

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, November 19th, 2013

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Carrie Sanders
Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

**VICE-
CHAIRS:**

David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Jeff Dunkel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Kristin Haldeman, WMATA
Jim Sebastian, District Department of Transportation
Fred Shaffer, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Michael Alvino	National Park Service
Kevin Belanger	City of Rockville (by phone)
Greg Billing	WABA
Jeff Dunkel	Montgomery County DOT
Chris Eatough	BikeArlington (by phone)
Kate Elkins	Maryland Highway Safety Office
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Jaime Fearer	City of Greenbelt
Christine Green	Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA

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Michael Jackson	MDOT (by phone)
Bill King	Loudoun County DOT (by phone)
Philip Koopman	Bicyclespace
Rene Lord-Attivor	Prince George's County DPWT
Hilary Poole	City of Alexandria
Carrie Sanders	City of Alexandria
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Charlie Strunk	Fairfax County DOT
Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians
Kenna Williams	Sherri Matthews Inc.

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Marco Trigueros

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Remembrance of Ron Kirby

Mr. Farrell announced the death of Ron Kirby, the Director of Transportation Planning at COG in his home the prior Monday, and expressed his grief at the loss.

Mr. Sebastian added that he had worked under Ron Kirby for several years at the Council of Governments. Ron was very knowledgeable, and was gifted with both an analytical, mathematical mind, and the people skills needed to pull a very diverse group of stakeholders together. Mr. Kirby came to work for COG in 1987.

Mr. Kirby was always very supportive of the work of this Subcommittee, including the priorities list.

3. Review of the November 19th Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved with two name spelling corrections.

4. Nominations for the 2014 Subcommittee Chair

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These are one year Chairmanships that rotate between the three States and WMATA, the idea being to get representation from around the region, and to avoid over-burdening any one person. We meet every other month, six meetings per year. It is an opportunity to help set the agenda for the Subcommittee, and have something of a leadership role.

It is DC's turn to provide a Chair. Mr. Sebastian said that DDOT was willing, but suggested that another DC-based agency such as the National Park Service might be beneficial. Mr. Alvino offered to bring the idea back to his supervisors at the regional office of the National Park Service. The National Park Service is an ex-officio member of the TPB. Ms. Engelhart asked if it would be the DC office. Mr. Alvino said that it is the National Capital region office of the National Park Service includes national park all the way to Harper's Ferry.

Mr. Farrell said that this does not have to be acted upon today, we can explore a possible National Park Service chair and make a decision in January.

5. Jurisdictional Updates

Prince George's County is working with SHA to reduce pedestrian fatalities by installing signals, bike lanes, sidewalks, and ADA ramps.

Ms. Haldeman identified the Silver Line as the biggest issue on the horizon for WMATA. Most of the stations have no auto parking, and getting people there on foot and by bike is challenging. WMATA will work with Fairfax County to safely direct people to the stations. WMATA is open to suggestions.

The National Park Service got its fifth bike share station installed on the mall, near the National Park Service regional office and the tennis courts on Haines Point. NPS is working with DDOT on the connecting path for the 14th Street bridge, which will be done with Transportation Alternatives Program funds. NPS will also apply for federal lands access funds.

The City of Greenbelt's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan will go to the City Council for adoption on Monday. Once that is adopted the advisory board will work on prioritizing the projects in the plan. The plan will be updated annually. Greenbelt is also working on a Complete Streets policy. Greenbelt is also working with MNCPPC on a bike share feasibility study, and is finalizing a bus stop accessibility study which was funded with a TLC grant.

The Fall 2013 Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety campaign is being wrapped up. The press event was held in October at Upper Senate Park.

Alexandria is working on the King Street bike lanes, which may or may not be approved. The major issue is bike lanes versus parking. N. Chambliss Street and West Taylor run have gotten

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bike lanes. 100 new bike parking spaces were installed this year. Alexandria is working with WABA on something called the Alexandria spokeswoman, to try to get more women to bicycle. Royal Street bike boulevard is currently in design, which will be nearly two miles long.

Fairfax County is adding bike lanes, and will have a kick-off meeting on Thursday on its TLC grant to bring Capital Bikeshare to Reston. The Bicycle Master Plan is scheduled to go to the Board in the first quarter of 2014. Rack and locker installation is to be wrapped up for the year. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure will not be in place, especially at Tysons, when the Silver Line opens. Wiehle Avenue has a 200 space bike room in the garage, which includes a repair station. Cost is \$60/year. The goal is to mesh with the Bike N' Ride access system. Right now they are two different systems. Access is by fob key.

WABA's board has voted on its top ten advocacy priorities. The major emphasis is on gaps in the regional trail network. Mr. Billing also wanted to know if the TPB member agencies were using the NACTO guide. If possible there should be some uniformity across the region. WABA likes NACTO, and the most recent AASHTO bike guide.

Ms. Engelhart noted that the MUTCD is a mandatory standard. Experimental treatments need approval from FHWA, but many things in NACTO are not experimental and are allowed under AASHTO and MUTCD. Ms. Engelhart urged members to get the memo from FHWA identifying the NACTO treatments which are experimental. NACTO is a good description of things that were often not well described but which were allowed.

Mr. Sebastian suggested that a Subcommittee-sponsored NACTO guide training would be timely for 2014.

The Fairfax County repair contract is out for advertisement. VDOT is accepting comments for its US Bike Route 1 study. The comment deadline is December 16th, and the study should be complete in January.

Loudoun County will do a bike ped connectivity study within a 3 mile radius of the new Metrorail stations.

BikeArlington recently released a movie call Bikeswell which is a documentary on the bicycling movement in Arlington. On the infrastructure side, Arlington finished its first bike box on Veitch and Lee Highway. Arlington public schools has hired a Safe Routes to School Coordinator, Kyle Lukacs, and is working with Toole Design on a school access plan.

Rockville has finished installing all its bikeshare station except for the two at the Rockville Metro station, and is working on bicycle master plan, which will be adopted next year.

AASHTO has approved MDOT's application to designate the C&O Towpath and the Great Allegheny Passage as US Bike Route 50.

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MDOT has finished its 30 minute law enforcement training video. The Maryland Police Training Commission has approved the video for credit as in-service training. It's available on line.

MDOT has also purchased its first bicycle and pedestrian counter, which it will put on the BWI Trail.

The Maryland legislature will be pushing the issue of trails in utility right of ways.

The Montgomery County advisory committee has taken up the utility issue. Montgomery County DOT is officially neutral for now. Ms. Engelhart said that part of the Fairfax County Parkway runs along a utility line. PGE in Portland has paths in the utility right of way. Some utilities are more open to the idea than others.

Bikeshare is on track in Montgomery County to have all its stations installed by the end of November. Montgomery County is starting a parking lot pedestrian safety initiative, to be launched on Thursday, November 21st. Montgomery County has purchased 30,000 shopping bags to give out, at fifty cents each. 85% of the parking lot collisions happen in commercial parking lots. The Strategic Highway Safety Plan of Maryland is adopting Montgomery County's targeted 3 E approach to pedestrian safety. Mr. Kuzan is spearheading that effort.

NVRC's bicycle and pedestrian safety training request for bids is going out today. The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail will get some funding to do more promotion of the route.

Mr. Dunckel asked Mr. Farrell if he would share the link to Mr. Jackson's training video. Mr. Farrell replied that he would, if Mr. Jackson would share the information with him he could forward it.

VDRPT has issued an urban standards road design guide, to be used in places like Tysons. It does things like reduce the clearances to street trees, etc. NACTO designs are approved for use by VDOT, except for the treatments that are still experimental. Mr. Sebastian suggested that Mr. Farrell share the link with the Subcommittee. It's on the VDRPT web site. The FHWA memo endorsing the NACTO design guide can be found on the NACTO web site.

6. Regional Transportation Safety Planning

Mr. Farrell introduced Mr. Trigueros, who is the new transportation safety planner position. The transportation safety subcommittee, which has been on hiatus in the absence of a safety planner, will meet in December. We will develop a safety element of our long range plan.

Mr. Trigueros spoke to a powerpoint on regional transportation safety. Ms. Engelhart asked why there was no check mark for pedestrian and bicycle safety for Virginia in the table showing the

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emphasis areas in the Strategic Highway Safety Plans. Mr. Trigueros explained that pedestrian safety was not an emphasis area in the Virginia Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Regardless of its presence in the Virginia SHSP, pedestrian safety should certainly be an emphasis area in the Washington region.

Fatalities are declining in the Washington region, both in absolute numbers and per capita. Ms. Engelhart said many European countries have achieved faster decreases. Mr. Dunckel said that we could use more comparisons with other regions. VMT has not been increasing; it peaked pre-recession. Mr. Farrell suggested that we use fatality rate per population as a goal, rather than rate per VMT. If the goal is to reduce fatalities, reducing fatalities by reducing VMT is just as legitimate as reducing rate per VMT. VMT includes all motorized vehicles, and it must be on a roadway. Ms. Haldeman asked if it included transit vehicles. Mr. Meese thought the answer was yes. The numbers are determined by counters, and the counters count all motorized vehicles, regardless of size or weight.

Jurisdictional pedestrian and bicyclist numbers are typically combined, since the bicyclist numbers are so small. 2012 numbers were low, but 2013 looks worse so far. That reflects national trends, whereby pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities are going up relative to motor vehicle fatalities. We don't have good exposure data for pedestrian and bicyclists.

Mr. Dunckel said that 2013 bicyclist collisions in Montgomery County had fallen by 47%, but he was reluctant to believe those numbers.

Mr. Dunckel asked if NHSTA had released data on the connection between alcohol consumption and pedestrian fatalities. The NHSTA report was national.

Mr. Trigueros said that for DC a lot of the crash reports have alcohol tests pending, so there may be some under-reporting.

Ms. Haldeman asked if we had regional data on injury severity. Mr. Trigueros replied that we did not, but we could investigate that further. Ms. Haldeman said that would be valuable. Ms. Engelhart wondered if we could correlate the hospital trauma reports with pedestrian injuries. INOVA does a trauma study every two or three years. Mr. Farrell asked Ms. Engelhart for contact information to get a copy. They're not available on the web.

Crash categories are not mutually exclusive.

What is the quality of the reporting data? Mr. Trigueros replied that there were a lot of unknowns, including restraints, and alcohol. Much of DDOT's data is not truly up to date.

Data on distracted driving is not good. Maryland is trying to improve the reporting on distraction. Mr. Meese said that there are now laws about use of a mobile device, so that data is more likely to be recorded. However, in Virginia one can use a phone, one just can't text.

Cyclist injuries have been rising steadily. We know there has been an increase in bicycling, but we don't know the VMT. Mr. Meese said that we should make a note that the increase in injuries has coincided with an increase in the number of bicyclists.

There are discrepancies in the pedestrian fatalities reported by DDOT and the number that actually occurred, and the number shown by FARS. DDOT reported 13 fatalities to us in a print-out of their TARAS database, but we know there were 19 because we know all the incidents. NHTSA's FARS database shows 15. So three different numbers for pedestrian fatalities in DC. Investigations are not being completed and fatalities are not being recorded.

Mr. Sebastian thanked Mr. Trigueros. Mr. Farrell suggested that the Subcommittee send us suggestions for additional data analysis.

7. National Capital Region Transportation Planning Information Hub

Mr. Swanson briefed the Subcommittee on the TPB's new transportation planning web site. It's meant to be a clearinghouse for information on the transportation planning process. This web site is intended to replace the TPB's citizens guide to regional transportation planning. There's not a lot of specific bicycle and pedestrian content. Links and contacts of state and local plans and planning processes are provided.

There will be a phase 2, so suggestions for additional features are welcome.

Ms. Engelhart asked if there was a link to VDOT's non-motorized plan. Mr. Swanson replied that it could be added.

A number of high profile projects are listed. This was not intended to be a project-oriented site, but there was demand to have links to some major projects.

One of the biggest challenges has been keeping the web site simple and useable, yet comprehensive.

We want this site to be full and accurate, so comments and corrections are welcome.

TLC projects are not shown. It was suggested that a link to the COG web site should be provided. Ms. Engelhart promised to help fill in some blanks in the table of pedestrian and bicycle plans. Mr. Swanson said that the data for this web site had been gathered from local web sites, not all of which are up to date.

Ms. Engelhart and others praised this web site as a valuable resource. Mr. Swanson's email is jswanson@mwkog.org, comments and corrections can be sent to him.

Mr. Swanson said that people frequently suggested adding an up to date regional calendar, which we don't have the resources to do. For phase 2 we may be able to do more interactive mapping.

8. Safe Routes to School

Christine Green of the Safe to School National Partnership discussed the October 29th Safe Routes to School Regional Meeting. Over 70 people attended, and we will likely do it again next year. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee web site has all the presentations. Results of the facilitated discussion were distributed to the Subcommittee.

Ms. Green is sending a formal data request to TPB for more data on the trip to school broken down by jurisdiction.

Ms. Engelhart asked if we had tabulated which jurisdictions still had formal policies against walking and bicycling. Ms. Green replied that she had that information, but not tabulated. These are school board policies, not laws. Prohibitions against bicycling are more common than prohibitions on walking.

Ms. Haldeman asked if a cost benefit analysis had been done of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure versus busing. Ms. Engelhart replied that in the case of one bridge the payback would have been 4-5 years. Mr. Wetmore mentioned other studies that showed that the cost of building sidewalks could be repaid out of the savings from not doing hazard busing with four to six years. However, busing was paid for by the State, while sidewalks would have to be paid for by the local jurisdiction.

Mr. Dunckel asked about the data table. "Not applicable" is people not going to school. So we show the mode shares for students, not university. The mode share breakdown is for students in the entire region. Numbers by jurisdiction will be different. We have enough of a sample size that we could pull accurate mode share for jurisdictions. One of the low-hanging fruit for follow-up actions is providing data on how people are getting to school right now.

Ms. Haldeman suggested studying the effect of land use. Mr. Farrell said that there were small area studies that were more recent than the 2007-2008 household travel survey, and they might give us some hints of the types of land use associated with higher walk to school mode share. If we were to devote some resources to it, it could be brought to the attention of the TPB Technical Committee, and made available to advocates.

This Regional Safe Routes to School meeting may be worth repeating in future years.

9. 2013 Top Priority Unfunded Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects List

Mr. Farrell reviewed the draft list.

Mr. Strunk verified that Fairfax County would replace its project.

Funding is organized by Fiscal Year. This list corresponds to the release of the FY 2015 – FY 2020 TIP solicitation document.

Prince William County has not yet provided a project.

VDOT is proposing a US Bike Route 1 signing project in Northern Virginia. It fits most of our selection criteria, and it has no funding now.

Regional bike sharing is being dropped to the completed list, even though it is not 100% completed, because most of what was proposed has been completed or has identified funding.

Mr. Meese cautioned against the committee making up a project. There is no identified phase 2 for this project. Mr. Sebastian suggested that Fairfax want bike sharing it should nominate this project as its choice. Mr. Farrell noted that this project came out of a TIGER grant application, which was not funded but has largely been funded by other means. This project was a one-off, because we were applying for a regional grant, which we are not doing now.

TPB Tech will look at this list in December, and it will go to the TPB in January. So undecided jurisdictions should send in their projects soon. Mr. Farrell will distribute the final list to the Subcommittee via email. The Tech Committee may have substantive comments and send it back to the Bike/Ped Subcommittee. If there are concerns, it can be pulled back and reviewed by the Subcommittee again. Mr. Sebastian said that we have only a few missing pieces, so it should be possible to accomplish by e-mail. The only outstanding items are Fairfax County and Prince William County.

Projects are nominated by local jurisdictions; the State DOT does not need to approve them. The selection criteria are in the memo that was distributed. We've never had a problem in the past with people supporting things that were unacceptable.

10. Other TPB Program Updates

The comments deadline for the regional Green Streets policy is November 22nd.

11. Adjourned