

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

DRAFT MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, July 10, 2018

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

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

CHAIR: Cindy Engelhart, VDOT

**VICE-
CHAIRS:**

Jeff Dunckel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation

Karyn C. McAlister, Prince George's DPWT

Jamie Carrington, WMATA

Attendance:

David Anspacher	Montgomery County Planning
Mark Lewis Degrace	M-NCPPC Prince George's County
James Carrington	WMATA
Jeff Dunckel	Maryland Highway Safety Office
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Laurel Hammig	National Park Service
Katie Harris	Washington Area Bicyclist Association
Jack Kozelca	Capital Trails Coalition
Karyn McAlister	Prince George's County DPWT
David Patton	Arlington County
Chloe Ritter	City of Fairfax (by phone)
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

COG Staff Attendance:

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the July 10, 2018 Meeting
Page 2

Tim Canan
Lyn Erickson
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Jessica Mirr
John Swanson (by phone)

1. General Introductions.

2. Review of the May 15 Meeting Notes

Minutes were approved.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

WMATA is planning mitigation for upcoming track work, similar to what was done during Safetrack. The Metropolitan Branch Trail will serve as an alternate route to the Red Line. WABA will sponsor a ride on that route.

Baltimore will launch a new Street Smart pedestrian safety campaign. Another project funded by a State grant will test radar technology to enforce certain rules.

4. TPB Endorsed Initiatives: Round Table Discussion

Mr. Farrell spoke to a powerpoint summarizing the results of the survey distributed to the Subcommittee.

The Subcommittees have been directed to gather suggestions and think about what we can do in terms of projects, plans, programs and policies to help move the TPB's aspirational initiatives forward.

The Public Transportation Subcommittee has already provided its comments.

This Subcommittee is being asked to provide comments on the nonmotorized initiatives, access to transit and the National Capital Trail. Several agencies have provided comments, not all of which arrived in time to be included in this presentation. A number of agencies have commented that the National Capital Trail is too geographically limited, and its scope is too narrow to achieve significant mode shift.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the July 10, 2018 Meeting

Page 3

Mr. Farrell asked for comments from the Subcommittee. Mr. Patton asked if the seven initiatives are to be revisited and revised? Or is this what we have? Mr. Farrell replied that for the most part yes, the initiatives have been adopted. However, we have been encouraged to think broadly.

Ms. Erickson added that we should think about these proposals as concepts. When Cindy Engelhart presents the Subcommittee's comments, she'll have the ear of the board on how to help implement these ideas.

Ms. McAlister said that in the case of the WMATA access initiative, the best solution would be for Prince George's County to fund projects to fix the deficiencies on the County-owned roadways into its Capital Improvement Program. Prince George's will look at that further.

The segments of the National Capital Trail in Prince George's that need to be completed are controlled by National Park Service and State Highway Administration respectively. The County can support their efforts, but those two agencies need to lead the charge. FLAP funds for access to federal lands might help the National Park Service, and the SHA segment, Oxon Hill Road might use Fund 88, a bicycle retrofit fund.

Staff time is also an issue, to work on either project it would need to be incorporated into the Prince George's DPWT work program. It would take a formal request to Prince George's County. Impediments include competing priorities, lack of staff time. It would take some time to get these projects done.

Ms. Hammig mentioned that partnerships with local jurisdictions, whereby local jurisdictions agree to take on trail maintenance, have been successful. The National Park Service has faced a challenge in funding maintenance.

Mr. Dunckel asked where Complete Streets and walkable, bikeable communities are reflected in these initiatives. Mr. Farrell replied that it is one of the ways of achieving them. If you are building Complete Streets, in many cases you are building trails. For example, the TPB's Complete Streets policy would call for something like the Harry Nice Bridge to include a bike trail. Mr. Dunckel asked whether Access to Transit could be woven into making those communities more walkable and bikeable. Is there a land use element? Mr. Farrell replied that there was a land use TPB initiative, bringing jobs and housing closer together, into walkable bikeable activity centers. The TPB has long promoted walkable, bikeable activity centers.

Mr. Wetmore praised the Access to Transit initiative, and asked about Safe Routes to School. Mr. Farrell replied that in the seven initiatives we have not specifically called out access to school, though it might be implicit in walkable, bikeable activity centers.

Ms. Engelhart added that due to the TLC program lack of expertise in trail development by the jurisdictions is no longer a major issue.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the July 10, 2018 Meeting
Page 4

Ms. Engelhart wondered if there could be a regular line item for trails in the TIP for each jurisdiction. Mr. Farrell replied that the TIP is typically project-oriented. Ms. Engelhart replied that there were funding pots for things like sidewalk maintenance. So perhaps a County-wide sidewalk and trail maintenance.

Ms. Harris added that none of the priority projects in the Prince George's County priority letter that it sends every year are part of the National Capital Trail. While the National Capital Trail is an important project, it isn't big enough and doesn't incorporate many regionally significant trail segments. Ms. Harris suggested that we expand the National Capital Trail concept into a regional paved trails network.

Mr. Farrell noted that that was one of WABA's written suggestions. The Capital Trails Coalition has been working on a regional trails plan for the last three years, though it does not extend to the full footprint of the TPB membership.

WABA suggestions included:

- Expanding the National Capital Trail into a regional trails plan. Using the selection criteria that the Capital Trails Coalition has developed, extend that plan to cover the all the TPB member jurisdictions. The CTC criteria have considerable overlap with the original Bicycle Beltway criteria.
- Expanding the TLC program. It takes a project to 30% design.

Ms. Engelhart asked if we need a formal resolution to ask the TPB to expand the National Capital Trail into the regional trails plan. Mr. Farrell replied that we are currently just compiling ideas, which the Subcommittee Chair would then present to the TPB this Fall.

Mr. Meese asked if we are currently adding to the list, or are we culling the list. Mr. Meese's suggestion is that right now it should be the former. Ms. Erickson said that the Subcommittee can present its recommendations whenever it is ready during the Fall. Mr. Farrell suggested that we might group recommendations by priority. However, we will have a limited amount of time in front of the TPB, so we should pick a very short list of priorities to present to them.

Mr. Patton recapped the history of the National Capital Trail, noting that the original bicycle beltway concept was developed years ago, and suggested that it be expanded. Ms. Harris noted that when the National Capital Trail was presented to the TPB, all the comments indicated a desire for a more comprehensive, regional paved trails plan. Ms. Engelhart asked if for the TLC and TAP funding, a project being part of the National Capital Trail was a plus. Mr. Farrell replied that it was. Mr. Swanson added that since the current National Capital Trail is so limited, we have yet to award funding to a project that was part of it.

Ms. Engelhart asked what the footprint was for the current Capital Trail Network. Ms. Harris

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the July 10, 2018 Meeting
Page 5

replied that it was the urban core plus the adjacent suburban jurisdictions. The route selection criteria and the map were vetted through the jurisdictions and the Coalition, which includes the affected jurisdictions and numerous other stakeholders. GIS data has been gathered for all the trail plans and existing segments. The trail data is updated every year.

Ms. Engelhart asked if there was a consensus in this group to expand the National Capital Trail into the Capital Trail Network as defined by the Capital Trails Coalition. Mr. Farrell replied that the exclusion of the outer jurisdictions – Charles, Prince William, Loudoun, and Frederick – was a concern. Ms. Harris favored the adoption of the Capital Trail Network by the TPB.

Ms. McAlister asked where the National Capital Trail came from. Mr. Farrell replied that it was a Jay Fisette idea, to copy Atlanta's circumferential Beltline trail. The difference is that the Beltline when it started was zero percent built, whereas we started at closer to 50%, and now we're around 65%. Ms. Engelhart suggested that we have a good basis for recommending expansion. Mr. Farrell replied that he tried to make it more substantial by adding short connectors and improvement projects, about 30 projects in all, but it's still very limited. The sense of the Subcommittee is that the National Capital Trail is no longer aspirational enough.

Mr. Carrington asked if we wanted to redefine the National Capital Trail as the Capital Trails Network, and then extend it to the outer jurisdictions. Mr. Farrell suggested that for any expansion we use the same selection criteria that the Capital Trails Coalition used.

The concept for the Bicycle Beltway/National Capital Trail was a circumferential, paved trail around the core of the region. The concept of the Capital Trails Network is connected regional network of high-quality bike trails, so that you can get on the network in one part of the region, and bike to another part, without encountering poor or stressful conditions anywhere along the route.

Ms. Engelhart if the Potomac Heritage Trail and US Bike Route 1 could be added to the network. Ms. Harris asked if portions were hiking, water, on road, or conceptual routes? Ms. Harris noted the requirement that it be a trail. We'll note where major trails continue outside the region. The WB&A and the W&OD already do meet our criteria, and we can show how they extend outside the region. The next iteration of the map will do that.

Mr. Dunkel suggested a motion expanding the National Capital Trail into the Capital Trail Network, with a possibility of adding more trails in the future. Ms. Engelhart suggested using the bullet points on page 7 of Mr. Farrell's powerpoint, specifying the August 17 date.

Mr. Carrington noted that we had not spent a lot of time discussing Access to Transit, and we may want to discuss it further. Mr. Swanson noted that while the National Capital Trail is too narrow, Access to Transit is broad, and might benefit for some prioritization among stations, where there would be a greater benefit. Ms. Harris suggested using COG's equity emphasis areas. Mr. Farrell noted that there are also activity centers, where there is the most potential for

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the July 10, 2018 Meeting
Page 6

increasing access, safety, and the Maryland BPPA's – bicycle pedestrian emphasis areas. So there are multiple lenses through which to look at this.

Mr. Carrington said that more walkable mixed use development is better for Metro. Mr. Farrell noted that other suggestions that have come in include making zoning changes to promote walkable communities around Metro stations, as well as defaulting to pedestrian-friendly designs. The region could add more housing to match job growth, and then put that housing in places that are walkable, bikeable, and transit-accessible.

Metro has an existing study on Access to Transit, but it's becoming obsolete, and another look is probably needed. Many of the stations identified in that study were already walkable.

Mr. Wetmore noted that in 1997 Maryland did a study of walk and bike access to stations in Maryland.

Mr. Farrell said that it looks like more work is needed to identify priority stations – some places may have short-term potential, and in other places you may need to rebuild everything and change the zoning to make it walkable.

Ms. Engelhart asked if Prince George's has adopted NACTO. Ms. McAlister replied that they have not adopted it but they do consult it. FHWA recognizes NACTO, and VDOT has allowed urban area to use NACTO as its design criteria. Ms. Engelhart said that could be one of our recommendations.

Mr. Meese asked if the Subcommittee could consider an ongoing process to consider which stations should be prioritized for bicycle and pedestrian access. Could we look at the Equity Emphasis Areas and create a list of example projects within those areas?

Mr. Farrell promised to summarize the comments and bullet points received. Ms. Engelhart said that the current powerpoint is already long; we will have to shorten it to bring it to the TPB. The earliest date to go to the TPB will be in October, if the Subcommittee's discussion is completed in September.

Ms. Erickson said that there is not enough calendar time to get these recommendations into Visualize 2045. We're well past the point of putting new elements into Visualize 2045. This exercise is about getting recommendations for implementation, and material for future updates of the plan. Ms. Harris asked why it couldn't be done if the Subcommittee and the Chair wanted it, given that the Subcommittee has been updated several times on the progress of the Capital Trails Coalition effort. Ms. Engelhart and Ms. Erickson replied that it needs to go through our process. Mr. Farrell suggested that it could be adopted as a follow-on to Visualize 2045, perhaps as a resolution.

This discussion was tabled in the interests of time, to be continued off-line.

5. Montgomery County Draft Bicycle Master Plan

Mr. Anspacher spoke to a powerpoint. Due to time he was able to discuss a sampling of the slides.

The plan includes a Vision and Goals.

This is a very data-driven plan, with specific metrics to be achieved in each year.

Montgomery County has developed a classification of bike facilities by degrees of separation from traffic. There is also analysis on connectivity and low-stress networks.

The network will be 1100 miles, a quarter of which exists today. The breezeway network will be high-quality long-distance facilities. There will be 18 such corridors connecting all the major activity centers.

There will be a lot of bike parking, again data-driven, with targets for bike parking in each of 19 urban areas. For example, Friendship Heights needs 160 additional bike parking spaces, and they have identified, where, by block, they are needed. Need is determined by square footage of various land uses. There will also be long-term bike parking at Metrorail stations, which will be provided as part of redevelopment.

There is a new design toolkit, which will include many things that are not yet in NACTO, which are intended for use in suburban areas.

Mr. Farrell asked about auto level of service requirements driving the provision of wider roads with bigger curb radii, etc. making for a non pedestrian friendly area. Will Montgomery County revise its level of service requirements? Mr. Anspacher replied that the level of service standards would be made more lenient in the urban areas.

Shared use paths will be built to a higher standard, comparable to a road, for durability. Flex posts and paint are being used to create separated bike lanes. Future development will upgrade these lanes with more durable materials. Proposed network mileage is split into prioritized and also 500 miles of non-prioritized facilities, which are not likely to be built within the next 25 years.

Montgomery County has developed a bicycle travel demand model, to forecast future demand. The plan will be monitored transparently, so that over time the public will see clearly what is (and is not) being achieved.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the July 10, 2018 Meeting
Page 8

One of the objectives is Countywide connectivity, currently at 14%. Once the high priority projects are built it will be 20%. Impact on equity will also be measured. Areas that remain inequitable after full build-out are border areas where the facilities are not entirely under Montgomery County's control.

Applause.

Montgomery County DOT is receptive to the plan. MDOT is more reluctant, and has not endorsed all the proposed facility types.

Ms. Harris congratulated Mr. Anspacher on a sophisticated bicycle plan. Mr. Anspacher replied that his mandate was to have the best plan in the country.

6. Draft Regional Map of Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Ms. Mirr demonstrated the draft GIS map of bicycle and pedestrian projects. This map shows everything in the database. The process of updating the database and map is ongoing.

The projects are color-coded by status. A number of projects don't have a status. They're highlighted in red.

The status field is important. Unfortunately, the mandatory fields cannot be changed, but we do need the status.

You can zoom into a jurisdiction, and click on the project for the project information to pop up. You can't edit in the map, but you can see what still has a missing status. Status can be entered in the bicycle and pedestrian project database.

We're coming up on the four-year anniversary of the most recent plan update in January, so we don't have a lot of calendar time to get this done. The project database is the base of the plan. Thanks to Jessica, in this iteration we will be able to map nearly all of the projects, rather than just an illustrative selection of major projects. The map is zoomable and intended to be viewed on line.

7. Announcements and Other Business

- **Harry Nice Bridge**

The sense of the TPB was that they preferred a separated lane option. At some point there is likely to be a letter from the TPB to the MDTA indicating the TPB's preference

- **Dockless Bike Share**

The workshop went well and the documents are posted on the web site. There will be a follow-up in the Fall.

- **FHWA Peer Exchange for Low Stress Planning Capacity Building**

Arlington has obtained federal funds for this regional event. It will be held here at COG. More details to follow.

8. Travel Trends in the Washington Region

Tim Canan spoke to a storyboard.

Go to the COG web site and enter “Travel Trends” into the search box to get to the storyboard.

The region is still growing in terms of population and jobs, but VMT is flat, mostly due to a sharp increase in telework. Bicycling and walking are growing rapidly (by 200%) from a low base, and auto commuting has declined. Metrorail ridership has declined in recent years. Older adults are often choosing to retire in the region.

Percentage of residents living in activity centers is increasing. In the last ten years population has gone up by 16%, but VMT is flat. VMT per capita has fallen.

Leisure and hospitality employment is growing. Location of those jobs is more dispersed than other.

Telework is at 32% now. This includes part time telecommute. Data is based on the State of the Commute survey.

The full report is available on line, along with a TPB News article which summarizes the content.

Part of the population increase is retirees, and retired people do not take as many trips as working people.

9. Adjourned