1. Roll Call

*Members present:* Tom Clauder, (arrived at Item #5), Joe Clausius, Jerry Mandli (arrived at Item #3), Al Matano, Paul Skidmore, Duane Hinz, (arrived at Item #7), Satya Rhodes-Conway, John Vesperman, (left after Item #5), Robbie Webber, Mark Opitz, Charles Kamp.

*Members absent:* Eileen Bruskewitz, Ken Harwood, Robin Schmidt

*Staff present:* Bob McDonald, Bill Schaefer

2. Approval of June 4, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Skidmore, seconded by Opitz, to approve June meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

McDonald said there were several at member’s places. The first is a letter from Aileen Switzer, WisDOT Planning, to Dwight McComb, FHWA, which McComb then forwarded to McDonald approving the change to the work program to conduct the transportation analyses for proposed urban service area amendments for the RPC. The second is a letter from the WisDOT Secretary approving Amendment #1 to the 2008-2012 TIP. The third one is a City of Madison resolution approving the final report of the Long Range Metro Transit Planning Ad Hoc Committee and its recommendations, which has been referred to the MPO for comment. He said the Board could decide on whether to send a letter of comment or adopt its own resolution regarding the report. Webber suggested discussing it at the next meeting and then sending a letter of comment. McDonald said he’d put it on the agenda for the next meeting and ask someone from Metro Transit to provide a presentation on it. McDonald reported that the last communication was a copy of a letter sent out to a large group of persons and organizations regarding an amendment to the current coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan for Dane County and the process that will be undertaken to create a new more comprehensive plan. Schaefer added that the MPO Board had already approved as part of TIP amendments the projects that were the subject of the letter. WisDOT had told the MPO that this was the process that needed to be followed, seeking input on the projects. The MPO received over twenty responses back from the letter and there was overwhelming support for all of the projects.

4. Public Comment (for items not on MPO Agenda)

None.

5. Presentation on the Dane County Clean Air Coalition by Dave Merritt Project Coordinator

Merritt handed out some materials, including a copy of a power point presentation that he referred to. He provided some background information on the Clean Air Coalition (CAC), which is a public/private partnership of businesses, government agencies, and schools. The MPO was a founding member of the CAC. The CAC was formed four years ago to voluntarily reduce air pollution in order to keep the air healthy and ensure that Dane County continues to meet all State and Federal air regulations. He reviewed some of the programs that the CAC has implemented, including the Clean Air Action Days whereby notification is given to the general public and CAC member organizations when it is anticipated that the air quality will reach unhealthy levels for sensitive groups. Member organizations then activate specific response plans and the public is asked to take actions as well such as using alternative transportation and not refueling their cars in the afternoon. Free bus rides are provided on those days. Other programs implemented under various grants include a green gas station initiative, an EPA clean school bus diesel retrofit program, an EPA off-road diesel retrofit program for city and county equipment, a gas can
exchange program, and an ongoing bio-diesel school bus fund to help school districts purchase Dane County bio-diesel fuel.

More recently, the focus of the CAC has expanded to include the issue of fine particle pollution as well as ground level ozone. On April 1, the U.S. EPA notified Governor Doyle in a letter that Dane County and a number of other counties in the state had violated the 24-hour Federal public health standard for fine particle pollution. The EPA adopted a more stringent standard for fine particle pollution or PM 2.5 in 2006 and that is the reason for the violation. The new standard is 35 micrograms per cubic meter compared to the old standard of 65. The 3-year average PM 2.5 level for Dane County is 37, so we are just over the standard. This may result in the county being designated non-attainment for this pollutant by the EPA. The Governor has taken a position that although Wisconsin counties are in violation of the standard new Federal rules and programs that have been recently adopted will reduce some of the major precursors of PM 2.5 pollution such as nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, VOC’s, and ammonia. As those programs take effect, we will become in attainment of the standard. Levels of PM 2.5 precursor pollutants have actually already been going down in Wisconsin and elsewhere over the last decade. Merritt then reviewed the timeline for actions on PM 2.5. Final designations by EPA are due in December of this year. We are anticipating a letter in late July from EPA with its initial non-attainment designations. Dane County will likely be listed as being non-attainment. We’ll then have 60 days to respond to that initial determination from EPA. At a recent meeting the CAC decided to seek from EPA what is called an early action compact or agreement. Dane County is in a somewhat unique situation in that MG&E has already pledged to shut down its coal burning operation at its Blount Street plant by the year 2011. A feasibility study is underway for the UW Charter Street plant regarding reduction of emissions from that plant. The proposal to EPA will ask that the agency not designate the county as non-attainment because the actions that have been and will be taken to reduce emissions combined with the Federal rules and programs will bring the area back into attainment of the standard. The WisDNR has agreed to conduct additional modeling to determine the effect of the reductions in PM 2.5 precursor pollutants from these actions. Because emissions from motor vehicles account for over 50% of the problem, the CAC plans to include some actions addressing motor vehicle pollution as part of the proposal.

Some discussion followed about the timeline for non-attainment designations for both PM 2.5 and ground level ozone. Merritt said that Dane County is close to violating the standard for ozone so that is a concern as well. He also mentioned some of the ramifications of being designated non-attainment, including transportation conformity. Schaefer explained that this means the MPO must demonstrate through modeling that the long-range transportation plan and TIP are consistent with the emissions budget for motor vehicles included in the DNR’s plan to come into attainment with the air quality standard. Matano asked if the presumption is that building more highways helps air pollution by improving traffic flow. Schaefer said generally the answer is yes. Rhodes-Conway asked if there was data on the percentage breakdown of PM 2.5 pollution sources, and Merritt said not yet. Merritt added that the other question that we’ll get the answer to with modeling by DNR is how much of the problem is due to local pollution sources. For ozone, the answer is we contribute no more than 5%, but for PM 2.5 it could be as high as 20%. In response to a question, Merritt explained that area sources are miscellaneous small sources such as gas lawn mowers, underground gas tanks, etc. In response to a question regarding the trend in air quality, Merritt explained that the emissions of PM 2.5 precursor pollutants have been dropping, but the levels of PM 2.5 depend to a large degree on meteorology. Last December, there was a major air inversion from the large snow cover and 40-50 degree temperatures. This trapped pollutants close to ground level and led to high PM 2.5 levels for several days. Merritt added that if the data from 2008 put the county back into attainment, we could apply for redesignation back to attainment status should the EPA designate the county non-attainment. Rhodes-Conway asked about the availability of information on cost effective pollution control measures from other parts of the country that have been dealing with this problem. Merritt said such information is available. Rhodes-Conway commented that the community should get serious about reducing pollution faster so we get further away from the non-attainment line, and she encouraged MPO staff to help the Board evaluate the potential air quality implications of its decisions.
Matano asked about car buy back programs to get high polluting vehicles off the road, and Merritt said that is something that could be considered, but it takes money.

6. Consideration of Resolution TPB No. 15, Regarding Amendment #3 of the 2008-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Dane County Area

Schaefer said the TIP amendment was requested by WisDOT and includes three projects. One is for emergency pavement repair work on I-94 that needs to be done this year. For the other two projects, WisDOT would like to start design work this year and that is the reason for the TIP amendment request. One of these is the addition of left turn capacity at the intersection of Verona Road and CTH PD. There are issues out there today, but WisDOT also wants to get this done before work on the Verona Road/Beltline interchange projects starts since CTH PD will be a primary alternative route. The other project is a bridge deck replacement project for the USH 51 (Stoughton Rd.) bridge over Cottage Grove Road. Construction is programmed for 2011 for both of these projects.

Moved by Mandli, seconded by Skidmore, to approve Resolution TPB No. 15. Motion carried.

7. Review of Preliminary Draft Listing and Scoring and Ranking of Candidate Projects for STP Urban Funding for 2009-2013

Schaefer reviewed the draft listings by year starting with the current year projects. He noted that because the CTH M/Valley View Road intersection project was delayed until 2010, additional funding was freed up for the East Washington Avenue and Monona Drive Segment 1 reconstruction projects in 2009.

Schaefer said a new sheet for this year was at member’s places, because staff had incorrectly divided up the funding between the two projects. The funding was divided up based on the amount each project was short of the full cost share amount. The available funding still falls short of the full amount potentially available under the MPO’s old cost sharing policy. Because the CTH M/Valley Road project was supposed to occur in 2009 and the MPO committed 80% funding for that project, staff proposes to fund it at that level even though 2010 is the first year of the new 50/50 cost share policy. Webber expressed concern about the lack of an agreement on the local share funding for the CTH M projects and wanted to get that cleared up. Schaefer said that staff would be discussing the issue at its annual intergovernmental meeting on the TIP. It must be worked out or the project sponsor must agree to cover the full local share.

Schaefer then reviewed the projects in the remaining years. In 2013, the projects are CTH M (Cross Country to CTH PD), the last phase of Monona Drive, and East Johnson Street (Butler to First St.). In response to a question about Raymond Road, Schaefer said the plan is to eventually cul-de-sac Raymond Road before it intersects CTH PD and connect Raymond Road directly to Mid-Town Road.

Clauder commented on the long list of projects below the funding cutoff line in 2013, and was concerned that these projects would get delayed further. McDonald said that to be honest the chances of many of the projects below the line being funded in 2014 was slim. It depends upon what other projects get submitted for funding in 2014 and beyond. If there are no new major projects, then some of them might get funded, but there is no guarantee. Webber commented that everyone is struggling with the fact there just isn’t enough money and that is why she favors doing maintenance projects before capacity expansion projects.

Schaefer said that the chances of a project that scored below 34-36 being funded were slim since new projects will continue to be added that they will be competing against. McDonald said the draft listings were presented for information only. They’ll be presented to our technical committee at its next meeting and then staff will prepare a complete draft TIP to release for public hearing.

8. Status Report by TPB Board Members on Projects Potentially Involving the TPB:

Transport 2020 Implementation Task Force: Matano reported that the Federal New Starts application had been submitted to FTA and the press release on it had some good information. The membership of the Finance/Governance subcommittee has been expanded to include representatives from communities outside Madison, businesses, and others. Also, a legislative council study committee is being set up to draft RTA legislation.
USH 51 (USH 12/18 to I-90/94/39) Corridor Study and USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) Study:
McDonald said there has not been a meeting recently as WisDOT has had to go back and follow a new agency consultation process required under SAFETEA-LU.

North Mendota Parkway Implementation Oversight Committee: Hinz reported that public meetings were scheduled for July 14 and 21 to review various alternative roadway alignments and the E-Way boundaries. Opitz added that the Town of Springfield had been holding meetings trying to get some public input. Meetings have also been held in other communities as well as meetings with property owners.

9. Discussion of Future Work Items
McDonald said the draft TIP will be released in August with a hearing in September and MPO action in October. Staff will also be putting together next year’s work program for review at the September meeting. A presentation will be scheduled on the proposed draft Verona Road/West Beltline interim improvements. A presentation will also be made at a future meeting on the ped/bike safety education program.

10. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings
The next meeting is August 6, 2008 at the same location.

11. Adjournment
Moved by Rhodes-Conway, seconded by Skidmore, to adjourn. Motion carried.