

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 20, 2015

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Tammy Stidham, National Park Service

**VICE-
CHAIRS:**

David Goodman, Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Jeff Duncel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Kristin Haldeman, WMATA
Jim Sebastian, DDOT
Fred Shaffer, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Michael Alvino	National Park Service
Kevin Belanger	City of Rockville
Greg Billing	WABA
Matthew Colvin	Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA (by phone)
Michael Jackson	MDOT (by phone)
David Patton	Arlington County
George Phillips	Prince William County
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Bill Sadler	Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Fred Shaffer	M-NCPPC Prince George's County
Molla Sarros	Maryland Department of the Environment (by phone)
Tammy Stidham	National Park Service

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Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)
Victor Weissberg	Prince George's County (by phone)
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Charlene Howard
Andrew Meese
Jessica Mirr

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the November 18th Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

NPS has completed the data collection portion of its update to its paved trails plan.

Mr. Colvin will assume Mr. Sadler's role in the Washington region with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership, since Mr. Sadler will be working on national issues.

The City of Rockville is working on its bikeway master plan and is creating bike parking guidelines for its developers.

WABA will be pushing Vision Zero, an idea coming out of Northern European countries to sharply reduce traffic fatalities.

Pepco appears to be open to putting trails on its right of ways, though it is objecting to paying for them.

4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the National Capital Region

Mr. Farrell announced that the plan would be presented to the TPB tomorrow. Comments have been received and mostly integrated in the plan. Mr. Farrell spoke to a powerpoint.

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There have been significant numbers of projects added and subtracted, and some significant numerical errors corrected in the project mileages.

After the adoption of the plan, the major follow-on action is the on-line mapping and visualization.

Mr. Farrell integrated most of Mr. Sadler's comments relating to Safe Routes to School, since they were consistent with the spirit of the plan, and added a specific commitment to snow and ice removal.

Comments were primarily technical corrections, but the Citizens Advisory Committee had comments relating to things they would like to see in the future. WMATA provided comments correcting and updating their activities. The Maryland Department of Environment provided detailed comments as well, including a suggestion that some of the language appeared to blame pedestrians.

Mr. Jackson asked about MDE's comments on pedestrians being to blame. Mr. Farrell replied that he had described areas with the worst safety problems as auto-oriented areas with low-income populations who lack access to motor vehicle. MDE wanted pedestrians' right to walk acknowledged.

Mr. Jackson mentioned that the NCUTCD Bicycle Technical Committee had met earlier this month to discuss improved signs for shared use paths to indicate nearby service providers. At the Transportation Research Board conference, in 2010, there was a publication on liability aspects of bikeway designation. They are looking for incidences in which this publication has been useful. If anyone in the audience has a success story, please share it with Mr. Jackson.

Prince William County is applying to be considered a bicycle friendly community. Prince William will participate in the May 15th Bike to Work Day.

Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation is doing an implementation plan for their trails plan. A road diet has been implemented at Largo Center Drive.

5. Update on the Use of GIS for Interactive Mapping and Visualization of the Regional Plan

Ms. Mirr presented the Visualization. It's pretty much done at this point, though it will be updated in the future. Mr. Farrell added that it won't be presented to the TPB tomorrow, but we will mention it and put up a screen capture slide.

The Visualization mirrors the flow of the paper plan. It incorporates the census explorer app, which enable the user to zoom to the census tract level and come up with mode share information. We've embedded this app so the user won't have to leave the Visualization web

page in order to use it.

The project data in the on line map reflects information in the database. The zoomable on line map solves a lot of the design problems associated with a paper map. The user can also search the project database.

Mr. Farrell noted that the project information in the map is as good as the information we have in the database. Changes made to the database will be reflected, periodically, in the map and publicly searchable database.

Any jurisdiction that has GIS layers, please send the information to Ms. Howard. Live links are preferred, so the data will be updated automatically. Right now the data available from Prince George's and Frederick is static. Sidewalk data is sometimes available but it's usually just an inventory. Mr. Shaffer offered to follow up. We're starting with existing facilities, but we are also interested in planned facilities. Ms. Engelhart said that the VDOT data is static. Mr. Phillips offered to check with his GIS staff and follow up as well.

Ms. Howard said that COG's GIS staff was prepared to assist with the bicycle beltway effort when that was ready, including crowdsourced maps.

Ms. Engelhart said at Hillary Poole is now the contact for Alexandria.

The data clearinghouse will be presented two months from this coming Friday.

Ms. Haldeman asked if the silver line stations were on the maps. Ms. Howard said that we had information for the stations on the clearinghouse, but if Ms. Haldeman has any new data we would be happy to have it.

6. Other TPB Program Updates

Top Priority Unfunded Projects

No list is available yet. Mr. Farrell will follow up and get a finalized list.

7. TRB Conference Highlights

Mr. Farrell discussed some of the sessions which he had attended. The feds are pushing to get bike count data up to the state level and up to the national level. Right now bike counts "live and die at the local level". Concomitant with that, performance measures will be forthcoming for walking and bicycling. At the major cities committee, NACTO and automated vehicles were the major topics of excitement. The kids in Palo Alto have started running in front of the

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Google car and forcing it to stop. Automated vehicles were discussed at many sessions, including a session on seat belts, where a representative from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety spoke, and discussed how the insurance industry is driving vehicle automation, in an incremental way, by giving discounts for automatic features that have been shown to reduce crashes and claims.

Automated vehicles could have major implications for bicycle and pedestrian planning. If cars cannot run over bicyclists, bicyclists will be emboldened to ride in the street, which in turn will help build support for separated bike lanes.

At the “Livable Arterials” session one speaker discussed the relation of street and building typologies and crash severity, with crashes being divided into property damage only, and all other crash types. Streets with tree cover have a far lower proportion of injury or fatal crashes. Looking at severity helped control other things, such as density of activity. This paper has been designated as “practice-ready”, so it apparently has had some degree of vetting.

Ms. Engelhart agreed that automated cars were a hot topic. The Bicycle Transportation Subcommittee has a data collection subcommittee, which now has 200 members and friends. They got about 45 papers, so they are looking at becoming a standing committee. The Bicycle Transportation Committee itself received 100 paper submissions last year, which enables it to get more sessions. Ms. Engelhart asked if the paper on tree cover had adjusted for other factors such as speed limits. Mr. Farrell said that he would have to read the paper in order to confirm that it did. Ms. Engelhart said that traffic calming of 2-3 mph can be achieved by planting trees. Mr. Dunckel expressed interest in the topic, and in having a presentation on the paper at a future subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Wetmore said that automated braking was harder to do for pedestrians than cars. You don't want a lot of false warnings. Regarding speed limits, some engineers prefer the 85th percentile of free flowing traffic, while others ignore that in the interest of safety. 85th percentile deals with driver perceptions of how fast they should go, not how fast pedestrians wish traffic was going. The Manual on Uniform Traffic Devices committee is taking over the responsibilities of the defunct Uniform Vehicle Code group. The 3' passing law is a hot topic. There is proposed language on a 3' passing law for the UVC.

Mr. Jackson attended a session on Vision Zero and speed limits in New York City. There were also proposals to change traffic signal progression in the late night hours to discourage speeding. Certain arterials will be designated safety corridors.

Mr. Jackson also attended a session by Anthony Fox, the USDOT secretary, on their visioning statement for the next 30 years.

The Bicycle Transportation Committee is concerned about the shortage of peer reviewers, and the quality. Since the Chair, Ralph Buehler, is based in Arlington, perhaps we could invite him to discuss the committee's work in more detail.

The current Chair of TRB is stepping down, and his replacement will be Neil Pederson, the former MDSHA administrator.

Mr. Meese attended a session on the integration of social media into transportation planning. Bicycle and pedestrian planning have done quite a bit of crowdsourcing. Social media are a good way to carry out surveys and gather comments. The opportunity for commenting on line has greatly reduced call volumes.

NCHRP Report 766 looked at safety relating to bike lane width and parking lane widths. Buffered bike lanes were found to be safer than conventional bike lanes. 8' wide parking lanes are recommended adjacent to a bike lane, in order to keep cyclists out of the door zone.

Mr. Sebastian said that a session on protected bike lanes found that preference for posts and curbs as a buffer were about the same. Planters were most preferred. The pedestrian session on Thursday was good. Toole Design has developed a tool for prioritizing pedestrian and bicycle improvements. You put the criteria into a spreadsheet, and it will give you a score. The tool will likely be available in June. Toole Design could probably provide it sooner than that. Jennifer Toole made the presentation. The tool will be made available on the PBIC web site.

Ms. Engelhart said that the MUTCD 2016 edition will have a lot more detail on bicycle signals.

Mr. Farrell added that the City of Oakland had a presentation on pop-up piloting of new bicycle and pedestrian features, using tape and cones. The argument for doing it that way is that the models are never as good as experience. Another argument is that when you are proposing a new facilities, people who are against it are more likely to speak out. But if you put something in as a pilot, you will get more people who like it. Piloting as an outreach tool, not just as a design tool. The example was a pedestrian plaza in a partially closed-off intersection. Oakland found that they got better public acceptance by piloting.

8. Other TPB Program Updates

- Spring 2015 Public Spaces Workshop. This will be a narrower, more pedestrian-focused workshop than the general NACTO Urban Street Design workshop we had originally contemplated. Hillary Poole has identified a speaker from NYCDOT who could be the keynote speaker. As before, we will add local speakers to the keynote speaker. Mr. Sebastian approved of the idea, and had good things to say about New York City DOT's work. The Subcommittee agreed, and suggested Mr. Farrell and Ms. Poole put together and agenda. Ms. Engelhart suggested that Ms. Poole or Ms. Sanders from Alexandria should speak. Time frame is half a day, to allow the guest speaker to Acela down and back in one day.
The Citizens Advisory Committee has asked whether there should be a stand-

alone regional pedestrian plan. Mr. Sebastian said that we can reply to that concern by focusing more on pedestrian issues in the workshops. Ms. Engelhart agreed that it was a good idea. Mr. Farrell said that he supported keeping the bicycle and pedestrian modes in the same plan, given that at the regional level there is a lot of overlap both of personnel and of projects between the bicycle and pedestrian modes. But we should make sure not to neglect the pedestrian mode.

- Street Smart. We have all our funds lined up, more than last year. We will have a video component, but keep the “tired faces” creative.
- We will mine the Household Travel Survey data to get information on school mode share. It’s old data, from 2008, but it’s the most complete data we have.
- Update Bike to Work Guide. Comments are welcome. The old version is posted on the bicycle subcommittee web site. We don’t have funds for a full update, but please provide corrections. Mr. Sebastian insisted that we must change the case studies. Tom Robertson is probably dead by now. There hasn’t been a full update in 20 years. Just take a picture of another guy and ask him the question. Qwest does not even exist anymore. Mr. Farrell asked the group to send him samples. Martin Guttenplan is no longer with Florida DOT. Mr. Sebastian said that the case studies were not consultant work; they were his work. Mr. Meese suggested that Mr. Sebastian take those comments to the Commuter Connections. Mr. Farrell promised to look into replacing the photos and case studies.
- Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 15th. We may eventually have this Subcommittee briefed on the Bike to Work Day Report. Doug Franklin manages this program.
- Ms. Engelhart supported approaching Ralph Buehler to have him present to the committee on current research topics. Mr. Farrell said that for this group we should emphasize the practice-ready. Ms. Engelhart said that practioners requests can help shape the research.

9. Announcements

Ms. Engelhart said that the new FHWA liaison for the Northern Virginia District is very pro-bicycle.

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There are three webinars coming up in the next three weeks, including one on February 5th on the protected bike lane on Telegraph Avenue in Oakland.

The National Bike Summit is coming up in early March, and the national walking summit in October.

10. Adjourned