

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, August 7, 2019

Impact Hub

5:35 to 7:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Mr. Eric Norton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

1. OPENING REMARKS

Mr. Dan Pontious, shared his past experiences organizing around transportation issues, as well as his current experience as the Housing Policy Coordinator for the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. He shared an overview of how resources are allocated via the local, state, and regional transportation planning processes.

Mr. Pontious also shared the reality that many decisions related to projects and funding are decided at the local level through priority letters, at the state level through MDOT's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), and in Annapolis by the Maryland General Assembly, which approves the CTP. Given this reality, many decisions related to transportation policy and funding have a political component and occur outside of the scope of the BRTB's purview.

The group acknowledged PAC members frustrations in attempting to provide feedback in a process with so many moving parts and levels of government involved. They also acknowledged that while the PAC serves as key element of the BRTB's public engagement process, it doesn't have to exist or exist in its current form and function.

From there, Mr. Pontious joined Mr. Norton and Ms. Monica Haines Benkhedda in discussing these realities and the ways in which the PAC members – both individually and collectively – feel would be most effective.

[Handout: Transportation Planning and Allocation of Resources]

2. DISCUSSION

PAC members discussed a range of options from maintaining the PAC as is, to recommending the PAC be dissolved, to a more ideal version of the PAC. Key highlights of discussion included:

- PAC members feel that the PAC is a valuable resource for sharing information about transportation projects and plans.

- Are there ways in which more members can utilize this information to share with others in the community? Obtain input to share with decision makers?
- Members recommend more space be created for regional dialogue, with an emphasis on events where both the public and government staff can learn about and discuss a range of topics, and information gathered can inform decisions being made.
- Understanding that the PAC is not a decision-making body, but rather offering advice. Does this work for everyone? Are there ways to manage expectations and make the limitations of the volunteer position clearer to potential volunteers?
- Are there other PAC's which have gotten over these hurdles and have a PAC which feels its input is more fully utilized to inform decision making process?
- Members would like clarification on what the BRTB would like from the PAC.
 - If suggestions given by the PAC are not being utilized, what kind of input would the BRTB like from the PAC?
 - If many transportation decisions are made outside of the BRTB's purview, should the PAC focus its efforts on a few key ideas to share and discuss with BRTB members?
 - Is there a way for the PAC be a more effective tool for gathering public input and sharing the public's voice with the BRTB?
- Since the BRTB's Technical Committee have more robust discussions with more time in advance of voting, the PAC recommends a seat at the table at Technical Committee meetings in order to provide PAC input earlier in the process.

3. DISCUSSION ON NEXT STEPS

The PAC would like to meet with the BRTB in August or September to discuss what the BRTB would like from the PAC and identify in which ways the PAC and BRTB can work more effectively together in the future. Staff will work with the PAC Chairs to discuss possible options for such a meeting and scheduling.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Celeste Chavis – Morgan State University

Michael Davis – Resident, Carroll County

(by phone)

Janet Eveland – Resident, Baltimore City

Kira Gardner-Marshall – Neighborhood Housing Services Baltimore

Benjamin Groff – Resident, Baltimore City

(by phone)

Yvette Hicks – Resident, Baltimore County

(by phone)

Tfadzwa Gwitira – Resident, Baltimore City

Bruce Kinzinger – Bike Harford

(by phone)

Paul Kowzan – Broadway Area Business Association
Ian Moller-Knudson – Howard County Sierra Club (by phone)
Eric Norton – Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Audrey Sellers – Accessible Resources for Independence, Inc. (by phone)
Derrick Sexton – Resident, Baltimore City
Sharon Smith – Partners In Care
Michael Thompson – Turner Station Conservation Teams
Arjan van Andel – Resident, Anne Arundel County (by phone)
Paul Verchinski – Howard County Citizens Association (HCCA) (by phone)
Cynthia Wyatt – Resident, Anne Arundel County

Staff and Guests

Regina Aris – Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)
Monica Haines Benkhedda – BMC
Dan Pontious – BMC

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."¹

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;

¹ 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.