

RICHMOND AREA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
MINUTES OF MEETING

June 8, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Malvern R. Butler, **Chairman**.....County of Goochland
Robert R. Setliff, **Vice Chairman**.....County of Hanover
Jack E. Apostolides (Nonvoting) VDRPT
Viktoria W. Badger (Alternate)City of Richmond
Edward BarberCounty of Chesterfield
Robert M. Berry RMA
Linda G. Broady-Myers (Nonvoting)EDAC
Rebecca DraperCounty of Hanover
Ralph J. “Joe” Emerson County of Henrico
E. Todd Eure County of Henrico
Paul E. Fisher RRPDC
Thomas A. Hawthorne VDOT
Malcolm H. Hines (Nonvoting)CTAC
Russell E. HollandCounty of Powhatan
Michael Holmes County of Charles City
George Homewood County of New Kent
R. M. “Dickie” KingCounty of Chesterfield
John M. Lewis.....GRTC Transit System
Sherman W. Litton.....County of Chesterfield
Eugene A. Mason.....City of Richmond
William Pantele.....City of Richmond
Cherika N. Ruffin (Alternate)..... RideFinders
Barbara K. Smith (Alternate).....County of Chesterfield
Frank Thornton County of Henrico
Stran L. Trout.....County of New Kent
Carson L. TuckerCounty of Powhatan
Joseph E. Vidunas (Alternate)County of Hanover

MEMBERS ABSENT

REPRESENTING

Jameson Auten RideFinders
Cliff Burnette (Nonvoting) VDA
John Gordon.....County of Hanover
Patricia A. Kampf (Nonvoting)..... FTA
Angela LaCombeTown of Ashland
Joseph T. LacyCounty of Goochland
John McCrackenCounty of Chesterfield
Vanloan NguyenCity of Richmond
Patricia O’Bannon..... County of Henrico

MEMBERS ABSENT (Cont.)

REPRESENTING

Ivan Rucker (Nonvoting) FHWA
John Rutledge.....CRAC

OTHERS PRESENT

REPRESENTING

Daniel N. Lysy, **Secretary** (Alternate)..... RRPDC
William R. Britton (Alternate)..... County of Charles City
Dave Dreis VDOT
Larry C. Hagin (Alternate).....GRTC Transit System
Laurie Henley..... VDOT
Liz McAdory..... VDOT
William C. Nelson (Alternate).....CTAC
Jim Ponticello..... VDOT
Mark Riblett (Alternate) VDOT
David T. Williams (Alternate)County of Powhatan
Geleene Goffena RRPDC
Barbara Nelson..... RRPDC
Sharon Robeson RRPDC
Jacqueline Stewart RRPDC
Patricia Villa RRPDC

CALL TO ORDER

MPO Chairman Malvern R. “Rudy” Butler called the June 8, 2006 meeting of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to order at approximately 2:20 p.m. in the large conference room of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC).

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Certification by MPO Secretary of Meeting Quorum –

Dan Lysy reported that a quorum was present.

B. Additions to MPO Agenda –

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

C. Minutes of the April 13, 2006 MPO Meeting –

On motion by Russell Holland, seconded by Robert Setliff, the April 13, 2006 MPO meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

D. Open Public Comment Period –

There were no public comments offered and Chairman Butler closed the Public Comment Period of the meeting.

E. MPO Chairman's Report –

Chairman Butler stated that he would defer a portion of his report to the end of today's meeting.

1. MPO Nominating Committee Report –

Chairman Butler reported that the MPO Nominating Committee, comprised of Pat O'Bannon, Bill Pantele, and Russ Holland, giving consideration to the rotation order contained in the bylaws, proposed nomination of Robert Setliff of Hanover County to serve as FY 07 MPO Chairman and Dickie King of Chesterfield County to serve as FY 07 MPO Vice Chairman. There were no nominations from the floor. On motion of Russell Holland, seconded by Robert Setliff, the names of those proposed as FY 07 MPO officers by the Nominating Committee were placed in nomination. On motion of Stran Trout, seconded by Bill Pantele, Robert Setliff of Hanover County and Dickie King of Chesterfield County were elected by acclamation to serve as FY 07 MPO Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively.

2. Other Business –

The MPO Chairman had no other business for MPO consideration at this time.

F. RRPDC Transportation Director's Report –

Mr. Lysy noted that in response to the MPO's request as made at its April 13 meeting, staff has prepared a summary of new planning provisions and requirements that have resulted from SAFETEA-LU and are incorporated into the MPO's FY 2007 Unified Work Program. This summary is included in the MPO agenda package as an information item under tab two. Mr. Lysy noted that final regulations are scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2007 and may result in additional changes. Mr. Lysy offered to answer questions and there were none.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Changes in Regional Traffic Patterns Following Completion of Route 288 –

Dan Lysy introduced Dave Dreis, Traffic Engineer with VDOT Richmond District, to provide a presentation on the changes between 2003 traffic counts and those taken following completion of Route 288 and the resultant changes in traffic patterns. Mr. Lysy noted that traffic count tables and a map of traffic volume changes were included in the agenda package. He said at the request of CTAC, an excerpt from the March 23 CTAC meeting minutes providing CTAC's comments on this same presentation were included in the agenda package.

Mr. Dreis provided a brief background summary on the data collection process and gave a PowerPoint presentation with the following slides:

- VDOT (cover slide)
- Traffic Volume Impact of Complete Opening of Route 288
- Purpose (four slides)
- Jurisdictions
- Count methodologies
- Findings (Significant Increases) Route 711 Chesterfield/Powhatan County
- Route 714 (Powhatan County)
- Findings (Significant Increases) (map)
- Findings (Significant Increases) Chesterfield County
- Findings (Significant Increases) (maps)
- Findings (Significant Increases) Goochland County; Henrico County
- Findings (Significant Increases) (two slides - maps)
- Findings (Significant Decreases) Chesterfield County (two slides)
- Findings (Significant Decreases) (map)
- Findings (Significant Decreases) Goochland County
- Findings (Significant Decreases) (two slides - maps)
- Findings (Other Observations) 10 slides – descriptions and maps)

Following Mr. Dreis' presentation, he answered a variety of questions and there was discussion which brought forward the following points:

- Based on before and after traffic counts from this study, VDOT will look at some of these same locations again and do follow-up studies to see what additional impacts there may be from Rt. 288. The widening of Robious Road (Rt. 711) in Chesterfield County will be one of the areas where additional counts will be taken.

- Traffic patterns have changed as a result of the opening of Rt. 288 having a positive effect on some areas and a negative impact on others. The back-up on Maidens Rd. (Rt. 617) in the mornings and evenings with people trying to get onto I-64 has been alleviated. However, a traffic back-up has been created in other areas such as between Rt. 288 and Rt. 295 at Short Pump on I-64.
- VDOT Richmond District Administrator Tom Hawthorne said the decision to build Rt. 288 on its current alignment was made back in the late 1980's and early 90's following an extensive environmental impact study which took into consideration traffic impacts on local roadways. On request of David Williams, Mr. Hawthorne indicated he would try to locate those studies to share and discuss with Mr. Williams.
- Percentages of increase and decrease in traffic volumes resulting from this study are not as meaningful as they might be if the percentages had been converted and interpreted in terms of capacity and level of service. A 115 percent increase may not have a significant impact on a road currently at a favorable level of service, whereas that same increase on a busy highway might push a road beyond reasonable capacity. The intent of this traffic count review was to provide a comparative analysis of raw traffic volumes; a capacity analysis was not intended.
- As counties, cities, and towns continue to grow, they are going to have to take more responsibility for managing growth and may need to require developers to pay for traffic impacts on roads.

Chairman Butler thanked Mr. Dreis for his presentation and encouraged localities to use the information he presented.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Impact of Rising Gas Prices on GRTC Ridership and RideFinders Carpool and Vanpool Formations –

Mr. Lysy introduced John Lewis, Chief Executive Officer of GRTC Transit System, who provided a PowerPoint presentation on the impact of rising gas prices using the following slides:

- GRTC Transit System: Express Route Ridership Trends (cover slide)
- GRTC's Express Routes – Operations (two slides)
- GRTC's Express Routes – Current Service Area and Funding
- Ridership Trends – Henrico County Express Routes: (bar graph)

- Ridership Trends – Richmond-Petersburg Express: (bar graph)
- Ridership Trends – Winterpock/Lowe's/Commonwealth 20 Express: (bar graph)
- RideFinders (two slides)
- Website Views and Client Database Levels (bar graph)
- Gas Prices and Public Interest (graph)
- Marketing Strategies
- GRTC Transit System – Thank You! and Questions

Following his presentation Mr. Lewis offered to answer questions and there were none. Chairman Butler thanked Mr. Lewis for his informative presentation and commented that he has noted that the rising price of gasoline has had some effect on traffic because he has noticed the full Park-and-Ride lots in Goochland County.

B. Consent Action Items –

1. TIP Amendment and RSTP/CMAQ Allocation Transfer Guidelines

On motion of Ed Barber, seconded by Dickie King, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approves the revised report “Richmond Area MPO TIP Amendment and RSTP/CMAQ Allocation Transfer Guidelines” as presented.

2. FY 2005 – 2007 TIP Amendment Requests: VDOT and VDRPT

On motion of Ed Barber, seconded by Dickie King, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) amends the *FY 2005 – 2007 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* to add new projects 2005-84 to 2005-86 as requested by VDOT and VDRPT and as presented.

C. MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) Meeting Report –

CTAC Chairman Malcolm Hines provided a brief report on the May 24 CTAC meeting noting that CTAC heard Mr. Lewis' excellent presentation. He reported that CTAC also heard from VDOT on plans to reconstruct the Huguenot Bridge relocating it slightly upstream by building the first half of the new bridge beside the existing structure that

can then be used for travel while the old structure is being demolished and the second half of the bridge is built. Mr. Hines said the new bridge will have two wide travel lanes with two 10-foot breakdown lanes for bicyclists and sidewalks for pedestrians. He said the project is well into the design phase and VDOT indicated plans should be available for public comment sometime in the fall. Mr. Hines said VDOT reported to CTAC that they will install fencing on the Nine Mile Road bridge over I-64 to prevent items from being thrown from the bridge onto the travel lanes below. Mr. Hines reported the election of FY 07 CTAC officers based on the bylaws rotation order, with current CTAC Vice Chairman William C. Nelson, Jr. from Powhatan elected Chairman and Mr. Robert P. Morris from Hanover County elected Vice Chairman. Mr. Hines also noted that CTAC had lengthy discussion about frustration with the General Assembly and the transportation funding dilemma and requested staff to arrange for Richmond area members from the General Assembly and other transportation officials to attend the next CTAC meeting to speak and listen regarding transportation needs and funding issues. He said CTAC expressed concern that transportation be looked at holistically and not just from the standpoint of funding roads. Vickey Badger inquired about the Huguenot Bridge relocation and Tom Hawthorne clarified that half of the bridge would be built slightly upstream from where the bridge is now to allow the old bridge to remain open, and then traffic would transfer to the new bridge while the old structure is torn down and the second half of the bridge is constructed. Chairman Butler thanked Mr. Hines for his report.

D. MPO Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC) Meeting Report –

Chairman Butler noted the staff report of the April 26 EDAC meeting included in tab seven of the agenda package. EDAC Chairman Linda Broady-Myers said she had nothing to add to the report. Chairman Butler called for questions on the report and there were none voiced. He thanked Ms. Broady-Myers for her continuing service on EDAC.

E. FY 07 Unified Work Program (UWP) Amendments –

Dan Lysy noted a couple of slight revisions are proposed to the FY 07 UWP dealing with regional mass transit study and the downtown circulator study. These proposed revisions are based on comments received from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to provide clarification and also based on RRPDC action to have the mass transit study address rural areas of the planning district as well as the MPO study area. Mr. Lysy said the MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) took action at its May 18 meeting to recommend action revising the UWP tasks as presented and noted the proposed resolution contained in the agenda packet. Mr. Lysy offered to answer questions and there were none.

On motion of Ed Barber, seconded by Stran Trout, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) amends *Fiscal Year 2007 Unified Work Program* (UWP) task 5.3, Downtown Circulator Study, Phase II, and task 5.5, Regional Mass Transit Study (RMTS) as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the MPO designates the MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) as the committee identified in item six of the May 11, 2006 Richmond Regional Planning District Commission's State Transportation Planning Grant Pilot Program Funds Authorizing Resolution to help determine what areas the RMTS will include, and that TAC is authorized to take action on behalf of the MPO to amend UWP task 5.5, RMTS to provide for final language in task 5.5 to establish spatial boundaries for the RMTS.

F. FY 06 – FY 08 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) –

Barbara Nelson, RRPDC Principal Planner and TIP Project Manager, noted that the MPO is requested to take action finding the FY 06 – FY 08 TIP in compliance with the air quality conformity analysis plan and to adopt an MPO Statement of Certification. She noted four specific items she would review with the MPO.

1. Draft “Blueprint” for MPO/VDOT Record Reconciliation for RSTP and CMAQ Projects –

Ms. Nelson reported that staff found 24 projects which have discrepancies between the MPO record and the latest allocations in the VDOT record. She said staff met with FHWA and VDOT staffs, both at the district level and with staff in VDOT Programming Division and developed a schedule, or blueprint, for good faith action towards resolving these discrepancies. Ms. Nelson referenced a copy of the blueprint included on page eight of tab nine in the agenda package and said that as a result of discussion with FHWA staff, PDC staff will recommend a slight modification to component six for TAC approval at their June 15 meeting, but reported that good progress has been made.

2. Public Review Comments –

Ms. Nelson reported that the public review process was initiated on May 19 and concluded on June 5. She said notices were run in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and the *Richmond Free Press*; 675 notices were mailed and/or e-mailed to MPO committees and interested parties as well as social and human service agencies and organizations;

and two public meetings were held, one at the Richmond Children's Museum and one at RRPDC offices. Ms. Nelson said attendance at the public meetings was low, which staff believes is due to extensive prior public review of the projects either at the local or state level. She reported that one written comment was received from a citizen, Urchie Ellis, and Ms. Nelson briefly reviewed his comments and staff response noting his letter and staff response were included in the handout being distributed which summarizes public participation activities. This documentation was also provided to TAC on June 6, 2006.

3. TIP Air Quality Conformity Analysis –

Ms. Nelson said the regional air quality conformity analysis was completed in early March; however staff felt that since the projects that drive air quality conformity analysis come from the TIP, the report included in the TIP Executive Summary could not be brought forward for action prior to the TIP being finalized for action.

4. MPO Statement of Certification –

The MPO Statement of Certification certifies that the region's transportation planning and programming process has been conducted in accordance with all the applicable federal requirements.

5. Draft FY 06 – FY 08 TIP –

Ms. Nelson noted the final draft *FY 06 – FY 08 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* document was enclosed with the agenda package and offered to answer questions regarding the document. There were no questions.

6. MPO Action –

On motion of George Homewood, seconded by Michael Holmes, the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) finds the *FY 2006 – 2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* to be in conformance with all applicable air quality conformity analysis requirements and hereby adopts the FY 2006 – 2008 TIP and Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process Self Certification Resolution as presented.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Butler noted the desperate transportation funding needs in the Commonwealth and expressed serious concern about the General Assembly's inability to come to consensus on a transportation funding bill, an important piece of the state budget for next fiscal year. He cited several critical transportation needs in the state and said the House and Senate are scheduled to meet again to discuss this matter. He noted that counties, cities, and towns have all passed budgets dependent on the state budget and said this morning's paper detailed the adverse effects of not having a timely budget. He noted another adverse effect of not having agreement on transportation funding is in the race for economic development, a very competitive process in which transportation plays a key part. Chairman Butler encouraged MPO members to communicate with their General Assembly members on the critical need for transportation funding.

Chairman Butler noted this is his last meeting as chairman, the second time he has served in that capacity, and that in July he will turn the gavel over to Mr. Setliff. He said he enjoyed serving as MPO chairman and appreciates all the efforts everyone has put forth to attend and support the MPO and to contribute to its processes. He said he believes transportation is the backbone of our everyday activities and noted that in the future, there will need to be more of a link in transportation and land use planning, something unheard of when he first served as chairman.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Butler adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:20 p.m.