

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, May 20th, 2003

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Charlie Denney,
Arlington County DPW

**VICE-
CHAIRS:** Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation,
Jim Sebastian
District Division of Transportation

Attendance:

Fatemah Allahdoust	VDOT/NOVA
Harry Cepeda	DDOT
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Brian V. King	VDOT
Bob Kuhns	Gorove/Slade
Rich Metzinger	National Park Service
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Mimi Murray	Fairfax County DOT
Steve Pinkus	Gorove/Slade
Jim Sebastian	District of Columbia
Gail Tait-Nouri	Montgomery County DPWT
Kenneth Todd	NCBW
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians
Maria M. White	City of Alexandria

COG Staff Attendance:

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Michael Farrell
Charlene Howard
Andrew Meese

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the March 18th, 2003 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Demonstration new Bike Route-finding Web Site, bikemetro.com

Michael Farrell, COG

Mr. Farrell and Mr. Gilliland demonstrated and discussed the bikemetro route-finding web site. This brand-new web site is sponsored by the Southern California Air Quality Management District, and was produced by the software company, Geoperception. Participants agreed that the mapquest-style routing service would be a valuable tool for cyclists. The routing system provides point to point cue sheets and maps between addresses or major points of interest such as bike shops, universities, etc. The user can select hill tolerance and skill levels, and whether to use transit. The transit feature is not yet functional. Buying into existing software should be cheaper than developing it from scratch. Bike to Work information and community boards were also available on the web-site. It was suggested that a location to advertise used bicycles would be a handy feature. But WABA or Commuter Connections are capable of hosting such functions already. If possible, this software should be hosted at Commuter Connections or commuterpage.com, where non-bicyclists may encounter it.

Mr. Sebastian suggested that we demonstrate this web site to Nick Ramfos, Chris Arabia, and to the Commuter Connections subcommittee. Mr. Sebastian proposed that we endorse this measure as a TERM. The board will consider new TERMS possibly in July, when we will know if we need them. At that point the committee could react to the analysis. Mr. Meese pointed out that a technical committee is not supposed to lobby. However, it makes sense from a technical point to indicate which TERMS we consider to be the best from a technical and/or bureaucratic point of view. TERM analysis is educated guesswork, so the lack of a track record with this software does not prevent us from doing a TERM analysis. Since there is a good chance that no TERMS will be adopted, the committee should think about funding regardless of whether TERMS are needed.

Major outstanding issues were:

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- Lack of responsiveness to inquiries from Geoperception up until now. It was speculated that the company had been reluctant to answer questions regarding its software while it was under development. Michael Farrell agreed to try to contact them. Continued nonresponsiveness would indicate that we should not pursue this software for the Washington region.
- We need to know what data we will need to provide in order to make this software useful. We do not know what underlying data they are using to evaluate suitability of their bicycle routes. If they are using speed and volume, we have that, but we do not have bicycle level of service for the entire region.
- Cost is a related question; the licensing cost will be between \$20,000 and \$60,000 per year, plus any additional data collection cost. The marginal cost of selling software is near zero, so the price may be negotiable.
- We should ask the SCAQMD what air quality assumptions they used when funding this software.
- Mr. Farrell will look into all these questions with Geoperception and with the Southern California Air Quality Management District and report to the subcommittee.

4. **Discussion of Regional Electronic Mapping of Bicycle Routes and Facilities in the Washington Region**
Charlene Howard, MWCOG

Ms. Howard has been gathering existing electronic data from the various jurisdictions. Existing information on bikeways at COG is obsolete. This is a mapping, not a route-finding effort. Ms. Howard asked attendees to provide COG with any bike data they might be aware of. This data will be used for commuter assistance. We are still missing Montgomery County data. COG data will always lag behind jurisdictional data. The ADC Map could be used to help clean up the digital data.

- Mr. Farrell should e-mail the group to request contact data for electronic bicycle information.

5. **Demonstration of the new COG Web Site**
Michael Farrell, COG

Mr. Farrell demonstrated the committee feature on the new COG web site, which allows the public to see meeting dates and documents. Some committees have password-protected documents, which is not likely for the bicycle and pedestrian committee. The on-line database of bicycle and pedestrian projects will be ready to demonstrate at the July meeting.

6. **Progress Report on the Sixth Edition of the ADC Washington, D.C. Regional Bike Map**

Michael Farrell, COG

Mr. Farrell described changes recently agreed to for the new edition. The extent will

remain the same. The enlargement of downtown on the front of the map will have more details drawn from the tourist map. We will also put in boxes showing how to approach the bridges. The last important change will be to the legend. The existing legend has six categories, which Mr. Farrell would like to reduce. At a minimum Mr. Farrell would like to get rid of the blue dotted line for a sidepath. In addition, Mr. Farrell would like to convert the official routes into generic routes, and reserve the solid red line for roads with bike lanes only. Mr. Denney mentioned that because this is not a digital map, changing colors would be a major undertaking and would depend on ADC's willingness to do the work. Ms. Allahdoust suggested changing the nomenclature for bike paths to the AASHTO term, "shared-use path".

Initial input is due to the ADC Company on June 1st, and the group will have one more opportunity to comment after the blueline version comes out in July.

- Mr. Farrell will discuss the proposed changes with the ADC Company to determine which may be feasible.

7. **Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Progress**
Michael Farrell, COG

The on-line database of regional bicycle and pedestrian projects is not yet ready to be demonstrated. It will be ready for the July Bike/Ped meeting. Mr. Farrell reviewed the portions of the plan already completed, the portions remaining to be done, and the likely schedule for completion of those elements. Census 2000 data is available and has been included. COG 2001 Household Travel Survey data will be available in July. COG 2002 Cordon Counts are not yet approved for public release, but should be approved before the end of the year so they can be incorporated as well. A descriptive chapter will be added showing the progress expected if all the projects listed in the regional database are carried out.

8. **Street Smart Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program Status Report.**
Michael Farrell, MWCOG

The final report has been issued and is available on the COG web-site. Mr. Farrell has submitted applications to the Maryland Office of Highway Safety and to the Virginia DMV for \$100,000 each. The District of Columbia has informally promised \$100,000. All the funds coming from the States are federal safety funds, so \$75,000 in local funds will be needed to match the federal funds assuming we receive all the funds we are asking for.

FY 2004 Street Smart will be carried out in the Spring, due to the impossibility of getting signed agreements from all the parties in time for an October campaign.

Another complication is that COG has not yet received any reimbursement from Virginia for last year's campaign. COG has had to bear the interest costs, something COG Accounting has been assured won't happen again. If the payment problem cannot be resolved, COG may refuse funds from Virginia. Virginia DMV cannot pay in a timely manner due to staffing shortages. Maryland Office of Highway Safety will allow us to submit invoices far enough in advance to allow for simultaneous receipt and payment of funds.

- Mr. Denney suggested that Mr. Farrell write a memo describing the need for local contributions, to be distributed among potentially contributing agencies.
- Next year, the request for funds should be submitted at the beginning of the year so that it can be built into local budgets.

9. **Bike to Work Day Event Report**
Eric Gilliland, WABA

Bike to Work Day 2003 was a big success. Bike to Work Day is the result of a partnership between WABA and Commuter Connections. The goal for this year was 3,000 participants, or 1,000 more than last year. Participation was 3,200. This was done with a smaller budget than last year's. Bike to Work Day has been effective in reaching its air quality goals through promoting more bicycling. This year there were 15 pit stops across the region and 21 commuter convoys. Every pit stop had at least one political leader in attendance, and the event received more press than ever before. Fox News, for the first time in this region, followed two cyclists and an automobile in a "commuter challenge" race from Chevy Chase to D.C. The cyclist won by one minute. AOL had the largest number of bicycle commuters. Their campus is adjacent to the WO&D Trail in Loudoun County. Sponsorship came in three tiers, and a certain level of donation was required to appear on the event T-shirt and literature.

10. **Discussion of Possible Educational Events for Fall, 2003.**

Mr. Cepeda proposed that our educational event be International Walk to School Day. Mr. Sebastian and Mr. Farrell explained that COG-sponsored events were for professional education, not elementary education. In the past, COG has sponsored seminars such as "Pedestrian Facilities 101", taught by Charlie Denney, "Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility", by Barbara McMillen and Andy Clarke, and "The New Aashto Guide" for Bicycle Facilities. Mr. Sebastian suggested that we sponsor a seminar on the environmental aspects of trails. Perhaps we could sponsor a seminar on design of trails, including environmental and economic development aspects.

Mr. Sebastian suggested a traffic calming seminar. Another suggestion was to sponsor a “Real Intersection Design” workshop by Michael King. A group divides into teams, then each team looks at an intersection and re-designs it for a particular mode, such as bikes, cars, etc. Everyone liked this idea. Mr. Farrell attended one of the first such seminars at Pro Bike Pro Walk 2000 in Philadelphia. Real Intersection Design is expensive, but it is a well-defined training seminar, easy to carry out this Fall.

Mr. Muchnick asked if the region was going to apply for the next round of Walkable Community workshops that the National Center for Bicycling and Walking. There will be an application process this year, and the actual seminars will be carried out in early 2005. Since we have already applied for this program, putting together another application will not be difficult.

- Mr. Farrell will contact Mr. King regarding the “Real Intersection Design” workshop, which is to be carried out this Fall.
- Mr. Farrell will apply for the next round of Walkable Community Workshops, which will take place in early 2005.

11. **Segway in the Washington Region**

Consideration of this issue was deferred until the July meeting.

12. **Member Jurisdiction Updates**

- Arlington. The new Arlington bike map was distributed. Dan Burden will be in Arlington next Wednesday and Thursday, providing assistance to the Columbia Pike Streetscape task force. On Thursday he will examine the new arterial traffic management study, and examine three corridors.
- District of Columbia. D.C. is halfway through the public involvement process. D.C. has four rides and four public workshops to do over the next four weeks. Participation has been good. Mr. Cepeda asked about how many seminars relating to pedestrians have taken place over the last three years. Mr. Cepeda asked to see every agenda item relating to pedestrians since the subcommittee added consideration of pedestrians.
- Fairfax County. 75 intersections have been approved for Yield to Pedestrian signs.
- City of Alexandria. Ms. White asked that we discuss the Segway at the next meeting, which is becoming a hot topic in Alexandria. Mr. Wetmore added that it had been a hot topic at recent conferences as well.
- Montgomery County. Mr. Wetmore has been trying to persuade the County GIS people to include walk to work census data on the County web site, something that could easily be done. It is not easy enough for the average person to readily get census tract-level walk to work data.
- Virginia Bicycling Federation. Mr. Muchnick mentioned that the Secretary of

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Transportation has issued a memo mandating that nonmotorized transportation be given the same consideration as motorized transportation.

- VDOT. The District Office has set up a committee to analyze the implications of the new Virginia directive on nonmotorized transportation. \$60,000 have been received to do a planning survey for nonmotorized modes. Mr. Sebastian mentioned that the District of Columbia had a bicycle survey on its web site. The bottom line is to find out how people are using bicycling and walking as a mode of transportation. The NOVA bike network study is back on track. Stand-alone pedestrian and bicycle projects will now be done, and 10% of Safety and Hazard elimination funds will be set aside for pedestrian and bicycle safety projects. VDOT NOVA is recruiting for a part-time bike coordinator position, Heather Wallenstrom's old position. Thirty hours a week plus a month off in the summer.
- Montgomery County. Ride-On has 32 Bike on Bus users per day, or 3,260/month. This is up from 26 users per *month* four years ago. Two racks on each of 300 buses. No evaluation of whether these riders are new trips for the bus system. Data from Denver indicated that bike on bus riders were mostly commuters. Montgomery County's experience shows that it takes time for people to realize that the service is available. Montgomery County also has received funds to design the Matthew Henson Trail and its segment of the Metropolitan Branch Trail. The Capital Crescent Trail trestle bridge over Rock Creek will open May 31st at noon. The Bethesda Trolley Trail bridge over I-270 will open at the end of June. The beltway bridge is already open. Some of the trail segments have been deferred, but the on-road routes are useable, so you can ride it now.
- National Park Service. In June there will be an inauguration event for the East Coast Greenway, a long-distance trail and bike route.
- Maryland. Will publish "A Building Manager's Guide to Bicycle Parking Facilities" by the end of June. Examples of lockers and racks for buildings can be sent to Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Wetmore discussed personalized marketing program to promote bicycling and walking which had achieved some success.

13. **Adjourned.**