

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, November 21, 2006

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:

Andrew Austin	MWCOG
George Branyan	DDOT
Charlie Denney	Arlington DES
Dennis Frew	Fairfax Advocates for Better Cycling
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Matt Greene	Montgomery County
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Carol Kachadoorian	WMATA
Kenneth Kanowick	VDOT
Yon Lambert	City of Alexandria
Noah Montes de Oca	Loudoun County Office of Transportation
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Carrie Sanders	City of Rockville
Charlie Strunk	Fairfax County

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting

Page 2

Gail Tait-Nouri	Montgomery County DPWT
Chris Wells	Fairfax County
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

COG Staff Attendance:

Andrew Austin
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the September 19, 2006 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Street Smart: Results of the 2006 Campaign, Funding, and Activities for 2007 and 2008

Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

Michael Farrell spoke to a version of a powerpoint presentation, which had been given to the TPB the previous week.

Spring of 2006 was the fourth Street Smart campaign.

Overall driver and pedestrian behavior has improved since 2002. The annual report has more details.

Andrew Meese noted that deaths are associated with high speeds, and many of our roads don't have fast traffic. There is no equivalent to automobile VMT for pedestrians, so we have no way of adjusting pedestrian or bicyclist fatality numbers for exposure. Our best measures of pedestrian activity are the census, and the COG/TPB household travel survey, which will be available next year. Bicyclist fatalities are not shown separately in the jurisdictional graphs, since even over a three-year period the number of bicyclist fatalities in any one jurisdiction is not significant, at least for purposes of comparing fatalities across jurisdictions.

Prince George's County has the highest fatality rate per population, as well as the highest absolute number of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities. The likely reason for high fatalities in Prince George's County is the concentration of poorer people there, together with high-speed roads that often lack sidewalks.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting
Page 3

The rate shown is per resident population; fatalities of commuters and visitors are counted against the resident population of the jurisdiction where the fatality occurred, not the population of that person's jurisdiction of residence. It is difficult to decide what weight to give daytime population; if someone spends 40 hours per week in the District of Columbia, how do you weight their presence relative to a full-time resident? The trend has been to show raw numbers to a body like the TPB for the sake of simplicity.

The likely period for the 2007 campaign is April. There is no competition with other safety campaigns, advertising is relatively inexpensive, and it coincides with the Cherry Blossom festival and the start of tourist season. The advisory committee will meet November 28 and December 13. There will likely be a press conference in early April. Materials will be similar, except that we will probably use more internet advertising. Peak period for internet use is 9 to 5, Monday through Friday, including web gaming sites that young men favor. Peak hour is lunch hour. Internet advertising can be targeted geographically, and it can be targeted to very specific demographics. Andrew Meese added that depending on how you are surfing the web, it is possible to tell roughly where you are depending on your IP address.

The TPB requested funds for FY 2007 from its member jurisdictions in March at a level of five cents per capita. A funding history table was distributed. Expected funding for FY 2007 is about \$420,000, an increase over last year. The TPB also approved the use of private sponsorship. TPB staff have been authorized to put together a list of appropriate sponsors, who would be sent letters requesting funds.

For FY 2008, the letters requesting funds will be sent three months earlier, in December 2006 for Spring 2008. Funds in 2007 are slightly ahead of last year, but advertising campaigns. To do two two-week campaigns would require at least \$500,000.

The TPB heard a version of this presentation. Chris Zimmerman felt that all the TPB member jurisdictions should contribute in proportion to population. He also suggested that the District of Columbia be considered both a State and a local jurisdiction for purposes of funding the Street Smart program.

The TPB also wanted to know why a possible fall campaign could not be scheduled in October rather than November. TPB members were displeased when informed that, due to the change of the federal fiscal year on October 1st, and the difficulty of getting signed contracts from the States by October 1st, that an October campaign would be difficult to carry out. Funding from the previous fiscal year cannot be used in October. An exemption would be difficult to obtain from all the States. Given the difficulties, it is questionable whether the benefit of an October campaign would be worth the cost. Moreover, other, shorter-term considerations are involved in timing these campaigns. Are there other competing safety campaigns? Is it an election year? How expensive is advertising? October will not necessarily always be the best month, even if it

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting
Page 4

is national pedestrian safety month. There was also a suggestion that it might be possible to run pro bono PSA's in October. The advisory committee will look into that issue.

Kristin Haldeman suggested that those interested in commenting further should attend the advisory committee meeting.

Chris Wells pointed out that the change of the clock associated with daylight savings time has been shown to be associated with an increase in pedestrian fatalities, and no other type of fatality has been shown to be associated with the changing of the clocks. Therefore, he suggested, we might want to time our campaign to coincide with the change of the clocks in the spring and fall.

- The 2007 Street Smart campaign will be further developed with the consultant. Advisory committee meetings will be held on November 28 and December 13, with another meeting in January [to be held at 10 a.m. in Room One on Tuesday, January 16]
- Letters requesting funds for the Spring 2008 Street Smart campaign will go out in December
- Private sponsorship will be solicited for the 2007 campaign

4. Follow-on Activities to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

- **On-line project database**

Michael Farrell distributed a mock-up. The public would be able to see the project information in the bicycle and pedestrian plan, and perform simple queries, such as by jurisdiction or project name or number. They could then click on the project to get complete information. Andrew Austin noted that the checkboxes in the database had been converted to yes/no statements, and a positive statement ("this project is within a regional activity center") now results if the box is checked. It was noted that there was no contact information. Some of the projects list contact information for a project manager, but most of them do not. However, we could put in some sort of default contact information; if need be it could be Michael Farrell. Andrew Austin assured the group that any e-mail contact information is coded so automated programs cannot pick it up.

Andrew Meese suggested that the checkbox statements be made less definitive, use a qualifier such as "indicated". The worst that could happen is that there might be an error of fact, and tentative language acknowledges that the project is not yet built. Say something like "This project was indicated to be in a regional activity center". Charlie Denney wondered if it really mattered. Andrew Meese replied that details like this can get a surprising amount of scrutiny. Charlie

Denney suggested leaving it the way it is, and changing it if it becomes a problem. Andrew Austin added that the flip side is that if an error is discovered, TPB staff or jurisdictional staff can correct the underlying database, and the information in the public window to the database will change.

- **Adopt a list of High Priority Unfunded Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects to be Presented to the TPB in December 2006**

Michael Farrell distributed a list priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects, with descriptions. The jurisdictional representatives have supported these projects and attested to the accuracy of the information.

Chris Wells suggested that the costs on Route 1 in Fairfax might be higher than indicated. Michael Farrell replied that we can approve the list today, but the budget number can still be changed if it's no longer accurate.

Allen Muchnick noted that in the table the name of the "Loudoun County Parkways" was not explicit as to the exact kind of project, which is a shared-use path. Michael Farrell agreed to make the titles more explicit.

The project list and descriptions will be mailed to the TPB in early December. Project details can be changed up until the date of the TPB mail-out.

Charlie Denney asked if it would be helpful to WMATA if we added WMATA's bicycle parking project to this high priority list. Carol Kachadoorian of WMATA said that it would be helpful. Michael Farrell asked whether Arlington or WMATA would be the project sponsor. Charlie Denney replied that it should be WMATA. Michael Farrell suggested that the Subcommittee take a vote to adopt the list with the addition of the WMATA bicycle parking project. Bicycle racks on buses now come as part of the bus, so they do not need their own project. Charlie Denney made the motion. Chris Wells seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously.

- Carol Kachadoorian is to send Michael Farrell the details on the WMATA Bicycle Parking project so that it can be added to the high priority project list. Project names will be clarified and the WMATA bike parking project will be added to the list before it goes to the TPB

5. Update on WMATA Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning

Carol Kachadoorian, Kristin Haldeman, WMATA

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting
Page 6

Dan Tangherlini has left WMATA, and a new director from Los Angeles will take over in January. Jack Requa is acting as the interim manager. The new director, John B. Catoe, was in charge of buses in Los Angeles. WMATA will find a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator position within WMATA.

Carol Kachadorian said that customer service at WMATA is improving, with bus schedules made more available to the public.

Michael Jackson noted that the Washington Post had done a profile of Mr. Catoe, who is originally from this region. He expects to ride Metro, and have an emphasis on customer service.

Chris Wells urged that as Metro generates many pedestrians, that it become a leader on the issue of pedestrian safety and access.

Carol Kachadorian said that even though WMATA does control the streets, if not for WMATA, their customers would not be on those streets, and she believed that WMATA has a moral obligation to make them safer.

Eric Gilliland added that he hoped WMATA would continue to increase its priority on safe access from a pedestrian and bicycle point of view. He suggested that we express our support for that direction within the agency.

Kristin Haldeman replied that there had been a number of bus pedestrian fatalities earlier in the year, which helped lead to the safety initiative that Carol Kachadorian is heading. There will be a bus conference later in the month.

Thinking on pedestrian safety has been affected by concerns about liability.

Customer access is now being emphasized.

George Branyan expressed concern that the location of bus stops often leads people to cross at the most dangerous locations.

6. Best Practices in Bicycle and Pedestrian Wayfinding in the Washington Region and Beyond – Preliminary Results

Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

Michael Farrell spoke to a powerpoint showing best practices in Europe, current MUTCD rules, and proposed changes in the MUTCD based on the route signs developed in Chicago. A bicycle wayfinding sign should, according to the Chicago DOT, incorporate the three “D”s: Destination, Direction, and Distance. Chicago places all that information on one panel. Chicago bicycle

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting
Page 7

route signs with destination are placed every ¼ mile, at every turn, and at every major signalized intersection. The rectangular panels with directional arrows are placed wherever two bicycle routes cross, and at decision points. Michael Farrell distributed a hand-out with Chicago DOT's petition to change the MUTCD, which shows both the current MUTCD bicycle route signs and Chicago's proposed changes. Chicago DOT dispenses with the words "bike route" which are duplicative of the bicycle symbol.

Eric Gilliland felt based on his trip to Chicago that the Chicago signs were too small for bicyclists to read, especially at night. Eric Gilliland suggested that the type on the signs could be made bigger. On the proposed MUTCD the signs would be six inches tall. Michael Jackson added that he was on the bicycle technical committee for the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and that that committee had recommended that these changes in the MUTCD go forward. That said, he agreed that the size of type was too small for some locations. The bicycle route signs also are useful to motorists, and with the aging of the population the need is for a larger type size. Michael Farrell remarked that it would not be hard to use a larger size of type. Charlie Denney suggested that since Michael Jackson is on the committee he could make some sort of recommendation. Michael Jackson replied that the recommendation to the National Committee to approve the Chicago-type signs had already been made. Charlie Denney noted that the down side of a larger type size could be larger signs, which would affect sign clutter.

In Holland there are more paths, narrower roads and slower bicyclists, so the type size is probably not as much of a problem. Charlie Denney noted that Dutch bicyclists probably don't have to read these signs from across an 8-lane arterial. Michael Farrell agreed that like everything else, perhaps our signs need to be a little bigger than Europe's.

Further slides illustrated bicycle and pedestrian route-finding signs in the Washington region. Bicycle signs in the Washington region generally follow the MUTCD. Alexandria's new signs resemble Chicago's, except that Alexandria puts multiple directional signs on a single panel. Only Commonwealth Avenue currently has these signs, but more will be added. Older signs tend to have just a bicycle symbol and the words "bike route", with no information on destination, direction, or distance. In Maryland a simple but effective innovation has been to place street signs at the intersection of bicycle trails and streets, where the two cross. This feature will be in the Maryland State Bicycle Design Manual. A person crossing the trail thus immediately knows what it is, while a person on the trail knows where they are. Michael Jackson is working to make it standard procedure to put up street signs at trail crossings, rather than having it be a "special order" process.

The National Park Service uses brown signs, unlike the green MUTCD signs everyone else uses. National Park Service still hasn't removed the "Stop" sign on the trail crossing of a blocked-off airport entrance ramp. The Bethesda Trolley Trail has information on inclination, cross-slope, and width, for the benefit of wheelchair users.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting
Page 8

For pedestrians there is no national standard, and there is a lot of variation within the region, based on different purposes. Because pedestrians can stop and read, pedestrian signs tend to be more detailed, and often take the form of “you are here” maps. Signs range from simple labels for nearby facilities, to more elaborate signs indicating multiple destinations, with direction and distance, to “you are here” maps. The consensus is that the very simple signs and the “you are here” maps work best, while the more elaborate directional signs are controversial. Sign clutter is always an issue. Old town Alexandria has the largest collection of pedestrian signs. Michael Jackson noted that one type of sign required people to understand that an arrow pointing up indicates forwards, while an arrow pointing down means back. Other signs have a thistle and a directional arrow with no distance indicated. The waterfront signs combine a directional arrow with a waterfront map. John Wetmore was critical of this sign type, arguing that it was placed too high up, and that the map covered too large an area for its size and level of detail. It would be more useful to have more detail about the next four or five blocks, rather than a little detail about the entire waterfront. Yon Lambert added that the City of Alexandria gets few complaints about these map-signs, probably because most people don’t notice them.

The District of Columbia’s “you are here” maps are clear and well-used. Other historic district maps try to direct people on a tour route. The Business Improvement District has installed blue signs that indicate destinations and direction, but no distance.

Kristin Haldeman asked what would be done with this information. Michael Farrell indicated that based on the responses he had received to a questionnaire from jurisdictional bicycle and pedestrian staff, he would produce a grid showing what each jurisdiction is doing, illustrated with photos.

Eric Gilliland announced that he would be presenting the results of his trip to Chicago.

7. Other COG Updates:

- **Educational/Training Events**

- Designing Urban Arterials for Pedestrians – December 5

A seminar will be held on December 5 in the old DC Council Chambers at One Judiciary Square. A draft agenda was distributed. Fifty-five people have been registered thus far. The target audience is designers, engineers, and consultants. There will be guest speakers from one or more of the DOT’s as well. The essence of it is that the author believes that arterial design should be based on surrounding land use and zoning rather than just functional classification. The event will last all day, and lunch will be served.

- **Status of Electronic Bicycle Route-Finding (bicycle.org)**

Nicholas Ramfos indicated that a bicycle route-finding capability cannot be integrated into the new Commuter Connections TDM software until FY 2009. Copies of a letter from Kristin Haldeman to the Chair of the Commuter Connections Subcommittee, and a reply letter from the Chair.

Charlie Denney expressed his disappointment in this outcome. He felt that he could and should have been informed earlier, so that he could have put in funding applications. As it is he has lost two months. Michael Farrell replied that he had informed Nicholas Ramfos of the time frame the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee was hoping for, and only recently had he indicated that it would be at least two years before this functionality could be achieved.

Eric Gilliland suggested that he had thought of this service as a stand-alone project that would still be compatible with the rest of Commuter Connections. Eric Gilliland expressed hope that since the cost was not high, that bicycle.org could be set up outside the formal COG process.

Michael Farrell said that Commuter Connections will still want to integrate bicycles into its TDM software, but that it looked like a multi-year process to complete it. Commuter Connections will not pay for a stand-alone bicycle.org web site. Eric Gilliland suggested that the urban core jurisdictions and WABA might be able to pool funds to pay for it. Michael Farrell noted that multi-jurisdictional projects can be difficult to manage and get off the ground, and that \$40,000, while not a lot of money, could be difficult to raise.

Chris Wells expressed some skepticism. How much better will this project be than a “mapquest” search? On the other hand, a core jurisdiction project could be valuable as a pilot.

Michael Jackson asked if someone from Commuter Connections to the next meeting to address their concerns, and explore advancing this on a faster track. Michael Farrell expressed pessimism about getting Commuter Connections to fund an end product before FY 2009

- A follow-up conference call will be scheduled among the interested jurisdictional representatives

8. Jurisdictional Updates

Allen Muchnick distributed copies of the new Virginia State Bicycle Map.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
Notes from the November 21, 2006 Meeting
Page 10

One hundred percent of the Fairfax Connector buses now have bicycle racks.

Charlie Denney announced that a second draft of Arlington's master transportation plan update will be available next week. It has bicycle and pedestrian elements. The National Park Service is interested in finding partnerships to improve trail safety.

WABA may assist in such an effort.

We might invite the National Park Service to the next meeting to discuss trail safety.

Montgomery County is working with the National Park Service to produce a cooperative management plan for trails.

Carrie Sanders announced that Rockville was installing additional signage.

Montgomery County has adopted a complete streets policy.

VDOT has designated a Bicycle Route 1 alternate route down Telegraph Road, since Fort Belvoir has been closed. There will be an interactive version of the map on line. A hand-out on VDOT's bicycle and pedestrian accommodation policy was distributed. Announcements will be distributed for bicycle and pedestrian design workshops.

Additional episodes of Perils for Pedestrians are now available on google.com, including footage from Dublin.

Eric Gilliland announced that the Environmental Assessment for the National Mall essentially ignored bicycle access, with the exception of a mandatory helmet rule. Segway users will now be allowed to use the mall trails.

George Branyan announced that DDOT will produce a pedestrian plan. A web site will be available some time next month.

Michael Jackson has received a grant from the Maryland Highway Safety Office to produce a bicycle safety video. Studies show that males are heavily involved in crashes and injuries, and that Baltimore City is overly represented in bicycle crashes, while Anne Arundel has numerous fatalities. The video will be aimed at risk-taking men and boys. Michael Jackson will be working with the Bicycle and Pedestrian advisory committee and asking for their assistance.

Adjourned.

A slide show by Eric Gilliland followed.