

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, September 17, 2019

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

PLACE: Room 1, First Floor
777 North Capitol Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

CHAIR: George Branyan, DDOT

**VICE-
CHAIRS:**

Jeff Dunckel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Jamie Carrington, WMATA

Attendance:

Fatemeh Allahdoust	VDOT/NOVA
George Branyan	DDOT
James Carrington	WMATA (by phone)
Jeff Dunckel	Maryland Highway Safety Office
Laurel Hammig	National Park Service
Andrea Lasker	Prince George's County (by phone)
Joshua Moore	National Park Service
Karyn McAlister	DDOT
Brett Ripkin	WMATA
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	NVRC (by phone)
Stephanie Walder	Prince George's County DPWT (by phone)
Vic Weissberg	Prince George's County DPWT (by phone)
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

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COG Staff Attendance:

Stacy Cook
Michael Farrell
Charlene Howard
Andrew Meese
Jon Schermann

1. General Introductions.

George Branyan chaired the meeting.

2. Review of the July 16 Meeting Notes

The Subcommittee approved the minutes, with the correction on page 4 that causes of crashes should be replaced with “contributing factors”. In the fourth item on page 4 Ms. Allahdoust asked if she’d sent a contact for GIS data. Mr. Farrell replied that she had.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

Mr. Wetmore was at APBP and taped several sessions, which are posted on Perils for Pedestrians.

The Kennedy Center reach expansion opened last week, which included a bike/ped bridge to the Rock Creek Trail. Park Superintendents are now allowed to permit e-bikes on park property. Those decisions will be made on a park by park basis. Mr. Branyan noted that there are a lot of bikes parked near the Reach. It might be best to wait until the festival is over to see what the normal demand is.

Maryland on October 1st will be a Vision Zero state, by 2030. The timing is good inasmuch as the Strategic Highway Safety Plan will be updated next year. It won’t make for a fundamentally different approach to what was done before. Context sensitive design standards are being developed for pedestrian-intensive areas. Safety is being put higher on the agenda for those areas. That would be a good presentation to make to this group when it’s done. Ms. Allahdoust asked about the difference relative to earlier policies. Mr. Dunckel replied that areas such as Silver Spring need a different set of standards from those used farther out in areas with less foot traffic. For example, having crosswalks on only two legs of an intersection might not be acceptable. These standards should be ready in about six months.

Virginia is experiencing higher rates of pedestrian crashes, and a group in Northern Virginia has been tasked with coming up with a new set of practices. Ms. Allahdoust expressed interest in Maryland’s work. Mr. Dunckel promised to send her the contacts. Speeding and people not

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crossing at the crosswalks are major factors in Virginia.

The Maryland work is all internal, without much outreach at this stage. Mr. Branyan noted that DDOT's Vision Zero had been done with a lot of public outreach. In Montgomery County's Vision Zero plan they say that mobility does not trump safety. Mr. Branyan said that Vision Zero reflects a shift in perspective about their relative importance. Ms. Cook asked whether anticipated infill development is being taken into account. Mr. Dunckel replied that it was.

Federal funding for NHSTA grants has been announced, including \$250,000 for the Street Smart campaign, and \$350,000 for Look Alive in Baltimore. Montgomery County has also funded some extra Virtual Reality challenge events. Maryland is doing a pedestrian fatality review process.

In Montgomery County Bethesda is lowering some speed limits. The head of the DOT will retire in October.

Ellen Jones is now the chief project delivery officer for DDOT. She is a former director of WABA. WABA is promoting "20 by 20", or 20 miles of cycle track by the end of 2020. Current plans call for eight miles. But DDOT is looking to get more resources and staffing to accelerate implementation. On the other hand, the easy stuff is already gone. You have to take away either parking or a travel lane, both of which are controversial. Several Councilmembers have endorsed "20 by 20". WABA's proclamation identified the twenty they are interested in, some of which are not even in the long range plan.

(inaudible)

Prince George's Vision Zero was adopted 15 months ago. The kick-off was held last summer.

MDOT's bikeway grant awards will be announced next week. The MARC train will expand bike car service.

NVRC will host another walking summit this year. It will coordinate with Alexandrians for Safer Streets. NVRC will offer League Cycling Instructor Training in return for two public outreach sessions.

4. Draft Map of the National Capital Trail Network

Mr. Farrell went through powerpoint describing the project. The National Capital Trail project, which serves a lot of people, has mostly been completed.

The TPB has instructed us to expand this National Capital Trail into a regional trails network. It's an opportune moment to take advantage of the work of the Capital Trails Coalition, which

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has completed a trails plan covering the center of the region. The Subcommittee has approved the CTC network.

Mr. Farrell reviewed the selection criteria, and showed the draft map which we have to date.

The major weak point is Loudoun County – we don't know if their trails comply with the selection criteria, particularly with respect to width and surface.

Mr. Dunckel asked why there were so few trails in the north of Montgomery County. Mr. Farrell replied that that was mostly ag preserve. The trails that are planned in the north end of the County don't connect to each other.

Initially Frederick County had the same problem but they improved a key link to the C&O towpath.

Montgomery County may soon be in a position to add more trails as their plans advance.

In Prince William County we have too many trails, and for fair share reasons we'll have to eliminate some of them.

This trail network is driven by what we have, and by what's planned. But when you add it up there will be pretty good accessibility to a large portion of the region.

Mr. Dunckel asked about utility right of ways. Mr. Wetmore replied that Montgomery County had a trail planned in such a right of way. When Pepco was taken over by Exelon they were required to allow trail use in their right of ways. Ms. Allahdoust asked about the source of the draft map – where did I get these trails. Mr. Farrell replied that the Counties had provided the trail layers. Ms. Allahdoust replied that VDOT/NOVA had such a map as well. Mr. Farrell replied that we hadn't gotten anything from VDOT. It might be duplicative but we'd be happy to have it.

Ms. Howard said that we had some flexibility on the standards where there are critical links. But if it's not a critical link we won't bend.

Ms. Howard is doing the GIS work, but Mr. Farrell is doing the outreach. Mr. Farrell replied that he's happy to do that, but he needs to know what Charlene isn't getting. Mr. Farrell promised to reach out to Larry Camp at VDOT and get their GIS layer.

Mr. Swanson noted that projects that are included in this network will get priority for TLC and Transportation Alternatives funds. TLC is expected to launch in January, while the TA program is on different cycles in the different states.

Once we've done all our due diligence, one thing that Mr. Farrell would like to avoid doing is

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wait for new data in new plans. We want to get this trail network adopted so that we can start using it for our funding and long range planning. This can always be added to later on as new plans get adopted.

Ms. Hammig asked about the update cycle. Mr. Farrell replied that he was contemplating an annual update. In terms of technical corrections, like changing a trail from planned to complete, that can be done by staff, but adding new trails would need the approval of the TPB.

Ms. Howard said that in terms of the update process, that her preference would be for the jurisdictions to use the bicycle and pedestrian project database in the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan, and then pull projects from that. During this outreach we've established some good relationships. The database is only as good as the data that is in it. An annual update of the bicycle and pedestrian database would amount to nearly a continual update.

Ms. Hammig asked about the timing for sending this to the TPB. Mr. Farrell replied that he would like to have a map that is ready to go to the TPB in this calendar year, even if it has to be approved in the next calendar year.

5. Aspirational Initiatives Activity

Ms. Cook spoke to a powerpoint. Ms. Cook was brought onto TPB staff in order to prepare the next long range plan, and to manage implementation of the aspirational initiatives.

The aspirational initiatives are part of Visualize 2045, the long range plan adopted in 2018. It includes the National Capital Trail.

Commuter Connections will be developing the Incentrip App, as well as flextime and other policies that employers can use.

We are trying to get a sense of what our members are doing that will help support the aspirational initiatives. This Fall we will be doing site visits with the planning staff of our jurisdictions to gather than information, as well as figuring out where some of the barriers and challenges to implementation are found. In preparation for these meetings we are collecting information in advance. Ms. Cook has prepared a survey for jurisdictional staff. It's not a long survey, and more than one person can be involved in completing it. The survey asks what is being doing to support each of the seven aspirational initiatives. Context sensitive design standards are a good example of such an activity. These forms should be filled out by the end of September.

Mr. Farrell asked whether once we have a good idea of what is happening to promote the aspirational initiatives, that we will follow up with a public engagement strategy to help promote

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the initiatives. Ms. Cook replied that we will develop ideas for helping our members, and eventually a public engagement element.

Ms. Allahdoust who would be filling out the form. Ms. Cook replied that we were engaging the members of the TPB Technical Committee but also reaching out to other staff.

We will work with the locals first, then with the DOT's.

6. Other TPB Program Updates

- **Street Smart Fall 2019 campaign**

We'll be rolling out our new testimonial videos. We were unable to pay for a video component for our Shattered Lives campaign, because we didn't have the money last year. However, by straddling the fiscal years, we have videos which are ready for this year. The videos can be used for television and internet advertising. There will be 15, 30 second, and two minute spots, featuring two people who lost a loved one, and one crash survivor. These are not the final versions, they still need editing. However the video will not be re-shot; we will work with the footage that we have.

Mr. Farrell played the Gwen Ward video.

This is the director's cut that will be shown on the internet. This version will not be shown on TV; it's too long. The 30 second spot will be the workhorse for the paid video.

Mr. Farrell then played two more videos.

Mr. Dunckel said that these videos have been distributed widely at MDOT. The response has been overwhelmingly positive. Chris Eatough felt that the videos were missing calls to action. But no one else thought that. These were unscripted testimonials.

Mr. Farrell noted that we do have a call to action. For Ren it's stop for pedestrians, not Nicolas speeding shatters lives. And what we just saw was two minutes; most of what people see will be 15 or 30 seconds, and the short versions include the calls to action. Not everyone understood what the long versions were about.

Street Smart has historically taken heat for victim-blaming, even though most of our ads are driver-focused. But these ads don't deal with the causes of the crashes. For example, Nicolas did not say speeding SUV, and Ren was in the crosswalk with a vehicle turning on the green ball, but she just said in the crosswalk. Gwen Ward's daughter was outside the crosswalk, and against the signal. Mr. Branyan suggested that the tag line on the Gwen Ward video should be "Use the crosswalk. Wait for the walk signal". Ms. Allahdoust suggested adding text, in close

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caption showing the crash facts. For Ren we could say Yield to Pedestrians when Turning.

We'll direct people to the long version on line, so we could direct people to a paragraph explaining what happened. There will be a testimonial wall at the public events which will give some context. Mr. Wetmore said that we don't want to interrupt the flow of the testimonial, but then add facts quickly at the end. On Youtube you can add three lines at the bottom. Ms. Allahdoust suggested adding it at the beginning. Mr. Farrell said that the story sucks you in, gets you interested. You don't want to hit people with the dry facts up front. The video puts you in the mood to listen.

From a purely visual standpoint, you need to shoot a road with a crosswalk. All the roads in the Gwen Ward video look like limited access highways. Mr. Farrell replied that he shared that concern with Sherry Matthews Marketing. We will be changing the shot. Mr. Dunkel agreed that Mr. Farrell's instructions had been very explicit. The shots in the video don't resemble Germantown Road. Six lane arterials are found all over the country, hundreds of thousands of miles of them. The concern is that it will make the victim look more at fault. This should be a doable change. The aesthetics of the ad are great, but we need the reality of what the road actually looks like. Mr. Wetmore suggested using a Google streetview shot. You could show someone crossing at a crosswalk for context.

Everyone in these videos signed waivers.

There will not be radio spots, just liners, a short message.

Germantown Road is pretty urbanized. Strip malls, parking lots. She was walking to the high school. She was hit by the bus shelter. It's the kind of place where you would expect high school students to be crossing, and probably a good chance that some of them will be crossing against the light.

- **September 27 Enforcement Workshop**

George Branyan will be the star. We'll also do live crosswalk enforcement. It will be here, and open to the public.

- **Incentrip Mobile Application Regional Launch**

It's an app that gives you small rewards for using alternate modes.

- **Car Free Day September 21-23**
- **Fall Dockless Workshop**

December 9th, here at COG.

7. National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program RTCA

Mr. Joshua Moore discussed the RTCA technical assistance program. The National Park Service offers free trails planning consulting assistance. There are seventy people working on the program throughout the country. They will work on lands that the National Park Service and federal government does *not* own to plan trails and other things. Instead of paying a consultant to develop a trails plan for a jurisdiction, you can apply for the National Park Service to do it for free.

It can also be used for water trails, put ins and take outs, etc.

Mr. Moore is usually based in Atlanta, though he is temporarily working out of DC.

Mr. Branyan asked what kind of trails? All kinds of trails. Mr. Farrell has posted a summary sheet of the program on the web site. King George County is looking into developing a countywide trails plan. NPS will be facilitating public meetings for that plan. King George County is the opposite end of the Governor Harry Nice Bridge. It's very rural. People there would like to have this kind of access, but they do not have the resources to do these kinds of plans themselves.

Applications are on the web site. For FY 2020 the applications had to be submitted by June 30. It's typically a two year grant, though it can be extended.

Virginia and Maryland are part of the National Park Service NE region.

Mr. Farrell said that he would load some of the additional documents, in addition to the summary, on the web site. Some of the outer jurisdictions, that are staff-poor, could probably use the helpful. DC proper is well staffed. In DC, DDOT does projects on Park Service property. But RTCA is a community assistance office for the country. It's a great service for places that need it.

8. APBP Conference Highlights

Mr. Farrell noted that Fremont, CA has a good Vision Zero program. They prioritize injury crashes, not property damage only. They do a lot of road diets. They sell the concept up front, then do less per-project outreach. They sell the road diets as safety projects, only secondarily for providing bike lanes, as a sort of side benefit.

Karyn McAlister went to an equity session for walk and bike plans to better understand barriers to walking and bicycling. They used walking focus group led by African-American staff. They catered the meetings, and compensated people for their time. They learned a great deal about the experience of walking and biking for African-Americans.

Mr. Wetmore noted that equity was featured in a number of the plenary sessions.

California has its hands tied in bad ways. No automated enforcements, 85th percentile speed limits. The speed limits are really high. 60 mph in areas heavily used by pedestrians. So Fremont does a lot of road diets, and a lot of human enforcement. In Portland they set the speed limits for what is safe, not for how fast people are already driving.

Adjourned