



**Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization
of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission**
POB 1505, 401 E. Water St, Charlottesville, VA 22902 www.tjpd.org
(434) 979-7310 phone • (434) 979-1597 fax • info@tjpd.org email

CHART Advisory Committee Meeting
December 3, 2008 Minutes

Present

Members

Stephen Bach
Bobby Burke
Marc Evans
Jay Gauldin
Jeff Monroe
Mac Lafferty, Vice Chair
Tom Loach
John Pfaltz
Linda Seaman, Chair
Bill Wuensch

Representing

MPO, Bicycling
MPO, Pedestrian
MPO
MPO
Albemarle County At-Large
Albemarle County At-Large
Albemarle County Planning Commission
City At-Large
City At-large
MPO

Not Attending:

James Burton City At-Large
James Currie Albemarle County, Environment
Jon Schroeder City At-Large

Staff:

Melissa Barlow TJPDC
Ann Whitham TJPDC

Ms. Seaman called the meeting to order.

Matters from the Public

There were no matters from the public.

Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the October minutes was deferred until the January meeting.

Upon a motion from Mr. Monroe, seconded by Mr. Bach, the November 5, 2008 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Discussion

Ms. Barlow provided the Committee with a comprehensive summary of the RTA study from its start in November 2006 to the current status of the effort to form a regional transit authority for Charlottesville and Albemarle County. She explained that when CTS brought to Albemarle County's attention the fact that the County's fees did not fully cover the cost of operations, the County agreed to contribute additional funds to the transit system if they could

participate in the management and governance of the transit system. She went on to note that VHB was hired to do a study on the development of an RTA, the final report of which is scheduled to be approved by the MPO Policy Board at the December 22, 2008 meeting. She summarized the separate reports that comprised the study and the current status of the initiative, including the work of the Joint Working Group, which developed the draft enabling legislation to be taken to the General Assembly for the 2009 session.

Mr. Burke asked if JAUNT has considered joining. Ms. Barlow responded that JAUNT has participated in an advisory capacity up to this point. She added that UTS has taken the same position.

Ms. Seaman asked how the two localities will approve the possible sales tax increase to fund transportation projects. Ms. Barlow responded that each would hold a public referendum on the issue.

Ms. Barlow went over the list of priority transportation projects with the Committee. The list of projects will be enclosed with the draft legislation presented to lawmakers in Richmond.

Mr. Gauldin asked if the revenues raised could be shifted and spent somewhere else. Ms. Barlow responded by noting the opening paragraph of the list where the Joint Working Group pledged to use any and all funds on transit and transportation projects. Mr. Gauldin asked if the Authority can issue bonds. This is the case.

Mr. Pfaltz stated that he has several questions about the authority, namely whether it is appropriate to make general transportation projects eligible for this funding source when the RTA began as an initiative to expand transit. Ms. Seaman commented that a County referendum is not likely to pass without funding for transportation projects given that there are large portions of the County not served by transit. Mr. Gauldin stated that it defeats the purpose of a Regional Transit Authority to fund transportation projects as well.

Ms. Seaman noted that some of the listed road projects can make transit more feasible, including widening Route 29, building the Berkmar Bridge and completing Hillsdale Drive Extended.

Mr. Monroe asked how the supporters of a western bypass could influence the outcome. Ms. Barlow responded that members of the Joint Working Group agreed that if construction of the bypass became a condition of approval of the RTA during the General Assembly session, then the legislation would be dropped for the time being.

Mr. Pfaltz suggested that CHART provide a letter of support for the formation of an RTA. Ms. Seaman asked the Committee if they agreed.

Mr. Gauldin asked about transit ridership in the past year. Ms. Seaman and Ms. Barlow responded that CTS ridership has risen consistently in the past year, due in part to the implementation of the UVA students, faculty and staff ride-for-free program.

Upon a motion by Mr. Pfaltz, seconded by Mr. Lafferty, the Committee voted in support of the formation of a Regional Transit Authority with one member opposed and one abstaining.

Ms. Seaman requested that MPO staff draft a letter of support for the formation of an RTA to be circulated to members before forwarding it to the RTA Joint Working Group.

UnJAM 2035 Draft Document Review

Ms. Whitham informed the Committee that she attended a workshop sponsored by the Association of MPO's in Austin focusing on linking land use and transportation in November. She reported that the CA-MPO is on the leading edge of incorporating climate change policy into the long range transportation plan. She also mentioned a webcast in which she participated about the same topic of climate change and transportation planning, noting that Harrison Rue was one of the participants. Mr. Rue directly referenced TJPDC and the MPO. She then introduced the agenda item and drew the Committee's attention to specific changes that had been made to the different chapters of the draft UnJAM 2035 document, as well as the completion of the Regional Vision section.

She solicited feedback from the Committee. They made suggested revisions to the table of issues and priorities in Chapter III. The Committee supported the changes made to the Achieving the Vision section. Mr. Evans suggested that the section needs a separate section on ITS. He and Mr. Wuensch volunteered to draft a section.

Other Business:

TJPDC Executive Director Search: Mr. Bach asked staff for an update on the search. Ms. Whitham responded that the Commission and search Committee are still in the search process.

UnJAM 2035 CLRP: Mr. Bach and Mr. Lafferty reported that the MPO Policy Board agreed to move the bike/pedestrian bridge over the Rivanna at Pantops back to the fiscally-constrained list. Mr. Bach stated that the proposed alignment was far more useful from a commuter point of view than either a bridge between Pen and Darden Towe parks or co-located under the I-64 bridge over the Rivanna.

The meeting was adjourned.