

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, January 17, 2012

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Jeff Dunckel
Montgomery County Department of Transportation

VICE-CHAIRS: Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation
David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services
Jim Sebastian, District Department of Transportation
Fred Shaffer, MNCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Jeff Dunckel	Montgomery County
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Arkopal Goswami	Loudoun County (by phone)
David Hayes	National Park Service
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Philip Koopman	BicyclePASS
Eduardo Maeyama	Parsons Brinckerhoff
Nohemy Miranda	Fairfax County DOT
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Chris Wells	Fairfax County DOT
Fred Shaffer	M-NCPPC Prince George's County
Gail Tait-Nouri	Montgomery County DOT
Allen Turnbull	BikeWalk Virginia

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Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)
Elisa Voigt	National Park Service
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Huijing Qiang

1. General Introductions.

Mr. Dunkel chaired the meeting. Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the December 22nd, 2011 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

December was a bad month for pedestrian fatalities in Montgomery County, but the total is still down 10%. Montgomery County is interested in the COG Complete Streets effort.

WMATA will soon open a bicycle parking structure in College Park, likely in mid-March. It will not be staffed, with key card access. This will not be the Metrorail fare card, though that may happen in the future. The facility will be called a Bike 'N Ride. There will be a charge of 5 cents per hour during peak periods, and 2 cents per hour overnight. Fare credit will be loaded onto the access card, and fees are deducted on entry. The transit police like the facility. Users will also lock their bikes inside the facility, so there are two layers of security. The facility will be monitored by cameras. This facility is expected to be significantly more secure than the racks, but more space-efficient than the lockers, which are dedicated to a single user. It will include some double-stacked racks. This is a pilot facility.

Mr. Meese noted that we may be able to hold a meeting nearby and have a tour of the facility.

Fairfax County has programmed \$70 million for pedestrians and bicyclists in the last ten years. Urban street design standards have been agreed to for Tysons Corner. The Bicycle Master Plan is under development, with eight zones. Tysons is the highest priority, but there is some question as to what the public sector should build, given that much of Tysons is likely to be redeveloped. Areas near and under the interchanges where no developer will be working are getting pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The Complete Streets policy for Tysons is on line, but information for some of the specific projects is not.

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Prince George's County is doing a Transit Oriented Development study along Central Avenue. A new Riverdale Park development will include dedicated space for a bike share station. Pedestrian safety studies for the blue line and green line could produce projects that would be funded through future grant applications. Prince George's is further developing its Complete Streets policy.

There is a bill under development in the Maryland legislature that would make it easier to build trails along utility corridors, as was done on the W&OD.

Capital Bikeshare will soon expand into Montgomery County. Developers often provide sites, but those sites need to be examined for suitability. Another problem is routing and wayfinding for bicyclists, which is less developed than in the District.

Maryland is funding bike sharing programs on a statewide level, using CMAQ funds. Seven jurisdictions, five of them in the COG area, have applied. Mr. Jackson will head the evaluation process. Baltimore has applied, and they will be using B-cycle. Everyone else who is applying will be using the same system as Capital Bikeshare, and will likely piggyback on the contract with Alta bike share. B-cycle is comparable technologically to Bixi. They are based in Denver.

Arlington has taken the lead on bike share in Virginia. Their contract with Alta does not allow for advertising on the bike stations. Arlington has hitherto put bike share stations on secondary roads, which Arlington controls. They are now applying to put them on VDOT, so VDOT is examining their contract to ensure that it meets VDOT's requirements. Once those locations are established, the precedents can be used in Fairfax and elsewhere. The two locations are Fairfax and Glebe, and the other is Spout Run at Lee Highway. CMAQ funds could not be used to pour the concrete pad in one case. The I-66 multimodal study included pedestrian and bicycle options.

Another VDOT issue is that their cost estimating process does not give an overall dollar estimate for pedestrian and bicycle projects when they are bundled with a roadway project. The VDOT State Bicycle Coordinator, John Bolocek, is looking into changing that.

The NVRC's safety booklet is being revised, since certain laws have been changed. An RFP for a research proposal has also been put out for pedestrian and bicycle counting methodology. Jurisdictions and States that do road diets lose funding under State and Federal funding formulas. To bring pedestrians and bicyclists up to the same status, the counting methodologies need to be upgraded, and made 24 hour. It's a 24 month contract, so the final results will not be available for a while.

Loudoun County is updating its travel demand model to COG's latest standards. The Loudoun health council is interested in promoting pedestrian and bicycle safety.

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Mr. Muchnick announced that there are two bicycle-related bills in the general assembly, one regarding following too closely, another regarding exercising due care. An interstate Bike Route, Bike Route 11, would follow the skyline parkway. Mr. Jackson is coordinating with Virginia on getting it extended across the pedestrian and bicycle bridge at Harper's Ferry, and connect it to a proposed Civil War Trail to Hagerstown. Mr. Muchnick said that his preference was for a more easterly alignment across Loudoun County, which would avoid passing through West Virginia. The Adventure Cycling Association will be submitting this application.

For the Blue Ridge Parkway, the preferred alternative for the National Park Service was a plan to retain its purpose as motorized parkway, which does not ban bicycling, but which might justify a disinclination to provide dedicated facilities.

Ms Spiliotopoulos announced that for the Potomac Heritage Trail she was inventorying all the locations where there is a VDOT or rail intersection, to identify opportunities for trail crossings.

The National Park Service is taking comments on its outdoor plan on January 25th. There will be a new ped/bike bridge over the Potomac River, parallel to the existing 14th Street Bridge crossing, which is expected to remain open. There is no plan to widen the existing crossing, but it won't be improved. Ms. Engelhart said that on the DC side the location for the new bridge is isolated and might have security issues, or perceived security issues, so it is important that the existing crossing remain open.

Mr. Farrell said that the existing approach ramp on the DC side is substandard, with cracked and side-sloping pavement. Mr. Hayes replied that ramp approaches to the 14th Street bridge will be made a part of another project to improve landscaping and security around the Thomas Jefferson Memorial.

The National Park Service will also be adding Capital Bikeshare stations in partnership with DDOT and Arlington County. There will be one near National Airport, but not on airport property. The MWAA Board has refused to have Capital Bikeshare on its property. The Board is appointed by Governors of Maryland and Virginia, and the Mayor of DC.

4. Draft Regional Complete Streets Policy

Mr. Farrell spoke to a hand-out on the regional Complete Streets policy. Though the language in policy was explicitly voluntary, MDOT and VDOT objected to the use of word "policy", and the TPB having one, at the January TPB Technical Committee. Mr. Srikanth suggested that we hold a stakeholder's workshop, to allow the Technical Committee to discuss the Complete Streets policy at greater length. The workshop will take place on January 30th. Ms. Engelhart from VDOT, Dustin Kuzan from MDOT, Dennis Leach from Arlington, Fred Shaffer from Prince George's County, and George Branyan from DDOT are likely speakers. The agenda will run for

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half a day. There will be an introductory session on the national context, followed DOT and local jurisdiction panels, which will discuss their respective Complete Streets policies. Following the panels there will be a discussion session to identify needed changes to the regional policy. The DOT's have suggested that if the policy is to be completely voluntary, it might be more accurate to call it a guidance document or template rather than a policy. Mr. Farrell discussed his proposed changes to the document, adding a justification section, and making it a template rather than a policy.

TPB Technical Committee members were also concerned about using the TIP as a means of documenting the implementation of Complete Streets policies. Since no consensus had emerged, Mr. Farrell proposed leaving the documentation of implementation of Complete Streets principles to be worked out by the TPB Technical Committee at a later date.

Mr. Shaffer thought that the current draft was a significant improvement. Mr. Farrell asked that if possible comments on the changes should be provided by the end of the week.

The goal for the Stakeholders workshop is to come out of the meeting with something close to a consensus.

Mr. Muchnick expressed support of the template idea, but suggested that we may still want some sort of update. The Citizens Advisory Committee should also be briefed. Ms. Engelhart said that if the policy had remained a policy, it would have to be approved at the state level, which would take considerably more time.

Mr. Jackson suggested that given that some jurisdictions feel that this is being forced upon them, perhaps we could simply re-iterate the principles endorsed by the National Complete Streets Coalition, rather than providing a template. Mr. Farrell replied that the template is consistent with the Complete Streets coalition principles. What is different comes out of the CAC recommendations, and some language from some of our member jurisdictions' policies. Mr. Farrell felt that a model language of our own would be a stronger statement than endorsing the Complete Streets coalition's general principles, and more useful to the TPB members.

The latest version will be posted on the blog. Members of the Bus Subcommittee and Access for All will be invited to the Stakeholders workshop.

5. Bicycle and Pedestrian Access to Metrorail Needs Inventory

Mr. Zych spoke to a powerpoint. WMATA has \$7 million in available funding for this CIP period. The needs inventory comes from the station survey. WMATA wants to increase pedestrian and bicycle access to Metrorail. Some stations have high bike access, others much lower. WMATA counted bikes parked at each station, and identified over-capacity stations, which need additional bike parking. The goal is to get to 2.1% share of bike access to Metrorail. 4300 bike parking spots are needed to meet that goal. Toole Design came up with 3000

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recommendations at a total cost of \$35 million. Ten miles of sidewalk are missing, and 743 intersection improvements are needed, things like pedestrian signals and curb ramps. Desire lines and locations for additional bike parking have been identified.

Ms. Engelhart asked what the breakdown between covered and uncovered was determined. Covered racks are better, but uncovered racks are used where additional capacity is needed. Existing overhangs will be used wherever possible.

Improvements will be both on and off of Metro property, though the bulk will be on Metro property. Cooperation with local jurisdictions is needed.

If additional funding becomes available, this inventory will be useful. Easy to implement projects have been identified. Ms. Engelhart said that many bike parking areas had been put where there was space, which often meant a location with poor visibility and security. Mr. Zych said that site evaluation considered passive security. On-demand lockers are under consideration. Bike N' Rides will improve security for parked bicycles. Vienna is a candidate for a Bike 'N Ride.

Tracks in the dirt are a sign that a sidewalk is needed.

Ms. Turner asked about the design of the Silver Line stations. Ms. Haldeman replied that they had been reviewing the Dulles designs for pedestrian access. WMATA is working with the jurisdictions to identify needed connections. Pedestrian access is the most cost-effective access for Metro.

At the jurisdiction level detailed information is available.

6. Other TPB Program Updates

Mr. Farrell announced that the COG Board has approved \$63,000 for the FY 2013 program into the COG dues. The DDOT contract has not yet come through for this year. On January 31st the Street Smart advisory group will meet here at COG, and the consultant will present the results of the focus groups. We will present the concept to the TPB Technical Committee on February 3rd. Last year we presented at the March meeting, and had to make last minute changes. Loudoun County was originally to host the press event, but they have declined to do so. There has been some political turn-over since they approved funding it. The City of Bowie is interested in hosting the event, so we will likely hold it there. Fairfax County eliminated its contribution in recent years, but come Fall 2012 it will be funded out of the COG dues and any jurisdiction will be eligible to host the press event.

The Unified Planning Work Program is largely the same, and there is no increase in the budget.

The unfunded project list has not been completed. The list is no longer on a hard schedule like it

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used to be, since the TIP is revised continuously. The list helps publicize the project, and it is a statement of regional priorities.

There is a new study available on health benefits of bicycling. Google “Midwest Cycling Health Study”.

7. Adjourned