



Joint Policy Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of November 17, 2006 Held at 10:00 AM in the MetroCenter Auditorium, Oakland

Attendance:

ABAG Members:

Mark Green
Scott Haggerty
Steve Rabinowitsh
Gwen Regalia

BAAQMD Members:

Chris Daly
Jerry Hill
Michael Shimansky
Pamela Torliatt
Gayle Uilkema, V. Ch.

MTC Members:

Sue Lempert
John McLemore
Jon Rubin, Ch.
Shelia Young

ABAG Staff:

Henry Gardner
Patricia Jones
Kenneth Kirkey

BAAQMD Staff:

Jean Roggenkamp
Ana Sandoval

MTC Staff:

Betty Cecchini
Therese McMillan

Other:

Ratna Amin, City of Oakland
Linda Craig, League of Women Voters
Irvin Dawid, Sierra Club
Jean Finney, Caltrans, District 4
Rich Hedges, MTC Advisory Council and EDAC
Patrick Hoge, San Francisco Chronicle
Lindy Lowe, BCDC
Steve Lowe, WOCA
Peter Lydon, SPUR
Val Menotti, BART
Alec McDonald, Bay Area Monitor
Bob Planthold
Bruce Riordan, Elmwood Consulting
David Schonbrunn, TRANSDEF
Will Travis, BCDC

JPC Staff:

Ted Droettboom

1. Call to Order

Chair Rubin called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Joint Policy Committee Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2006

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3. Global Climate Change

Ted Droettboom presented a slide show summarizing the potential implications of climate change for California and the Bay Area, putting the Bay Area's contributions to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in world context, and recommending next steps toward building a regional climate change strategy. The presentation is available on the JPC website: http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/jpc_presentations.htm.

Discussion touched on a number of ideas:

- The necessity to coordinate the JPC effort with other regional and local efforts (including those of special-purpose districts) already underway; to learn from these efforts, and avoid duplication;
- The desirability of integrating GHG considerations into other ongoing regional work (e.g., calculating GHG contributions attributable to Proposition 1B and other transportation projects; continuing our efforts to reduce growth in VMT);
- The interaction among global warming changes and other areas of continuing regional concern (e.g., an increase in wild fires will have significant effects on air quality, especially PM concentrations);
- The potential for tradeoffs between climate change strategies and other environmental objectives, requiring assessments of net benefits and costs to the local environment versus those accruing to the globe;
- The observation that, while there are many local governments and a some states undertaking climate-change initiatives, there are few if any U.S. regional entities active in this area; the Bay Area will have to lead;
- The potential utility of incentives to induce GHG emissions;
- The desirability of unambiguously clear state targets;
- A recognition that sea-level rise threatens a significant portion of our existing transportation infrastructure (including freeways, railroads, and airports); the cost of taking preventive action needs to be compared to the cost of protecting or rebuilding these expensive facilities;
- The potential for the region to exhibit leadership and educate;

- The need to pioneer new models of public involvement around this issue, being wary of traditional negative involvement models which will stall progress;
- The importance of smartness: smart growth, smart transit, smart driving, and smart cars;
- The recognition that there are inter-regional, as well as regional, aspects to this issue;
- The observation that this is a very complex issue with many interrelationships and alternative paths; it will be easy to lose focus if we are not mindful of the most important areas in which we can be effective; a focus on a few clear goals and tangible actions will be required.

The Committee adopted the recommendations in the staff memo.

4. Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) and *Projections 2007*

Paul Fassinger reported on the draft methodology for determining local allocations for the next RHNA cycle and on *Projections 2007*, the regional population and jobs forecast which underlies that methodology and is intended to be used, as well, for the next Regional Transportation Plan. As with the two previous forecasts, *Projections 2007* is based on smart-growth policy. It assumes that local land-use plans will be modified to steer more development toward existing communities, near job concentrations and near transit infrastructure.

The draft RHNA methodology also pursues smart-growth objectives by including employment and transit availability as allocation factors. More information on the draft RHNA methodology is available on the ABAG website: <http://www.abag.ca.gov/planning/housingneeds>.

The JPC did not endorse a single, consolidated position on either the draft RHNA methodology or *Projections 2007* but requested that the concerns of the Committee's individual members and others speaking at the JPC meeting be summarized and conveyed to the ABAG Executive Board for its consideration. In summary, some of those in attendance at the JPC meeting were concerned about:

- The absence of a clear nexus between local housing responsibility and regional funding to support that responsibility (not just for housing itself, but for housing-supportive infrastructure, like transportation), noting that RHNA was an inadequate, incomplete and potentially punitive lever for achieving smart growth;

- The lack of transparency in the link between regional projections and the growth anticipated in local land-use plans, acknowledging that most local plans do not extend to the 2035 horizon of the projections;
- The apparent ambiguity and possible conflict between the “goal” as expressed in the projection-derived RHNA allocations and “reality” as defined by what is possible on the ground;
- The asymmetry introduced into regional and local planning processes because RHNA allocates housing but not employment and because housing is allocated to a jurisdiction without regard to its location in that jurisdiction and particularly its proximity to the jobs in that jurisdiction or neighboring jurisdictions;
- The need to incentivize not just housing, but the vertical integration of uses;
- The conceptualization of RHNA as a largely technical, staff-driven process with insufficient involvement of elected officials, even though some locally-elected officials did participate in the Housing Methodology Committee;
- The opaqueness of the projections process and of the manner in which the underlying policy assumptions are applied;
- The potential folly of assigning increased housing allocations to jurisdictions with planned transit extensions which may not materialize;
- The disconnect between regional objectives and the general public, who still do not buy-in to increased housing in their communities.

No resolutions on any of these concerns were put or adopted.

5. *Focusing Our Vision (FOCUS) Progress and Proposed Amendments to Smart-Growth Policies*

Ted Droettboom reported that Propositions 1-C and 84, approved by voters at the November general election, contained incentive monies which could be applied to *FOCUS* implementation, depending on trailer bills expected to go before the Legislature early in 2007.

Ken Kirkey outlined a proposal for county meetings early in the new year to introduce the 2007 *FOCUS* initiatives and clarify their relationship to Projections 2007, RHNA, anticipated incentives, and the 2009 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

Action on the Proposed Amendments to Smart-Growth Policies was deferred to the next JPC meeting with a request that the policy on future urban development include a reference to urban limit lines/urban growth boundaries.

6. Other Business

Two members of the Committee commented on the desirability of the JPC now becoming more proactive its approach, leading regional policy rather than reacting to the policy initiatives of others.

7. Public Comment

All public comment was received relative to specific agenda items and is incorporated in the summary of those items.

8. Adjournment