

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 31st, 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
Jamie Carrington	WMATA
Matthew Colvin	Safe Routes to School National Partnership
Henry Dunbar	BikeArlington
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Kristin Haldeman	WMATA
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Jim Sebastian	DDOT
Fred Shaffer	M-NCPPC Prince George's County
Tammy Stidham	National Park Service
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians

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COG Staff Attendance:

Lamont Cobb
Michael Farrell
Charlene Howard
Andrew Meese
Erin Morrow
Jon Schermann
Daivamani Sivasailam
John Swanson

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the January 20th Meeting Minutes

Minutes were approved.

3. Creating Pedestrian Spaces Workshop – April 28th

Planning for this workshop is well under way. The lead speaker from NYC DOT has agreed to attend. We are still lining up local speakers.

4. Briefing on a study to identify pedestrian/bicycle access improvements at select rail stations

Mr. Swanson spoke to a powerpoint. TPB has prepared an inventory of capital improvements at 25 metro stations. For the most part, the consultant pulled together projects already identified by our members. There was some examination of TDM measures, and signage. Mr. Jackson suggested that some form of encouragement campaign should be considered as well. Ms. Haldeman added that if you are connecting additional households riders should discover it. The emphasis is in getting the facilities on the ground. If we find that people are not using the facilities, then we can promote their use. Mr. Wetmore suggested looking at where there are worn dirt paths.

Toole Designed looked at the list of 25 stations, pulled together the list of projects from local plans, and then identified five stations where additional field work was needed.

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Mr. Farrell suggested that one way of doing pedestrian planning is to follow the dirt paths, which are often obvious enough to be seen from the aerial photography.

TLC brochures are available. The application will be made available on Friday. People with ideas are encouraged to apply. The application deadline is June 3rd. These are small planning grants.

5. Briefing on Greenhouse Gas Multi-Sector Work Group

Ms. Morrow spoke to a powerpoint. In 2008 COG established a climate, energy, and policy committee to oversee the region's greenhouse gas goals. The multi-sector work group first met on June 30th.

The purpose is to identify viable strategies, across sectors, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region, and create a joint action plan.

Ms. Engelhart asked whether obstacles, such as rules governing wind turbines, had been evaluated. Mr. Wetmore added that the private sector often had rules against solar, clotheslines, etc. Ms. Morrow promised to pass these issues onto the relevant staff.

Any information you can provide that would be of help to the consultants over the coming months would be welcome.

The goal for the final report to the COG Board is January.

Mr. Jackson said that in Europe many work vehicles are either human powered or electric assist. Could we evaluate the use of such vehicles here? There is a bike shop in Takoma Park called the green commuter that specializes in such vehicles.

6. Briefing on the new Regional Transportation Data Clearinghouse/Shared Mapping Tool

Ms. Howard demonstrated the tool. This tool may be of use to the bicycle beltline work group. Ms. Howard has gathered layers of bike facilities from around the region.

Anyone with access can edit it.

GIS loads slowly over Webex.

Mr. Farrell asked if the site would automatically record when a change was made and who made

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it.

Ms. Howard replied there would be a name and date line, but adding an automated features would be difficult.

Ms. Engelhart suggested showing facility type rather than location.

Different jurisdictions call the same thing many different things.

We can add as many fields as we need. Ms. Engelhart said that the facility location should include the street or park or facility name. Ms. Engelhart said that we do not need to follow what the jurisdictions do since there is no consistency with those labels. We need something that will make sense to someone looking at this for the first time.

Ms. Engelhart said that when VDOT went live on its snow maps, people as far away as the Philippines checked them. We need to be cautious about how widely we distribute this link.

We will put anything into the clearinghouse that the jurisdictions would like to share.

So far we have nothing for Prince William County.

The layers can be turned on and off depending on what you want to see.

The bike beltline drawing function is totally freehand – you can't use the existing lines. Length is added automatically. If these lines prove to be useful, they can be consolidated with existing lines, like "R" Street. Ms. Engelhart said that this is similar to what in the drafting world is called a "redline" file. Mr. Meese asked if this could tell us if we cross a stream bed. Ms. Howard replied that it could be done, but would require a lot more work.

Mr. Farrell explained that the bicycle beltline work group came out of a request from Councilmember Jay Fissette, to develop a vision for a circumferential route around the Washington region. This was inspired by Atlanta's bicycle beltline. The group has already designated an inner loop, which already mostly exists, and the group decided it also wanted an outer loop.

If Ms. Engelhart can get GIS layers for the roads that she would like to use, we can use those roads.

For this purpose we can digitize, following the route and clicking. But it won't snap to the nearby road unless we have that road in the correct format.

Ms. Engelhart and Mr. Jackson were participating in the work group. Mr. Farrell would like to broaden participation, to include more knowledgeable people, such as Philip Koopman. Once

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we have inner and outer routes that the working group is comfortable with, we can bring it back to the bicycle and pedestrian subcommittee, and eventually to the TPB Technical Committee and the TPB. We need the most help on the Maryland side. The WABA trail summit put a lot of lines on the map, and the National Park Service is updating its trail plan. Pepco is more open to trails in its power line right of ways.

Ms. Engelhart asked why we couldn't go over the Memorial Bridge. Mr. Farrell suggested short cut using the 14th Street Bridge.

Mr. Jackson suggested that MNCPPC could convene a meeting. Mr. Farrell replied that holding a public meeting would be more challenging than inviting people whom we know are knowledgeable, and let them use this tool to draw some maps. Ms. Englehart suggested that WABA should be asked to participate in drawing the inner and outer loops. Advocate involvement does not preclude public sector involvement. We can cast the net as far as we need to get good ideas.

7. Top Priority Unfunded Projects

Mr. Farrell distributed a draft list. Certain jurisdictions want to change their projects, so it is not ready for adoption at this meeting.

The list is primarily a publicity tool, to show what projects we have that are not funded, and that respond to our selection criteria, which are consistent with the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan.

Ms. Howard added that the unfunded projects in the bicycle and pedestrian plan will be incorporated into the regional general unfunded projects list.

Mr. Farrell noted that the unfunded bicycle and pedestrian project database can be updated by the members at any time. That information has to be downloaded before it can be seen by the public, but that doesn't take that long.

8. Other TPB Program Updates

- **Street Smart**

The March 25th press event went well. Six cameras, many elected officials appeared. The new campaign has video. The State of Maryland intends to adopt our creative as their statewide campaign.

- **Update to Bike to Work Guide**

Mr. Farrell distributed his proposed edits. There are still a few more days available if you have last-minute edits. Mr. Sebastian's comments have been addressed in the changes made so far.

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There is no PDF of the draft available, since the changes have not yet been put in. Qwest communications has been retired and replaced with OPower. Two of the old profiles are being replaced.

- Commuter Connections – Employer Pedestrian Outreach

Montgomery County has requested that we incorporate walking into the Commuter Connections employer outreach. The Upper Bethesda TDM was able to find an example from Florida. We will use the Walkwise approach as a model. We will brief the Commuter Connections Committee on April 21st

- Bike to Work Day May 15

We anticipate another successful year, barring snow or torrential rain. Pit stop locations are posted on the web.

- Safe Routes to School Information from the Household Travel Survey

This has not been written up.

9. Jurisdictional Updates

Maryland has given the go ahead to consultants to produce a tour guide for bicycling in Maryland, to encourage bicycling tourism. Prince George's County has decided to use a modified sign, saying that "bicycles may use the full right lane", which is not a standard sign. MDOT is discussing the issue with Prince George's County. There are exceptions to using the right lane, such as making a left turn, road conditions, or keeping up with traffic. The State uses "Bicyclists may use the full lane". MDOT would prefer consistency with the standard signage.

Ms. Engelhart says that the codes do not specify that you have to stay in the right lane in a slow vehicle, just that you have to stay to the right. So if the right lane is blocked you can go around.

MDOT will have a "Bike from Work Day", in the afternoon of May 15th.

The Federal Lands Access Grant program has a deadline of April 17th.

Pepco has dropped their policy of opposition to trails in their ROW. They will do a pilot trail project from Montgomery Mall to Germantown. It will be built as a maintenance road but will be available as a pedestrian and bicycle trail. This is part of the concessions leading to the Pepco/Excelon merger. Mr. Jackson thanked Mr. Wetmore for his efforts in making this happen.

VDOT is working on the I-66 widening project outside the beltway. Bike and ped facilities are being identified on each crossing structure. VDOT is trying to maintain or improve bike and ped access on all crossings.

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WMATA is working on a study of walk access to Metro, which it will present at the next meeting.

Construction on a Bike N Ride will start at East Falls Church soon.

Arlington has started a PAL ambassadors program to do on-street education. Arlington has also started its Rackpotting app to gather data on need for bike racks.

10. Adjourned