

# **National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board**

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## **MEETING NOTES**

### **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE**

**DATE:** Tuesday, July 21st, 2009

**TIME:** 1:00 P.M.

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

**CHAIR:** David Goodman – Arlington Department of Environmental Services

#### **VICE-**

**CHAIRS:** Kristin Haldeman  
Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority  
Michael Jackson  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
Jim Sebastian, DDOT  
Fred Shaffer, MNCPPC, Prince George's County

#### **Attendance:**

Larry Cole	Montgomery County
Jeff Dunckel	Montgomery County DOT (by phone)
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT – Northern Virginia
Eric Gilliland	Washington Area Bicyclist Association
David Goodman	Arlington County DES
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Amy Jacobi	WMATA
Michael Kelly	Greenology/Bike Bank
Philip Koopman	
Rachel Lyons	McAndrew Company
David Mosley	Virginia Highway Safety Office
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
John Thomas	Frederick County Planning (by phone)

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John Wetmore

Perils for Pedestrians

**COG Staff Attendance:**

Monica Bansal  
Michael Eichler  
Michael Farrell  
Andrew Meese

**1. General Introductions.**

Participants introduced themselves. Mr. Jackson chaired the meeting.

**2. Review of the Minutes of the May 19, 2009 Meeting**

The minutes were approved.

**3. Member Jurisdiction Updates**

Mr. Wetmore announced that his cable access show, Perils for Pedestrians, had an episode from Paris. The Walk21 Conference will take place October 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> in New York. WABA is working with the GSA on bicycling and walking survey of federal employees. WABA is also tracking stimulus funding expenditures on walking and bicycling projects.

VDOT has started its SUPR (research) projects. It will continue its count program, which will use an automated video software. It will produce an educational hand-out. It will produce a maintenance methodology for comparing bicycle and pedestrian projects, and prioritizing needs for repairs. It will establish a pool of maintenance projects, and carry out a joint project with Arlington, to help them improve evaluation of pedestrian safety projects.

WMATA will have a public workshop tomorrow for its pedestrian and bicycle access to metrorail study. Toole Design has accumulated a lot of information on how people access the stations currently, including people who drive short distances. An on-line survey is available.

Racks have been installed at Eastern Market, and racks will be installed in Takoma Park. Racks have been added at Wheaton, and bike parking at Ballston will be improved.

Mr. Jackson has been working with Montgomery College Rockville to improve their accommodation for bicyclists in their facilities master plan. The college may bring back bicycle training courses. Mr. Jackson is also working on a presentation for the Transportation Research Board on Social Marketing for bicycling.

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Montgomery County will spend an additional \$3.9 million on pedestrian safety. They are focusing on high-incidence areas (HIA). Three audits have been completed, and work is underway on design for engineering improvements as well as enforcement and education components for the first HIA, which will start in August. Traffic calming measures are being installed on a number of county roads and intersections, and the Safe Routes to School program is under way.

MNCPPC Montgomery County is addressing bicycle and pedestrian issues in its updates.

Frederick County will incorporate transit, pedestrian and bicycle provisions into its adequate public facilities ordinance. The City of Frederick has prepared a bicycle safety video. MTA has provided new bike racks at Brunswick, Frederick, and Monocacy stations on the Brunswick line. The Safe Routes to School program continues, including a walking school bus program. Trails in flood plains are exciting some controversy; examples of designs for such trails would be welcome.

Mr. Sebastian asked whether a bike/ped subcommittee list serv would be implemented soon. Mr. Farrell replied that it would be, and promised to post an up to date subcommittee contact sheet on the web site.

Arlington is replacing the bike racks at Ballston, doubling the bike parking capacity. Over the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday bicycle and pedestrian counts were performed, mostly with volunteers. The September count will mark one full year of data collection for Arlington. Counting tubes are not currently being used regularly, but are being tested to see if they provide accurate data. A permanent counter will be kept on the W&OD trail, as well as a mobile heat-based people counter, which will also be used on the trail.

Arlington is working with Alexandria and Virgia Tech on the Four-mile run trail, to rebuild the Shirlington Road bridge.

#### **4. Regional Priority Bus Corridors and Transit Stations**

Mr. Eichler spoke to a handout. Priority buses will help reduce congestion on the metro system. And buses are slow, stuck in congestion, with a low level of operating efficiency. Buses can be prioritized in a number of different ways. The goal is to make buses move faster and have more reliable travel times. Reducing congestion for buses allows the same bus fleet to deliver more service. A supplementary goal is to improve the image and ease of use of bus transit, and attract more riders.

Even a modest increase in average speeds greatly improves fleet efficiency.

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Buses are typically slowed down at stops and in traffic. Pre-payment can reduce boarding times. If exiting passengers would use the back door efficiency would be improved. Wheelchair boarding slows operations. Low floor buses, boarding platforms, and multiple doors can reduce boarding times.

When moving, traffic signal priority, “queue-jumper” lanes, HOT lanes, and full dedicated bus lanes can improve bus travel times.

There are a range of low and high-investment options for improving bus travel times. The high-investment options are sometimes known as BRT.

The federal stimulus bill includes a competitive element, known as Tiger grants, for regional programs. The deadline is tight. On July 15<sup>th</sup> the TPB approved a list of possible projects to be included in a regional Tiger grant application. The TPB technical committee will approve a final list on September 4<sup>th</sup>. A cost-benefit analysis will have to be performed, so projects need to be finalized by early August.

The K Street transit way is the “crown jewel” of the bus priority corridors project. WMATA has nominated nine priority corridor projects, and Arlington and Alexandria have proposed two corridors each.

A regional bike sharing project will be part of the application.

Mr. Gilliland asked if there would be time to look at the application and comment. Ms. Bansal replied that there was not a lot of time for comment, but that most of these projects had already been through some public comments process. Mr. Wetmore suggested that any bike sharing system be capable of expansion. Ms. Engelhart suggested that we examine cities in which bike sharing has failed.

There will be buses on managed (toll) lanes, which will be connected to the K Street transitway.

Mr. Eichler provided his contact information.

## **5. TPB Work Program Items**

- New TPB directive on Bicycle and Pedestrian project funding information to be included in the Transportation Improvement Program

WABA commented at the most recent TPB meeting that the TIP did not show sufficient funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects. VDOT specifically did not report any funding. Mr.

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Muchnick said that there were bicycle and pedestrian projects from Virginia in the TIP, and Ms. Engelhart said that all highway projects included a bicycle and pedestrian component.

TPB has directed TPB staff to provide more information on how much is being spent on bicycle and pedestrian projects. It is difficult to determine the cost of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are incorporated into larger projects. The number will have to be an estimate. Mr. Wetmore suggested that a more useful metric than money spent would be things like miles of facilities built; measures of results rather than estimated expenditures. Mr. Muchnick suggested that in the TIP submission form should be expanded to include the type of facility, length of facility, etc. It could be a drop-down menu, and the information could then be collected electronically.

MDOT does this for its CTP for State Highways – it keeps miles of bicycle and pedestrian projects on all state highways. That information could be added to the TIP.

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Database and Plan Update

Mr. Farrell noted that the suggested metrics such as miles of bike lane constructed are included in this database. If we update the database, we can query it compared to the 2006 version to see what has been done since then. We have assigned the task of debugging the database to a different staff person here at COG. Once it has been fixed, Mr. Farrell will ask the agency bicycle and pedestrian staff to update their projects within a 30-day time frame. Mr. Gilliland said that an updated database of planned projects would be very useful. A key piece of information is what projects are designed but unfunded.

The database is the key input into the bicycle and pedestrian plan, as well as an input into other regional plans such as the scenarios studies.

- Top Priority Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects for 2009

Mr. Farrell spoke to a hand-out, a presentation on the top priority unfunded bicycle and pedestrian projects which was presented to the TPB last fall.

This list needs to be brought up to date and approved at the September 15<sup>th</sup> bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee meeting, so that it can be presented to the TPB in October or November. Each of our jurisdictions should look at the old list and determine whether the project is still the top priority, whether it has been funded, etc. The new list will be for FY 2011. Some of the top priority projects from last year were not funded. Mr. Muchnick suggested that we could add a column showing the number of years the project has been on the list. Some projects such as the Metropolitan Branch Trail have been on the list continuously, but have made progress every year.

## **6. Street Smart Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Campaign**

Ms. McAndrew responded to a suggestion of taking the campaign to four times per year. Ms. McAndrew was skeptical of the suggestion for a number of reasons, but chiefly because it would be too difficult to get law enforcement support and media attention for four waves. Ms. McAndrew recommended limiting the campaign to two one-month waves per year.

Mr. McAndrew spoke to a powerpoint. Public education and enforcement are both key. Incidence of pedestrian fatalities is declining in a number of counties. Street Smart can take some credit. 2007-2008 the campaign went to twice per year. In the same time period law enforcement efforts were boosted significantly. Counties that did more enforcement got better results in terms of reducing fatalities.

The Spring campaign carries the most weight, while the Fall campaign is mostly a maintenance campaign. The 2009 Spring campaign had multiple messages. To get the multiple messages out, more transit shelters were used. Free media added an estimated \$290,000 worth of media attention. Far more citations and warnings were reported as well. Major drunk driving campaigns issue about 70,000 citations within a one-month period, which is more than Street Smart, so there is still room for improvement.

Public awareness of the messages got a significant boost. The cyclist message did not show any boost in awareness, but the survey was of motorists, not cyclists. Surveying cyclists through a random survey is too costly to be feasible. Drivers believe they can be ticketed for infractions relating to pedestrian safety. Pedestrians, however, do not believe they will be ticketed. The questions have been phrased consistently since 2007.

Mr. Sebastian asked when the Fall campaign would run. Mr. Farrell replied that the funding applications were still out, so we do not know for a certainty that we will have a Fall campaign. For the Fall we will use the same messages, but we will decide the exact scheduling, the mix of media, coordinate the law enforcement and public relations. For Spring, we will likely create new materials. However, we do not have to create materials. We will follow the direction of the advisory committee.

## **7. Innovative Bike Sharing and Storage Systems**

Greenology representatives spoke to a hand-out. Greenology has been preparing a bike storage and bike sharing system. Theft is a serious problem, and items such as helmets and shoes have to be brought with you. Greenology's system will lock the front tire, rear tire, and the frame. It has

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a credit card reader and interface for bike sharing. The system stores vertically to reduce the horizontal space needed. The system is modular so that it can be scaled down or up. There will be an iPhone app so you can tell if there is bike or parking availability. It can be combined with the new kiosk parking meters as you switch from the old parking meters.

Greenology has been studying the various bike sharing systems, of which Bixi is probably the most successful. The bike is one of its strongest elements. Velib has also been successful, with over 20,000 bicycles deployed, and 200,000 subscribers. Theft and vandalism have been a problem, along with redistribution of bicycles.

Two necessities: bike share needs critical mass including both density and extent of territory served, and sufficient users, including casual users and tourists should be able to use it. Greenology is suggesting that a national system would be helpful.

Greenology does not have a final design for the bicycle, but they have specified most of the elements of the bicycle, station, and maintenance characteristics. Revenues would come from a subscription fee, advertising, and public funds. Carbon credits could also be used. We can estimate the carbon reduction from bike sharing.

Greenology will have a prototype by this winter, and hopes for a full launch by Spring 2010.

Greenology is looking for letters of interest and locations for installation.

Mr. Jackson asked for contact information. [Andrew@nycyclists.org](mailto:Andrew@nycyclists.org) and [ben@nycyclists.org](mailto:ben@nycyclists.org). There is no web site yet.

## **8. European Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

Ms. Englehart spoke to a handout. She had visited five counties and ten towns, ranging from 500 to millions in size.

Most European countries post-WWII saw a major increase in motor vehicle mode share. It was decided to reduce the reliance on single occupant vehicles.

Helmets and spandex are scarce in Europe – bicycling, walking, and transit are mainstreamed, with mode shares on the order of 40-60% for the three modes together. Trains and buses run on time. Intersections do not have free rights; all turns are signalized. Pedestrian refuges are everywhere, often very small refuges. Signs for refuges are placed low, so snowplows will see them and not hit them. Crosswalks have detection so that crossing time can be extended for elderly people.

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Bikes are often kept on the road on one-lane roundabouts.

Bus/bike lanes limit bus speeds to 15 mph for compatibility.

Bike paths are very smooth, with 12" of sub-base, as opposed to 4" to 6" of sub-base, which results in better conditions and longer life, on the order of 15 years.

Bicyclist and walking education is much more thorough than in the United States.

**9. Adjourned**