

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3310 Fax: (202) 962-3202 TDD: (202) 962-3213

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 16, 2007

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Kristin Haldeman
Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority

**VICE-
CHAIRS:** Charlie Denney
Arlington County DES
Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation
Jim Sebastian, DDOT

Attendance:

Fatemeh Allahdoust	VDOT/NOVA
Paul DeMaio	Arlington DES
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Carol Kachadoorian	WMATA
Yon Lambert	City of Alexandria
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Jenny Pate	Fairfax County Parks Authority
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Charlie Strunk	Fairfax County DOT
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

COG Staff Attendance:

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Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the November 21, 2006 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Status of Electronic Bicycle Route-Finding (bicycle.org)

Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

Michael Farrell distributed an action item which was to be distributed to the Transportation Planning Board this week, on the recommendation of the TPB Technical Committee. Since Jim Sebastian presented the item to the TPB Technical Committee at their January meeting, Michael Farrell asked him to summarize what had happened.

The TPB Technical Committee was briefed on the proposal to include funding in the FY 2007 and FY2008 Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWPs). The Committee had generally positive comments, and recommended that the FY 2007 UPWP be amended to fund Phase I of the planning and implementation of a route-finding web site, and that Phase II be considered for inclusion in the FY 2008 UPWP. Some issues remain outstanding, such as the contracting arrangements.

Michael Farrell discussed the background of the proposal. The Subcommittee had been briefed on bicycle.org by WABA in September, and the Subcommittee suggested that bicycle.org could be included in the Commuter Connections work program. A request was made to the Commuter Connections Chair to do so, and the Commuter Connections Chair responded that some bicycle route-finding capability would be including in the ridesharing software upgrade, but not before FY2009. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee members agreed at their November meeting that FY 2009 was too long to wait, and the most interested members of the Subcommittee had a couple of follow-up meetings, at which it was agreed that we should request that an on-line bicycle route-finding project should be incorporated into the UPWP. The option of pooling funds was considered and rejected due to the complexity of the contracting. In the interests of getting the program moving, we had Jim Sebastian present the proposal to the TPB Technical Committee in January.

The text of the TPB resolution was distributed. The resolution provides that the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee and staff should consider and pursue the most cost-effective means of developing an on-line bicycle route-finding system. The solution the Subcommittee has

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discussed in the past was a sole-source contract with WABA, which would act a project manager and work with bicycle.org, the jurisdictions, and selected subcontractors such as the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin.

Andrew Meese added that one of the purposes of leaving the contracting mechanism open was to make sure that this system will have inter-operability as much as possible with the Commuter Connections software. We want our efforts to be compatible insofar as possible with what Commuter Connections is doing. The contracting mechanism will be the subject of a follow-up meeting.

Commuter Connections will continue to incorporate a bicycle route-finding capability into its software. But this capability will not be realize until FY 2009. If the Commuter Connections capability proves to be adequate, bicycle.org could be terminated. But as a multi-year project, we might not get this capability within a reasonable time-frame, or it may not suit our needs. The direction of the Subcommittee earlier was that this project should move forward in a timely manner. We should have full consultation, but not slow the pace of the project in order to ensure that Commuter Connections can use it.

Eric Gilliland said that whatever data the project produces will be GIS data, which should be usable by Commuter Connections.

Andrew Meese added that the UPWP can be used to set this project up, but it cannot be used to maintain it over the long run. So it would behoove us to consult with the Commuter Connections software consultant, to make sure that our system is as compatible as possible with theirs.

Allen Muchnick added that it might be good to know the in-kind value of the jurisdictional staff time needed to provide the data.

Jim Sebastian replied that we had some idea, and that much of the data such as roadway data already exists at COG. If COG doesn't have it, the jurisdictions do.

Eric Gilliland said that WABA can't go much further with this project without some payment.

We should have a work group meeting to follow up these data, contracting, and compatibility issues further.

Fatemeh Allahdoust said that VDOT Northern Virginia has centerline street data. Michael Farrell noted that data such as traffic volumes, speed limits, and number of lanes would also be useful.

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According to the proposal, Phase I of the project in FY 2007 would cover those jurisdictions for which data is available. We have a mandate to put some sort of Phase I system together, which need not be geographically complete. As far as contracting, the options are competitive bid or sole source with WABA. Carl Kalish, the contracting officer here at COG, has given his OK for the idea of a sole-source contract with WABA.

Jim Sebastian expressed concern that Phase I was not geographically comprehensive. Michael Farrell replied that the Phase I jurisdictions were illustrative. This list is not necessarily exclusive. And Phase II is coming up quickly, starting in July.

Andrew Meese did not think this issue would pose a problem for the TPB.

The TPB must identify things to cut in order to amend the work program. After March, it becomes almost impossible. In March if funds are likely to be left unspent, they are exported to the next fiscal year, and are no longer available. And once again, FY 2008 is coming up very soon. Andrew Meese said that he wrote the language to be as flexible as possible.

John Wetmore added that this project might give some jurisdictions an incentive to provide data, in order to be included in the project.

The funds for bicycle route-finding were added to the Bike-Ped Planning line item of the UPWP.

At the end of FY 2008 the UPWP will no longer fund this program. WABA will have to find funds to support it, or it will be folded into Commuter Connections.

Fatemeh Allahdoust asked why WABA should be hired. Michael Farrell replied that WABA had a good background to manage this project, having good relations with user groups, with the jurisdictions, and having done a lot of the groundwork already. The resolution does not specify a sole source contract with WABA, just collaborative relationship with WABA.

4. On-line Project Database

Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

Andrew Austin was ill and not present. Michael Farrell had been on vacation until the day before and had not had an opportunity to meet with Andrew. This item was deferred until the next agenda.

5. Best Practices in Bicycle and Pedestrian Wayfinding in the Washington Region – Survey Results

Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

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Michael Farrell distributed hand-outs summarizing the results of the survey on pedestrian and bicycle wayfinding. For bicycling, most jurisdictions are following the MUTCD. However, the the MUTCD is evolving, and some of the jurisdictions are starting to use the type of signs recommended by the NCUTCD Technical Committee. For pedestrian signs, there is not a lot of standardization. Michael Farrell promised to prepare a memo that will summarize the responses better. Not all the jurisdictions have responded.

Michael Jackson added that Maryland has started a taxicab service for bicyclists across the Bay Bridge. There is signage advising cyclists of this service along the US 40 corridor. John Wetmore said that Arlington has some good pedestrian maps, and expressed surprise that no photos of those maps were provided.

There was a request in 2006 from a COG Board member that the Bike/Ped Subcommittee look into the creation of standardized signage. The Subcommittee's reaction was that regional standardized signage was not necessary, insofar as most jurisdictions already follow the MUTCD for bicycles. Pedestrian trips are mostly not across jurisdictional lines, and each jurisdiction and area has its own priorities. Andrew Meese pointed out that the bicycle and pedestrian plan calls for a report on best practices, and suggested that it was time to get a report done. Michael Jackson thought the level of response from the jurisdictions was pretty good. Allen Muchnick said that signage was subject to vandalism, and the report might deal with vandalism issues. Michael Jackson suggested that jurisdictions sell replica signs for people wanting souvenirs. Michael Farrell promised to follow up with some of the jurisdictions that have not yet responded, and produce a short paper showing existing and best practices in the Washington region. The purpose of the paper is to share information, not set regional standards, something that Subcommittee members felt was duplicative for bicycles, since standardization already occurs through the MUTCD, and counter-productive in the case of pedestrians, since each jurisdiction has its own needs and priorities for pedestrian signage. Sharing information and best practices, on the other hand, was thought to be a worthwhile endeavor.

There was a question about Spanish-language signs. Michael Farrell replied that no one has Spanish-language signs, but there is a movement to use symbols and maps, both of which are useful to non-English-speakers.

6. Other COG/TPB Updates

Michael Farrell, COG/TPB

• **Street Smart**

The schedule will be March 18 – April 14, which will follow the change to daylight savings time. We still don't have a firm commitment from DC for funding due to slow action from congress. This does pose some threat to the problem. We have a likely budget of \$420,000. A planning meeting was held this morning, at which two concepts for the campaign were

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examined. We will have a follow-up meeting on Wednesday, February 7. Jim Sebastian asked if it would be more shocking this year. Michael Farrell replied that the two concepts were the coroners report and the boxing match, and we are leaning towards the boxing match. We are going for singular messages, that will speak more specifically to the audience being addressed. Radio spots will be addressed to motorists. The surveys showed that people were confused about the messaging because we were trying to address all user groups in each ad. The ads will be translated into Spanish and run on Spanish radio, and all the posters and hand-outs will be bilingual in English and Spanish. Spanish transit shelters will be placed in areas with Spanish-speaking populations.

We talk to pedestrians about motorists, and we talk to motorists about pedestrians and bicyclists, but we don't talk to bicyclists. The reason for that is that radio ads and transit shelters are inherently likely to reach far more motorists and pedestrians than bicyclists. It may be possible to target bicyclists more cost-effectively through the internet.

Internet advertising can be geographically targeted through IP addresses, and demographically targeted by advertising on the appropriate sites.

Outdoor advertising is expensive; we cannot target cyclists cost-effectively through transit or radio advertising. Michael Jackson objected that poor cyclists may not use the internet. Jim Sebastian replied that DDOT was working with Aspira and WABA to hand out brochures to non-English-speakers and poorer cyclists.

Streetsmart.mwcog.org will probably be the web location. Posters and radio messages will be singular and hard-hitting, while the web site and the brochures will contain more information.

Materials are not yet fully developed; we have sketches but no photos. A decision on which ad to choose is needed by Friday.

John Kutniewski said that pedestrians hit outside the crosswalk either thought they could make it across, or thought the driver saw them. Since a pedestrian will lose in a collision with a vehicle, it is the pedestrian's responsibility to avoid the collision.

There is still time for input, but the consultant should only work for one committee. So the advisory group will make all the decisions with respect to the program; the advisory group is the appropriate place to provide input. The next meeting of the Advisory Group will be on February 7.

- **Draft Bike/Ped Element for the FY 2008 UPWP**

The FY 2008 UPWP is currently under development, and will be approved by the TPB on March 21st. The program is consistent with what we've been doing already, except for the bicycle

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route-finding. Copies of the draft UPWP should be made available to the Subcommittee.

The ADC maps are not on a set schedule. They are re-done whenever the ADC map company decides to do one, usually when they run out.

Michael Jackson suggested that an Education session on trail issues should be done in FY 2008. Trail planners, traffic engineers, bicycle activists, etc. can be invited. Design, collection of crash & injury data, enforcement, snow, signals, lighting, signs, hours of access are all issues that can be dealt with. The UPWP calls for a training event. A trails event has been discussed before; it was third on the list, but since the others have been done it is probably time. It would be helpful if there were any available or canned courses. If one is not readily available, this may take a little more work to put together.

- Proposed Transportation-Land Use Technical Assistance Program

Michael Farrell distributed hand-outs on the new technical assistance program. The program does not provide funds, but it does provide technical assistance to do transit-oriented development planning. John Swanson is running the program. TPB member governments are eligible to apply; nongovernmental agencies may apply in partnership with their jurisdiction.

Jim Sebastian said that a lot of the jurisdictions are already doing this kind of work, but that this kind of assistance would still be useful.

This program arises partly from the scenarios study, which concluded that transit-oriented development had the potential to reduce congestion and vehicle-miles traveled

7. Jurisdictional Updates

Fairfax County is creating a bicycle map, and is trying to create an on-road bicycle route program.

Fairfax will also put bicycle racks on its bus fleet.

Friday February 9th is the annual bicycle/pedestrian symposium in Annapolis.

Cindy Englehart of VDOT/NOVA will teach a course on bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Sixty people signed up for the last VDOT class. 90 people have signed up for January 18. 30 people are on the waiting list for early March.

Arlington's community bike ride will take place on Sunday, June 3rd. Arlington is also revising its bike map.

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Allen Muchnick mentioned that there will be study to put light rail on the W&OD Trail.

The WABA gala and benefit will be coming up. Bike to Work Day is coming up on May 18th.

Jim Sebastian will give a bicycle tour for the Transportation Research Board conference. Send him an e-mail to sign up.

DC had 17 pedestrian fatalities in 2006, but no bicyclist fatalities. Most of them were not in the crosswalk. Michael Farrell asked whether only marked crosswalks were counted. John Kutniewski replied that the pedestrian was considered to be crossing at a crosswalk if they crossed at the intersection. John Wetmore asked about data on injuries; there might be more injuries at the intersection. Jim Sebastian said that fault for crashes as a whole is evenly divided, though for fatalities pedestrians were more likely to be at fault due to high-speed collisions at mid-block locations. Michael Jackson asked if any of the fatalities had been ruled homicides. John Kutniewski said that he did not have exact data.

The next regional workshop on bike and ped safety will take place on March 6 at WMATA. There will be on-line registration available. The focus will be to create a bicycle and pedestrian strategic plan for WMATA.

Michael Jackson announced that on Wednesday January 24 there would be a TRB session on bicycle programs and liability.

Adjourned.