

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, July 20th, 2004

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Jim Sebastian,
District Division of Transportation

**VICE-
CHAIRS:** Charlie Denney
Arlington County DPW
Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation,

Attendance:

Fatemeh Allahdoust	VDOT/NOVA
George Branyan	MHSO
Jamie Bridges	BMC
Lora Byala	WMATA
Cheryl Cort	Washington Regional Network for Livable Communities
Kirk Eby	City of Gaithersburg
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Christy Huddle	Montgomery County Executive Office
Chuck Kines	M-NCPPC Montgomery County
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Jim Sebastian	District of Columbia
Lois Thibault	U.S. Access Board
Betsy Thompson	City of Rockville
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

COG Staff Attendance:

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Andrew Austin
Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the March 18th, 2004 Meeting

Minutes were approved. On Item #7 Jim Sebastian's presentation on the D.C. Bike Plan was a joint presentation.

3. The Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee and Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning at WMATA

Lora Byala, WMATA

No one has represented WMATA on this subcommittee since Sharonlee Vogel retired. The subcommittee would like to hear how the Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee works and how we can work together to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to Metro.

Lora noted that Robin McClelland has assumed Sharonlee Vogel's responsibility to manage bike lockers. No one at Metro does bicycle and pedestrian planning specifically, though such considerations may be included in station-area plans. Pedestrians officially have first priority for access, followed by bus, followed by cars. WMATA does not generally plan for areas beyond its property line. Nor does its parking department plan its facilities based on future pedestrian demand or land use. The Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee is a staff committee of jurisdictional representatives, which reports to the WMATA Board. Lora distributed a list of JCC members. If a jurisdiction staff member has a concern about access to a Metro station, their JCC representative is a good person to talk to.

Cheryl Cort asked about the status of bus stop studies that WMATA is pursuing. Lora replied that WMATA is currently studying major bus stops and transfer points to rail. There is also a regional activity center study going on, which may include pedestrian access and bus stop access. Many of the jurisdictions are doing their own studies, including Montgomery County and Fairfax County. Lora promised to make inquiries and get more information on collaboration with the jurisdictions to improve bus stop access. Ideally, WMATA would have someone evaluating bus stop locations and informing the jurisdictions about the access needs at each location. Lois Thibault noted that ADA in principle requires that access issues be addressed. Fatemeh replied that such requirements usually apply to new construction, but there is no money set aside to go back and retrofit. Jim Sebastian pointed out that of the various federal funding pots, nearly all can be used to built sidewalks and correct ADA problems.

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Charles Kines asked whom the jurisdictions should contact with regards to bicycle and pedestrian access issues at WMATA. Lora replied that the JCC member would be a good point of contact, but that there is no specific staff person at WMATA assigned to bicycle and pedestrian issues. With regards to bicycle lockers, Robin McClelland is the contact person for bike locker rental and repairs. Michael Farrell noted that Robin deals strictly with bike locker administration, not broader bicycle or pedestrian access. It has been a management decision that bicycle and pedestrian issues be dispersed and dealt with on a project by project basis. Jim Sebastian said that Robin McClelland is a customer service representative, and we should not try to morph her responsibilities into planning or design. Her contact number is 301-562-4620, e-mail rmcclelland@wmata.com.

The JCC occupies a position within WMATA analogous to that of the Transportation Planning Board Technical Committee to the TPB.

Jim Sebastian suggested that the different jurisdictions fund a bicycle/pedestrian coordinator at WMATA. Most of the access issues that we've been discussing are the responsibility of the jurisdictions. But it would be helpful to have someone at WMATA who would think systematically about how to get more people to access Metro without cars, and work with the jurisdictions to get the improvements made. In D.C. little was happening with bicycles while there was no bicycle coordinator, and now that they have one things are happening. Would such a position be acceptable to WMATA. Lora replied that it is possible for the jurisdictions to fund an additional position. The subcommittee was supportive of the idea. The position would only be a beginning; funds would still be needed for implementation. Jim said that he does not have time to think systematically about transit access in D.C. Allen Muchnick added that WMATA has 10,000 employees and a billion-dollar annual budget; it should have one planner assigned to pedestrian and bicycle access. The measure of success, Cheryl Cort added, is the increase in the share of those modes. The position could more than pay for itself in reduced need for auto parking. We could even evaluate it as a TERM, assuming the person would succeed in reducing automobile trips. John Wetmore agreed with the need for a position, adding that bus stop planning often falls through the cracks. The coordinator would not be able to do all the studies, but they could use the existing studies and try to get them implemented, or commission new studies.

Fatemeh Allahdoust suggested that we present the idea to the JCC. Jim Sebastian agreed. We could take a third of the money from each jurisdiction, just like with the bike racks, only on an annual basis. It could be a two-year pilot to start, with funding to be renewed if the agencies agreed. The next JCC meeting is September 24th.

- Jim Sebastian will present the idea of a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator at WMATA to the JCC on September 24th.

4. Top Ten Unfunded Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Michael Farrell, MWCOG

The Top Ten Unfunded Bicycle and Pedestrian projects in the region are selected on an annual basis in December, and endorsed by the TPB in January. The list is a tool for publicizing projects that the jurisdictions would like to get funded. Endorsement by the TPB does not necessarily result in their being funded. When the list is updated projects from the previous list that have been funded are moved to a “success list”. Some projects may be removed because the jurisdiction’s priorities have changed. Since each jurisdiction should get internal consensus on which unfunded projects have highest priority, jurisdictional representatives should consider consulting their advisory bodies and political leaders so that by the November meeting they will know what their jurisdiction’s highest priorities are. The list must be adopted at the November meeting of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee so that it may go to the TPB no later than January. The list was last updated in December, 2002. It was not updated in 2003 because very little had changed, so there was little success to celebrate. A hand-out with the list was provided, along with a copy of the selection criteria.

Fatemeh Allahdoust asked if projects of a regional nature, such as a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator for WMATA. Jim Sebastian replied that as long as the project would show up in the TIP if funded, it can be nominated. The project does not have to be location-specific. If a project has been funded, or is virtually a done deal, then it should not be on this list. Ron Kirby started this list years ago.

We are giving two months lead time for the jurisdictions to decide what their priorities are, then our subcommittee will select a list of priorities, which the TPB will then endorse. Fatemeh suggested that anything in the CLRP should automatically be in the Top Ten priority list. Allen Muchnick replied that the CLRP is a thirty-year document, while the TIP is a six-year document. And many projects, especially smaller projects like bicycle and pedestrian projects, are added to the CLRP and the TIP simultaneously. Andrew Meese suggested that this could serve as an official wish list of unfunded projects. It is an identification of projects that are not so high priority as to have been placed in the CLRP, but that are waiting in the wings should funding become available. We are frequently asked to provide such wish lists in connection with homeland security. Fatemeh suggested that this should be the next round of priorities after those in the CLRP. Jim Sebastian suggested that we wait and see what the priorities are.

Allen Muchnick suggested that the success list be split by year, so we can see what proportion of the each year’s priority projects ended up getting funded, rather than lumping them all together. The TIP submissions have check-box for projects that primarily bicycle and pedestrian projects. So we should be able to track how much money is being spent on bicycle and pedestrian projects in the TIP, and compare with the funds spent on highway expansion, as well as how much of that money ends up being projects from our priority list. Lists R Us.

- Jurisdictional Representatives should start the process to select new unfunded bicycle and pedestrian priority projects, and should inform Michael Farrell if a

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project on the existing list has been funded.

- Michael Farrell will investigate tracking the amount spent on bicycle and pedestrian projects in the TIP.

5. COG Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects Progress & Event Reports
Michael Farrell, MWCOG

A. Street Smart

The FY 2004 Street Smart campaign has been completed. The budget was \$390,000. A draft of the final report was distributed. Comments should be provided to Michael Farrell within two weeks, so that the consultant can finalize the report.

One hitch has been that the Virginia DMV has not yet paid us their \$100,000 share, due to federal re-authorization issues.

For FY 2005, Michael Farrell has been instructed that there will be a competitive bid for a consultant in FY 2005. We will write up an RFP in August, and go to the TPB in September to ask for their endorsement of the RFP, and to solicit local match funds. Local match funds are critical to match the federal funds being provided by the States. We need to have local commitments by December. We can put out an RFP using the strawman budget. But we need a hard budget before we start work.

Our evaluation shows that people are hearing our messages, and people report seeing drivers yield to pedestrians more often. Perceived probability of getting a ticket for failure to yield to a pedestrian has not increased. Regional safety data, when the 2003 numbers become available, will be examined for improvement in the bottom line of deaths and injuries. The target audience, males under 35, showed the greatest improvement. Jim Sebastian asked what the improvement in message awareness was this year. Last year it was 11 percentage points. Michael Farrell couldn't recall, but promised to get that information. George Branyan asked if we would be asking for anything different in our RFP than what Design House has already been doing. Michael Farrell replied that the RFP would be essentially what Design House has been doing. We need someone who has experience negotiating ad time, and who can modify the materials based on the wishes of our funding agencies and our estimates of effectiveness. Evaluation is a mandatory portion of the program. George Branyan noted that if we can leverage free media from the enforcement efforts we could get a great deal of free media. Jim Sebastian asked if the evaluation should ask people if they are worried about getting a ticket, or if they are worried about hitting someone. The message was primarily "be careful", although it did mention law enforcement. We can decide what our message should be when it comes time to re-design the campaign in the task force. Jim Sebastian suggested tabling the discussion and leave it to task force which we will convene for the purpose.

- Michael Farrell will work with other COG staff to produce an RFP for a consultant for

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the FY 2005 Street Smart campaign. Subcommittee members are encouraged to try to find local money to match the federal funds that the States will be providing.

B. Bicycle/Pedestrian Project Database.

The bicycle and pedestrian project database has grown to 243 projects. A sample copy of it was passed around. Michael Farrell encouraged the group to submit their projects, either directly or by sending him whatever information they have to input into the database. Already it is possible to query the database and find out how many miles of bike lanes are being planned. When the database is complete the answers will be more accurate. The old method of getting information on planned projects was to call all the bicycle coordinators and ask them what they had in the works. The database will make information more accessible and more accurate. Eric Gilliland asked if project meetings could be included in the database. Michael replied that the project database included a link to the project or departmental web site, which would have the most recent information. Time-perishable information like project meeting dates is prohibitively difficult to maintain at this level. Names and contact information for project directors will also be provided.

The next step will be for jurisdictional staff to provide more project data, and to check what is in the database for accuracy. It is best if people who are familiar with the project enter the data, since they are less likely to make errors of interpretation. The database will be online in October, we hope. It is tied into the overall CLRP database.

When you enter data, choose one of the agencies on the list of lead agencies, or your projects won't show up. And when you open the database, save it to your hard drive first. Technical questions should go to Andrew Austin, planning questions should go to Michael Farrell.

6. Fall Bicycle or Pedestrian Training Event

Michael Farrell, MWCOG

A number of ideas have been suggested for a Fall workshop, including a seminar on pedestrian access to transit, a replay of one of Charlie Denney's pedestrian-friendly communities workshops, or another ADA workshop. ADA is very easy to market; more than 100 people showed up for our last workshop, with heavy representation for consultants.

MPO's that had Walkable Communities Workshops may now apply for workshops next year. The major catch is that the cost has risen from \$8,000 to \$20,000 for eight workshops. And we may have cherry-picked the best events and the most motivated local coordinators already. I will announce the possibility and gauge interest. The application is due August 18th.

We will eventually repeat something we have already done, but we should decide what is most relevant or needed.

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George Branyan suggested a seminar on pedestrian enforcement. Enforcement is a difficult topic, because the police are very jurisdictionally oriented, training needs to be specific to local law, and we don't have the contacts. COG's Police Chiefs Committee might be a good audience for a brief seminar, if it could be attached to an already scheduled meeting. Andrew Meese added that Homeland Security is placing a lot of demands on the police. Andrew Meese suggested that the subcommittee members work within each jurisdiction to get such training. COG already has had a Transportation Safety Conference in November of 2003. Jim Sebastian noted that he had not been able to schedule training for the DC police. Jim suggested that we focus on presenting to people who are already coming to COG.

Cheryl Cort suggested that we sponsor a presentation of Traffic Safety through Design that she had attended at a meeting of the Congress for the New Urbanism. The emphasis on safety could help bring in the unconverted. ADA is a proven way to pack the house with engineers. We should also have a local speaker, from DDOT for example.

Arlington County is wrapping up its arterial traffic management study, which might be a good case study for our seminar.

DC is starting to employ police to control intersections, primarily to prevent box-blocking. Their presence may mitigate the worst driver behavior.

- Michael Farrell will gauge interest in another round of Walkable Communities Workshops, and will investigate the Congress for the New Urbanism presentation on Traffic Safety through Design.

5. Montgomery County Updates
Charles Kines, M-NCPPC

M-NCPPC will be modifying its zoning ordinance to incorporate bicycle parking requirements. They are researching ordinances in other locations.

The Beach Drive/Sligo Creek area will be having a bicycle safety campaign.

There will be some signage improvements, and possibly some share the road pavement markings similar to those used in San Francisco. There is no width for bike lanes, and the park people resist widening. There is a concern that widening the road would increase speeds. Allen Muchnick asked where the cyclists would be instructed to ride. Will they be instructed to take the lane. Allen suggested that the speed be lowered so that cyclists can take the lane. A ten foot lane is too narrow for cyclists to ride to the right. There have only been four accidents on Sligo in the last three years, one of which was a fatality. There is a speeding problem on Beach Drive. Allen Muchnick suggested narrowing the lanes to 9' and providing a narrow shoulder.

6. Member Jurisdiction Updates

John Wetmore attended the Walk21 conference in Copenhagen and got nine hours of videotape. Next years Walk21 is in Zurich. John may present some of his slides to the subcommittee in September.

Adjourned.