

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, July 17, 2007

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Kristin Haldeman
Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority

VICE-CHAIRS: Charlie Denney
Arlington County DES
Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation
Jim Sebastian, DDOT

Attendance:

Fatemeh Allahdoust	VDOT/NOVA
Don Briggs	National Park Service – Potomac Heritage Trail
Cheryl Cort	Coalition for Smarter Growth
Paul DeMaio	Arlington County
Dennis Frew	Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Akua K. John	WMATA
Yon Lambert	City of Alexandria
Rich Metzinger	National Park Service
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Chris Niewold	NPS-NCR RTCA
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians
Jim Sebastian	DDOT

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Charlie Strunk	Fairfax County DOT
Chris Wells	Fairfax County DOT
Stephanie Yanowitz	MD SHA

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the May 15, 2007 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Bicycle Sharing and Rental Programs in the Washington Region

Mr. DeMaio spoke to a photo slide show on bike sharing systems from Europe. Arlington is currently considering a number of bike sharing systems for implementation. Three systems, Bicing in Barcelona, Velov in Lyon, and Velib in Paris use designated docking stations to which bicycles must be returned. A fourth, Call a Bike, may be locked anywhere on public property, and users get an unlocking code through their cell phones.

All systems charge users a fee. The fixed system uses smart cards for payment, with an eventual option in Barcelona (Bicing) for credit card payment. The pricing structure encourages prompt returns. If a user returns a bicycle within a few minutes, the system remembers that and will not release the bicycle again until it is checked. Lights are activated by the bicycle being shaken, and have a photo sensor so they will only work when it is dark. A map at the rental rack shows all the system rack locations. Twenty-four staff with vans relocate the bicycles constantly to meet demand.

The Velov program has had a dramatic impact on bicycle mode share in Lyon. Before Velov in Lyon, there was less than 1% bike mode share. Two and a half years after the start of the program, bike mode share in Lyon has increased to 4-5%. Lyon has about 3,000 bicycles.

Bicing started in March of 2007 with 1,000 bicycles, and estimated bicycle mode share has increased from 1% to 2%, which is very impressive for just a few months.

Velib in Paris launched very recently, the largest city in Europe so far to adopt this system.

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When the system launched two staff were present at the stations for two weeks to explain it to passersby.

Usage tends to spike after subway or transit systems shut down for the night. More parking spaces are provided than there are bicycles, often two to one.

For Call a Bike, you dial an 800-number with a cell, dial the code for the bike which is printed on it, and receive a code to unlock that bicycle. When you lock the bike again, the computer on the bike will give you a return code, and you dial the 800-number and enter the return code so the system knows you are done. Call a Bike is in five German cities right now, including Berlin. Call a bike charges a low per minute fee.

Mr. Sebastian discussed DDOT's bike sharing program, which will be launched soon. JC Decaux, the company that puts advertising on bus shelters, also runs several bike sharing systems in Europe. An option for bike sharing was added to the contract. DC will have 100 bikes and 10 kiosks to start. It may be possible to renegotiate the contract to provide for more kiosks and bikes. Kiosks need to be placed close together, so people will have secondary drop-off locations in case their first choice is full. Mr. Sebastian brought a sample bike, which is very sturdy and distinctive in design. The system will take credit cards, so if the bicycle is stolen while it is in your position you must pay for it. No helmet or lock is provided.

Mr. Jackson asked why Arlington was leaning towards Call a Bike. Mr. DeMaio explained that Arlington does not allow advertising in public space. Call a Bike is provided without advertising. Bicing is the first example of fixed-location service being provided without advertising. Arlington is currently waiting for price quotes. Call a Bike can be locked at any intersection, which is good for the user, but makes it more difficult for maintenance. The bikes may be equipped with GPS to make it easier for maintenance to locate them. There will be a marketing campaign for the service.

Another advantage of Call a Bike is that it does not require investment in a sole-source, proprietary parking system. Bikes can be parked at general-purpose bike racks that the County already has, or locked to fixed objects.

The fixed-location systems may include a method for users to locate the nearest bike rack that has vacant spaces.

Bike sharing is meant to help get people to places where metrorail doesn't go, so parking locations may be located at locations that metrorail and metrobus don't serve, as well as places they do serve.

It may be possible to get developers to help pay for the system. However, if Call a Bike is selected, fixed locations will not be needed. Planning cannot proceed until the choice is made

between fixed-location and Call a Bike systems.

Mr. Meese asked if there had been any consideration of interoperability between systems and jurisdictions. Will inter-operability be a consideration in the system selection? Mr. DeMaio replied that it would be, and if the Clear Channel system were selected it would be compatible with the DC system. Clear Channel had not yet decided whether to sell the system without advertising, as Arlington prefers. Mr. DeMaio is a consultant to Clear Channel. Mr. Meese expressed concern that with a sole-source system, if there were a falling out between the jurisdiction and the provider, the jurisdiction could end up being stuck with a lot of useless infrastructure. Call a Bike is less infrastructure-dependent, with all the equipment carried on the bicycle. That would make it easier to change equipment or providers if necessary.

4. Status of Electronic Bicycle Route-Finding

Mr. Gilliland said that the data integration and line-matching has been completed by the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin for Arlington, Alexandria, and the District of Columbia. We are now ready to proceed with Phase II of the program, which will include a beta of the web site, which may launch as soon as August. We have until the end of the fiscal year, July 1st 2008, to finish the project. Phase II will include as many additional jurisdictions as possible. If the inner suburban jurisdictions can be added, we should have a useful system.

5. WMATA Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues

- WMATA Reorganization

Ms. Haldeman discussed the WMATA reorganization. A number of positions have been cut, including that of Carol Kachadoorian. A new employee, Akua John, will run the bike rack and locker program.

Ms. John introduced herself to the group. WMATA is investigating a more digitalized system rather than physical keys. New racks have had positive feedback, though there is some concern that the new U-racks require two locks to secure both wheels. Mr. Jackson asked for Ms. John's contact information.

Mr. DeMaio mentioned that Arlington is purchasing double-decker bike racks. Arlington might be able to cooperate on purchasing and order in bulk.

Four stations will receive full replacement from existing racks to U-racks.

The goal of the WMATA reorganization is to focus on the core services, so outsourcing of the

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locker program would be compatible with that goal.

Demand forecasting for facilities is another issue.

A decision on a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator will be made by the new general manager. In the meantime Ms. Haldeman will serve as the chief point of contact for bicycle planning issues, and Ms. Johns for bicycle parking operational issues.

It was suggested that there be some effort to keep a record of what Carol Kachadoorian did, so her efforts would not be lost. Ms. Haldeman replied that it would, and that she did not plan to leave WMATA (though neither did Ms. Kachadoorian).

Different offices deal with different aspects bicycle and pedestrian issues, including planning, customer service, and bus operations. Ms. Haldeman expects that planning will continue to work on station access and joint development.

Ms. Haldeman suggested that we might reforward to the new director the letter from Dan Tangherlini promising a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator.

WMATA has had three reorganizations in four years.

Mr. Farrell said that the Subcommittee had felt that there should be a point person for bicycle and pedestrian access both in customer service and in planning, whose function it would be at a minimum to attend the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Muchnick asked if WMATA was looking into expanding video monitoring to address bicycle theft and vandalism.

Ms. Cort suggested that one way to address security of bicycle parking would be to bring bicycle parking within view of staff, or inside the fare gates.

- **Bus Operator Training**

Mr. Sebastian discussed the Bus Operator training program. Mr. Sebastian and George Branyan of DDOT are teaching classes for bus operators on a volunteer basis. Mr. Sebastian asked for assistance in teaching these classes. The plan is to train all the WMATA bus operators on pedestrian and bicycle safety issues. Another option would be to ask WMATA to hire a consultant. Mr. Sebastian felt that he and Mr. Branyan as jurisdictional staff had more credibility than a consultant. The classes take place in the morning in New Carrollton. Mr. Sebastian distributed a training manual. The basics include the rules for pedestrians and bicyclists. The course is modeled on the course for police officers.

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Volunteers should come and observe first. If ten people will volunteer, they would only have to go once every two weeks.

Mr. Sebastian suggested that we set up listserv for the subcommittee. No TPB subcommittee currently has a listserv. Mr. Meese replied that we would investigate that idea internally. A listserv would allow for multiparty interaction. Mr. Sebastian suggested that if legal liability or sensitivity were an issue that he could start a list himself.

6. Fall Training Seminars

There have been two suggestions, one for a trails seminar, and, more recently, a seminar on bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding. Mr. Farrell distributed a sheet of possible topics for a trails seminar. Mr. Farrell felt that it would be primarily a classroom exercise, with local speakers. There are funds available for a paid speaker if necessary. It would be a short, one-day seminar, located at COG. We might schedule a short walk and field view of the nearby Metropolitan Branch Trail. Mr. Farrell asked for feedback on topics for the trails seminar. The Trails seminar should be done first, since the idea has been waiting longer.

Mr. Gilliland suggested that we address design issues.

Mr. Jackson distributed an article on trail safety on National Park Service trails. Wayfinding on trails also needs to be improved. Adding standard street name signs at roadway intersections would be valuable. Liability is another concern. Demand forecasting is another. Forecasting models focus on specific facilities, not regional demand for trails. Mr. Farrell asked that if anyone had an idea they want presented at the trails forum, or if they would like to speak, to please contact him.

7. TPB Program Updates

- Safety Planning

A Safety Forum was held on June 6. Numerous safety staff and law enforcement personnel were present.

We have a mandate as part of our transportation plan to include a safety element, which should at a minimum incorporate and summarize the major elements of the State Highway Safety Plans. The first meeting of a Safety Subcommittee will take place on July 31st. It will oversee the development of the Safety element, and may also serve as forum for safety staff similar to the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee. Attendance is open. Mr. Wells asked how we would ensure that the right people were invited to the subcommittee. Mr. Farrell replied that from the

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Safety forum we had developed a large contact list. Mr. Meese added that the kind of people who will come to such a subcommittee are diverse. State agencies tend to have assigned safety staff, but smaller agencies may not. We should also focus on topics that are of interest on a metropolitan scale.

Mr. Farrell noted that data integration and crash information was a likely candidate as a regional safety issue. All three States are improving their crash reporting system, and moving towards a GIS-based crash reporting location system.

- Street Smart

We have been directed to expand the campaign to twice per year for FY 2008. A probably budget was distributed. The campaign waves will coincide with the change in daylight savings time, which means November 2007. We need at least \$600,000 for two campaigns per year, but thanks to pledges from WMATA and others we are close to that goal. Fall 2007 will use the same materials as Spring 2007, but with the guidance of the advisory committee we will probably develop a new campaign theme and ads for Spring 2008.

Evaluation for the campaign is based on before and after surveys of 300 area motorists. We measure increase in awareness of the campaign messages, and behavior. We have been asking the same behavior questions since 2002, so we can track responses over the long haul. Law enforcement is part of the campaign on a voluntary basis. We schedule our campaigns in part based on law enforcement availability. Law enforcement is mentioned in the ads, as well as in the public relations. We hold a kick-off event every year, which generates significant press coverage.

Mr. Wells remarked that it was good to see Prince George's County contributing. Mr. Wells commented on Arlington's challenge to other jurisdictions to increase their contributions, and said that it was hard to justify increasing Fairfax County's contribution since it has been funding the program in full all along. Mr. Farrell replied that Montgomery County has increased its contribution over its suggested amount. It might be defensible to ask for some kind of increase, if not a doubling. Mr. DeMaio said that he believed that Mr. Zimmerman's intention was to stimulate an increase in contributions.

COG will seek private sponsorship. We have a stronger case now that we have more private sector sponsorship. If anyone has contacts, please share them with Mr. Farrell. Names and phone numbers are best. Mr. DeMaio suggested Care First Blue Cross, and other health-related industries.

A seventh edition of the ADC Bike Map will be created over the next several months. ADC prefers minimal changes. Mr. Farrell will call a meeting later this month to discuss the ADC map. Mr. Farrell invited those interested in providing changes to take a copy of the ADC map. ADC is asking for input by August 20. Expanding the area of the inside the beltway side would

hurt legibility. Mr. Farrell suggested Tuesday July 31st for the ADC map meeting.

8. Top Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Ms. Haldeman asked if the top priority projects could be tabled until September. Mr. Farrell replied that we may be looking for a call for projects in November. The earlier we can get a list together the better. Mr. Farrell promised to try to get at least updates on the old projects by the September meeting.

9. Jurisdictional Updates

- New Maryland Bicycle Maps were distributed. It is more legible than the last one. On-road bikeways are marked in green. A route from Baltimore to DC is shown in yellow.
- Arlington's new bike map was distributed. They have more information, and they are easier to use
- VDOT has a new bicycle and pedestrian coordinator. Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax are changing the law from yield to pedestrian to stop for pedestrians.
- Fairfax now has \$47 million for pedestrian retrofit projects. The first of the Route 1 sidewalks have been built. Fairfax is also working on a bike map.
- Bicycle Route 1 will be relocated and re-signed.
- DC will hire a Safe Routes to School Coordinator
- Mr. Wetmore will attend a conference on transportation for the elderly and disabled.

10. Adjourned