**Government should be collaborative.** Collaboration actively engages Americans in the work of their Government. Executive departments and agencies should use innovative tools, methods, and systems to cooperate among themselves, across all levels of Government, and with nonprofit organizations, businesses, and individuals in the private sector. Executive departments and agencies should solicit public feedback to assess and improve their level of collaboration and to identify new opportunities for cooperation.

I direct the Chief Technology Officer, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Administrator of General Services, to coordinate the development by appropriate executive departments and agencies, within 120 days, of recommendations for an **Open Government Directive**, to be issued by the Director of OMB, that instructs executive departments and agencies to take specific actions implementing the principles set forth in this memorandum. The independent agencies should comply with the Open Government Directive.

This memorandum is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

This memorandum shall be published in the *Federal Register*.

BARACK OBAMA [January 21, 2009 - on his first full day in office]

**Baltimore Regional Transportation Board  
Citizens Advisory Committee  
Policy and Legislation Subcommittee**

The Policy and Legislation Subcommittee shall consist of a minimum of 5 voting members. This committee shall focus on areas such as education for members about the transportation planning process and updating members on relevant local, regional, and federal legislation and policy. – *CAC Bylaws*

**Work Program for 2009**

CAC Action Calendar

BRTB Visioning Process

- Identify and summarize good examples from other regions
- Develop vision elements and draft vision statement
- Work collaboratively with BRTB and BMC staff

Long-Range Transportation Plan 2040

- Identify and summarize good examples from other regions
- Develop table of contents
- Identify performance measures
- Compile and review relevant regional analysis
- Compile and evaluate alternative strategies and scenarios

Annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- Evaluate proposed TIP projects against long-range plan and vision criteria
- Identify potential TIP projects

Annual BMC Unified Planning Work Program

- Identify annual staff and information support requirements for BMC
- Draft scope line item language

Topics of Current Interest

- 2009 Maryland Legislative Session
- Baltimore region response to Federal stimulus bill
  - (e.g., priorities for use of funds channeled through BRTB)
- Baltimore region response to 2007 Federal rail authorization bill
- Baltimore region input and response to upcoming Federal surface transportation authorization bill

Other Topics of Ongoing Interest

- Suggestions for potential new legislation (future state legislative sessions)
- Performance measures, analytic tools, methodologies and data
- Regional transportation – planning process
- Regional transportation – relationship to environmental and energy policy
- Regional transportation – organization and governance
- Regional transportation – sustainable funding

*Modus Operandi*

- Issue-specific research
- Discussion within subcommittee
- Keep CAC apprised of status of issue
- Build consensus around a position or recommendation
- Formulate resolution for CAC action