

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, September 20th, 2011

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Kristin Haldeman
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

VICE-

CHAIRS: Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation
David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Jim Sebastian, District Department of Transportation
Fred Shaffer, MNCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Tim Bevins	NPS-GWMP
George Branyan	DDOT
Larry Cole	Montgomery County Planning (by phone)
Patrick Donahue	Arlington Police
Jeff Dunckel	Montgomery County (by phone)
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
David Goodman	Arlington County
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Phil Koopman	Bicyclespace
Rachel Lyons	McAndrew Company
Jim McAndrew	McAndrew Compnay
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation (by phone)
Bill Orleans	Greenbelt
David Patton	Arlington County

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 2

Rob Robinson	City of Gaithersburg
Carrie Sanders	City of Alexandria
Fred Shaffer	Prince George's County
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	Northern Virginia Regional Commission (by phone)
Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)

COG Staff Attendance:

Sarah Crawford
Michael Farrell
Huijing Qiang

1. General Introductions.

Ms. Haldeman chaired the meeting. Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the July 19, 2011 Meeting

Minutes were approved, with the proviso that WMATA would send revisions to its jurisdictional update.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

WMATA is identifying some needs for “off-site” bicycle facilities near its stations, such as lanes and sharrows. Cooperation with agencies that own the roads is needed.

Arlington submitted an application for the bicycle-friendly communities. Arlington got silver-level status, but had hoped for gold. 12 automated counters have now been placed in Arlington or on the Mount Vernon Trail. There will be an on-line searchable database so people can get access to the counter data in real time. Arlington is part of the national bicycle and pedestrian documentation project, which is using human counters to validate the information from the automated counter. Wayfinding signage will be deployed in the Rosslyn – Ballston corridor, with about 250 signs going out by the end of the year.

Cindy Engelhart will take over from Fatemeh Allahdoust as the VDOT representative on the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee. VDOT is studying video of high-crash locations on trails. Arlington and VDOT attended the first meeting for the NCHRP project for innovative bicycle data collection methodologies. The RFP was released yesterday.

Maryland SHA and MDOT have come up with draft guidelines for appropriate use of the “Bicycles may use Full Lane” sign. The guidelines are fairly open-ended, and the cycling community is being asked for comments. The 2009 MUTCD approves these signs. Ms.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 3

Engelhart asked for a copy of the guidelines.

Maryland is also finalizing a Maryland law enforcement video on bicycle safety and bicycle regulations. The federal grant requires that the work be completed by September 30th. Maryland has moved up the ranks to #10 among bicycle friendly states, and was awarded bronze recognition.

Prince George's County Parks Department recently opened a section of the Anacostia River Trail from Bladensburg to the DC line. The Western Branch Trail was recently opened in Upper Marlboro. SHA will do streetscape improvements on Branch Avenue and Naylor Road. This area got a TLC study last year, and many of the pedestrian and bicycle improvements in the SHA project were drawn from that study. There will also be transit oriented development studies for the southern Green Line stations and for the Blue Line stations in Prince George's County. Separate contracts will be awarded for the Green and Blue lines. The general plan is being updated, and will include Complete Street principles. A signage plan is being developed for the Potomac Heritage Trail.

Alexandria has completed improvements to the Eisenhower Trail. The Telegraph Road Trail overpass at Huntingdon connected to the Eisenhower Trail. Both projects were completed this summer. Alexandria is also participating in the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation project, with the assistance of the bicycle and pedestrians subcommittee. Based on that data the city may install an automated counter. The city has applied for a walk-friendly community designation. The City has started design on the Holmes Run Trail underpass.

Mr. Jackson asked for background on the bicycle signal heads on the Mount Vernon Trail. Preliminary results are that compliance is better with the signal heads than with the Stop signs. The signal is on the Mount Vernon Trail at South Alfred Street, at the entrance to a major waterfront apartment complex.

Ms. Engelhart said that pedestrians and bicyclists on a trail are not required to stop at Stop signs under the Virginia code, but they must obey a signal.

Mr. Farrell mentioned that he thought there were many inappropriate Stop signs; based on the traffic volumes in many cases the Stop should be on the roadway. The mandatory dismounts are also frequently and appropriately disregarded. Lastly, Mr. Farrell believed the redesign of the trail access at Roosevelt Island had poor geometrics and was unsightly as well, with colored plastic barriers.

Montgomery County has completed its analysis of pedestrian collisions, and found that the number of pedestrian collisions fell by 15%, and serious collisions by 30% in 2010. Most of the reduction in collisions was in high-incidence areas where countermeasures had been carried out. While the program is getting results, the Capital Improvement Program budget is likely to be cut next year.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 4

Montgomery County is planning a County-wide 150-mile BRT system. Bicycle and pedestrian priority areas will be designated around all the BRT stations. In addition, the County Council may adopt Complete Streets legislation. Roger Berliner supports it.

Maryland is working on a strategic plan for pedestrian safety.

Ms. Spiliotopoulos from NVRC announced that there will be a meeting for the Potomac Heritage Trail on November 2nd. The NVRC's Bike/Ped Safety Guide will be updated.

Fairfax County working with Cambridge Systematics to study bicycling in the County.

The City of Falls Church is revising its bicycle network. It will be incorporated into the Arlington Bicycle Map.

The Loudoun Board of Supervisors has identified a set of bicycle and pedestrian priority projects. The purpose is to have a ready list of projects if funding becomes available. There is also a pedestrian and bicycle plan for the future Silver Line Metrorail station.

There is a robust trail count program on the Mount Vernon Trail. Capital Bikeshare may soon be permitted on National Park Service property. The Park Service is also working on revising its signage, including the Stop sign at the closed ramp to Ronald Reagan National Airport.

4. Draft Regional Complete Streets Policy

A draft regional Complete Streets policy has been posted on the Subcommittee blog, and copies were distributed to the group. The language is drawn primarily from the federal Complete Streets bill, with some borrowings from the City of Alexandria's and the State complete streets policies. Now is the time to make specific comments and suggested changes on the language.

For example, one provision is that if a specified user group is prohibited by law from using a facility, a greater effort shall be made to accommodate those users elsewhere.

Ms. Engelhart noted that that section mostly referred to ban on bicyclists on Interstates. In Virginia pedestrians and bicyclists may still be accommodated within the ROW on a separate facility. We might want to use the phrase "within the right of way", instead of "elsewhere".

Another issue that Shane Farthing of WABA brought up was whether there should be any specified speed limit below which bicyclists should not be banned from a roadway. This was with reference to the ban on bicyclists on the GW Parkway. Ms. Engelhart said that this was a long-standing policy of the National Park Service. Mr. Muchnick said that the ban on bicycling on the Parkway south of Old Town Alexandria dated from 2007. The ban north of Alexandria

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 5

dates for decades. Ms.Engelhart said that the purpose of the Mt. Vernon Trail was to get bicyclists off the parkway, and she thought the ban dated further back. Mr. Farrell said that the larger issue was whether we should offer speed limit guidelines or traffic volume guidelines.

Mr. Muchnick suggested that the phrase “roadway” should be changed to “road” or “travel corridor” since a “roadway” is a travel way for motorized vehicles. Sidewalks are not part of the roadway. Ms. Engelhart said that there was a difference in the definitions offered in AASHTO and MUTCD, so we should make sure that everyone is on the same page.

Mr. Farrell asked whether we wanted to have a complete streets policy for transportation projects such as rail corridors. Should a railway have to accommodate motorists within its right of way. Mr. Dunkel said that language that is too general runs the risk of becoming meaningless. Ms. Haldeman said that a rail line is not meant to be a multimodal facility. Is a freeway by definition not a multimodal corridor? Bicyclists are allowed on freeways in some states. The federal bill uses more general language, for “all users” rather than specifically pedestrians or bicyclists.

Ms. Engelhart suggested that I might post a copy of the federal bill in the same place as our Complete Streets draft policy, so that we can compare. Mr. Farrell said that he could do that. Mr. Muchnick said that the federal language was not necessarily the best language. Mr. Jackson asked whether the “all ages” language included five year olds? Mr. Goodman said that it should encompass small children accompanied by parents. “If you are old enough to walk by yourself, you should be able to get across the street by yourself”.

Mr. Farrell that the issue seemed similar to disability. If a project must accommodate the disabled, then how disabled? Ms. Engelhart said that she did not like all the listings, but suggested that we simply say “the disabled”. Mr. Muchnick said that the final CAC memorandum to the TPB had a different formulation, referring to “people of diverse abilities”. Mr. Farrell promised to take a second look at that language. Nothing binds us to the language in the federal bill.

Mr. Shaffer expressed some concern about lack of bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on private streets, which has been an issue in Prince George’s County, including areas near Metro stations. These facilities are maintained by the developer. And the State (at least in Virginia) will not accept private constructed streets unless they meet certain standards.

Ms. Engelhart asked what the deadline for comments would be. Mr. Farrell replied that October 15th would be a good target date for this Subcommittee. Access for All will make specific comments relating to the disabled.

Local jurisdictions could encourage Complete Streets on private streets through zoning and permitting. The DOT’s do not have that power.

Mr. Farrell said that we have already decided that this will not be a mandatory policy. However,

if the region adopts a Complete Streets policies, then the local jurisdictions may be more inclined to pass their own Complete Streets policies. The CAC suggested that we should document compliance with a regional Complete Streets policy through the TIP. Three or four new check-boxes would be sufficient. Another possibility would be to send out an annual survey of this Subcommittee's membership regarding your agency's compliance with the regional Complete Streets policy.

Ms. Haldeman suggested that further comments be submitted to Mr. Farrell later.

5. Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign.

- **Evaluation Results**

Mr. McAndrew spoke to a Powerpoint on the FY 2011 Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety campaign. A copy of the Annual Report has been posted on-line; printed copies will be made available later. Comments on the Annual Report should be submitted within two days in order to meet the print deadline.

The Street Smart campaign is getting attention at the national level, with Federal Highway hosting an employee event at its DC headquarters using the Street Smart materials and a live speed demonstration. Baltimore, Raleigh, and Texas Tech have used our materials.

The campaign targets 18-34 year old males as the group at greatest risk. Eight radio stations, with 20 spots per station per day, in addition to transit advertising, brought the message to the public. There was an ad targeted specifically to bus riders. Cable TV was used to reach the Spanish-speaking audience. The spot we used was originally shot in English, but played well in Spanish. The actors were bi-lingual, so the same actors were used for the dialogue on the Spanish spot. Partner agencies carried out enforcement, and a mobile billboard was used to reinforce the message at targeted enforcement locations in the District of Columbia.

The overall theme of the Spring campaign was the "giant safety problem", and there were five sub-messages. It is a challenge to communicate five sub-messages in a mass media campaign. Such campaigns usually focus on a single message such as "don't drink and drive".

During the campaign there was also an outreach to the media, including a press event. Despite some problems with the event, there was a considerable amount of coverage of the press event and the campaign. "If you don't want the media to use the wrong number, use the right number". The Post coverage included some errors in the reporting, and it mixed EMS run and police crash data, which are considerably different from each other, since not every EMS run results in a police report. It can be challenging to get the reporters to pay close attention to the materials they are given and report the news correctly. And the press may choose to interpret the data differently. Ms. Engelhart said that every five years VDOT gets a report from INOVA

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 7

Fairfax hospital, so they can check hospitalization reports against crash reports.

Five years down the road there may not even be local TV news as we know it now, but for now we are able to get coverage. We have been able to get \$1.2 million in free media. Several hundred thousand of that was Montgomery County, which saturates the County with free transit ads.

Pre and post campaign surveys measure the public awareness of the messages. The giant pedestrian safety theme got a significant boost in awareness. Perceived unsafe behaviors increased, though that likely reflects increased awareness of the issues. Non-target audience respondents did not believe that unsafe behaviors had increased. The five sub-messages did not get a significant boost in awareness. People believed that pedestrian laws are not strongly enforced.

The availability of outdoor advertising is not available in all the Counties. Heavy coverage on WMATA and in DC meant that most of the outdoor advertising was inside the beltway. Where there is a full exposure to both radio and outdoor advertising there is a significant increase in new awareness.

- **DDOT Enforcement Study Results**

Mr. Branyan spoke to a handout. While there have been generally positive results on the pre-post telephone surveys, we do not have anything that would show changes in behavior. Five behaviors that are proxies for pedestrian crashes were tracked by camera at selected locations before and after the Spring campaign in the District of Columbia. Seven hours of video was recorded at each test intersection, mostly in Columbia Heights. Traffic Control Officers were sent to those locations and wrote tickets. Outdoor advertising was present at all these locations, including a mobile billboard. Mr. Branyan was involved in training the traffic control officers on the types of violations that should be ticketed. Less enforcement happened than had been hoped for due to the TCO's being pulled away to other duties. However, Mr. Branyan believed that the observed changes in behavior were primarily a reaction to the enforcement.

Significant reductions (50-60%) were achieved in right turn on red, and failure to yield ROW to pedestrians when turning on green.

- **FY 2012 Campaign**

We will slightly more money to work with, on the order of \$630,000. Loudoun County will be contributing for the first time, on a divided vote. Loudoun County has indicated that they were looking for evidence of effectiveness. Montgomery County's results are encouraging. Ms. Engelhart noted that Loudoun County has recently hired a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 8

This meeting is the first de facto planning meeting for the Fall. We are in position to sign a contract with McAndrew Company for the Fall. The fall press event will be held in Montgomery County. A Best Practices in Law Enforcement seminar will take place in mid-October. It will be a law-enforcement oriented event. We have one representative from each State, but we have room for other speakers. We will try to have another such event in the Spring.

Mr. Orleans asked who was funding the program. Mr. Farrell replied that it was the largely the same group of funders, plus Loudoun County.

Mr. Dunckel asked if the DDOT report was available on-line. Mr. Branyan replied that the report was still being finalized, but there was a brief write-up in the Street Smart Annual Report.

Mr. Farrell will brief the TPB on Street Smart, but involved committee members such as Jeff Dunckel would be welcome to present the results of their pedestrian safety program.

6. TIGER Grant Program

Ms. Crawford briefed the Subcommittee on the recent TIGER grant application. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements around rail stations were bundled into a TIGER grant. The TPB will be asked to approve the seven proposed project into the regional TIGER grant.

7. Other TPB Program Updates

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Database**

A notice has gone out to update the projects. Mr. Farrell will follow up with member agencies. Once the project database is updated we can do a progress report

- **Top Priority Unfunded Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects**

This should go to the TPB in December. Mr. Farrell will send out a notice and follow up with individual jurisdictions. Projects on last year's list should be updated, and if need be a new project substituted. The list should be approved at the November Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting.

- **Regional Long Distance Bikeways Task Force**

There will be a meeting in the first week of October to deal with signing guidelines, and next steps toward preparing a proposal for the TPB to endorse.

- **Future Education/Training Workshops**

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the September 20, 2011 Meeting
Page 9

Mr. Farrell believes that a Complete Streets seminar would be a good accompaniment or follow-up to the adoption of a regional Complete Streets policy. Mr. Farrell envisions a workshop that would focus on how to implement a Complete Streets policy, rather than policy development. Ms. Engelhart said that someone on her subcommittee led Complete Streets workshops. Mr. Branyan suggested that Barbara McCann of the Complete Streets Coalition is based here in DC. The Subcommittee thought we should target developers, and people higher up in their departments than the “usual suspects” of bicycle and pedestrian coordinators. Mr. Muchnick suggested getting elected officials.

Mr. Jackson said that sidewalk snow removal could be couched as a Complete Streets issue. Mr. Goodman said that Complete Streets should apply to maintenance and operations. DDOT is trying to do a better job clearing sidewalks, in response to criticism over conditions last winter. One possibility: ATV plows & snowblowers for sidewalks. Mr. Goodman said that Arlington is considering buying specialized equipment to clear snow from pedestrian facilities.

Cabi (Capital Bikeshare) is celebrating its first birthday near the SE Waterfront, on Car-Free Day.

8. Adjourned