

## **PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, July 10, 2019

Impact Hub

5:30 to 7:30 P.M.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Eric Norton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

#### **1. OPENING REMARKS**

Mr. Norton welcomed everyone to the PAC's summer retreat and provided some opening remarks. He began by stating the purpose of the retreat is to reconnect halfway through the year and have an open discussion about the PAC's role in the regional planning process, acknowledge frustrations and fatigue amongst members, and ways in which everyone's time and skills can be most effectively utilized moving forward. Mr. Norton emphasized the need to recognize that PAC members volunteer to give up personal and family time each month because they want to make positive changes in the transportation arena. The discussion this evening seeks to discuss these matters and identify ways in which members individually and collectively can move forward.

#### **2. DISCUSSION**

Mr. Norton and Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda facilitated discussion with members. Key highlights include:

- Members discussed their role in regional planning – collectively and as individuals. Survey results of [current PAC members](#) and [former members](#) indicate members value the:
  - diversity and multi-disciplinary experience of PAC members who are motivated and interested;
  - exchange of ideas from a diverse cross-section of the community;
  - presentations on transportation plans and projects and knowledge sharing on transportation related issues; and
  - discussions and debates, even if difficult at times.

Frustrations expressed include feeling as if individual talents aren't being utilized by the BRTB. Some expressed interest in doing more outreach and volunteering to talk with people in the community. Others stated they found working on the Every Voice Counts

Transportation Academy extremely fulfilling. Overall, opportunities for members interested in doing more community engagement is limited, leaving some members feeling their time and talents could be more effectively engaged.

Collectively, members expressed ongoing frustration that their input is not heard or utilized, especially on items that are outside of BRTB plans and products. Survey results reflect this sentiment, with 62% of current members and 78% of former members who responded to the survey indicating they feel their work on the PAC had little to no impact at all.

- PAC members shifted to discuss comments/resolutions submitted to the BRTB. Members decided that an in-depth look at the comments made and BRTB response would help determine if this frustration can be verified by the data. Other members suggested it would be good to also identify results of regional plans and UPWP funds used for local studies – what are the results of those? How has the information identified in these studies been utilized?
- Members discussed the difference between a process in which public input is used to inform decision-making (Comments → Decisions) and a process in which comments are sought as consultation for decisions already made (Decisions → Comments).
- Members discussed the mission of the BRTB and the PAC (see attached) and talked about both formal and informal organizational structures. Members also discussed the role of the BRTB in transportation planning process and how it fits in with other local and state planning processes.

One member pointed out that metropolitan planning organization's (MPO's) were first created by federal mandate in 1962, with an intermodal approach to highway and transit funding being implemented in 1991 with the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Since their formation, each metropolitan area has created their own local structure and policies guiding their MPO.

Members asked if there are any other MPO's which offer examples of more effective public engagement and collaborative decision-making. This was tabled as a potential follow-up action item.

- Through the discussion and the survey, several members asked what BMC staff and the BRTB sees as the PAC's role and value add to the process. Members also suggested that, if much of the decision-making in the region happens locally or at the state, the PAC would benefit from their ability to connect more with BRTB members and provide input into local planning initiatives.
- Other questions raised included:
  - Why do PAC meetings begin during rush hour?
  - Are there any key initiatives or recommendations that the PAC can agree upon and collectively advocate for?
  - Is there value in having the PAC help capture the pulse of the community on transportation needs for use in the planning process?
  - Is there a role for the PAC in helping to build capacity for local planning efforts?

- Is there space for the PAC to have conversations which are outside of the existing planning process or does the BRTB wish to have the PAC be a consultation only role?
- What is the process in which the BRTB discusses and deliberates collectively on public comments?

### **3. DISCUSSION ON NEXT STEPS**

PAC members agreed that further conversation is needed amongst PAC members and with BRTB members. The PAC agreed to continue discussion at their August 7 meeting and asked if a meeting could be scheduled in August with PAC and BRTB members meeting together to a build relationship and discuss ways in which they can work more effectively together.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **Members**

Yinka Bode-George – Resident, Baltimore City

Celeste Chavis – Morgan State University

Michael Davis – Resident, Carroll County

David Drasin – Member, Howard County Multimodal Transportation Advisory Board

Kira Gardner-Marshall – Neighborhood Housing Services Baltimore *(attended makeup mtg)*

Tfadzwa Gwitira – Resident, Baltimore City

Bruce Kinzinger – Bike Harford

Paul Kowzan – Broadway Area Business Association

Ian Moller-Knudson – Howard County Sierra Club

Eric Norton – Central Maryland Transportation Alliance

Matt Peterson – Resident, Baltimore County

Mary Presley – Maryland Motor Coach Association

Sharon Smith – Partners In Care

Michael Thompson – Turner Station Conservation Teams

Jed Weeks – Bikemore *(attended makeup mtg)*

Jennifer Weeks – Resident, Baltimore County

Cynthia Wyatt – Resident, Anne Arundel County

#### **Staff and Guests**

Don Halligan – Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)

Monica Haines Benkhedda – BMC

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## PAC MISSION

The purpose of the PAC is to:

- A. Serve as an advisory body to the BRTB. The PAC has the responsibility for providing advice to the BRTB on policies, plans, programs, budgets and to assist in community outreach. The PAC shall be provided with staff assistance from the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) as described in the Unified Planning Work Program to assist the PAC in carrying out their responsibilities. The Chairperson of the PAC shall prepare and present a report of the PAC's activities at each regularly scheduled Empowered Representative BRTB meeting. At a minimum, the PAC shall advise the BRTB on the following major activities and work products:
  - o The Unified Planning Work Program;
  - o The Long Range Transportation Plan;
  - o The Transportation Improvement Program;
  - o Amendments to the TIP or Plan that affect the region's conformity with federal air quality requirements;
  - o The Public Participation Plan; and
  - o Regionally significant land use and transportation issues, plans and programs.
- B. Promote public awareness and participation in the regional transportation planning process.
- C. Promote equity in the regional transportation planning process.

## BRTB MISSION

The mission and purpose of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board are to carry out the metropolitan transportation planning process as mandated by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 and its successors. These laws call for all MPOs to provide a "continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process that result in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and supports the metropolitan community development and social goals."<sup>1</sup>

Consistent with the direction provided by Federal transportation law, Maryland Smart Growth initiatives, and regional policy priorities, the mission of the BRTB is to develop, promote and ensure implementation of a regional transportation plan that:

- (A) supports the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- (B) increases the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- (C) increases the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
- (D) increases the accessibility and mobility options available for people and freight;
- (E) protects the environment, promotes energy conservation, and improves quality of life, and promotes consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- (F) enhances the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- (G) promotes efficient system management and operation;

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<sup>1</sup> 23 CFR Part 450, Metropolitan Planning Rule, October 28, 1993

- (H) emphasizes the preservation of the existing transportation system; and
- (I) promotes an efficient relationship between land use and transportation that maximizes the use of existing and future public programs and infrastructure.

The activities performed by BRTB to comply with this mission include:

1. Organizing, overseeing and managing the planning process in compliance with current federal requirements. Specific responsibilities of the BRTB include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) to receive and act upon planning products from the Technical Committee, as organized in Article IV, Section V, developed in compliance with current federal metropolitan planning regulations;
- b) to review and comment upon the transportation element of the State Air Quality Implementation Plan (SIP);
- c) to develop, approve and implement the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and to determine conformity of the LRTP and TIP with the SIP in accordance with the Federal Clean Air Act, as amended;
- d) to develop and approve the annual (or Bi-Annual) Unified Planning Work Program and Budget (UPWP);
- e) to ensure that locally adopted comprehensive plans and the regionally endorsed cooperative forecast are reflected in the work carried out through the UPWP;
- f) to manage the progress of UPWP projects;
- g) to assure the development of work programs that fulfill the objectives of the UPWP and to assure that the approved UPWP is consistent between the BRTB and the contractual arrangements with the UPWP funded staff, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the local jurisdictions or other entities contracted by the BRTB for execution of the work program;
- h) to facilitate and encourage early and meaningful public involvement in the transportation planning and decision-making processes;
  - i) to develop and maintain a comprehensive public involvement and outreach plan as an integral part of the transportation planning process. This plan would be reviewed annually and modified as appropriate;
  - j) to review and, if necessary, modify or amend the regional transportation planning process for compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation's certification of the planning process;
  - k) to examine long and short range transportation funding requirements and potential revenue sources and to make recommendations on a preferred approach for securing necessary funds; and
  - l) to examine and consider regionally significant land use issues, plans and programs as they relate to transportation planning for the region.

2. Providing direction to and receiving policy related support from the Technical Committee of the BRTB.

3. Providing policy direction and oversight to meet Federal and State environmental requirements for attaining air quality standards as required by the Federal Clean Air Act as amended.