

Capitol Region Council of Governments

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Environmental Justice Advisory Board Meeting

July 17, 2006

Minutes

Board Members Present: Dr. Mark Mitchell, CT Coalition for Environmental Justice; Stephen Hillyer, CT Coalition for Environmental Justice; Allan Mercado, CT Coalition for Environmental Justice; Kathleen Henry, CT Coalition for Environmental Justice; Dawn Simonsen, CT Coalition for Environmental Justice; Jorge Davila, CT Coalition for Environmental Justice; Marilyn Risi, Upper Albany MS.

Others: Charlie Carson, CT Transit; Phil Fry, CT Transit; Bradford Smith, Windsor; Tom Maziarz, Mario Marrero, CRCOG; Douglas Alderton, Azure Dynamics; Doug Gifford, Matthews Buses; Vicki Shotland, Greater Hartford Transit District.

1. Welcome: Tom Maziarz called the meeting to order and welcomed members of the Environmental Justice Advisory Board. He stated that there would be presentations on the Albany Avenue reconstruction project, CT Transit particulate filters project, options for cleaner Dial-A-Ride vehicle, EJ Equity Assessment, followed by an EJ Analysis of the Transportation Improvement Program.

2. Discussion of Issues.

a. Albany Avenue Reconstruction Project: Mr. Maziarz gave a brief presentation on the \$15 million project, explaining some of the improvements and enhancements being undertaken.

Conclusions: Marilyn Risi commented on her satisfaction in the outcome of the five-year process and the pleasure of working with CRCOG on the project.

b. Dial-A-Ride Vehicles: Vicki Shotland stated that the Transit District is exploring options for replacement transit vehicles, and that one option is a hybrid gas-electric bus (20-24 passenger). Due to high cost, GHTD will not consider this for its regular replacement program now, but would consider it as part of a pilot project or demonstration program. Doug Gifford and Douglas Alderton gave a presentation on the benefits of the new vehicle. Discussions occurred after the presentation regarding pricing, life span, anti-idling feature, etc.

Conclusions: The price of the hybrid-electric bus makes it unaffordable at this time, but there was interest in seeking funds to purchase a vehicle for a demonstration project. GHTD's next purchase of replacement vehicles must be ones that meet the new lower 2007 emissions standards. Given the 5-year life cycle of the current vehicles, the planned replacement schedule should result in a fleet that is fully compliant within 5 years.

c. CT Transit Update: Phil Fry gave a brief presentation on the history of the project and a status report on the conversion of particulate trap filters for CT Transit buses. The project will start as soon as the ultra low sulfur fuel deliveries start and the older diesel fuel is purged from the all tanks. This should be sometime after December 31. The fleet conversion should be completed by 2010.

Conclusions: Dr. Mitchell commented on how please the CT Coalition for Environmental Justice was to see that this effort has finally come to fruition and his satisfaction in working with CRCOG and their efforts to see it through to completion.

d. EJ Equity Assessment: Mr. Maziarz gave a presentation on the TIP and the associated equity assessment. Charlie Carson mentioned that the percentage of the projects in the Primary and Secondary areas could increase if hours were used versus mileage to calculate the equity.

Conclusions: Committee members felt the methodology was acceptable and the distribution of benefits was equitable. The assessment report was approved unanimous vote.