

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, July 27, 2006

COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those present are highlighted)

Commissioner Hilda M. Barg	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Commissioner Sharon Bulova	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Gerald E. Connolly, NVRC Vice Chairman	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner W. S. Covington, III	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Commissioner Joan Cross	<i>City of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Steve DeBenedittis	<i>Town of Herndon</i>
Commissioner Joan DuBois	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Barbara A. Favola, NVRC Chairman	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Commissioner Penelope A. Gross	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Catherine Hudgins	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Adam Larson	<i>City of Manassas Park</i>
Commissioner Robert W. Lazaro, Jr.	<i>Town of Purcellville</i>
Commissioner Harold Lippman represented by David Snyder	<i>City of Falls Church</i>
Commissioner Elaine N. McConnell	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Martin E. Nohe	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Commissioner Harry J. Parrish, II, NVRC Treasurer	<i>City of Manassas</i>
Commissioner Redella S. Pepper	<i>City of Alexandria</i>
Commissioner M. Jane Seeman	<i>Town of Vienna</i>
Commissioner Paul C. Smedberg	<i>City of Alexandria</i>
Commissioner Linda Smyth	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Stephen Snow	<i>County of Loudoun</i>
Commissioner J. Walter Tejada	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Commissioner Bruce E. Tulloch	<i>County of Loudoun</i>
Commissioner Kristen C. Umstatt	<i>Town of Leesburg</i>
Commissioner Fred E. Yohey, Jr.	<i>Town of Dumfries</i>

STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb	<i>Executive Director</i>
Linda M. Tenney	<i>Deputy Director</i>
Linda Summerall	<i>Executive Secretary</i>
Barbara Gordon	<i>Communications Director</i>
Doug Pickford	<i>Director, Environmental and Heritage Resources</i>
David Schwengel	<i>Regional Emergency Services Planning Director</i>
Michelle Simmons	<i>Director, Human Services</i>
James Van Zee	<i>Director, Regional Planning Services</i>

GUESTS PRESENT

Tom Flynn, P.E.	<i>Draper Aden Associates</i>
Michael Leventhal	<i>Historic Preservation Coordinator, Arlington Co. DCPHD</i>
Judith Beattie	<i>Hunter Mill Traffic Calming Committee</i>
Bruce Bennett	<i>Hunter Mill Traffic Calming Committee</i>
Sue Rowland	<i>SR Consulting, Inc.</i>
Brian Trompeter	<i>Sun Gazette Newspapers</i>
Jane Woods	<i>Driftwoods Consulting</i>

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Favola called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

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

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS Chairman Favola welcomed three of the new members present: Adam Larson, Manassas Park City Council; Robert W. Lazaro, Jr., Mayor of Purcellville; and Fred E. Yohey, Jr., Mayor of Dumfries. (Councilman Snyder, substituting for Harold Lippman, new Commissioner for the City of Falls Church, arrived after introductions were made.)

APPROVAL OF
MINUTES

Commissioner Tulloch moved approval of the minutes of the June 22, 2006, meeting. The motion was seconded and carried, with Commissioners Covington and Lazaro abstaining.

PRESENTATIONS:

A. *Hunter Mill Road Traffic Calming Study*

VDOT awarded NVRC the funding for this study. The firm of Draper Aden Associates has been hired to make engineering recommendations. Those recommendations will go to the General Assembly prior to the 2007 session. Mr. Gibb added that tonight's presentation is for information purposes only for the Commissioners.

Tom Flynn

Mr. Flynn pointed out that Hunter Mill Road has many historic and scenic corridor attributes that the consulting firm recommends preserving and enhancing. Another goal of the study is to make the road safe and efficient for all users: automotive, pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians.

Six traffic-calming approaches for the road are recommended:

- 1) Roundabouts — handle traffic efficiently and safely
- 2) Landscaped medians — slow traffic a little and reduce accidents
- 3) Grass shoulders — provide visual differential; esthetics
- 4) Splitters — horizontal curves that moderate speed
- 5) Slightly straighten a sharp curve of the road
- 6) Put a trail bridge/crossing underneath the automobile bridge

*questions and
answers*

Replying to Commissioner Connolly's inquiry, Mr. Flynn said roundabouts do not require more right of way. Responding to Commissioner Parrish, Mr. Flynn said the funding provided is for the study only, not for construction.

Mr. Flynn discussed the differences between traffic circles and roundabouts. Generally, traffic circles are large and often contain a traffic signal, whereas roundabouts are designed to move traffic at 18-20 miles per hours and the approach to the roundabout is designed to slow the speed of traffic. A single lane roundabout handles 20,000 automobiles and multi-lane roundabouts can handle approximately 50,000 vehicles per day. In reply to Commissioners' comments, Mr. Flynn said the roundabouts have signs stating "yield to traffic in circle." He encouraged the members to see the roundabouts on the Virginia Tech campus, as well as in Gloucester and Richmond. Mr. Flynn stated that roundabouts dramatically reduce accidents, with a 90 percent drop in injury and fatality accidents. Mr. Snyder pointed out that the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has extensive data and research on roundabouts that support the statements made by the consultant. Mr. Gibb added that he, too, was initially skeptical of roundabouts, but he took the staff from the Verband Region Stuttgart to Hunter Mill Road, and they assured him the roundabouts will work if they are correctly designed.

Mr. Flynn reported that VDOT has been involved with the study. The consultants are still gathering comments from the county, the community and VDOT and then they will brief the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

B. *Boundary Stones*

Michael Leventhal

Mr. Leventhal reported that 38 of the original 40 stones laid to mark the original boundary of the District of Columbia remain. The stones are six feet in height, with two feet appearing above ground.

The D.C. Department of Transportation (DDOT) has a \$160,000 enhancement grant to research the preservation (protection) of the boundary stones. The grant requires a \$40,000 match. Fourteen boundary stones are located in Northern Virginia. DDOT is inviting the Northern Virginia Regional Commission to help with \$15,000 to \$20,000 of the

match. Mr. Leventhal suggested that the Northern Virginia Congressional delegation be urged to petition the National Park Service Preservation Lab to be part of the preservation process. Mr. Pickford, NVRC's Director of Environmental and Heritage Resources, advised the members that that grant does not provide for upkeep of the stones on private property.

It was agreed that NVRC staff will obtain additional information and report back to the Commission at its September 28 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA Chairman Favola reported that both items were reviewed by the Operations Committee at its meeting earlier in the evening. Commissioner Connolly moved approval of the Consent Agenda, consisting of the items outlined below. The motion was seconded and carried with Commissioner Larson abstaining.

- A. June Financial Reports
- B. Resolution No. P07-02: Amendment of Employee Fringe Benefit Package to Increase Life Insurance Benefit

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Mr. Gibb reported that staff continues work on the regional water supply plan. A working group expects to have a proposal ready in September for the Chief Administrative Officers Committee, and that proposal will then be presented to the Commission on September 28.
- B. NVRC has received \$250,000 from D.C. for the eight percent initial shortfall in CARE Act, Title I funds for the new grant year.
- C. Mr. Gibb met earlier in the week with the new Mayor of Dumfries to discuss holding a charrette in southern Prince William County that includes Route 1 and the Marine Corps Base.
- D. Commissioner Connolly suggested that NVRC provide an orientation on regional issues to all newly elected officials in Northern Virginia. The members agreed this was a good idea.
- E. Mr. Gibb distributed an updated funding chart for NVRC, showing the dramatic reduction in state funding over the past 29 years.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Commissioner Bulova moved election of the slate of officers. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

Barbara Favola	Chairman
Gerry Connolly	Vice Chairman
Hal Parrish	Treasurer

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Commissioner Parrish, Chairman of the Operations Committee, reviewed the proposed amendments: membership termination, membership and representation formula, alternates, the five standing committees, weighted voting, and dues formula change. Commissioner Parrish moved that the bylaws be amended as proposed. The motion was seconded.

The members thanked Commissioner Parrish and the Operations Committee members for their work and gave them a round of applause.

After discussing the four-year phase-in period for the new dues formula, which will affect towns most significantly, the motion carried with Commissioner Lazaro abstaining.

COMMITTEE
REPORTS

Communications

Staff distributed a written report as well as recent news releases. Ms. Gordon, NVRC's Director of Communications, reported that Fairfax County website staff have been extremely helpful in reviewing NVRC's needs in anticipation of drafting an RFP to contract to update NVRC's website.

Legislative

Commissioner Connolly, committee chairman, reported that the date of the special session on transportation funding is still unknown, although the session will begin sometime in September. The financial committees will hear the Governor's mid-year report on August 28.

VDOT's report on the cost to complete the secondary road funding allocations is dire: Northern Virginia has lost \$10.5 million in real dollars (not accounting for inflation) in ten years. Commissioner Connolly stated that as a Commission, all NVRC members need to raise their voices more effectively with state legislators. The Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce recently released the results of its poll of 1,800 county residents, with 54% listing transportation as their number one priority, while 10% listed education as the top priority. Chairman Favola suggested that the Legislative Committee develop a strategy to mobilize the public. Commissioner Connolly agreed, adding that a draft legislative program will be available in October for action at the December 14 meeting.

Commissioner Parrish raised the issue of how much money Northern Virginia gets back from the General Assembly, adding that he has heard it is only 29¢ per \$1.00. Commissioner Gross said Fairfax County receives 19¢ to 20¢ for every \$1.00 it sends to Richmond. Several members concurred with Commissioner Gross, saying that generally, the Northern Virginia localities are thought to receive about 20¢.

Commissioner Tulloch said the Commission should discuss how Northern Virginia is represented in Richmond.

Some members expressed frustration with VDOT's funding priorities. Mr. Snyder stated it is a misperception that Northern Virginia receives its fair share of transportation dollars — it doesn't; it is important to look at structural changes to the whole funding/ planning system and look at the structural aspects. He stressed the importance of letting the voters know they must contact their state legislators about this.

Commissioner Covington commented on the need for Northern Virginia to have its own lobbying group.

Commissioner Connolly raised the issue that the state needs to invest in its infrastructure and that it does not use its bonding capacity to the fullest. The state has set a five percent cap on bonds whereas the counties have 10 percent; further, the state uses only 2.5 percent of its bond capacity.

Chairman Favola said the Commission will arrange trips to Richmond during the special September session.

Operations

Commissioner Parrish reported that Mr. Gibb's contract ended December 31, 2005. The Operations Committee has been working on Mr. Gibb's annual appraisal and contract for several months. Commissioner Parrish moved that the Executive Director's former contract be extended through December 31, 2006, that a work plan and goals be developed, and that a one-time cash payment or a deferred compensation contribution be made. The motion was seconded.

Commissioner Connolly stated he would be more comfortable discussing this in executive session. Commissioner Connolly moved that the Executive Director's former contract be extended through December 31, 2006, and that the other items be brought to the Commission for consideration at the September 28 meeting. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

VAPDC Report

Commissioner Tulloch reported that the Governor listened to the request for additional funding for the three large, urban planning district commissions and agreed to carry this request on his budget amendment, but it was laid aside at the last moment. The metro PDC delegation will meet again with the Governor, who will carry the request into the next budget amendment.

VAPDC is developing its own communications and marketing strategy. Commissioner Tulloch reported on the disconnect between the state and the localities.

Commissioner Tulloch reported that Northern Virginia does not receive funds under the state's Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program while every other planning district commission, including Richmond and Hampton Roads, receives these funds. Commissioner Tulloch distributed a draft letter requesting these funds, and moved that the letter be sent to the Secretary of Transportation. The motion was seconded. It was requested that the Governor and the Northern Virginia Delegation be copied on the letter. The motion as amended carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Chairman Favola adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

G. Mark Gibb
Executive Director

Approved by:

Barbara A. Favola
Chairman