

**RICHMOND AREA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

MINUTES OF MEETING

March 13, 2008

MEMBERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Daniel A. Gecker, Chairman	County of Chesterfield
Daniel N. Lysy, Secretary (Alternate)	RRPDC
Viktorina W. Badger	City of Richmond
Robert M. Berry	RMA
Linda G. Broady-Myers (Nonvoting)	EDAC
Malvern R. Butler	County of Goochland
Deborah B. Coats (Alternate)	County of Hanover
Timothy W. Cotman	County of Charles City
Marleen K. Durfee	County of Chesterfield
Ralph J. "Joe" Emerson	County of Henrico
E. Todd Eure	County of Henrico
James M. Holland	County of Chesterfield
John M. Lewis	GRTC Transit System
Faye O. Prichard	Town of Ashland
Mark E. Riblett (Alternate)	VDOT
Ellen F. Robertson	City of Richmond
Robert R. Setliff	County of Hanover
Barbara K. Smith (Alternate)	County of Chesterfield
Frank Thornton	County of Henrico
Stran L. Trout	County of New Kent
Carson Tucker	County of Powhatan
Joseph E. Vidunas	County of Hanover
Joseph B. Walton	County of Powhatan

MEMBERS ABSENT

REPRESENTING

William J. Pantele, Vice Chairman	City of Richmond
Jameson T. Auten (Nonvoting)	RideFinders
Charles Badger (Nonvoting)	VDRPT
Cliff Burnette (Nonvoting)	VDA
Tony Cho (Nonvoting)	FTA
John Gordon	County of Hanover
Thomas A. Hawthorne	VDOT
George M. Homewood	County of New Kent
Robert P. Morris (Nonvoting)	CTAC
John McCracken	County of Chesterfield
Patricia O'Bannon	County of Henrico
Charles H. Rasnick (Nonvoting)	Citizen Appointee

MEMBERS ABSENT (Cont.)

REPRESENTING

Ivan Rucker (Nonvoting) FHWA
John Rutledge.....CRAC
David T. Williams.....County of Powhatan

OTHERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

John T. Benton Citizen
Robert Bradham Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce
William R. Britton (Alternate)..... County of Charles City
Karin Carmack Planning Commission, County of Powhatan
Ned S. Creasey RRPDC Commissioner, County of Goochland
Carol David..... Citizen
Joan Girone Chesterfield Business Council
Lawrence C. Hagin (Alternate)..... GRTC Transit System
Kelly Hickok EDAC
Michael Holmes Former MPO Member, Citizen
Walter Johnson..... VDOT
Adele MacLean..... CTAC, VCN
Liz McAdory..... VDOT
James P. Ponticello VDOT
Frank Speilberg..... VHB
Brandon Stidham (Alternate).....County of Powhatan
Stephen Story James River Bus Lines
Alan Tobias HNTB
John Zeugner..... CTAC, VCN
Jin Lee RRPDC
Barbara Nelson..... RRPDC
Archita Rajbhandary RRPDC
Sharon Robeson RRPDC
Lee Yolton RRPDC

CALL TO ORDER

MPO Chairman Dan Gecker, called the March 13, 2008 meeting of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at approximately 2:15 p.m. in the large conference room of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission offices.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Certification by MPO Secretary of Meeting Quorum –

Dan Lysy reported that a quorum was present.

B. Additions to MPO Agenda –

No additions were requested.

C. Minutes of the February 14, 2008 MPO Meeting –

On motion of Robert R. Setliff, seconded by Viktoria W. Badger, the MPO unanimously approved the minutes of the February 14, 2008 meeting as presented.

D. Open Public Comment Period –

Chairman Gecker opened the Public Comment Period and recognized Adele MacLean, a citizen and grass roots advocate for smarter growth serving on MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee, the Regional Mass Transit Study Advisory Committee, and Long-Range Transportation Advisory Committee. Ms. MacLean expressed concern about global warming, the increasing cost of fuel, the more rigorous air quality standards, and the negative health affects of our transportation system, which is far too dependent on the automobile. She suggested several low-cost solutions at our fingertips. First, she asked support for the GRTC plan [Comprehensive Operations Analysis], which she said is an excellent start on a regional transit plan with an incremental approach which can grow into a larger transit system for the region. She also asked the MPO to advocate for a dedicated source of funding for transit. Second, Ms. MacLean noted the City of Richmond Downtown Plan, a grass-roots plan developed with significant citizen involvement, and encouraged other jurisdictions to use the same approach in developing local plans. She said the Downtown Plan is pedestrian-friendly and asked consideration of pedestrian-friendly solutions with safe, connecting sidewalks in other localities. Ms. Maclean said a third low-cost approach is to implement the regional bicycling plan to facilitate commuter bicycling options and asked that localities look at this as they are developing transportation solutions. Ms. MacLean thanked the MPO for listening.

Chairman Gecker thanked Ms. MacLean for her remarks and recognized John Zeugner. Mr. Zeugner introduced himself as a certified planner, chair of the Falls of the James group, Sierra Club member, a long-term CTAC member and participant in four LRTP planning efforts. Mr. Zeugner commended the RRPDC staff for what he called “super-human work” in pulling the long-range transportation planning effort together and moving it along in abbreviated time frames and schedules and he said members of the LRTP Advisory Committee have also done a great job. Mr. Zeugner noted a couple of flaws in the process to consider for the next plan update process. He said despite development of goals and objectives, and looking at land use and transportation, the LRTP is still mostly a process where localities provide a list of roads and intersections they want improved and it really doesn’t address looking at transportation alternatives in the areas where enormous growth is anticipated. Mr. Zeugner noted several areas in the region where he said roads cannot be expanded to handle the growth in single occupancy vehicles and said there

needs to be planning now for mass transit alternatives. Otherwise, Mr. Zeugner said levels of service F, gridlock, health problems, and air quality problems will continue to increase. Mr. Zeugner urged an ongoing transportation planning process which continues to work on coordination and solutions with area transit service providers to develop a real transportation plan that is seamless throughout the various modes. He said he would like to see a process that looks more closely at expected growth and works out transit-oriented development with higher densities for anticipated infrastructure sites to create communities with modal alternatives that will serve the needs of citizens. Mr. Zeugner said he appreciates the MPO's time and attention on this.

Chairman Gecker thanked Mr. Zeugner for his comments. There being no additional requests to address the MPO, Chairman Gecker closed the public comment period.

E. Recognition of Outgoing MPO Chairman and MPO Members and Alternates –

Dan Lysy reported that outgoing MPO Chairman R. M. "Dickie" King was present for recognition at the RRPDC Board meeting and picked up his plaque and framed resolution and that Mr. Russell Holland also picked up his resolution at the RRPDC meeting. Mr. Lysy read the resolution of appreciation and Chairman Gecker presented the framed resolution to former MPO member Michael L. Holmes, which was followed by a hearty round of applause. Mr. Holmes said it has been a pleasure to have served on the MPO. He said many things have been accomplished in the past and expressed confidence that good things will be accomplished in the future, particularly the Long-Range Transportation. Mr. Holmes thanked the MPO for the resolution and his remarks were followed by a second round of applause.

Chairman Gecker noted the remainder of the resolutions would be mailed to those not present to receive them.

F. MPO Chairman's Report –

Chairman Gecker had nothing to report.

G. RRPDC Transportation Director's Report –

1. Proposed VDOT Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements –

Mr. Lysy reported that VDOT is currently conducting a review and proposing major changes to secondary street requirements and guidelines. He said counties for which VDOT maintains their secondary roads are those affected by the proposed revisions. He said VDOT is very interested in comments or suggestions and noted that

Mark Riblett, VDOT staff support to Assistant Secretary of Transportation Nick Donohue, who is leading this review, is present at today's meeting. Mr. Lysy suggested that MPO members communicate questions or comments to their local jurisdiction TAC member.

2. Other Business –

No other business was brought forward for consideration.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. 2031 MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) List of Proposed Projects –

Mr. Lysy said 2031 LRTP Project Manager Lee Yolton would provide a presentation noting there were two mailings to the MPO on this item and that PowerPoint presentation handouts are being distributed. Mr. Yolton said in the interest of brevity he would focus on the list of projects that staff is asking the MPO to authorize today for submission to VDOT for air quality conformity analysis, as well as for staff to conduct environmental justice analysis and public review. Mr. Yolton said that the first supplemental mailing contains the list of all the projects that the LRTP Advisory Committee is recommending for approval from the MPO and presented information on this topic using the following PowerPoint slides:

- 2031 Richmond Area Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) (cover slide)
- 2031 LRTP Projects List (two slides with fund sources and projects)
- Total Federal and State Funds Projections thru 2031 (chart)
- Additional Revenue Sources for Projects in 2031 LRTP
- Year of Expenditure (chart)
- Vision List
- 2031 Richmond Area Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) (closing slide)

Mr. Yolton concluded his presentation and thanked all the members of the Long-Range Transportation Plan Advisory Committee who sat through a series of 10 different meetings to develop the list and said staff is requesting authorization by the MPO this afternoon to submit the list for air quality conformity analysis, environmental justice review, and public review. Mr. Yolton offered to answer questions. Chairman Gecker asked if there were any questions and Mr. Lysy responded noting one correction, brought to his attention today, to the Local and Secondary Projects list mailed out on March 11. He said that for two of the Goochland County projects, staff identified the wrong termini points showing Route 5 instead

of Route 6 and requested that the resolution presented in the agenda supplemental mailing package be restated to say "...as presented and corrected."

On motion of Malvern R. "Rudy" Butler, seconded by Robert R. Setliff, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) authorizes the list of proposed projects for the 2031 Long-Range Transportation Plan Update as presented and corrected to be submitted for air quality conformity analysis, environmental justice review and analysis, and for public review.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Consent Action Item –

1. VDOT TIP Amendment Request; Bridge Replacement and I-64 Widening and Pavement Rehabilitation Projects –

On motion of Robert Setliff, seconded by Marleen Durfee, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) amends the *FY 2007 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* adding the following projects: VDOT UPC #51261, replacing bridge over Crump Creek on Georgetown Road in Hanover County obligating \$199,000 in Bridge funds and \$44,000 in "other" state funds for preliminary engineering in FY 08, and VDOT UPC #11800, rehabilitating pavement and widening for 14.7 miles of Interstate 64 between Route 249 and Route 33 in New Kent County obligating \$902,000 in AC funds and \$5,349,000 in NH funds for PE in FY 08 and obligating \$551,000 in AC funds for PE in FY 09.

B. Revisions to the RSTP and CMAQ Project Selection and Funds Allocation Guidelines –

Mr. Lysy said Barb Nelson, Project Manager, would provide a brief presentation on the proposed revisions. Ms. Nelson said the *Richmond Area MPO RSTP and CMAQ Project Funding Programs, RSTP & CMAQ Project Selection Process* document was mailed as an enclosure in the March MPO agenda package. She said she would provide a brief presentation on the requested changes to those guidelines and would ask for MPO approval of the recommended changes. Ms. Nelson provided a

PowerPoint presentation addressing the proposed changes with the following slides:

- Richmond MPO, RSTP & CMAQ, Project Selection and Funding (cover slide)
- RSTP and CMAQ Project Selection and Funding
- CMAQ, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement
- Available Allocations – CMAQ
- RSTP, Regional Surface Transportation Program
- Available Allocations – RSTP (chart)
- RSTP and CMAQ: Project Life Cycle (flow chart)
- Recommended Policy Changes

Ms. Nelson completed her presentation, noting that the recommended changes are highlighted in the agenda packet enclosure, and offered to answer questions. Chairman Gecker asked if there were any questions and, seeing none, thanked Ms. Nelson for her presentation and noted the resolution contained in the agenda package under tab four.

On motion of Robert R. Setliff, seconded by Deborah B. Coats, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approves the proposed revisions to the “*Richmond Area MPO RSTP and CMAQ Funding Programs, RSTP & CMAQ Project Selection Process*” guidelines (December 9, 2004) as presented.

At this point in the meeting, Chairman Gecker announced that he would need to leave and, in the absence of Vice Chairman Bill Pantele, Chairman Gecker said Immediate Past Chairman Robert Setliff agreed to chair the remainder of the meeting.

C. Report on Financial Close-Out of Previous Allocations for RSTP and CMAQ Funded Projects –

Acting Chairman Setliff recognized VDOT representative Mark Riblett for his report on the close-out of allocations. Mr. Riblett noted staff is distributing a letter from VDOT Chief Financial Officer Reta Busher provided to Mr. Lysy today regarding the status of the funds reconciliation effort. Mr. Riblett noted four basic points addressed in Ms. Busher’s letter basically recognizing the letter from the Richmond Area MPO to Secretary Homer last year requesting this effort be undertaken and completed. He said the VDOT Programming Division chaired and led this effort, through a committee including Programming and Richmond District staff and with the assistance of Richmond MPO staff, to provide a reconciliation of RSTP and CMAQ allocations for the MPO and that the

report is complete and being reviewed by Ms. Busher's staff and Programming staff with a report to be released shortly. Mr. Riblett said he was asked to convey that this is a record-setting effort from a reconciliation standpoint and that this is the first comprehensive reconciliation effort of RSTP and CMAQ projects in the state. He said it is taking longer than they had hoped and certainly longer than the Richmond MPO wanted. He said VDOT hopes that future reconciliation efforts in other MPO areas will go much faster as a result of this effort. Mr. Riblett said Diane Mitchell will attend the March 20 TAC meeting to discuss the STIP grouping process and he said if they have any additional information by then regarding the finalization of this reconciliation effort, Ms. Mitchell will certainly share any new or updated information. On behalf of Reta Busher and VDOT, Mr. Riblett conveyed that they certainly appreciate the MPO's patience on this process that has taken much longer than expected.

Acting Chairman Setliff thanked Mr. Riblett for his report and asked if there were any questions. No questions were voiced and Acting Chairman Setliff asked Mr. Riblett when VDOT anticipates completion of the final report. Mr. Riblett said he does not have a date, but that could be a point of discussion with TAC and VDOT Programming staff at the meeting next week. Mr. Lysy noted that finalizing this report is an important concern because TAC will initiate the RSTP and CMAQ project review and selection process next Thursday and if they don't have the numbers, they can not be included. Mr. Lysy noted there is a special follow-up TAC meeting tentatively set for March 31. He said it would be very important if Mr. Riblett could send the message back that this information is needed at the March 31 meeting at the absolute latest. Mr. Lysy said he recognizes and appreciates this is a precedent-setting effort. Barb Nelson said staff had hoped to have this information by December and then January and February and she said staff would like to have it no later than or, if possible, in advance of the March 31 meeting. She said the goal is to allocate the oldest money first as they go through the allocation process and clear out the backlog of old projects. Mr. Lysy noted his recollection is that staff estimates that these funds total approximately \$7 million and asked Mr. Riblett if VDOT is able to provide any kind of number and Mr. Riblett responded that he could not. Mr. Lysy noted that these funds will not increase, but they are losing value as project costs are increasing while this reconciliation process is underway. Acting Chairman Setliff thanked Mr. Riblett.

D. MPO Regional Mass Transit Study (RMTS) –

Mr. Yolton introduced the consultant team, Alan Tobias of HNTB and Frank Spielberg from VHB, who would provide a presentation showing some of the preliminary results of the analysis of modal alternatives for the Regional Mass Transit Study. Alan Tobias said the study began in January of 2007 and noted that the original schedule called for completion

by the end of December 2007 and there was an extension due partly to issues related to the need to revise socioeconomic data for the region. Mr. Tobias provided a PowerPoint presentation, copies of which were distributed at the meeting, and referenced the following slides in his presentation:

- Richmond Regional Mass Transit Study (cover slide)
- Schedule
- Corridors and Modes Analyzed
- Corridors
- Local Service Extensions
- Proposed Corridors (map)
- Ridership Forecast (2031) (bar graph)
- Priority Categories
- Recommended Tier I Service (chart)
- Recommended Tier II Service (chart)
- Recommended Tier III Service (chart)
- Key Upcoming Dates

Mr. Tobias concluded his report and offered to answer questions. Linda Broady-Myers asked if there is anything in the plan to provide paratransit service to meet up with the recommended new lines so that people with disabilities, seniors and those who don't drive at all can take advantage of service from outlying areas to downtown Richmond. Mr. Tobias said there is a section with discussion on that and noted that clearly there is a requirement and obligation or responsibility to provide paratransit service in those areas. He said there would be complementary expanded paratransit service as the bus service is expanded. Ms. Broady-Myers noted that under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), if there is not fixed route service, there is no requirement to provide paratransit service and a lot of places across the nation are trying to go to link connectors so that they can avoid the expense of paratransit. She said the unfortunate result is that the people who are most in need of public transportation are not able to utilize it because they cannot get to it. She asked if there is anything written into the plan for the localities to have to incorporate some local paratransit so that all the residents and citizens within their locality can have the option of using the links and express bus services he had mentioned. Mr. Tobias clarified that the study at this point is just a series of recommendations. He said the recommendation is that paratransit service be extended as part of any new service expansions or routes in the region. Ms. Broady-Myers noted that expansion of paratransit service can only be achieved in the two jurisdictions that already provide it and that paratransit would be new service for the other localities and she asked if there is language written into the plan to suggest that the localities give serious consideration to meeting the needs of those who most need the transportation service, so that those who need paratransit service are not always left out of these type of plans. Ms. Broady-Myers requested a

copy of those recommendations. Mr. Spielberg said he believes that in the draft plan, the budget includes that a certain amount is set aside for meeting ADA requirements, but he believes it important to expand service such that it is provided to whomever in the jurisdiction needs it.

Joan Girone asked what rail line is referred to in corridor G for Midlothian. Alan Tobias responded that would be commuter service on the existing Norfolk/Southern rail line. Dan Lysy commented that he appreciates the hard work the consultant team has done on this study and noted that John Lewis and Larry Hagin of GRTC will provide a presentation on the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) at the April MPO meeting. He said one of the very big items in that study is the bus rapid transit proposal from Willow Lawn to downtown Richmond and out to Rockett's Landing. Mr. Lysy said the study also includes a recommendation for a downtown transfer center mentioned by the consultant. Mr. Lysy also noted that the MPO programmed a lot of its RSTP funds for the new bus garage facility currently under construction in south Richmond. Joe Vidunas noted that VDRPT is currently working on the statewide rail plan and he said he understands there are some recommendations or study considerations that seem to conflict with some of the recommendations being put forward in the RMTS. He requested that in the next RMTS update, those apparent conflicts be addressed or reconciled, particularly in Hanover and Henrico counties which seem to be significantly effected. Mr. Lysy responded that Kevin Page, Chief of Rail Planning with VDRPT, will attend the March 20 TAC meeting to provide a presentation on the state rail plan and talk about some of those proposals, particularly with regard to consideration of a proposed alternative rail line on the old Buckingham Branch line, which bypasses Staples Mill Road station and the Ashland train station with the intent to avoid the congestion at the Acca Rail Yard. Mr. Lysy said if there is interest, he would request that Mr. Page attend the April MPO meeting for a presentation on the state rail plan.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was brought forward for consideration.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chairman Setliff adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:30 p.m.