



Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

Agenda Item No. 3.0

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Regional Coordinating Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, February 8, 2011

Cook County Conference Room

233 S. Wacker Drive, Suite 800, Chicago, Illinois

Committee Members

Present:

Michael Gorman (President, Village of Riverside-CMAP Board), Interim Chair, Frank Beal (Metropolis Strategies-CMAP Board), Roger Claar (Mayor-Village of Bolingbrook-CMAP Board), Sheri Cohen (Chicago Dept. Public Health-Human & Community Services Cmte.), Christine Kolb (ULI-Housing Cmte.), Al Larson (President, Village of Schaumburg-CMAP Board), Andrew Madigan (Mesirow-CMAP Board), Heather Weed Niehoff (VOA, Inc.-CMAP Board), Ed Paesel (South Suburban Mayors & Managers Assoc.-Land Use Cmte.), Lance Pressl (Chicagoland Chamber-Economic Development Cmte.), Leanne Redden (RTA-Transportation Cmte.), Rae Rupp Srch (DuPage County-CMAP Board)

Members Absent:

Jack Darin (Sierra Club- Environment and Natural Resources Cmte.)

Others Present:

Mike Albin-DMMC, Dave Bennett-Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Bruce Carmitchel-IDOT, Bruce Christensen-Lake County, Len Cannata-WCMC, Chalen Daigle-McHenry Council of Mayors, Karen Darch-Village of Barrington, Bola Delano-IDOT, John Donovan-FHWA, Grace Gallucci-RTA, Elizabeth Holleb-City of Highland Park, David Kralik-Metra, Josh McLusky- IDOT, Chrissy Nichols-MPC, Hugh O'Hara-WCGL, Mark Pitstick-RTA, Peter Skosey-MPC, Tom Rickert-Kane County, Vicky Smith-Southwest Conference, Chris Staron-Northwest Municipal Conference, Mike Sullivan-Kane/Kendall Council of Mayors, and Tammy Wierciak-West Central Municipal Conference.

Staff Present:

Randy Blankenhorn, Matt Maloney, Jill Leary, Don Kopec, Alex Beata, Holly Ostdick, and Ross Patronsky

1.0 Call to Order

Michael Gorman, Interim Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

There were no agenda changes or announcements.

3.0 Approval of Minutes – December 14, 2011

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2011 meeting as presented, made by Mayor Roger Claar was seconded by Ed Paesel. All in favor, the motion carried.

4.0 Performance Based Evaluation Criteria and Transportation Funding

Matt Maloney, CMAP staff, presented an overview of the material that had been forwarded in the committee packet. He reported that following the December discussion, staff had presented that material to both the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee at their January meetings. Staff had created an issue brief for this topic, had reached out to IDOT and RTA staff on next steps, and was submitting an application to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Transportation Planning Capacity Building Peer Program for a peer exchange on this topic.

During this item, Grace Gallucci of the RTA also gave an overview of RTA's asset conditions assessment. The criteria to be developed will be agreed upon by all the service boards to reflect the uniqueness of the different modes of travel. FTA has provided funding to this effort in the hopes of recommending or requiring use by transit systems throughout the country.

5.0 Semi-annual TIP/GO TO 2040 Conformity Analysis & TIP Amendments

Regional Coordinating Committee Interim Chair Michael Gorman introduced this matter, stating that staff would be seeking a tentative recommended approval to the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee of the Semi-annual TIP/GO TO 2040 Conformity Analysis & TIP Amendments. CMAP staff Ross Patronsky briefly explained the purpose of conformity– to ensure that the transportation plan and programs adopted by the region will meet the goals set by the Clean Air Act--and the steps required for the Policy Committee and CMAP Board to make a conformity determination. Patronsky described the types of projects that are subject to conformity, and the types of project changes that require a conformity analysis. Twenty project changes were included in the current conformity analysis, Patronsky continued, and of particular interest were Pace's service improvement in the I-90 corridor, which is part of GO TO 2040's major capital projects and the CREATE project along the SouthWest service, also recommended by GO TO 2040. Patronsky reported that the conformity analysis indicates that the region meets the air quality goals under the Clean Air Act, that the analysis had been released for public comment on January 20, 2012 and that no comments had been received to date. A motion to recommend approval of the Semi-annual TIP/GO TO 2040 Conformity Analysis & TIP Amendments to the CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee was made by Ed Paesel and seconded by Rae Rupp Srch. All in favor the motion carried.

6.0 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)

CMAP Executive Director Randy Blankenhorn presented background information on the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ). This is an \$80-

90 million per year Federal Highway program that comes to the region to improve air quality and mitigate traffic congestion. A variety of projects have been programmed over the years including those that improve traffic flow, transit facility expansions, bicycle-pedestrian projects, and most recently, diesel engine retrofits for trains and buses.

Over the past several years, approximately \$125 million in unobligated CMAQ funds have been lost through rescissions and by the end of FY 2013, Blankenhorn continued, the region could lose \$100 million through a lapse. He reported that CMAP's goal is to get the money moving and to get projects completed, and that, as a region, we simply cannot sit back and lose money.

Blankenhorn cited measures taken to date, including a multi-year program extending out five years, discussions of phasing projects differently and one-time moves for phases that are delayed so that projects stay in the program but do not tie up funds. Blankenhorn went on to say that conversations with IDOT are underway that might allow delegation of some responsibilities to the local agencies, particularly the large ones. This would alleviate bottlenecks resulting from reduced staffing levels at IDOT.

Going forward, Blankenhorn suggested that there is consideration not to fund phase 1 engineering through the CMAQ program, but instead program the remaining phases at a 100% federal share once phase 1 has been completed. This will result in more money to local governments since phase 1 engineering costs are approximately 8-9% of the total construction costs and the most common funding split now is 20% local and 80% federal. Also, a more automatic removal process might be considered. He recommended that project readiness be considered a higher priority when programming. Since local match has to be available to move projects, changing the match criteria may ease matters. Finally, contingency plans must also be identified if funds are still not obligated in a timely manner.

Blankenhorn stated that the CMAQ Project Selection Committee and Transportation Committee will be consulted next, with suggestions coming back to the Regional Coordinating Committee in April and recommendations for consideration by the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee in June.

Committee members weighed in with several considerations: engaging local people that work with the other end of the cycle; exercising fairness in the selection process must be observed; the region cannot afford to lose money; fixing the process problems; finding solutions that work at the local level; establishing stricter criteria for removing projects that have no movement; moving to the 5-year program helped; looking at accounting issues – CMAP must be able to reprogram unneeded funds when bids come in low; there are concerns over removing projects thus creating a larger unobligated balance; projects to back fill are necessary; the goal is not to remove projects, but rather to get projects completed; and CMAP must not overlook air quality benefits in the press to obligate funds.

7.0 State Legislative Update

CMAP Staff Gordon Smith first thanked the committee for the assistance in developing the framework document which has already proven to be valuable. Smith reported on the material that was contained in the committee packet, stating that staff is presently tracking about 250 bills, ranging from public partnership clean-up to plumbing code, and updates to air quality issues. Bills will be added or deleted from reporting, Smith continued, throughout the session with subsequent reports including more detailed information on these and other bills as they are introduced. Bills that are a priority for CMAP and are moving through the legislative process will also be highlighted, Smith concluded. One suggestion included the monitoring of DNR funding related to water supply planning. The question of these matters taking a back seat to bigger issues for the general assembly to tackle (pension reform, medicare reform, education) was raised. Smith responded that while those bigger issues will be in the news, CMAP and its partners will be advancing (and monitoring) the matters important to our region.

8.0 Other Business

The question was raised about CMAP's position on the Asian carp matter that has both environmental and economic development impacts. It was reported that CMAP's ENR committee is expected to have some involvement this spring and CMAP staff have also been involved in an advisory capacity. Maloney reported that staff will conduct a follow up to the matter and added that there is much work (other than transportation-related) for the committee to consider in the near future; i.e., the green infrastructure vision, human capital and workforce development, drilling down into certain industry clusters (freight, logistics). A major report of the region from OECD is forthcoming with a public release on March 9. Chicago is the first U.S. metro area to be examined by the global organization.

9.0 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

10.0 Next Meeting

The Regional Coordinating Committee meets next on April 11, 2012 at 8:00 a.m.

11.0 Adjournment

At 9:02 a.m., a motion to adjourn made by Rae Rupp Srch was seconded by Ed Paesel. All in favor, the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



04-11-2012
/stk

Approved as presented, by unanimous vote, June 13, 2012