

ADD40 Committee on Transportation and Sustainability Meeting

Jan 16, 2013, 2:30-6:00pm

Hilton - Monroe

1. Welcome and introductions (Joe Zietsman)

About 29 members and 45 friends attended the meeting. Joe encouraged those attending to become friends by signing up at the committee website, www.Trbsustainability.org.

2. Update from TRB staff (Martine Micozzi)

Martine thanked members for their contributions this year, especially Joe and Damon for their leadership. She introduced Ralph Hall to briefly highlight his work on the research database and Nidhi Kalra for communications and technology, John McArthur for paper review, Tien Tien for her role in organizing sessions.

In 2015, TRB will move to the Washington Convention Center, which will help the cross cutting role of this committee. For next year, the annual meeting dates are January 12-16, 2014, with the theme of "Transportation Research: Celebrating our Legacy and Anticipating the Future".

There are approximately 11,000 participants this year. TRB is considering how to address the growing number of papers submitted to TRB (growing ~10% per year). Also, seeking to engage with non-traditional stakeholders and encourage their participation.

3. Committee business

a. Summary of prior meeting minutes (Damon Fordham)

Damon gave a brief summary of the summer meeting. The minutes are on the website.

b. Subcommittee updates (subcommittee chairs)

Joe recognized Todd Litman for his work on the sustainable indicators committee and data, Nidhi for communications and technology, John McArthur for paper review, and Tien Tien for session planning. A new international subcommittee was deemed to be a good idea as a springboard to future conference planning because so much is happening internationally. Joe invited expressions of interest from members and friends.

Lewison Lem gave a brief update on the Joint climate change subcommittee.

i. Sustainable Transportation Indicators (Todd Litman)

Ralph Hall gave a brief report since Todd was presenting at a session. Todd will write a report on the three sessions that he is involved with currently. There is a working document on syllabi for sustainable transport that the subcommittee will try to obtain a copy of as a resource for course planning. There is a forthcoming document on Mosaic, an ODOT system of sustainable indicators.

ii. Communications (Nidhi Kalra)

www.trbsustainability.org is the web site. There is also a goggle group for members and also one for friends. Members who don't have a picture posted should send one to Nidhi. There is also a LinkedIn

group to join. She invites feedback on how to improve the site. A link to the joint subcommittee should be added.

iii. Paper Review (John McArthur)

John said that over 20 papers were received, with 13 accepted for presentation, and two put forth to publication. Over 50 friends and members helped with paper reviews.

iv. Conference and Session Planning (Tien Tien Chan)

Damon provided an update on behalf of Tien Tien. This year the committee was the primary sponsor for three lectern sessions (274, 458, and 685), a poster session (357), and a workshop on carbon credits (174). Additionally, the committee was a co-sponsor for a workshop on behavior (143), several lectern sessions including two on internal data best practices, and a poster session on health analysis. Damon noted that the blog post on the committee web site and using the LinkedIn group can be ways to connect for the future and make announcements.

v. Research (Ralph Hall) - (includes discussion of RNS database analysis)

Ralph explained TRB's back to basics initiative to develop research statements, in the context of the committee's research agenda. He has undertaken work to determine to what extent sustainable transportation is represented in the RNS database. He developed scores for each leg of the triple bottom line (environment, social, economic), with a maximum score of 3 for the highest score in each dimension, and found a total of 325 records since 2006, the inception of the database. Only 19 records discussed sustainability in a comprehensive way—only 16 that addressed all three dimensions comprehensively. Efficiency and safety are the most discussed. They looked the application and tools of the top 16-19 records. There is some duplication in the records due to the focus of individual committees on a particular application, life cycle costs, for example. This committee could add value by coordinating research statements or adding details to existing ones. Said a different way, the committee can work with other committees to improve their statements as well as developing its own research statements. The report will be available on line at the committee's web site. Joe suggested asking for helpers and well as looking forward to how to get the statements funded.

Ralph would like volunteers and hopes to develop 5-10 statements. Techniques might be use of on-line tools, conference calls, workshops or meetings at the annual and summer meeting.

4. Triennial strategic plan (Donna Day)

All committees have to develop a strategic plan to guide the activities. The deadline is March 1. Donna described the elements of the plan, of which a research agenda is the primary new component. The current draft of the plan will be distributed for comment with responses requested in time to meet the deadline.

5. Planned conferences (Joe/Damon)

Joe suggests that a summer meeting would be a good time to start planning for a transportation sustainability conference in 2015. Nidhi suggested that the conference should in itself be sustainable, such as a more virtual access to cut down travel. Perhaps it might be combined with another group. There is a visualization committee conference in spring 2015 with presentations going directly into cloud and Ipad buddies for conversation.

Burr Stewart suggests that combining with the performance indicators conference in 2015 would be very good since sustainability indicators are but a subset of general performance indicators. He also mentioned borrowing some of the technological approaches used in a visualization conference. Another person suggested building on what Dan Sperling did with energy recently (http://www.rita.dot.gov/press_room/press_releases/dot116_12/html/dot116_12.html). Joe is asking for volunteers to help put this together with Tien Tien.

a. 2013 mid-year meeting

Possibilities for this year include:

- The Asilomar energy conference in August. It has only plenary sessions, so the committee meeting would have to be in the evening or before/after. The dates are August 6-9.
- Washington, DC, on July 22-23, with the planning and policy committees.
- International Conference on Ecology and Transportation (ICOET), June 23-27, 2013 in Scottsdale, Arizona, USA.
- A dedicated section meeting for EJ/Land Use/Economic Development committees.

The committee seemed to lean towards the Asilomar option.

b. 2014 annual meeting

Topics for call for papers or that could otherwise lead to sessions or workshops at the 2014 Annual Meeting:

- Pivot off the **2013 workshops** with a call for papers on those topics.
- Use the **2014 “legacy” theme** as a way to get spotlight sessions
- **Practical applications and tools** – e.g. lighting as cost saver; tools for calculating GHGs; how to track waste;
- **Economic issues** – e.g. tools to calculate return on investment of sustainability efforts
- Best **construction management** practices to push sustainability transportation in general—Sam will try organizing a workshop on this and coordinate with the construction management committee
- Partner with a **history** subcommittee to let history inform the future—many ideas have been discussed before.
- **Visioning for sustainability** – aligns with theme of looking 50 years out. Ties into scenario planning.
- Changing **travel patterns of the millennials**—combine with land development committee or other social and economic factors committees.
- **Operationalizing** the concept of sustainability – for example, benchmarking performance indicators—are there thresholds that should be considered in sustainability?
- Building a **definition of sustainability**—ITE has a database from polling their agencies; can link to that
- **Infrastructure disinvestment**—what this might do to the sustainability of the system, as in Pennsylvania’s VMT only criterion for keeping an aging bridge open.
- Transportation agencies becoming more **intermodal**

Consider letting other committees be the “primary” sponsor and supporting them, to help drive sustainability topics out to their networks and get it on their agendas, so we are not “preaching to the choir.”

Workshops need to be on a separate track due to July 30 deadline.

Consider webinars on one or more of these topics during the course of the year.

6. Presentations

a. Holger Dalkmann, EMBARQ –Update on Rio+20 and other global initiatives

[Note: This presentation occurred out of sequence, at the start of the committee meeting]

Holger is head of EMBARQ, an arm of World Resources Institute, with a key focus on sustainable transportation in developing countries. This includes influencing large finance programs at the national level and with practical projects at the local level, e.g., BRT in Mexico City. He gave an overview of what happened in Rio and Copenhagen. Rio + 20 was a follow up from the meeting in 1992 that focused on sustainability but not transport. Ten years after that in Johannesburg led to millennium goals on food security and other areas, which helped focus international funding, but again, no sustainable transport. Rio + 20 added some recognition to SLOCAT, which had been broached three years before. Rio + 20 also had some volunteer targets, including a \$175 billion commitment to sustainable transport over ten years. UN Decade for Road Safety recognized the need to reduce the 1.3 million people dying each year from road accidents, almost 50% of them pedestrians. Sustainable transportation is one element of road safety because of walking, cycling. Finally on climate change, he mentioned the Kyoto extension / 2009 Copenhagen, with climate change instruments designed for energy and waste. There is a commitment for a “green climate” fund - \$100B US investment over 10 years. Again, the question is how does sustainable transport fit in? There is a need more quantifiable evidence on problems, countermeasure effectiveness. The Asian Development Bank is now emphasizing more rail, fewer roads.

b. Tina Hodges – INVEST

Tina talked about a web-based self-evaluation tool for assessing sustainability over the life cycle of a transportation project or program that has been developed by FHWA. It is a free voluntary tool for doing self-assessments. It addresses system planning, projects, and operations. The goal is to improve the sustainability of whatever it is applied to. It has had a long development period, with beta and pilot versions that have been tested by many agencies. There are a number of criteria addressed, with various scorecards to fit different types and size applications. The goal is to have agencies improve the sustainability of their projects. There is a funding grant program (50-50) of \$25,000 to \$150,000 for using INVEST for agencies at all levels that is asking for letters of interest . www.sustainablehighways.org

c. Henrik Gudmundsson – European Green Capital Award Update

This is an award for all cities of 200,000 or greater to reward Europe’s major cities who have had consistent effort at green initiatives. The cities must apply; candidates are selected by a panel, with a jury selecting the winner of the title for a year. It is recognition only. Stockholm 2010, Hamburg 2011, Vitoria-Gasteiz 2012, Nantes 2013, and Copenhagen 2014 are the winners so far. There are 12 areas, ranging from contribution to climate change, local transport, noise pollution, etc., to energy performance, that are assessed. They have to describe the present situation, what has been done over the last 5 years to get there, and then objectives for the future. The measures are based on easily available data, such as the length of bike lanes per capita, share of population near public transport, share of short trips by auto. Henrik gave additional details about Copenhagen, which wishes to use its success to attract other cities to similar behavior. Copenhagen wants to be the best city for bicycling. Strengths and weaknesses: gets wide attention, empowers city environment departments, positive image, wide exchange of ideas and knowledge. Weaknesses included limited attention to social and economic pillars, mix of large and small cities, depends on data from cities, no funding, no systematic

follow up, area by area—limited integration. Outputs are reports and award. Perhaps the good practices reports are the best output.

Joe asked if such a program could be valuable in the US. Limited funding at the DOT levels is a growing problem. Henrik and April will investigate to see how the US might get involved.

7. Liaisons/Report back

Lewis Lem gave a brief report on the joint climate change subcommittee, and encouraged the committee to seize the moment. There was also a brief report on the joint health and transportation Subcommittee, whose website is www.TRBHealth.org. Those interested can join their group on Facebook: [TRB Health and Transportation Group](#).

8. Roundtable updates from the floor

Joe mentioned TRB's desire to reach out to groups outside of transportation, i.e., non-traditional stakeholders. Dan Hardy will help here as well as Margi Bradway from Oregon.

There was a show of hands for an international subcommittee—should go forward. Send email to Joe if interested in leading it.

The TR News on sustainability is coming out in Sept-Oct—this committee has been providing input.

9. Closure