

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Summary of October 10, 2007 Meeting

This meeting was held in Conference Rooms 2 and 3 of the State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA.

Steve Olanoff, Chair and Town of Westwood, called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

1. Chair's Report - *Steve Olanoff, Chair*

S. Olanoff reported on recent actions of the MPO's Transportation Planning and Programming Committee. The Transportation Planning and Programming Committee approved the 2007 – 2008 HOV Monitoring on I-93 North and Southeast Expressway and also discussed several proposed work programs: the South Coast Rail Project and the Green Line Extension Project. The South Coast Rail Project work scope involves providing ridership forecasts, air quality analyses, and environmental justice analyses based on land use alternatives prescribed by consultants working with EOTPW and the Southeast Regional Planning and Economic Development District. The Green Line Extension Project work scope involves MPO staff providing re-evaluation of ridership projections, air quality analysis, and user benefits to support this project's Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement and New Starts application.

Anne McGahan, MPO staff, presented a white paper prepared by MPO staff, "Carbon Dioxide, Climate Change and the Boston Region MPO," detailing findings on global warming in the region.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes of September 12, 2007, were approved unanimously.

3. Announcements

S. Olanoff announced that October is Disability Awareness Month. The Commonwealth's transportation agencies will hold an event on Thursday, October 11, from 12:00pm to 1:00pm. Gary Talbot, MBTA Assistant General Manager for Systemwide Accessibility, will speak at the event.

The MBTA invited the Advisory Council to ride a Greenbush test train from Greenbush to Weymouth Landing and back on Wednesday, October 17, at 12:00pm. Interested prospective riders should contact John Hersey, MPO staff, to reserve a seat.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion

Kristina Johnson, Quincy, asked if the MBTA could provide public transportation to the event. She offered to drive riders from Quincy to Greenbush.

Frank DeMasi, Wellesley, asked the MBTA to pick up riders at the Braintree Station or at the State Transportation Building.

4. Annual Advisory Council Elections

Jeff Levine, Inner Core, with Marcy Crowley, Wayland, and Michael Abend, American Planning Association – Massachusetts Chapter, convened to prepare nominations for chair and vice-chair for the coming federal fiscal year. The Nominating Committee offered K. Johnson for chair and S. Olanoff for vice-chair. Both representatives accepted the nominations.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion

Marvin Miller, American Council of Engineering Companies, commented that the Advisory Council's practice has been to have the vice chair move into the office of chair after one year of service. He asked how succession would follow in next year's elections if S. Olanoff, FFY 2005-2007 chair, became FFY 2007-2008 vice-chair.

F. DeMasi said that he declined nomination for chair.

M. Abend added that S. Olanoff could choose to leave a vice-chair position in the middle of his term.

M. Crowley commented that the Advisory Council bylaws require certain officers to chair certain committees. Generally, more member representatives should be more involved with committees.

K. Johnson thanked the Advisory Council and detailed her professional experience with transportation planning in the region, which includes working with the Office of Transportation Planning and examining state policies through a municipal lens. She added that one of her goals for the Advisory Council is to bring the focus of activity back to the certification activities and documents and to encourage more participation from municipalities bringing their views to the region's planning.

S. Olanoff noted that he plans to continue to attend Transportation Planning and Programming Committee meetings and offered to help out as needed.

K. Johnson and S. Olanoff were elected to their respective positions unanimously.

5. Advisory Council Review of Membership Attendance

F. DeMasi summarized a letter to be sent to Advisory Council members who have attended fewer than three meetings in Federal Fiscal Year 2006-2007. The purpose of the letters is to encourage more active participation. These are not termination letters. These letters will go to the Advisory Council members' chief elected officials, the members' representatives and alternates.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion

M. Crowley encouraged letters to be sent to chief elected officials.

Chan Rogers, SouthWest Area Planning Committee, noted that small-town members' representatives are likely to find it more difficult to attend due to their small staffs and more pressing municipal priority obligations. He went on to comment on the advantage of greater exposure to the MPO from regularly attending Advisory Council meetings.

S. Olanoff explained that the MAPC Subregions are members and their representatives on the Advisory Council can report to the small towns in the Subregion.

M. Miller commented that a different letter should be sent to MPO members to encourage their participation in the Advisory Council.

S. Olanoff added that David Mohler, Transportation Planning and Programming Committee chair, and Bernard Cohen, Executive Office of Transportation secretary, should be invited to brief the Advisory Council from time to time and also send a representative to attend meetings.

S. Olanoff recognized the City of Boston's regular attendance at Advisory Council meetings. Tom Kadzis, Boston, spoke to municipal concerns about "meeting fatigue" and agenda redundancy with other MPO committees' interests.

6. Presentation: "Growth in the Port of Boston" – Lynn Vikesland, MassPort

Lynn Vikesland, maritime research marketing manager, discussed MassPort's Maritime Division activity. There are four freight operations at Conley Terminal: the China Ocean Shipping Company from eastern Asia (53% of market); the Mediterranean Shipping Company from northern Europe and the western Mediterranean; the French Line from northern Europe; and the Icelandic Steamship Line Company from Halifax. There is also a barge service from New York. The China Ocean Shipping Company from eastern Asia comprises 53% of the market, the Mediterranean Shipping Co. and French Line combine for 36% of the market, and short sea shipping services make up the rest of the market. The Port of Boston exports raw materials like lumber, fish, waste paper and scrap metal and imports shoes, toys, furniture and fish.

The Conley Terminal Capital Improvement Project brought new equipment to the Port of Boston, including gantry cranes, yard reconfiguration of chassis operations and lighting, and other efforts, exhibiting growth over the past five years. Future projects involve expanding the Terminal further.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion

S. Olanoff asked if moving the chassis operations placed more traffic on South Boston streets. *The reorganization has not changed trucking routes in South Boston. Route changes occur within the terminal. (L. Vikesland)*

F. DeMasi asked if MassPort is exploring efforts to move the current chassis operations to make way for a new postal annex, in coordination with plans to expand South Station to the current postal annex's property.

Mike Leone, MassPort, will discuss this issue further in a subsequent presentation. (L. Vikesland)

7. Presentation: “Including Freight in a Statewide Economic Development Vision” – Walter Bonin, Marlborough

S. Olanoff asked Walter Bonin, Marlborough, to deliver a presentation based on his research with freight and experience with business management. He offered his views on the State’s recent economic development initiatives and their gains and losses in job growth and tax revenue, arguing that the State lacks a single economic development vision and that as a result, transportation projects will fall short of their objectives.

Economic growth on the region’s boundaries impacts municipal and state budgets for capital projects involving transportation, affordable housing and public health. Municipal economic development efforts and politically motivated projects often fail to examine regional or statewide needs and assets. Prioritizing the State’s economic development goals would provide more focused vision for cities, towns and regional planning agencies to follow.

Points and Issues Raised During Discussion

S. Olanoff asked if the Journey TO 2030, the region’s long-range Transportation Plan, provides satisfactory goals to create a focused vision.

F. DeMasi commended Barbara Lucas, MAPC, for her efforts to make the link between land use and transportation projects, but argued that there are so many priorities involved in decision-making that the vision gets confused and clouded.

M. Abend commented that local permitting fails to address regional issues and focuses too heavily on local agendas.

K. Johnson commented that an infrastructure fund supported with gas tax revenue would help address many of the State’s issues.

Malek Al-Khatib, Boston Society of Civil Engineers, commented that the large triangular diagram used in the presentation would be better understood as a series of smaller triangles.

F. DeMasi commented that freight has greater potential today than it did years ago, and the State should examine moving common household goods on rail instead of on congested highways.

C. Rogers commented that the State is facing the same regional planning issues today that it confronted in 1960. Local zoning ordinances do not address or reflect the Commonwealth’s vision for economic development and efficient transportation planning.

8. Advisory Council Committees

Storrow Tunnel

Marilyn Wellons, Riverside Neighborhood Association, commented that this project's Draft Environmental Impact Report has been delayed indefinitely. There has been no decision about the bypass road on the Esplanade.

M. Miller commented that officials are considering fixing the Longfellow Bridge before permanently repairing the Storrow Drive Tunnel.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Attachments:

1. Attendance List for October 10, 2007
2. "Including Freight in a Statewide Economic Development Vision" Presentation

Attendance List for October 10, 2007

Cities and Towns

Marcy Crowley, Wayland
Bill Deignan, Cambridge
Frank DeMasi, Wellesley
Kristina Johnson, Quincy
Tom Kadzis, Boston
Steve Olanoff, Westwood
John Squibb, Revere
Gail Wagner, Lexington

Agencies

Richard Canale, Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination
Jim Gallgaher, Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Jeff Levine, Inner Core
Steve Rawding, Massachusetts Aeronautics Commission
Chan Rogers, Southwest Area Planning Committee

Citizens Groups

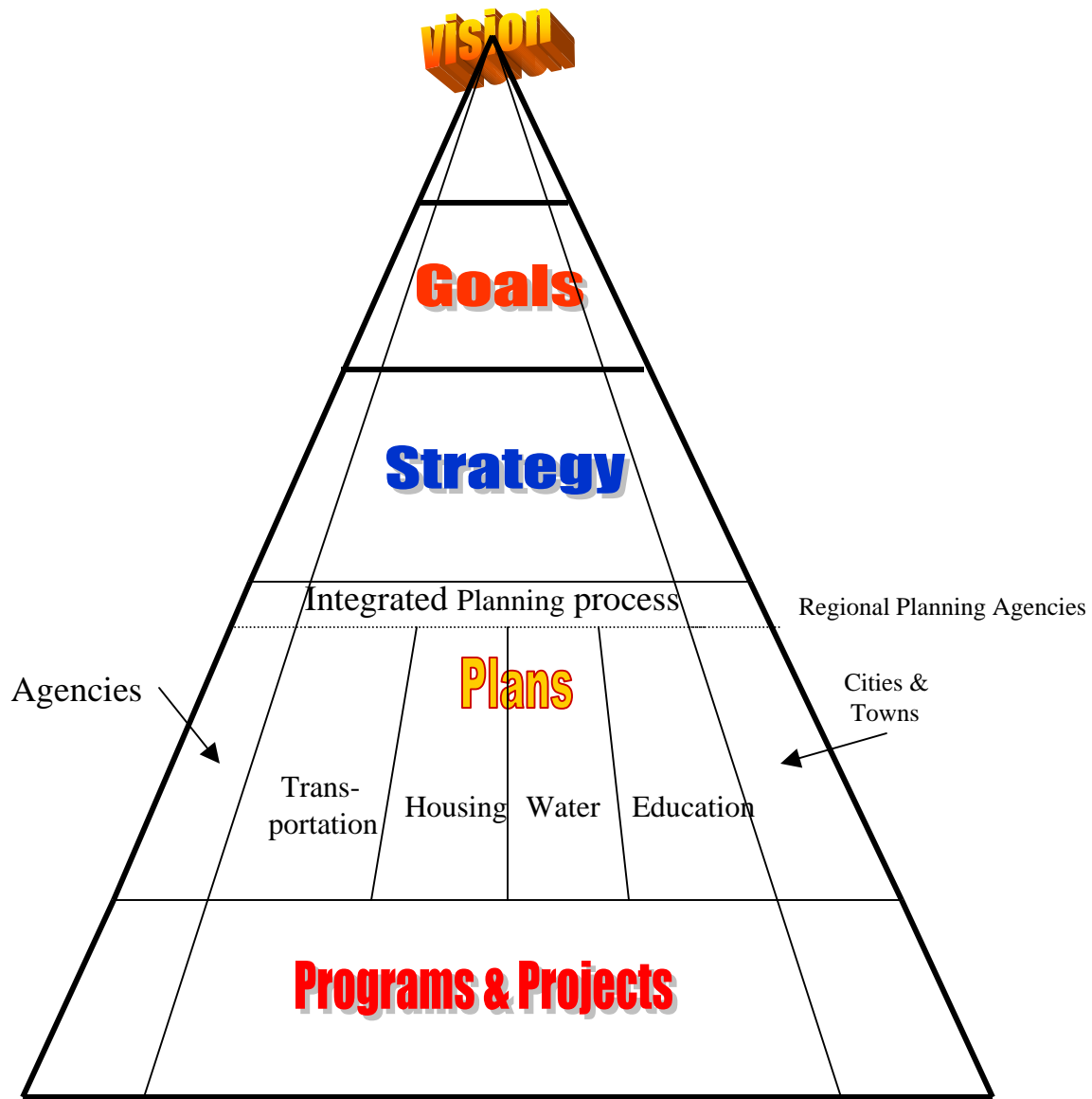
Malek Al-Khatib, Boston Society of Civil Engineers
Michael Abend, American Planning Association – Massachusetts Chapter
John Businger, National Corridors Initiative
John Gillon, Institute of Transportation Engineers
John McQueen, *WalkBoston*
Marvin Miller, American Council of Engineering Companies
Marilyn Wellons, Riverside Neighborhood Association

Guests and Visitors

Stephen Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods
Romin Koebel, Fenway Community Development Corporation
Marilyn MacNab

MPO Staff

John Hersey, MPO Staff
Pam Wolfe, MPO Staff



- Build upon State's unique strengths in:
- Leadership companies resident in state
 - Universities/research labs/graduates
 - Medical institutions
 - Ports
 - Rail network