

REPORT
TPB Citizens Advisory Committee
December 13, 2012
Tina Slater, 2012 CAC Chair

The CAC meeting on December 13 included a focus group-style discussion of the marketing concepts for the next *Street Smart* campaign scheduled for spring 2013, updates on the implementation of the Regional Complete Streets Policy, and development of the Transportation Planning Information Hub for the National Capital Region. Staff also announced the results of the election of six members of the CAC for 2013.

Street Smart Focus Group

As the region strives to promote walkable communities, the CAC has long recognized the importance of pedestrian and bicycle safety. Public education campaigns, like *Street Smart*, are an essential part of the wider effort to make our streets safe and convenient for all users.

This year, the CAC has requested opportunities to become more involved in the *Street Smart* campaign. A CAC member, Veronica Davis, is currently participating in the *Street Smart* Advisory Committee meetings. Also, the CAC requested the opportunity to provide input on the draft creative materials for the campaign early in the development process. (In past years, the CAC has been briefed on the *Street Smart* campaign materials after they have already been developed, and the committee expressed concern that they had no opportunity to provide real input in the process.)

At the CAC meeting on December 13, representatives from the campaign's new advertising consultants in Austin, Texas presented draft campaign concepts to the committee in a focus group-style session. The consultants presented two campaign concepts: "BAM" which featured cartoonish pedestrian and bicycle figures in the midst of collisions and "Faces" which featured close-up photos of people staring straight into the camera with black tire-treads across their faces. The consultants emphasized key features of the campaign, including the need to appeal to a variety of audiences (with an emphasis on Spanish-language messages) and the need to use the campaign materials in a variety of ways (does it "have legs"?) including posters, radio, events, etc.

CAC members reacted enthusiastically to the draft materials, generally expressing the opinion that the new concepts improved upon *Street Smart* approaches in recent years. Comments from the committee included the following:

- Specific suggestions regarding ***targeting messaging to drivers***:
 - ***Vehicle speed*** – According to one member, research show that the most effective action that drivers can take is to reduce their speed. Therefore, the messaging should encourage drivers to slow down.

- **Turning vehicles** – Another member said that messaging should target turning vehicles, which are a major point when collisions occur.
- Emphasize the possibility of **police enforcement**. Member suggested that the campaign might include the threat of police enforcement. The consultants said the campaign would not likely include images of police, but enforcement could be coupled with other aspects of the campaign, such as stepped up and publicized enforcement efforts when the campaign is first launched. A CAC member said the campaign could be coordinated with the use of speed cameras. The consultants emphasized, however, that it was important not to represent the “cops as bad guys.”
- Focus messages on **pedestrian and cyclist behavior**:
 - **Hazardous bicycling** – Members spoke about growing concerns that the behavior of cyclists can be erratic and dangerous. They suggested the campaign should target cyclists’ behavior.
 - **Cell phone use** – Members also discussed the dangers that arise from pedestrians using cell phones. One member suggested using an image of a cell phone with tire treads across it.
 - **Darkness** – A member said that a large percentage of pedestrian fatalities occur at night, and therefore the campaign might try to specifically raise awareness about those heightened dangers.
- Thoughts about **the role of children** in the campaign:
 - Members discussed **appealing to parents** through their children. They discussed the ways in which campaigns to promote recycling have successfully used school education to indirectly influence the behavior of adults.
 - The group discussed the **use of images of children** in the campaign. While some members suggested it could be very powerful to feature a child’s face with a tire tread, others (including the consultants) suggested that such disturbing imagery could create a negative backlash.
- Thoughts about **campaign design**:
 - Use **free media** as much as possible. The consultant assured the CAC that the campaign was being devised to take advantage of an array of free media opportunities.
 - Make sure the campaign is built with an evaluation tool to **measure success**. The consultants said that before/after surveys would be performed.
- **Don’t create exaggerated fears** about walking and bicycling. Members said the campaign needs to be careful not to create a false impression that walking and bicycling are inherently dangerous when in fact people are far more likely to be hurt while driving.

Update on the Implementation of the Regional Complete Streets Policy

At the urging of the CAC, the TPB in May approved a Regional Complete Streets Policy. At the CAC's December 13th meeting, Mike Farrell of the COG/TPB staff briefed the CAC on the implementation of the policy. He gave an update on a survey that staff has performed to identify how many of the region's jurisdictions have approved Complete Streets policies and issues they are encountering in implementing such policies.

CAC members asked what efforts will be taken to ensure some consistency among the TPB's members in their Complete Streets policies, and in particular, whether some action might be taken to encourage those members without a policy to adopt one. Mr. Farrell said that a workshop will be conducted early in 2013 that will offer members a chance to share their experiences. This peer exchange will hopefully encourage all members to take useful actions in their jurisdictions.

Review of the TPB's Draft Website *Transportation Planning Information Hub for the National Capital Region*

John Swanson of TPB staff presented the latest draft of the *Transportation Planning Information Hub* website for review and comment by the Committee. He reminded the group that the origin of the website was an event in May 2010 called "The Conversation" in which numerous stakeholders recommended that the TPB develop a new tool for explaining the regional transportation planning process to the public. He gave Committee members a brief tour of the site, including its three main sections: Planning Process; High-Profile Projects; and Documents and Resources.

Committee members made or asked several comments, suggestions, and questions about the site:

- ***How will you get the word out about the site?*** Several Committee members asked about how the TPB planned to publicize the site. In particular they asked what sites would link to the "Hub" website, including existing TPB and COG websites, as well as the websites of the different jurisdictions. One member asked whether the site would be built with the latest search engine optimization (SEO). Another member said she thought that advocacy groups in the region would be able to help publicize the site among their members. John Swanson said that staff will be thinking more about that in coming weeks and that staff might call on members of the CAC to help spread the word.
- ***How will staff maintain the site?*** Some Committee members expressed concern about the level of maintenance the site would require, especially with so many links to outside websites and materials. One Committee member said she had had a good experience giving such work to an intern. Staff is anticipating hiring an intern after the first of the year who might be able to assist with maintaining the site's content. Another member suggested using special software to automatically detect "broken" links on the site.

- ***Did you consider including federally-managed projects in the list of high-profile projects?*** One member suggested including federally-managed projects in the list of high-profile projects since the federal government owns or manages several major transportation facilities in the region and that the decision-making process for those projects can differ from the process for other state and local level projects. John Swanson said that recommendation was a good one and that staff would definitely consider it.
- ***Did you consider using an interactive map to show the high-profile projects?*** One member said she thought it would be really useful to display the high-profile projects on an interactive map, perhaps Google-based. John Swanson said that staff had considered that and that it would probably be part of the second phase of development for the website.
- ***Make it easy for users to provide feedback about the site.*** One member reminded staff to make it easy for users to provide feedback about the site. He said this could go a long way in helping staff make improvements to help make the site more usable and valuable for the intended audience. John Swanson said that staff would certainly endeavor to make that kind of interaction on the site possible.

CAC Elections

John Swanson announced that the 2012 CAC had in an email election chosen six individuals (two from each state-level jurisdiction) to serve on the 2013 CAC:

- Veronica Davis, DC
- Tracy Hadden Loh, DC
- Allen Muchnick, VA
- Tina Slater, MD
- Steve Still, VA
- Emmet Tydings, MD

Nine additional members (three from each state-level jurisdiction) will be nominated by the TPB officers at the TPB's meeting on January 23. After those nominations, the TPB will approve the full slate of 15 CAC members, along with any alternate members the TPB officers nominate. At that same meeting, the TPB chair will announce his appointment of the CAC chair. The 2013 CAC will hold its first meeting in February.

Other Business

- ***Upcoming TPB agenda*** – Ron Kirby, Director of COG's Department of Transportation Planning, briefed the CAC on upcoming agenda items. Members spoke in some detail about the draft letter from Chairman Turner to state legislators regarding funding issues. They said they appreciated the robust nature of the letter and discussed the seriousness of the region's transportation funding shortfall.

- **CLI Alumni Network** – Staff is developing a network of past participants in the TPB’s Community Leadership Institute (CLI) to help implement public involvement events and facilitate coordination among community leaders from across the region on transportation issues. The first event for this network will be held early in 2013.
- **CAC 20th Anniversary** — John Swanson said that TPB staff was tentatively planning to host an event in February to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the CAC. He asked committee members to volunteer to help with this event.

ATTENDEES
CAC Meeting, December 13, 2012

Members Present

Tina Slater, Chair (MD)
Veronica Davis (DC)
Bill Easter (MD)
Kelby Funn (MD)
Anita Hairston (DC)
Allen Muchnick (VA)
Jeffrey Parnes (VA)
Stephen Still (VA)
Emmet Tydings (MD)

Members Not Present

Maureen Budetti (VA)
Rob Mandle (DC)
Larry Martin (DC)
Krystle Okafor (MD)
William Soltesz (VA)

Alternates Present

Justin Clarke (MD)
Kimberly Kaplan (VA)
Tracy Hadden Loh (DC)
John Epps (MD)
Fred Walker (VA)

Staff and Guests

John Swanson, COG/TPB
Ron Kirby, COG/TPB
Ben Hampton, COG/TPB
Andy Meese, COG/TPB
Mike Farrell, COG/TPB
Bill Orleans, citizen
Kenna Williams, Sherry
Matthews Advocacy
Marketing
Jose Marrero, Sherry
Matthews Advocacy
Marketing