

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 18, 2008

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Fred Shaffer –
MNCPPC, Prince George's County

**VICE-
CHAIRS:** Kristin Haldeman
Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority
Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation
Jim Sebastian, DDOT

Attendance:

Cheryl Cort	Coalition for Smarter Growth
Paul DeMaio	BikeArlington
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Jeffrey Hermann	Fairfax County DOT
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Fred Shaffer	M-NCPPC, Prince George's County
Charlie Strunk	Fairfax County DOT
John Thomas	Frederick County

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Nancy Rea

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1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the January 22, 2008 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Member Jurisdiction Updates

Prince George's is working on a master transportation plan which will include a bicycle and pedestrian element. Mr. Shaffer distributed flyers for upcoming workshops for the plan. The County is interested in a Cross-County Trail, which would use Piscataway Creek and the Charles Branch to link up the Potomac River corridor and the Patuxent. The County is also doing small-area plans along Marlboro Pike and the port towns, which are established communities that need to be retrofitted for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Maryland legislature was working on a bill that would require motorists to give bicyclists a 3' passing zone and yield to pedestrians operating in a bicycle lane. However, the bill was killed in committee. A second bill HB875 would allow the chairman of the transportation authority to allow pedestrians and bicyclists to use toll-crossing facilities on a case by case basis.

Pedestrians and bicyclists are currently prohibited on toll facilities. The US 301 bridge to Charles County will soon be renovated, but the authority will not consider allowing pedestrians or bicyclists on the facility due to the law. The bill to change that has passed the Senate but not the House.

Frederick County is updating its comprehensive plan, which will include a bicycle and pedestrian element. The Ballenger Creek trail will be built, as well as several sections of the Hagerstown and Frederick Trolley Trail. The Monocacy River Trail will eventually connect Frederick with the Potomac River. Frederick City will have a bike to work day pit stop.

Fairfax is working on its bike map and some bike lanes.

The Coalition for Smarter Growth is working on a pedestrian safety report, soon to be released.

DC has hired a Safe Routes to School Coordinator and put out a bike map.

WMATA is continuing its rack replacement program. 550 racks have been replaced so far. Ms. Haldeman distributed a list of racks designated for replacement. A new person is working to develop an on-line bicycle rental system. WMATA has submitted a request for federal funding for lockers, including a pilot electronic hourly rental system.

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Ms. Cort suggested that racks might be placed inside the metro stations. Ms. Haldeman suggested that racks might be placed in the unpaid area, especially in some of the more spacious outlying stations. Ms. Cort suggested that there is a need to place racks within view of the ticket kiosk. Mr. Farrell suggested that bicycles might be allowed inside the faregates during the peak period, but not on the platforms or in the trains. BART does that. Ms. Haldeman replied that such a policy could create enforcement issues. Mr. Farrell suggested that it would be beneficial if a survey could be done of the stations to identify more secure locations for bike racks, either inside or outside the fare gates.

Arlington will build a bike station at Ballston with sheltered parking for 120 bicycles, and another sheltered bike parking location at Shirlington with 24 sheltered spaces. The racks will have bike pumps built into them.

4. Bike Sharing: Prospects for Cross-Jurisdictional Coordination

Mr. Farrell discussed the bike sharing programs in the Washington region and interest in those programs from Chris Zimmerman and Jay Fisette on the Arlington County Board. The Board members wanted to know why the Arlington and District of Columbia systems would not be compatible. In response, staff from both jurisdictions attended the Chief Administrative Officer's meeting in March, and receive briefings on the programs and this subcommittee's effort to coordinate them. The CAO's were interested in the projects, and somewhat skeptical that they would work. The CAO's gave no direction that these pilot programs should be coordinated. It may be possible to extend the Arlington and DC systems into adjacent jurisdictions. The river is a significant barrier to most bicycle trips. We will continue to keep each other informed and look for opportunities for coordination.

5. Bike Sharing in Arlington: Nextbike

Arlington has been researching various bike sharing technologies. Arlington has received a grant from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation for \$209,000. Arlington looked at the Clear Channel technologies. Clear Channel does not provide its service to jurisdictions without an outdoor advertising component. However, there would be an option for Arlington to buy into the DC contract, for a cost of around \$4,000 per bike in capital cost per bicycle. NextBike costs about \$750 in capital cost per bicycle. Nextbike is a "low-capital high-tech" solution, which uses cell phones rather than fixed stations to reserve bicycles, which could be called a high-capital, high-tech solution. Mr. DeMaio demonstrated the bicycle for the group. Advertisements are allowed on vehicles in Arlington, so NextBike will have ads. Arlington will charge an annual fee for membership, and will also offer a weekly membership for tourists. The bicycle is a commuter-style bike with fenders, basket, and chain guard. The seat cannot be removed easily. The design will be step-through, for people in dresses. There is a three-speed internal hub, and a bottle dynamo for the front and rear lights. The final bike will have an internal dynamo, which will be simpler to use, and reflective whitewall tires, and a bell.

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Ads are easy to replace. The bicycle has its own lock. The brakes will be coaster brakes.

Bikes will be located on the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, parked two per pole at carshare poles, and at some new post racks. To check out and return a bicycle you must use a cell phone. Mr. DeMaio demonstrated the reservation system with his cell phone. He dialed a number, and following the directions entered the number of the bicycle. He then received a code from the phone, which allowed him to unlock, and later lock the bike. When you lock the bike you call in again to inform the system that the bike has been locked (&locations?).

The initial application will be 200 bicycles.

Arlington may provide a financial incentive to take bicycles up the hill, such as a longer free period. Charges will increase for longer rentals, to encourage turnover.

Arlington County's attorney was concerned about having Arlington provide the service. Insurance is an unresolved issue.

Mr. Strunk noted that Fairfax has tried to do a bike sharing program for its County buildings, but risk management shot it down.

Mr. Farrell asked if the District of Columbia had resolved the liability issue. Mr. Sebastian replied that it had been. Clear Channel has lawyers whom it pays to find ways to get the program done, as opposed to risk managers who get paid to say no. DDOT has a fleet of 10 cruiser bicycles for employee use.

Mr. DeMaio suggested that for bike sharing there may be more than one right answer, as well as a few wrong answers. Washington has multiple bus services meant to serve local needs. It can have multiple bike sharing services.

6. April 29 Pedestrian Safety Workshop at the National Press Club

Nancy Rea distributed a proposed agenda for the workshop. Mr. Farrell discussed the background. WMATA wanted to have a pedestrian safety workshop, and approached the COG side of the house with a proposal to have a workshop at the National Press Club. COG and TPB staff are cooperating to organize this workshop, which will produce recommendations which will be incorporated into a COG Board resolution. The workshop will include plenary and breakout sessions. We are looking for panelists, speakers, and comments.

Ms. Cort objected to Lon Anderson's presence on the agenda, arguing that he is an automobile advocate not a pedestrian safety advocate. Ms. Rea replied that his presence might help bring more political leaders to the workshop. Ms. Cort noted that she and Lon Anderson had different approaches to safety. Mr. Sebastian suggested that DC Councilmember Tommy Wells be put on

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the agenda. Tommy Wells is Chair of the COG Human Services committee, and is very active on pedestrian safety.

Mr. Farrell said that there is still some scope for changing the order or roles of the plenary speakers. We want to have Lon Anderson somewhere on the agenda, but he does not have to lead the wrap-up sessions. Mr. Sebastian agreed that Lon Anderson's participation was a positive.

Mr. Jackson suggested several speakers for plenary and breakout sessions.

Ms. Rea suggested that this seminar could be used as an opportunity to protect and enhance existing pedestrian safety programs.

Mr. Farrell reiterated that plenary session speakers can still be changed in terms of order and topics addressed, and that breakout session panelists are still wide open, and all suggestions are welcome. Comments are needed within the next week, especially regarding plenary session speakers. Subject matter experts are encouraged to attend, whether as speakers are not. Display tables will be available for handouts. Mr. Farrell thanked the group for its input.

7. TPB Work Program Updates

- **Electronic Bicycle Route-Finding Projects**

Technical issues are being resolved. We will either use the Navtec data, which is proprietary, or free data from Google. We have been meeting with the Commuter Connections consultant, Base Technologies, on a weekly basis. With the Navtec data we are not sure how long it will be in our possession – the license has to be renewed every two years. With Google we are not sure if we can add routing as opposed to landmarks, such as park and ride lots. In addition, there is a rumor that Google may do bicycle routing for free.

Mr. Sebastian noted that DC has a license covering Navtec data for the entire region. We would have to check the particulars of the license to see if we would use it.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region**

- Schedule for Updating On-Line Project Database

The on-line database will be made public soon. We agreed that the database should be updated every two years, and the information will be two years old in July, so we would be looking for updated information from the members of this subcommittee.

- Schedule for updating the bicycle and pedestrian plan

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The bicycle and pedestrian plan is to be updated every four years, but if we have updated data, it would make sense to have updated maps. If the project list and maps are to be revised, it would not be that much more work, and certainly not much more committee work to update the plan. Most of the plan would not change too much, certainly not the format. Mr. Sebastian suggested leaving that part of the report part alone. Andrew Meese suggested making minor updates to the plan, to correct things that have gone out of date. Mr. Farrell suggested that it might be possible to get the database updated by July. Mr. Muchnick suggested that the most useful update might be to show which plan projects have actually been completed since the plan was updated. Mr. Sebastian agreed that that would add value. Most bike plans just look forward, but perhaps we can add more value by tracking what has actually been accomplished. Mr. Shaffer noted that developers are building a lot of facilities. Mr. Farrell replied that much developer work was not part of the original plan. The group agreed that we should produce a list of projects from the original plan that have been build or partially built. Mr. Farrell agreed that that would be something that the TPB might actually be interested in hearing – we could report to the TPB on what has been built from the 2006 plan, and what has been added to the list of planned projects.

Mr. Meese asked how pedestrian projects could be captured, given that a lot of them were small developer proffers. Mr. Shaffer replied that some of the developer contributions were significant sections of planned trails.

It might be possible to create some measure to reflect the completion of small projects. Mr. Farrell noted that we have always struggled with dealing with small projects. We prefer that sidewalk retrofit programs be reflected as single programs, and progress reported in terms of funds expended or miles of sidewalk built, rather than completion of particular sections.

Mr. Jackson suggested produced a list of bad intersections needing redesign. Mr. Farrell said that engineering studies were not within the budget in the UPWP. Should we add another list of top priority projects, for intersections only? Mr. Muchnick suggested that at the next meeting we could have a presentation on various bicycle planning efforts in the region.

- Schedule for top priority unfunded list

A draft list should be produced for the May meeting, with a target date for adoption of July or September.

- Street Smart

The kick-off event was very successful, with tremendous press coverage. More than fifty law enforcement officers attended the enforcement seminar of February 28. The campaign materials have been well-received, and are probably the best we've ever done. Funding letters for FY 2009 have gone out. DDOT and WMATA provided much of the funding for this year's

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campaign, allowing the highest budget ever. Prince George's County also contributed its full suggested amount for the first time.

8. Follow-up Actions for the Trails Seminar

A follow-up meeting will take place to address issues raised at the seminar. Issues include crash and injury data for trails users, and standardized recommendations for traffic control devices for trail users.

9. Adjourned