

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
Summary Minutes
APRIL 13, 2006

held at the Northern Virginia Regional Commission
3060 Williams Drive, Suite 510
Fairfax, Virginia 22031

Members
(those present are highlighted)

William Euille
Christopher Zimmerman
Robert Lederer
Gerald E. Connolly
David Snyder
Scott K. York
Harry J. "Hal" Parrish, II
Bryan Polk
Martin Nohe (alternate)
Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.
Jeff Frederick
Margaret E. G. Vanderhye
Tanya Husick (alternate)
Dennis Morrison

Alexandria City Council
Chairman, Arlington County Board
Mayor, City of Fairfax
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Falls Church City Council; NVTA Chairman
Chairman, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors
Vice Mayor, City of Manassas
Manassas Park City Council
Prince William Board of County Supervisors
Virginia House of Delegates, District 34
Virginia House of Delegates, District 52
Governor's Appointee
VDRPT (non-voting member)
No. Va. District Administrator, VDOT (non-voting member)

Staff Present

Linda Summerall

NVRC

Call to Order

Chairman Snyder called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Roll Call

The roll was called and members present or absent were noted for the record.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Snyder moved approval of the minutes of the January and February meetings with a minor change to the February minutes. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Action Items:

A. Approval to Reallocate Fairfax County CMAQ Funding

Tom Biesiadny, Interim Technical Committee Chairman, reported that new information had been received that additional funding will be needed to complete the Backlick North Park-and-Ride Lot even with the reallocation of funds. Mr. Connolly moved approval. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

B. Approval to Reallocate Arlington County RSTP Funding

Mr. Zimmerman moved approval to transfer funds from the Clarendon and Crystal City canopies projects to the Ballston Metro station access improvements phase II project. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Presentations:

A. Senior Transportation Study

Jana Lynott, Director of Transportation Planning with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC), explained this study was funded through a grant from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT).

The study used broad research, encompassing a national literature review, demographic analysis, scientific telephone survey, focus groups, and expert analysis to derive recommendations.

The number of seniors in Virginia will more than double in the next 25 years, and there is a similar trend in Northern Virginia, with expected growth of more than 240,000 seniors; most of that growth will occur in the suburban and exurban areas. Currently, one in nine persons in Virginia are age 65 and older; by 2030, it is estimated that one in every five persons will be 65 and older.

For Northern Virginia seniors age 75 and older, the majority use cars (driven either by others or themselves) for their most frequent mode of transportation, with walking being a distant second. Driving at night and traffic congestion are common driving problems among Northern Virginia seniors, and many seniors limit their driving to a geographic area and/or specific known destinations. The two most numerous problems with walking for seniors were “everything is too far away” and “no sidewalks/ sidewalks in poor condition.”

Numerous problems were cited with public transportation:

- going where you need to go
- transferring
- time it takes
- getting a seat
- getting information
- boarding

The study concludes that:

- Seniors in urban/town mixed-used centers are somewhat more mobile than seniors from suburban and exurban areas. They are also more likely to walk and use public transportation to reach a destination.
- Solutions must acknowledge community type differences as well as the differing physical capabilities of seniors. Solutions must attract seniors to fixed-route public transit and more specialized transportation services.
- Attention must be paid to the design of the built environment to increase walking and use of public transportation.

Ms. Vanderhye suggested that Ms. Lynott present the study to communities that are re-doing their central business districts. Mr. Connolly concurred and suggested that Ms. Lynott also contact the jurisdictions’ planning directors.

B. TransAction 2030 Plan Final Report and Resolution

The members agreed that the proposed resolution is tailored to NVTA and not to the individual jurisdictions to adopt the TransAction 2030 Plan.

Mr. Connolly moved that the final report be distributed to the Northern Virginia jurisdictions; that staff revise the accompanying resolution; that NVTA will receive periodic updates on status of projects in the TransAction 2030 Plan; and that the final report be adopted at NVTA’s June 8 meeting. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Mr. Connolly volunteered Fairfax County’s Public Information Officer (PIO) to take the lead with the other jurisdictional PIOs.

C. Status of Hunter Mill Road Traffic Calming Study

James Van Zee, Northern Virginia Regional Commission’s Director of Regional Planning Services, reviewed the study’s schedule.

Mr. Connolly moved that a letter from Chairman Snyder be sent to Delegate Callahan, sponsor of the study's appropriation, transmitting the study's work schedule.

Discussion Item:

Report on 2006 General Assembly Activities

Tom Biesiadny reviewed the status of the state items in the NVTA legislative program, and reported that SB 373 permits jurisdictions to adopt transferable development rights (TDRs).

He said that the House of Delegates approved HB 5002 (budget bill) which establishes a Transportation Reserve Fund to hold transportation revenues until the General Assembly can agree on how to spend them.

The Senate met April 12 to refer a number of transportation bills to the Senate Transportation Committee. Mr. Biesiadny briefed the members on the three bills of interest to Northern Virginia. SB 5004 (Cuccinelli), which would give NVTA authority to impose tolls on any new or reconstructed roads. Those tolls could be used to support transportation bonds. The members discussed the fact that "reconstructed roads" has not been well defined but repaving probably would not qualify under the definition.

The other two bills of interest are SB 5008 (Saslaw) and SB 5007 (Devolites Davis). SB 5007 would raise \$250 million to \$290 million per year in Northern Virginia from several revenue sources, including a 0.5% motor vehicle sales and use tax; (ii) annual vehicle registration fee increases; (iii) an initial registration fee at the time the vehicle is first registered; (iv) hotel/motel transportation impact fee; (v) rental car transportation impact fee; (vi) a diesel fuel tax evaluation with gasoline; and (vii) transportation impact real estate closing fee (also known as the grantor's tax).

It would also add two House members and one Senator, as well as a rotating representative of the towns to NVTA. It would direct that the first \$50 million each year be dedicated to Metro and the next \$20 million per year be dedicated to VRE. At least 40 % of the revenues are also dedicated for use on residential, urban and secondary roads. The bills earmark a portion of the funding for a list of 21 (generally small) Northern Virginia projects.

SB 5008 would impose a 0.5% sales tax and a 20 cent/\$100 of valuation grantor's tax in Northern Virginia and dedicate the revenues to NVTA.

The members discussed their displeasure that SB 5007 earmarks projects in Northern Virginia that are not NVTA priorities.

When asked to comment on the session, Delegate Frederick noted that the Senate is very divided. The House does not want to increase taxes, especially when many House-recommended improvements to VDOT and the CTB were not approved this session. Delegate Frederick added that it is unconstitutional to embed tax increases in the appropriations bill.

Mr. Connolly moved that the Authority go on record as reiterating its support for the Governor's or the Senate's transportation funding figures. The motion was seconded and carried, with Delegate Frederick opposed.

The Authority also discussed the upcoming Six Year Program Public Hearing and directed staff to prepare draft comments for Chairman Snyder.

Other Business

Mr. Connolly reported that the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) for management of the Dulles rail extension and the management and improvement of the Dulles Toll Road was signed. Fairfax and Loudoun Counties originally opposed the MOU, because it did not provide for local government input. The Governor intervened and established the Dulles Corridor Advisory Committee to give those two jurisdictions seats at the table. Mr. Snyder indicated that Falls Church would also like to have representation on the committee.

Del. Frederick raised the issue of private entities' proposals that "put money on the table." Mr. Connolly said that any profit realized under MWAA's management will be reinvested in the project, and he did not see a public benefit to allowing private firms to profit from a very successful project. He was also concerned that Dulles Toll Road revenues would be sent to other areas of the state.

Adjournment

Chairman Snyder adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m.