

## **MEETING NOTES**

### **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, January 22, 2002

**TIME:** 1:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** COG, 777 North Capitol Street, NE  
First Floor, Room 1

**CHAIR:** Heather Wallenstrom  
Virginia Department of Transportation

**VICE-**

**CHAIRS:** Michael Jackson  
District Division of Transportation,  
Jim Sebastian  
Maryland Department of Transportation

**ATTENDANCE:**

Shaheer Assad, Loudoun County  
George Branyan, SHA/ Maryland Highway Safety Office  
Charlie Denney, Arlington County  
Eric Gilliland, WABA  
Michael Jackson, MDOT  
Daniel Janousek, City of Gaithersburg  
Brian V. King, VDOT  
Allen Muchnick, WABA  
Harvey Muller, Maryland SHA  
Steve Pinkus, WalkDC  
Jim Sebastian, DC DPW  
Gail Tate-Nouri, Montgomery County DPWT  
Kenneth Todd, National Center for Bicycling and Walking  
Heather Wallenstrom, VDOT NOVA

**COG STAFF ATTENDANCE:**

Michael Farrell  
Andrew Meese  
Daivamani Sivasailam

## **ACTIONS:**

### **1. General Introductions.**

Participants introduced themselves.

### **2. Selection of a New Chair**

Heather Wallenstrom of VDOT was elected Chair by acclamation.

### **3. Review of the Minutes of the November 20, 2001 Meeting**

Minutes were approved.

### **4. Regional Air-Quality Status and Bicycle-Related TERMS**

Daivamani Sivasailam, MWCOG

Daivamani Sivasailam discussed regional air quality. The 2002-07 Transportation Improvement Program should have been approved in 2001, but is still awaiting approval by the Transportation Planning Board. The reason is that the program and the plan are 3.3 tons in excess of the emissions budget for mobile sources in the region. The TPB formed a task force to solve the problem, which has submitted a report to the Board. The TPB can take actions in February to approve the TIP and the long-range plan if they can resolve the 3.3 ton excess. One way of dealing with the excess would be to adopt TERMS. The task force has identified a list of TERM. The other method would be to ask the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Board to revise the State Implementation Plan, or SIP, to allow a higher NO<sub>x</sub> emissions budget, but a lower VOC budget. For every tons of VOC reduced, you get credit for 1.6 tons of NO<sub>x</sub>. Any modification of the SIP will have to be reviewed by the EPA, which will take at least a year.

The group discussed TERMS. The purpose of making a program a TERM is to help lobby for funding. Whether or not a program is labeled a TERM, the region can take air quality credit for it. Cost-effectiveness is calculated, but it is not the only criteria used to select TERMS. Total cost for the proposed TERMS is \$39 million over three years, but none of the State agencies have indicated that they have money for any TERMS. The earliest point at which any decision can be made is February. At this time no one knows if some or any TERMS will be adopted, or whether they will be combined with some NO<sub>x</sub> – VOC trade.

Heather asked about the status of Bike Racks on Buses. Michael Jackson promised to find out about the status of Maryland's funding for this TERM. The TPB will not adopt a TERM unless the agencies involved make the funding commitment. Now is the time to submit new programs for consideration as TERMS. Allan Muchnick pointed out that of the ten TERMS

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on the short list, few offered any transportation benefit. Jim Sebastian pointed out that the first phase of Regional Bike Racks is still not fully implemented. We need to re-think that TERM. The problem is not money for racks, the problem is staff, and getting them to install the racks. A new bike rack TERM should include installation. Montgomery County and Prince Georges County still have bike racks around that no one has ever installed. Harvey Muller indicated that he would not approve a regional bike rack TERM until we deal with the installation program. Siva added that since regional bike racks was on neither the long nor the short list, it is too late to consider it for this TIP. Heather asked Siva when we should submit a revised bike rack TERM for next year. When should we be getting Siva information and in what format? Siva replied that a solicitation document had been issued. Send the write-up through Mike Farrell. If funding is available, submit it as a TIP project. The analysis does not need to be done at this time; just submit a paragraph describing the project. The new bike rack TERM should include installation. Heather asked the group to submit its' ideas and get them in to Siva by February.

Charlie Denney suggested that we endorse two other TERMS, one for regional parking cash-out, another for pedestrian facilities at rail stations. Charlie made a motion that the new Chair send a letter on behalf of the subcommittee to the TPB supporting these TERMS, as well as the bike racks on buses and bike station TERMS. The TERMS to be endorsed are: M-145 External Bicycle Racks on WMATA Buses, M-165 Bike Stations at Rail Stations, M-93 Improve Pedestrian Facilities Near Rail Station, and M-07A Voluntary Employer Parking Cash-Out Subsidy. Siva suggested that the letter be sent to Mike Clifford, cc Ron Kirby. The motion was seconded. Jim suggested that the letter be sent to the head of the Technical Committee. Heather asked that subcommittee members get the support of the Tech committee members from their jurisdictions.

Some members asked if they could modify the existing TERMS. Mike Farrell replied that at this stage No, since the existing description is the basis for the air quality analysis.

The deadline for public comment on the TERMS is January 30, and anyone can write to the Board.

The motion to endorse the TERMS was adopted unanimously.

Heather asked about Employer Outreach for Bicycles. We have \$15,000 per year to outreach to bicycles. Allen pointed out that it was only a five-year TERM, which would expire eventually. The money is essentially for staff time. The money comes from the State agencies. However, it is in the 2003 budget. A potential use for these funds is for workplace seminars. Jim Sebastian is planning to have one, together with Mike Farrell and WABA, at his workplace in March. We would like to do the same lunchtime seminars at other locations. WABA's newsletter will have an advertisement offering lunchtime seminars. The commuter connections people know the companies who might be willing to host one of these seminars.

Allan asked about the subcommittee's obligation to evaluate existing TERMS. The degree of evaluation varies considerably between TERMS. WMATA has done one for which the only evaluation was a verification that it had been done. Commuter Connections, on the other hand, carried out numerous pre and post surveys to measure the effectiveness of its program. With something like bike racks it might be good to verify that racks were purchased

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and installed, and perhaps sample usage at a few locations. Expenditure on evaluation should have some proportion to the cost of the program.

Action Items:

- Michael Jackson agreed to determine the status of Maryland funding for Bike Racks on Buses
- Subcommittee members interested in getting a regional bike racks program considered as a TERM this year should re-think that TERM to deal with the installation issue, and submit their ideas to Michael Farrell, who will forward them to Siva.
- Heather Wallenstrom should write a letter to the head of the TPB Technical Committee on behalf of the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee, endorsing the following TERMS: M-145 External Bicycle Racks on WMATA Buses, M-165 Bike Stations at Rail Stations, M-93 Improve Pedestrian Facilities Near Rail Station, and M-07A Voluntary Employer Parking Cash-Out Subsidy.
- All subcommittee members representing TPB member jurisdictions should speak with their jurisdiction's representative on the TPB technical committee to obtain their support for the above TERMS.

**5. Map for the Constrained Long-Range Plan.**

Michael Farrell discussed the map for the Constrained Long-Range Plan. The group discussed what to include on the map. Michael Farrell proposed showing shared-use paths greater than two miles. It was agreed that on-road bike routes should not be included. Jim Sebastian noted that this map was not for the bike plan, but for the constrained long-range plan. This document does not have to be followed, it is meant to be illustrative of what is going on in the region. Jim also proposed that the map include be labeled both pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Michael Jackson proposed doing smaller-scale maps for different districts, and separating planned from existing facilities. Projects that are planned and funded should be distinct from projects that are only planned. Bike lanes should be shown, in addition to multi-use paths. Michael Farrell noted that he had been hearing more of a cacophony than a consensus on what to map. Jim Sebastian proposed mapping only projects listed in the CLRP, which would not include bike lanes. Less is more, someone said, we should only show the better facilities. Substandard facilities should not be included.

Action Items:

- Michael Farrell promised to send out maps for review to each jurisdiction.

**6. Goals and Opportunities for the New Year**

Heather Wallenstrom discussed goals she would like the committee to achieve. Copies of the Unified Planning Work Program were distributed. Heather asked that the group provide comments by the end of February. Is this what we want to do as a group? Heather suggested

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that we develop an annual schedule of events for which we need to prepare materials, such dates for submitting new TERMS. We should know when COG household travel survey data will be released, so we can review it. We need a coordinator from the committee for projects such as the pedestrian and bicycle safety outreach campaign. Another example is the bicycle routing software, for which Eric Gilliland has become the coordinator. Michael Jackson said that one of the most important roles of the group was information-sharing. Another goal might be to set up an educational workshop. Perhaps we should make it a goal to have one every fall. We should also have more contact with the TPB Tech Committee, to which in principle we should report. This committee should be recommending things to be included in the TIP and the CLRP. Some subcommittees have their Chair brief the TPB Technical Subcommittee every six months or so. Andy Meese suggested that the Bike/Ped Chair attend every Tech committee meeting, which happens the first Friday of every month. Members of the Bike/Ped Committee should get to know their technical committee member, and make them aware of Bike/Ped issues, in particular our TERM endorsements. Heather asked the group to approach their technical committee members regarding the TERMS that we are endorsing.

Heather brought up the issue of Vice-Chairs. At the moment we have one from Maryland and one from D.C. Heather suggested that the outgoing Chair should be the Vice-Chair for at least a year, to assure continuity. The group endorsed Jim Sebastian and Michael Jackson as Vice-Chairs. The Vice-Chairs will help formulate the agendas, as well as assist with particular items. Chairs and staff should have a conference call before the meetings.

The issue of an official subcommittee membership list was discussed. Jim suggested taking the existing sign-in sheet and highlighting the names of all persons representing COG member jurisdictions. Andy Meese added that we had not had a formal membership up until now, merely a list of participants.

Action items:

- Michael Farrell should develop a draft schedule of recurring events of which the Subcommittee should be aware, such as TERM evaluation, the TIP, and Household Travel survey productions.
- The Subcommittee should interact more with the TPB Technical Committee, of which it is officially a subcommittee, perhaps by having the Chair make a report to it on a semi-annual basis. Or a member could volunteer to attend the monthly technical committee meetings.
- Members should approach the TPB Technical Committee member in their organization, and make that person aware of bicycle and pedestrian issues such as bicycle and pedestrian-related TERMS.
- Members should think about what kind of bicycle or pedestrian educational seminar they would like to see held.

**7. Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Outreach Campaign**

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Michael Farrell discussed a draft concept paper for the campaign. The concept paper is meant to be a sales document, and decision-makers are the audience. The program is to have three phases. The first phase would be WalkSmart, a partnership with WMATA to put Montgomery County's posters on the insides of WMATA buses. This phase could probably be managed by the Bike/Ped coordinator. Heather asked if anyone would be willing to help with this program. Jim Sebastian volunteered. It was agreed that any campaign should emphasize pedestrians over bicycles, on an order of approximately three to one. The pedestrian safety task force will work out the details of the campaign.

Action Items

- Committee members should e-mail comments on the paper to Michael Farrell

**8. Maryland Pedestrian Enforcement**

George Branyan of the Maryland Office of Highway Safety discussed Maryland's Pedestrian enforcement program. The program is active in six counties, and funds enforcement directed at drivers who commit violations against pedestrians. Pedestrian and bicycle crashes get relatively little enforcement attention compared the number and seriousness of such crashes. Pedestrian safety is also a quality of life issue in that it impedes people's ability to walk. Pedestrian fatalities increase dramatically with vehicle speed. Lower speed limits, and enforcement of speed limits, especially in school zones, is a priority. Failure to yield, failure to stop at the stop bar, and failure to yield to pedestrian before turning on red are some of the behaviors targeted. Education alone has been shown to be ineffective, but when people think there is a chance that they may get caught, it changes behavior. The program encourages citing pedestrians only when they disrupt the traffic flow.

Enforcement efforts can help the police identify engineering problems, or locations in which the engineering makes it difficult for motorists to obey the law. Police can bring these shortcomings to the attention of the traffic engineers. Roundabouts can be a problem for pedestrians. For motorists the number of collisions increases, but the severity goes down.

Complaining to the police about motorist violations with respect to pedestrians may have some effect, if there are enough complaints.

Pedestrians must assert themselves to some degree if they are going to move, but they need the help of law enforcement in asserting their rights. Many judges take pedestrian violations much less seriously than other violations, such as drunk driving, but in terms of fatalities pedestrian violations are just as important.

At mid-block crosswalks, the stop bar should be twenty feet in front of the crosswalk due to the threat to pedestrians in multiple-lane roads when one car yields but the other does not. If the stop bar is set well back from the intersection, the motorist will be able to see the pedestrian.

The issue of crosswalks creating a false sense of security to pedestrians, and hence more pedestrian fatalities, was raised. The group disagreed, generally, but asked for research. Michael Jackson cited a study finding that pedestrians did not have a false sense of security. Michael Farrell said that it was a fact that most collisions were in the crosswalks. The theory

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proposed is the false sense of security, but other explanations are more likely. People who cross at crosswalks are disproportionately young children and the elderly. People who cross away from the crosswalks tend to be physically fit and more able to avoid collisions than people who cross at the crosswalk. Removing crosswalks is bad for pedestrian accessibility because motorists are unlikely to yield if there is no marked crosswalk. The placement of bus stops in dangerous locations with no sidewalks or safe crossings was discussed.

Action items:

- Research should be found on the issue of the safety of marked versus unmarked crosswalks

### **8. Progress on Bicycle Routing Software**

Eric Gilliland discussed the development of bicycle routing software by GeoPerception, a software company in California. The software uses bicycle level of service data to generate bicycle routes between selected destinations, in a manner similar to Mapquest. Cyclists will be able to use different routing criteria, such as traffic volume, speed, or slope. The region may be able to acquire the software, and use data accumulated under the region's bicycle plans.

A motion was passed to incorporate a line item on exploring ITS applications to pedestrian and bicycle issues.

Action items:

- Monitor software progress and data requirements
- Inventory Washington regional data collection efforts
- The COG work program should be amended to include a line item for exploring ITS applications to bicycle and pedestrian issues.

**Adjourned.**