



City of Alexandria

Transportation Commission

Regular Meeting

September 5, 2012
7:30 p.m.
City Council Workroom

MINUTES

Commissioners Present: Donna Fossum, Jennifer Mitchell, Kevin Posey, and Justin Wilson

Staff Present: Rich Baier – T&ES, Abi Lerner -T&ES, Jim Maslanka – T&ES, Marti Reinfeld - T&ES, Steve Sindiong - T&ES, Karen Callahan – T&ES, Jim Maslanka – T&ES, Pierre Holloman – T&ES, Karl Moritz, P&Z, Carrie Beach, P&Z , Raymond Mui - DASH

A quorum being present, the Chair called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:37pm.

1. July 11, 2012 Minutes

Commissioner Posey asked if there were any comments regarding the July 11, 2012 meeting minutes. Commissioner Fossum recommended minor edits to the July minutes. A motion to approve the minutes with the minor edits was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

2. Funding Update

T&ES staff, Abi Lerner reported:

Federal: President Obama signed a two-year transportation bill called MAP-21 which substantially changes some aspects of federal transportation funding.

Commonwealth Transportation Board: CTB approved new methodology for allocating funds to Northern Virginia, which requires jurisdictions to accept funds from DRPT, and book them before they can be allocated to NVTC.

TPB: Approved the 2012 CLRP and FY 2013-18 TIP. Also received MAP-21 legislation.

WMATA: Board adopted a set of policies which will govern any station naming activity at Metrorail stations and engaged in an extensive strategic framework discussion.

NVTC: Adopted a Vanpool Incentive Program to acquire vanpool operations data which can produce additional transit subsidies and approved an action to allow NVTC staff to acquire federal grants which will be used for the Corridor C Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Assessment (AA/EA).

NVTA: A meeting of the Efficiency and Effectiveness Study occurred on August 23, 2012 which summarized key findings to date.

3. RSTP/CMAQ Request for FY 2014 – Public Hearing

T&ES staff Marti Reinfeld gave an overview on how the City will use the FY 2014-FY 2019 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) project funding requests. The Transitway Enhancements and Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements were the only new projects added. The requests are made annually in September. Staff recommended that the Transportation Commission review the proposed list of CMAQ/RSTP projects for FY2014-FY2019, and develop a recommendation for City Council consideration and approval at their September 27, 2012 meeting. This funding plan must be submitted to Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) before September 30, 2012. A public hearing was held and two persons supported pedestrian and bicycle improvements. Following the public hearing, Commissioner Fossum made a motion to approve as presented. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

4. Civic Engagement

T&ES staff Rich Baier and Marti Reinfeld gave an update on “What’s Next, Alexandria?” This is an initiative to begin a dialog with citizens about how Alexandrians can best engage in shaping the City in terms of priorities and principles to guide the planning process. The objectives are to have a healthy discussion with the community to find out what has or has not gone well in the planning process, if citizens feel their voices are heard, to hear citizens’ opinion of what the key issues are while planning for the City’s future, and the shared expectations of civic engagement. The project will begin with a poll in mid-September to gather community opinions about principles of successful engagement and solicit suggestions for improvement. During meetings on this initiative, there will be discussions on the feedback from the poll, as well as best practices in civic engagement. A kickoff meeting is planned for November 2012. In January 2013, there will be a community issues forum with speakers and discussions on priority issues. Community outreach for the project will be extensive, across multiple channels in order to ensure that we hear from a broad cross section of citizens. Feedback from, and participation by, members of City Boards and Commissions will be a key element in shaping the process and helping to achieve broad participation community-wide. There will be a report finalizing areas of agreement. The Transportation Commission suggested the need for a more formalized process, working with, and determining the role of civic associations, and the need for better outreach to the west end of Alexandria.

5. Super NoVa Study Update

Amy Inman of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) gave an overview of Super NoVa which is a Transit/Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Vision Plan that identifies safe, strategic, and seamless mobility options for rail, transit, and TDM. Super NoVa envisions mobility beyond the boundaries of the diverse localities extending from Northern Virginia to Maryland and West Virginia, including Caroline County to the south, Culpeper County to the west and Frederick County, Maryland to the northwest. It also includes an effort in coordination with Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The Plan is evaluating current transit service and TDM programs in the near-, mid- and long-term periods between today and 2040; existing and future land use, population, and employment conditions; travel patterns and trends; and projected travel demand as a basis for the development of a multi-horizon vision for transit and TDM in the Super NoVa region. It will identify a wide range of transit mode and transportation program enhancements.

6. TransAction 2040 Updates

T&ES staff Pierre Holloman gave an update on the TransAction 2040 which is a regional transportation study conducted by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA). The draft TransAction 2040 is a fiscally unconstrained plan which serves as an update to the 2030 Plan. It includes several City projects that were not a part of the 2030 Plan. To solicit public input on developing a regional consensus on transportation improvement priorities, the NVTA held a public open house in April 2012. City Council will be asked to endorse the TransAction 2040 Plan at its September 11, 2012 meeting. The NVTA Board will be asked to approve and finalize the TransAction 2040 Plan at its November 2012 meeting. To be eligible for funding, projects identified in TransAction 2040 must be included in the City's Long Range Plan, the region's CLRP and the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program. Any new projects identified through the TransAction 2040 process would need to be added to the CLRP in the future.

7. Staff Updates

Potomac Yard Metrorail Station: Impact assessments for various socio, economic, environmental, and transportation areas are currently underway with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) anticipated to be released in early 2013. The locally preferred alternative (LPA) is anticipated through a City Council vote in early 2014. The next meeting of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Working Group (PYMIG) is scheduled for October 10, 2012 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. in the Council Workroom in City Hall. Topics of the meeting include impacts, preliminary cost estimates, and funding opportunities for each alternative.

Crystal City-Potomac Yard Route 1 Transitway: The Route 1 Bus Rapid Transitway (BRT) is between Monroe Avenue and Potomac Avenue in a dedicated transitway. The 90% design plans have been completed and reviewed by City Staff. 100% design plans are currently underway. Construction began in July 2012 on the transitway and is anticipated to be completed in December 2013.

BRAC-133 Update: There are several projects/programs currently underway associated with the BRAC-133 facility. The construction of the short-term improvements will be completed in September 2012. The construction of the mid-term improvements, which require right-of-way acquisitions, will be completed in December 2013. A pedestrian bridge across Seminary Road has been removed from the set of proposed improvements. For the I-395 HOV Transit Ramp, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued by FHWA in June 2012. VDOT has issued the Request for Proposals. The Interchange Modification Report (IMR) has not been approved yet. The City is requesting that FHWA approve the option that precludes northbound right turns at the top of the ramp in the morning and precludes westbound left turns onto the ramp in the afternoon. Construction of the ramp is expected to be completed in 2015. DoD issued a TMP evaluation report on July 18, 2012. The program has been very successful in the utilization of alternate modes of transportation.

8. Commission Updates

- Commissioners Wilson and Mitchell inquired about the placement of construction information signage in the area of the Route 1 Transitway construction.
- Two newly appointed Transportation Commissioners (Josh Sawislak and John Komoroske) will attend their first meeting at the October meeting.

- Commissioner Posey stated this is the last Transportation Commission meeting for T&ES staff Abi Lerner who has resigned from the City. The Commissioners thanked Abi for his outstanding services and wished him well in his future endeavors.

9. Other Business

City Council Public Hearings: At its September 15 meeting, City Council will hold two public hearings on the consideration of a request for Council to approve a resolution indicating the City's position on the operation of the Seminary Road HOV/Transit Ramp; and a resolution supporting the design and construction of the northbound I-395 Auxiliary lane between Duke Street and Seminary Road.

Upcoming Transportation Commission Meetings: The October 3, 2012 Transportation Commission meeting will be a joint meeting with the High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group at 7pm at the Charles Houston Recreation Center. Also scheduled is a work session on bicycle and pedestrian issues at 6:00 pm before the November 2012 Transportation Commission meeting.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made at 9:28 pm, seconded and unanimously accepted.