

# 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, September 16, 2014

**TIME:** 1:00 P.M.

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

**CHAIR:** Jim Sebastian, District Department of Transportation

**VICE-  
CHAIRS:**

David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services  
Jeff Duncel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Kristin Haldeman, WMATA  
Carrie Sanders, Alexandria Department of Transportation and  
Environmental Services  
Fred Shaffer, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County

**Attendance:**

Jeff Duncel	Montgomery County DOT (by phone)
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT- Northern Virginia
Christine Green	Greater Washington Safe Routes to School
Philip Koopman	BicycleSPACE
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Fred Shaffer	M-NCPPC Prince George's County (by phone)
Bill Saddler	Greater Washington Safe Routes to School
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

**COG Staff Attendance:**

Michael Farrell  
Andrew Meese  
Jessica Mirr

**1. General Introductions.**

Participants introduced themselves.

**2. Review of the July 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes**

Minutes were approved.

**3. Draft Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region**

A draft was reviewed at the July meeting, so Mr. Farrell focused on the changes made since July. Ms. Engelhart noted that the July version had not been complete. The most recent version has been posted on the web site.

Some comments have been received on the July version. Mr. Muchnick of the Virginia Bicycling Federation suggested that we use the phrase “recommended practices” rather than “best practices”. Mr. Farrell noted that “best practices” has a long history. Mr. Muchnick also suggested caution on “endorsing and using” the NACTO guides. Mr. Farrell added a suggested caveat that the NACTO guides are intended for use in urban areas in the current draft.

Mr. Farrell said that FHWA has encouraged agencies to use the NACTO guides. Ms. Engelhart did not agree that they “encouraged” the use of the NACTO guides. Ms. Engelhart agreed to take a closer look at the language. Mr. Sebastian noted that the current plan calls for adoption of the MUTCD. The language is on page 6-4. Mr. Farrell said that as long as the State DOT looks at the language that keeps us out of trouble. The current draft recommends that agencies “endorse and use” the NACTO guides.

Mr. Farrell said that he is not entirely satisfied with the completeness of the information in the database; he had asked committee members to take another look at their projects, and mark as complete the ones that had been completed. However, the current reported mileage of completed bike trails and bike lanes still seems implausibly low, and that could invite questions at the TPB Technical Committee. Mr. Farrell cleaned up a few obvious mistakes or duplicates, but he had not otherwise attempted to correct the work of the jurisdictions.

Ms. Engelhart suggested that we put a caveat under the chart that it does not include mileage relating to maintenance or repaving projects. Mr. Sebastian said that DC alone had installed 20

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 16th, 2014 Meeting**  
Page 3

miles of bike lanes since 2010. Right now DDOT has an on-going project to install bike lanes. Mr. Farrell said that another bike lanes project needed to be added to take credit for miles of bike lanes completed. Mr. Sebastian said that DDOT does five miles a year, so has added 20 miles since 2010. Mr. Farrell said that the 2010 entry is going to be backward-looking because it was added in 2010. If you added a project and completed it since 2010, you should add that project to the database, and mark it as Complete. Mr. Farrell said that he would make changes. Mr. Sebastian suggested that Mr. Farrell call Mr. Goodman as well and ask him how many miles of bike lanes and trails he has completed. Mr. Sebastian asked Mr. Dunckel how many lines of bike lanes Montgomery County has added. Mr. Dunckel replied that more than six miles had been added; and that he would ask Ms. Shepherd to look at the database.

Mr. Farrell noted that 41 projects had been reported as Complete, still a low number.

Mr. Farrell discussed a draft map showing projects from the plan, and discussed its relationship with the future on-line version. The pluses are planned spot improvements.

Mr. Farrell asked the group to look at the maps and see if there was something obviously wrong. The COG ID numbers are unique numbers that never change. In the paper report the project ID is the agency project ID, not the COG project ID, so that needs to be changes. The Woodrow Wilson Bridge should be shown as Complete. The Metropolitan Branch Trail needs to be shown as partly completed, partly not completed. These maps were created by combining lines we already had with lines from the jurisdictions. The existing projects are just the major ones. We currently track projects completed since 2005 separately from completed projects. The paper map is easily over-crowded, so we probably don't want to show most of the projects completed before 2005.

Ms. Howard noted that the on-line map solves some of the over-crowding problem. We can show more of the existing facilities in the on-line map.

Mr. Wetmore suggested changing the title to "selected existing facilities", though Mr. Farrell said that he thought that was obvious since we're only showing a few major ones.

Mr. Farrell said that the paper maps are not terribly user friendly, and we hope to solve that problem with the on-line map, which is what the public will mostly see. Ms. Howard said that when we added existing facilities we were constrained by what we had gotten from the jurisdictions, which in the case of Fairfax County was just map service lines and not GIS layers. We need GIS layers to be able to transfer the lines easily to a regional facility map. The more GIS layers we get from the jurisdictions the better the map will be.

Mr. Farrell said that the point of the map was to show that we have things planned, and that we've made progress. Show projected "Completed since 2005". Mr. Sebastian and Ms. Engelhart suggested using "selected existing facilities". "Selected" is a word no one will object to. For the "proposed" the selection factor was at least 3 miles in length or greater than \$500,000

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 16th, 2014 Meeting**

Page 4

in cost.

The map doesn't show the trail recently completed along the Bladensburg waterfront. The Fairfax County Parkway extension isn't shown. Other planned projects in DC such as the South Capitol Street Trail, the Rock Creek Trail, etc. don't show up. DC has GIS layers for these projects. Ms. Howard asked Mr. Sebastian to send the layers. We can turn unneeded lines off easily.

Ms. Howard said that if the jurisdictions would like particular projects to be mapped, that they should let us know, and provide us the GIS layers. Information on whether projects are complete is drawn from the database, so it helps if those entries are accurate. Send the GIS layers to Mr. Farrell, and he will forward to Ms. Howard.

Mr. Farrell said that GIS layers are welcome, as are pictures, which can be used to highlight the project in the presentation to the TPB. It could be a challenge to get the plan to the TPB in November. Mr. Meese asked what the difficulty would be. Mr. Farrell replied that the map was his main concern, and the accuracy of the information was a related concern. Ms. Green asked that information on Safe Routes to School should be incorporated. The draft plan is posted on the Subcommittee web site. Mr. Meese expressed concern that we not fall into a pattern of delay.

Mr. Farrell said that he'd work more with the members one on one to get the database updated. Additional drafts of the map will be distributed when we have them. Mr. Meese suggested using Google earth as a supplemental source of information. Ms. Engelhart asked if we had a category for FHWA projects. FHWA is the lead agency on Eastern Federal Lands projects. VDOT will take those roads into its system. We need to add Eastern Federal Lands as a lead agency.

Mr. Wetmore said that Google's data is often a year or two old. Another commenter suggested adding another column in the paper report showing the status of the project.

Mr. Meese suggested having another meeting a month from now, via conference call, to review the plan.

Mr. Farrell said that the paper report was already over-squeezed, and we'd have to remove things in order to add things.

Mr. Sebastian asked if the plan is a giant Word document. Mr. Farrell replied that it was a Word document that had been converted into a PDF. Will this plan be published using slicker formatting and publishing standards using Word. Mr. Meese replied that it is too large a document for it to be a glossy publication.

#### **4. Update on the Use of GIS for Interactive Mapping and Visualization**

Ms. Mirr and Ms. Howard briefed the Subcommittee on the draft on-line map. Ms. Howard said that while the paper map is an important product, it would be good to bring it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by making an on-line, interactive map. We can provide links to this draft map so that it can be viewed remotely. The internet map was slow loading, mirroring the problems with Webex earlier in the meeting.

WMATA projects are mapped, but map awkwardly. The map shows major projects defined by the criteria they were given, and selected existing facilities. Major projects were not broken out by status type. The map is only as good as the database, so if you see problems it would be good to have them fixed.

Ms. Engelhart asked why we were using a yellow warning sign for bikes. The only bike signs available through ESRI were this warning sign, and a bike with a red slash through it, “no bikes allowed”.

The on line map will allow the public to go on-line and see quickly what is being proposed. It also allows the public to share information quickly. Ms. Engelhart said that this will be a good thing when it is complete. Mr. Sebastian agreed. Ms. Howard re-iterated that it is only as good as what we get. In a perfect world we can have not just our plan but everyone else’s as background.

Ms. Engelhart asked if count data could be made available in some similar format. The cordon counts are not a bike-specific counts. The cordon counts persons in vehicles, but not pedestrians.

Mr. Dunckel said that this on-line map was a great thing. We do need to improve the source data, but the map will help us sort those out. The map will help us regionalize all this information in a way that will help us promote it. Mr. Dunckel asked where the Montgomery County information had come from. Ms. Howard replied that some of it was from the Park and Planning GIS people, and some from the Montgomery County DOT. We still need the actual GIS layers. Mr. Dunckel promised to work with Ms. Howard to get her the information.

Mr. Shaffer said that M-NCPPC Prince George’s County had provided shape files, and offered to help get additional data.

None of the facilities types have been changed. Shape files are better than map service data, since with GIS layers we can change the symbology. Wherever there is map service data, there are corresponding shape files in existence. Ms. Engelhart said that it could be some time before VDOT is able to provide shape files.

The count locations include counts of people in other vehicles.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 16th, 2014 Meeting**  
Page 6

Mr. Meese asked if the counts were 24 hour counts? How do we present different types of counts? The cordon counts occurred over a specific time period. Mr. Meese asked if the metadata would be available, so people would know when and for how long counts were done.

Ms. Engelhart said that VDOT has accumulated a great deal of directional bicycle and pedestrian counts at intersections, broken down by turn movements, etc.

Mr. Farrell said Arlington had 24-7 counters, and it puts the information on line.

Ms. Howard said that the on-line maps are likely to be more user friendly than paper, and can be refined as we move forward.

It was suggested that the Cabi stations could be added to the map at some point, and maybe bike parking too. Ms. Howard said that we had some information on bike parking at Metro stations. Mr. Farrell said that since this map is zoomable, could something like the Google maps layer be added? Mr. Sebastian said that we need to be careful what we show, if this is a planning map. Proposed facilities need to be distinguished from existing. Mr. Farrell suggested that there could be an option to turn off the existing facilities layer.

For now, we are trying to visualize the paper map and plan document. Symbology will be standardized. We're looking for feedback on what should be shown, and get data layers.

## **5. Other TPB Program Updates**

Mr. Farrell sent out a notice a little while back on the 2014 top priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects. We can bring this short list to the TPB for their attention. Nothing has changed on this item since the last time we spoke about it. Mr. Farrell requested that people send in their projects.

Street Smart has gone really well, with good results from last year, good campaign recognition. \$1.4 million in free ad space. The Annual Report comes out at the end of the month.

The Fall campaign press event will take place November 6<sup>th</sup>. Pumptopper ads will start up October 8<sup>th</sup>. We have about \$50,000 more for this year than for last. We still need enforcement numbers.

Institute for Regional Excellence is a student group, which did an observational study of distracted walking. They found that ¼ of observed pedestrians had heads down in the smart phone while crossing the street. The report will be available soon.

Mr. Dunkel added that Montgomery County had found that young people were more likely to be found at fault in pedestrian collisions, which might have something to do with distraction and

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 16th, 2014 Meeting**  
Page 7

smart phone use in that generation.

The Best Practices workshop was lightly attended compared to previous years. More marketing of the event is needed; Mr. Farrell was on vacation prior to this year's event.

We need this workshop because the police need training – DCMPD has a police officer handing out citations for bicyclists not wearing helmets, which is not a violation in the District. DCMPD used to require that officers doing the enforcement had to attend this workshop; now they don't.

The Safe Routes to School Regional Meeting is coming up shortly, on October 28th. Ms. Green briefed the group on the meeting, which will feature Mark Fenton, a nationally known speaker. Safe Routes to School coordinators, school officials, parents, and others will attend. 70 people attended last year. Ms. Green is stepping down soon, and Mr. Sadler will replace her as regional Safe Routes to School Coordinator.

Mr. Farrell strongly encouraged people to attend; many people come to these meetings with whom we do not always have institutional ties. Mr. Dunckel might present, since Montgomery County has a high school safety campaign that borrows our "tired faces" theme from Street Smart, with their own messaging and photos of high school students. We've in turn asked to borrow some of those images back for general use.

Child pedestrian safety is a very different world than adult pedestrian safety. You don't have the adults corralled in the classroom, and the messages often need to be different for young people.

Mr. Meese warned the group that early morning meetings can be challenging from an IT/Tech support point of view. Mr. Dunckel said that the high school campaign will kick off tomorrow. It's a physical press event at Seneca Valley High School, at 11 a.m. Distracted walking will be the theme. Mr. Farrell will push the announcement out to the list.

Mr. Sebastian suggested that the NACTO seminar be put off until winter.

Some of the DDOT staff went to Pro Walk Pro Bike in Pittsburgh.

Ms. Engelhart said that VDOT is evaluating 1100 curb ramps.

Mr. Farrell said that he had attended a good workshop in Pittsburgh on best practices in bike sharing. There was a lot of discussion of variable pricing schemes, to control re-balancing costs, and better recover costs. Another guideline was the suggestion that a bike share system needed at least 2000 bicycles to be reasonably efficient. Over 2000 bikes the cost per bike declined more slowly. Small bike share systems are not very cost effective. Ms. Engelhart asked if that was true of college campuses. Mr. Farrell replied that other things mattered as well, such as density. They recommend a bike share station every 300 meters.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 16th, 2014 Meeting**  
Page 8

Ms. Green said that there was a good presentation on health impact assessment of safe routes to school program. There is a need for a Safe Routes to School coordinator at the district level, so that they can better identify schools that need safe routes to school intervention, as opposed to those that prepare the best applications.

Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup> was tentatively scheduled to discuss the bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Mr. Wetmore said that the Excelon-Pepco merger might lead to trail projects.

**6. Adjourned**