

# National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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## **DRAFT MEETING NOTES**

### **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 18, 2018

**TIME:** 1:00 p.m.

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

**CHAIR:** Cindy Engelhart, VDOT

**VICE-  
CHAIRS:**

Jeff Dunckel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation

Karyn C. McAlister, Prince George's DPWT

Jamie Carrington, WMATA

**Attendance:**

Eric Brenner	MD Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board
James Carrington	WMATA
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Robert Gardner	WABA
Laura Ghosh	Loudoun County DOT
Eli Glazier	Montgomery County Planning (by phone)
Katie Harris	Washington Area Bicyclist Association
Oleg Kotov	City of Rockville (by phone)
Jack Kozelca	Capital Trails Coalition
Karyn McAlister	Prince George's County DPWT (by phone)
David Patton	Arlington County
Molla Sarros	MDE (by phone)
Adam Weigel	Prince William County DOT

**COG Staff Attendance:**

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 18, 2018 Meeting**  
Page 2

Lyn Erickson  
Michael Farrell  
Matthew Gaskin  
Andrew Meese  
Jon Schermann  
John Swanson

**1. General Introductions.**

**2. Review of the July 10 Meeting Notes**

Minutes were approved.

**3. Jurisdictional Updates**

Mr. Gardner mentioned that Washington DC is pushing a Vision Zero update, in two meetings on the 27<sup>th</sup> of this month.

Next week there will be a meeting for anyone interested in the Long Bridge project, to develop a set of principles which they will endorse for that project.

Arlington is updating the bicycle element of its master plan, and preparing a dockless pilot project.

Mr. Weigel of Prince William County introduced himself. He is the new bicycle and pedestrian coordinator.

Loudoun has a new bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Ms. McAlister announced that tomorrow there will be new Capital Bikeshare stations in National Harbor. Parking day is this Friday, parking spaces in Hyattsville will be converted into a bicycle parking lane. The county will do a study on the connections between health and transportation in corridor planning, with a US DOT grant, in the Addison Road corridor. Nationally there are six recipients of this grant. This will be an 18 month study. MDSHA will be looking at multiple corridors including the US 301 corridor and MD 210 corridors, for pedestrian safety. Prince George's planning is working on pedestrian and bike access to the Prince George's Plaza metro station.

Montgomery County DOT is about to start construction on its fifth separated bikeway in downtown Silver Spring. It will have the first bike signal in Maryland. Mr. Glazier added that the bicycle plan is moving rapidly towards approval.

#### **4. Subcommittee Recommendations to the TPB on the Endorsed Initiatives**

Mr. Farrell spoke to a powerpoint.

The seven endorsed initiatives occupy the middle ground in our planning framework, between the constrained element, which are projects for which we have identified funds, and what we call the “all-build” element, which is all the projects in all the long range plans in the region.

The seven initiatives are intended to be high impact in terms of meeting the goals that the TPB has identified, but that are “within reach” financially and politically.

TPB asked this Subcommittee to identify things that the region could do to advance these initiatives, specifically the National Capital Trail and Access to Transit initiatives. After responding to a survey, at the July meeting the Subcommittee made some consensus recommendations which will be brought to the TPB.

Mr. Farrell described the National Capital Trail. The National Capital Trail includes thirty projects that would fill gaps, upgrade, or provide short connection, such as the Arboretum Bridge.

Despite covering only a small part of the region, half a million people live and 800,000 people work within ½ mile of the National Capital Trail.

The Subcommittee felt that the scope of the National Capital Trail was too limited, covering too little of the region, and too few important trail projects. It’s too limited to achieve significant mode shift, and too limited to guide the TLC and TAP programs. The National Capital Trail is also mostly complete or on its way to completion. Lastly, it is an old idea, originally proposed by councilmember Jay Fiset over five years ago. It is not longer aspirational enough.

The Subcommittee recommended that the National Capital Trail be expanded into a regional trails network. Fortunately the Capital Trails Coalition has been working on such a plan. Mr. Farrell proposed that the Subcommittee recommend that the region build on the work the CTC has done, adopting its goals and selection criteria to expand the Capital Trails Network to cover the entire TPB membership.

The Subcommittee agreed that the TLC (Transportation – Land Use Connections) program has been highly effective. Mr. Farrell suggested that we recommend that TLC funding be sharply increased. The number that came up in the comments was a factor of three. However, Mr. Farrell suggested that we use the formula “sharply increase”.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 18, 2018 Meeting**  
Page 4

Access to Transit is about improving walk and bike access to transit, and increase ridership. In some cases a few investments can significantly increase the walk shed of a station. Consensus recommendation number three was to identify a list of high capacity transit stations to be prioritized for walk and bike improvements.

Next steps would be to review and approve these recommendations to be sent to the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB.

Mr. Patton asked if we were limiting it to WMATA. Mr. Swanson replied that we are not, the initiative was originally access to Metrorail, and we changed it to access to high capacity transit stations. For this initiative, we are prioritizing station areas, but not particular projects within those station areas. Identify a need, not prescribe the solutions.

Mr. Patton asked whether there would be concern about using a plan developed by an outside organization, the Capital Trails Coalition. Mr. Farrell replied that for both the National Capital Trail and Access to Transit we are making significant use of outside planning work, and vice versa. Mr. Farrell added that for the Capital Trails Network there is a non-trivial amount of work to be done, identifying trails in the outer jurisdictions. We are not specifying who should do this work, though the TPB may well conclude that TPB is the best agency to carry it out. We would also need to identify resources and a calendar to do it.

We were not able to integrate the Capital Trails Network into our new regional plan, Visualize, because the Capital Trails Network was not ready in time. The last time we added anything to Visualize was back in January, and the CTC was not ready back then. So if the Capital Trails Network is adopted by the TPB it will have to be on a different track than Visualize. . . At this point Visualize is already out the door, in the middle of public comment.

Mr. Brenner mentioned a project that the National Park Service mentioned an improvement to the trail access to 14<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge. But they didn't mention that it was part of the National Capital Trail. Mr. Farrell said that agencies can mention that a project is in the regional plan, but they don't always do so.

Mr. Swanson suggested putting the TLC recommendation third. The TLC can support the National Capital Trail and Access to Transit initiative. It will improve the narrative flow. Mr. Farrell agreed.

Ms. McAlister asked if projects that are part of these initiatives would score higher for TLC and Transportation Alternatives funding. Mr. Swanson replied that they would.

Ms. Sarros asked about adding something about incomes in the Capital Trail Network. Mr. Gardner replied that equity was already included in the selection criteria for the network. Mr. Weigel noted that the Capital Trails Network does not include Prince William County. What would be the schedule for adding Prince William's projects? Mr. Farrell replied that we had not

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 18, 2018 Meeting**  
Page 5

yet committed to doing this, but it would likely happen in the next calendar year. We would apply the CPC selection criteria to Prince William's planned trails network. This is not an "all-build" exercise. One of the selection criteria is continuity. You can see that northern Montgomery County has not trails in the Capital Trails Network; that was because their planned trail network lacks continuity.

Mr. Farrell noted that early on he had suggested that the Capital Trails Coalition use the TPB footprint. However, the coalition decided that they did not have adequate resources. Gathering the data, and stimulating the jurisdictions to improve it or create it, was a significant amount of work. The CTC was funded for 1.5 full time equivalents, from REI.

Subcommittee members from Prince William and Loudoun expressed interest in extension.

Another member questioned the off-street criterion. Is the intent recreational? Mr. Farrell replied that it was intended to be used for transportation and for recreation. It needs to be a low stress facility. The goal is a consistent high quality environment, suitable for all ages and abilities. Low quality connections were not accepted. We anticipate that the principle of connectivity will be maintained. WABA has been good about bringing in various stakeholders at various events such as the Trails Symposium, which is coming up November 15.

Mr. Farrell asked for a motion to endorse the recommendations to the TPB with the change in order that Mr. Swanson suggested. Mr. Patton made the motion. He asked about a quorum. Mr. Farrell replied that there were a lot of people on the phone. The motion passed by consensus.

## **5. Long Bridge Project**

No one from DDOT is available to talk about the long bridge.

DDOT is thinking in terms of having bicycle and pedestrian facilities on this railroad bridge, and parallel, and they are also thinking in terms of taking it all the way over the GW Parkway to Long Bridge Park, which will provide a connection to Crystal City, as well as connecting to the Mt. Vernon Trail.

Mr. Farrell spoke to a powerpoint describing the project. Alternatives include retaining the existing bridge and adding a new one, to provide a total for of four tracks.

Mr. Schermann added that the main driver of the project was to accommodate more passenger rail. CSX is not paying for it; the main driver is the State of Virginia.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 18, 2018 Meeting**  
Page 6

For bike ped facilities three options are being considered: attached, closely parallel, and separate. None of the publicized maps show a connection to Long Bridge Park. Mr. Patton suggested that it would improve confidence if the diagrams started to reflect such a connection. The design is likely to be tricky. A separate structure would cost more than an attached structure. Arlington has identified three attached trails in this country. Typically railroads want a fence. Currently CSX is asking for 25 feet of separation. The current EIS is all about a rail crossing, not a trail.

Long Bridge Park is a great trailhead, with restrooms, showers, and numerous facilities. And Crystal City is on the Amazon short list.

Mr. Farrell noted that having good technical ideas is one thing, but there needs to be political support. The TPB supports a bike ped facility is on the Harry Nice Bridge, and this is arguably more important given the development densities. There is a need for advocacy, which is not this Subcommittee's role. Mr. Gardner said that WABA will be holding meetings on the subject.

Mr. Farrell noted that the 14<sup>th</sup> Street is something of a choke point, and there is a lot of existing and planned development on both sides. Long Bridge would also be a more direct connection from Crystal City to National Harbor.

## **6. Other TPB Program Updates**

- **November Street Smart Campaign**

The regional Street Smart pedestrian and bicycle safety campaign is coming up in November. The press event will take place on November 8, two days after election day.

We'll have a video training exercise, with a bright yellow sports car and virtual reality headset. There will be a TV screen set up so you can see what they see. We've set up situations commonly associated with crashes, and ask the driver to spot pedestrians and bicyclists.

We'll spend nearly \$400,000 on paid media buys and outreach activities. We're using our new shattered lives creative.

- **Bike Ped Project Database**

Mr. Farrell sent out an electronic map, which is not editable, but which is color-coded by status.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee**  
**Notes from the September 18, 2018 Meeting**  
Page 7

It will allow the jurisdictions to see whether their information is up to date. I can give you a user ID and password to go into the database, or you can send me the information and I can enter it. The database included things that have been built since we started this plan, but most of them are planned projects. It is the basis for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. January 2019 is the four-year mark since the last plan update.

Mr. Farrell has outlined in earlier emails what the critical information in the database is. We only map the linear projects, but we also track point and linear project, like a downtown traffic calming project. We don't count signed routes as bike facilities, but we do count painted, buffered, and protected bike lanes as facility types. We don't count sharrows. There is a move towards low-stress bike networks, but this plan doesn't address that – it tracks miles of planned facilities.

Mr. Brenner asked about a regional user-oriented paper map, like the old ADC bike map. ADC once did such a map at its own expense and TPB's input. ADC was bought out, and the technology it was using was never digitized. So the task would be to take the lines we can get from the jurisdictions, and pick a design. Mr. Farrell was thinking in terms of something similar to the DC bike map, but expanded outwards to cover the area inside the beltway.

Commuter Connections does have a regional digital bike map.

Mr. Farrell added that ADC sold the old map to the public, so there was no cost to COG. We would need to identify some funding, and hire a consultant to design it.

Mr. Patton asked how frequently the database map which I sent out is updated. Mr. Farrell replied that it reflects information that is two months old. If you know that you personally have provided information, but it's not reflected in the map, don't worry about it. Mr. Farrell would like to gather more information first before troubling his GIS people to change the map.

- **Harry Nice Bridge**

Mr. Farrell said that TPB plans to make an official comment on the bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on the Harry Nice Bridge. It will have everything in it that WABA would like to see.

- **Fall Dockless Workshop**

The workshop will be held late next month. There's been a lot of change since the Spring workshop. DC will report on the results of its pilot. The purpose of the workshop is the same as the last one; agencies that are doing dockless bike share can brief those who aren't doing it but are considering it. In a rapidly evolving field information sharing is important.

- **Car Free Day**

Car free day is this week – there are two days.

## **7. Announcements and Other Business**

Ms. Ghosh asked for examples of good and bad transitions from bicycle facilities to other facilities. Mr. Farrell replied that this could have some relation to low stress bike facility networks. The idea is that when a bike facility ends, it should end on a low-stress street, where you don't need a designated facility. Mr. Farrell recommended looking at the self-identified best bicycle plan in America, the Montgomery County Bicycle Plan., and talking with some of the planners there.

Traditional bike planning identified a desired route network based on where people wanted to go, and then worked on adding miles of facilities. With low stress networks, you start by looking at what is already bikable, and then identify the gaps, where specialized facilities are needed.

Mr. Brenner added that Prince George's has been trying to clean up some of their worst ends to bike facilities.

## **8. Adjourned**