

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, March 19, 2002

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

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

CHAIR: Heather Wallenstrom
Virginia Department of Transportation

VICE-

CHAIRS: Michael Jackson
District Division of Transportation,
Jim Sebastian
Maryland Department of Transportation

ATTENDANCE:

Shaheer Assad, Loudoun County
Charlie Denney, Arlington County
Steve Kelly, RBA Group
Brian V. King, VDOT
Eric Gilliland, WABA
Brian V. King, VDOT
Sheng Leu, Fairfax County
Rich Metzinger, National Park Service
Allen Muchnick, WABA
Steve Pinkus, WalkDC
Jim Sebastian, DC DPW
Gail Tate-Nouri, Montgomery County DPWT
Kenneth Todd, National Center for Bicycling and Walking
Sharonlee Vogel, WMATA
Heather Wallenstrom, VDOT NOVA

COG STAFF ATTENDANCE:

Michael Farrell
Mark Hersey
Andrew Meese
Gerald Miller
Daivamani Sivasailam

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the January 22, 2002 Meeting

Minutes were approved.

3. Bike to Work Day, May 3, 2003

Mark Hersey, COG

Mark Hersey discussed the progress of Bike to Work Day. Brochures and posters have been printed, and will be distributed soon. Eleven pit stops have been selected this year, as opposed to five last year. The pit stops will be Bethesda, Arlington, Alexandria, College Park, Rosslyn, Frederick, Leesburg, Reston, North Bethesda, Rockville, and Silver Spring. The TPB board will issue a proclamation at the board meeting tomorrow designating a Bike to Work Day. There will be a signing ceremony following the meeting. This will raise the profile of the event and encourage member jurisdictions to issue their own proclamations. Sponsors include Pepco, DC Lottery, and Commuterpage.com. In-kind sponsors include City Bikes, Gold's Gym, and Fresh Fields. Mike Farrell asked about registration levels. Eric Gilliland said that about sixty people had registered on WABA's web site, in advance of any marketing efforts. We are on-target for achieving our goal of doubling last year's participation. We have double the pit stops of last year, with half the money. We plan to do some TV and radio interviews, as well as some radio spots. The Guaranteed Ride Home program gives us much of our marketing push. Final registration date is April 19. The employer who registers the most employees gets a free lunch. Last year it was the Coast Guard. The radio ads will be running around the end of March. The radio ad will list sponsors, depending on the level of sponsorship. Banners will also be printed for the event. Heather asked if there was anything this group could do to be supportive. Mark replied that getting into cyclist group newsletters would be the most helpful thing. Eric said that WABA could probably handle that aspect of the marketing, but it would be helpful if attendees could make their agencies aware of the event.

Cyclists can bring their bicycles onto Metro anytime except weekdays 7-10 p.m. and 4-7 p.m. Two bikes are permitted per car. On week-ends four bikes are permitted per car. Mark got an e-mail from WMATA with other information, which Sharonlee promised to look into.

Action Items:

- Bike/Ped committee members should talk up Bike to Work Day at their respective

agencies.

4. Regional Air-Quality Status

Daivamani Sivasailam, MWCOG

When the TPB met in February, the understanding going into the meeting was that there would be no new TERMS programmed in the FY 2002 – 2007 Transportation Improvement Program. The plan was to call for new projects for a fail-safe TIP from FY 2003-2008. Such projects would have to be air quality neutral. But at the last minute the TPB received a letter from Governor Glendenning committing Maryland to fund TERMS. None of the parties were prepared to specify projects or funding levels, so the TPB agreed to fund TERMS, without specifying projects or funding levels. That issue is to be settled at tomorrow's TPB meeting.

There are some other loose ends with regards to air quality conformity, such as truck percentages on local streets. These need to be settled before a new TIP can be adopted. Enough TERMS have already been released for public comment to make up the 3.3 ton shortfall. Any new TERM proposals would have to go through 30-day public comment period before being adopted. The TPB has formed its own task force to examine ways of making up the shortfall, a task which would normally fall to the TPB technical committee. A \$38 million package of TERMS would be sufficient to make up the shortfall. That TPB task force is no longer active since it made its report.

Heather asked if this committee's letter endorsing the bicycle and pedestrian TERMS should be sent to some group other than the TPB Technical Committee. The letter was cc'd to Phil Mendelsohn, so that should be sufficient. Kenneth Todd asked how many comments had been received on the TERMS. Daivamani Sivasailam replied that he didn't know. Kenneth Todd asked about the Sierra Club's comments. Siva replied that responses would be handed out at tomorrow's TPB meeting. Fred Shaffer asked about the Bike Station TERM. He was interested in knowing which metro stop in Prince Georges County might be best for a Bike Station. Mike Farrell replied that bike stations are still fairly rare and somewhat experimental, and described some of the services offered. The bike station TERM was for Silver Spring, and borrowed the ridership numbers from Palo Alto, CA. Mike suggested that a bike station should be one of the last things done, in response to obvious demand, rather than one of the first things.

5. "Safety Effects of Marked versus Unmarked Crosswalks," FHWA-RD-01-075

Michael Farrell gave a Powerpoint presentation on a recent Federal Highway Administration study on the safety of marked versus unmarked crosswalks. Hard copies of the report were distributed, as well as copies of the Powerpoint presentation.

At the January meeting, one of the issues discussed was the safety effects of unmarked versus marked crosswalks, and there was a request for a literature search on the question. The publication of this study in February was quite timely.

The authors of the study are careful to say that pedestrians are to be design users on all

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streets, and that the failure of one design treatment should not be an excuse to give up and do nothing. If a marked crosswalk is not sufficient, the designer should move on to the next design treatment.

A 1972 study of 400 uncontrolled intersections in San Diego found a higher incidence of pedestrian crashes in marked than in unmarked crosswalks. There was no breakdown by street type. This study, together with the hypothesis that crosswalks create a false sense of security in the pedestrian, are often used to justify not striping crosswalks.

The current study found that marked crosswalks did have a higher rate of pedestrian crashes on multilane streets with greater than 15,000 vehicles per day than unmarked crosswalks. All locations considered were uncontrolled. There was no difference in the crash rate on two-lane streets, or multilane roads with traffic volumes of less than 12,000 vehicles per day. Location (mid-block), crosswalk striping pattern, one-way versus two-way operation, and speed limit did not affect pedestrian crash rates. 35 mph locations did have twice as many serious and fatal crashes as the 25 mph locations. The authors found that senior citizens and young children are significantly more likely to cross at a marked crosswalk, and argue that they are more likely to be involved in crashes since they are not physically agile. Discovered crashes, when a pedestrian is hit by a second car after being yielded to by the first one, were nonexistent on multilane unmarked crossings, but accounted for 17% of crashes at marked multilane crossings. Raised medians cut the pedestrian crash rate in half on multilane roads, but painted medians and two-way left turn lanes had no pedestrian safety benefit.

The authors cited studies indicating that pedestrians do not have a false sense of security at marked crosswalks. The presence of elderly and children, and the discovered threat problem, account, in the opinion of the authors, for the higher crash rates at marked crosswalks. At an unmarked location, people will wait for a gap, but at a marked crosswalk one car may yield and the other not.

A marked crosswalk is never associated with a lower crash rate than an unmarked crosswalk at an uncontrolled location. Multilane, high-volume, high-speed roads have very high pedestrian crash rates.

The authors provide guidelines for the use of crosswalks. They should be used to encourage pedestrians to cross at a safer location, but they do not in themselves make that location safer. Additional design treatments are discussed.

One might also conclude that jaywalking is not worth enforcing if the alternative is an uncontrolled intersection crosswalk, since there is no safety benefit.

The fact that locations with high speed limits had more serious injuries indicates that locations with higher speed limits actually had higher speeds.

Kenneth Todd argued for the elimination of crosswalks. Mike replied that crosswalks can be used to direct pedestrians to a safer crossing location. Another argument for marking crosswalks is that it gives the pedestrian a clear legal right to cross, so at locations where there is no safety difference, the crosswalk should be marked in order to improve pedestrian access.

Kenneth Todd argued that the systems of major and minor roads, designed in the 1920's, puts pedestrians at a disadvantage. High-speed roads are dangerous for pedestrians. Heather interrupted at this point to say that we needed to move on, and that Mr. Todd had already

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covered these points in a presentation and paper that he had given to the group in a past meeting.

A suggestion was made that we ask for further research on crosswalks at controlled intersections.

Mike emphasized that the report applies only to uncontrolled crossings, and its results cannot be generalized to controlled crossings. A question was posed about raised crosswalks. Raised crosswalks are not useable on high-speed roads. Raised crosswalks are more visible to the motorist, and they usually have markings leading up to it as well. Motorists learn to slow down for them. A question was asked about the effectiveness of signs in marking crosswalks. Research on that topic is still inconclusive.

6. Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Outreach Campaign

Mike Farrell distributed a draft outline of the program elements, funding, and timetable. The program is inspired by Smooth Operator, the regional anti-aggressive driving campaign. Mike Farrell has been attending that group's meetings, and their new publicity campaign does include pedestrians as victims of aggressive driving. However, Smooth Operator's mandate is to work against aggressive driving. It does not address itself to pedestrians or to cyclists, and it does not teach motorists how to drive around pedestrians and cyclists. There are many instructional elements that Smooth Operator does not address.

Program elements include billboards and radio spots. TV time is very expensive in an area like Washington, and Smooth Operator cannot afford any even with a million-dollar advertising budget. Targets are pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. On a basis of three to one the campaign should focus on pedestrians. Another element is to print Montgomery County's materials and put them on the inside of WMATA buses. WMATA has offered the space pro bono. Press releases and events should be designed by the same consultant who designs the billboards and radio spots.

The Ped/Bike Safety Task force will work with the consultant on the creative process. The Council of Governments will manage the consultant. The ads will be coordinated with regional pedestrian safety enforcement, particularly with enforcement funded by the Maryland Office of Highway Safety. Research that has been presented to us shows that education needs to be connected to enforcement if it is to be effective. Since enforcement is an independent effort.

Smooth Operator needed \$100,000 just to design the campaign, but not to buy radio time and billboard space. Heather asked if we need \$150,000 to design our campaign. However, our \$150,000 would include the printing costs for Montgomery County's posters to go on WMATA buses. We should right up a scope of work and cost it out before we apply for money. Applications are due April 30. Heather and Mike should work together to get the application in by the 30th. D.C. needs a memorandum of understanding.

Jim Sebastian suggested that for bicycling and walking visuals are important. We should include money to develop video PSA's, and then try to find corporate sponsorship or other funding to get some cable time. Videos can still be used for public meetings and public access channels. The group agreed that we should make videos a part of the program. We should look into what has been done around the country with respect to PSA's. Mike Farrell promised to

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look into some videos that have just been prepared in Portland. Jim has some, but none have minorities. Videos from Maine do not translate well into the Washington area; conditions are not the same. We may want to develop our own videos.

Heather said that we need letters of support from all the jurisdictions to support the Virginia application for 402 safety funds. Jim asked if we could get a letter of support from the TPB. Gerry Miller replied that we need our proposal to be more specified before we take it to the TPB.

Jim suggested that we get an RFP to the Bike/Ped Committee by May. Gerry asked about the role of the Ped/Bike task force. Mike replied that he saw its role as one of overseeing the consultant. Heather suggested that the Ped/Bike task force meet in April to help prepare the funding applications. Mike Farrell agreed to solicit people to come to a Ped/Bike task force meeting, and set up a time in April. Heather promised to speak to the TPB technical committee to let them know what we are doing. Heather asked the group about letters of support. Who should sign them? A County manager or Board of Supervisors would be appropriate.

This week 65 police officers are getting trained in crosswalk sting operations. These operations will be done with as much publicity as possible. This training is part of the Maryland Office of Highway Safety's pedestrian enforcement efforts. We will try to coordinate our ad campaign with this enforcement effort. We will get an e-mail out to the group with the Ped/Bike meeting date, as well as cc'ing a draft of the funding application. Heather will look into getting letters of support from the jurisdictions. Elements of the application may be helpful in developing the scope of work.

Action Items:

- Mike Farrell will order safety videos from Portland. Other participants are urged to share any materials they have on pedestrian and bicycle safety, especially videos.
- Schedule a meeting of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Task Force in April to discuss funding applications and an RFP for a consultant. A draft RFP should be available for the May 21 Meeting of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
- Gather letters of support from the jurisdictions for a Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Outreach Campaign.
- Complete applications for Section 402 Safety funds to Maryland and Virginia. Heather will do the Virginia application and Mike Farrell will do the Maryland application. Complete a Memorandum of Understanding between COG and the District for COG to receive 402 funds from the District.
- Heather Wallenstrom will make a brief report on our activities to the TPB technical committee, the committee to which we are a subcommittee, at its April 5 meeting.

7. Updates from Member Jurisdictions

Sharonlee Vogel of WMATA discussed the status of funding for bike racks on buses. D.C. and Virginia have committed the money, but Maryland has not. The situation in Maryland

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is confused. John Porcari, Governor Glendening, and Maryland legislators, are the correct people for Maryland citizens to address about this issue. Maryland's recent commitment to fund TERMS does not identify specific projects. Nothing can be done until there is a specific commitment to fund bike racks.

Heather Wallenstrom provided an update on the Northern Virginia Regional Bikeway and Trail Network study. Since the project started in June the existing facilities have been identified. A latent demand model is being run, and results will be available soon. A list of recommended corridor studies will be developed. The process should be finished by the end of the summer.

Fred Shaffer discussed the updating of the Prince Georges County Bike and Trails Plan. The plan will produce a consolidated map.

Sheng Leu discussed Fairfax County's plan. The board will meet April 29 to discuss the plan.

Jim Sebastian announced that another 100 bike racks will be installed in D.C., that bike lane striping is going forward, and that a project manager is being hired for the Metropolitan Branch trail. D.C. is conducting a small pedestrian safety campaign. A check-signing ceremony has taken place for the New York Avenue metro stop, which will incorporate part of the Metropolitan Branch Trail when it is opened in 2004.

Mike Farrell distributed an annual schedule of recurring events of interest to the Bike/Ped Committee. The regional plan will be updated in 2003, so we should have a draft plan available by the end of 2002. The guts of the plan is a list of projects. We should put the list on-line, in a format that can be queried. It could be updated more frequently than the paper plan, which rapidly loses accuracy and relevance. It is possible to link an on-line map with the table, so changes to the table are immediately reflected in the map.

Heather suggested that a work group be convened to discuss the new bike plan, and it should have representatives at least from the two states and the district. We need a meeting dedicated solely to the bike plan. Eric noted that we had already gone through the process of updating the project list just a few months ago. Heather suggested that we try to get this document to have more teeth. Jim countered that it will never have any teeth; that it is purely an informational tool. The regional plan reflects local plans, not the other way around. Gerry suggested that projects of regional significance be identified in the plan. The number does not have to be large. However, it sometimes matters, in enhancement applications, if a project is listed in the regional plan. Gerry argued for having fewer regional priorities rather than more. Heather passed around a sign-up sheet for a meeting of a working group on the bicycle plan. Another person suggested updating the project list. Mike suggested holding off on updating projects until we have a definite timeline as to what we want to accomplish and when, which we should have by the May meeting. Eric asked about COG's GIS data on bicycle facilities, which is flawed. Mike agreed that the data is bad, but it is not the bike plan. Another person suggested separating funded and unfunded programs, and tracking the rate of funding. Gerry said that realistically we are not likely to be able to do that. We do not have time and resources for the necessary data gathering.

Charlie Denny suggested ADA as a subject for a Fall educational seminar. FHWA is

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already preparing a course. The group agreed that this was a good idea. . It might be necessary to do some work to get some local case studies. We should be able to sit around a table and look at possible solutions to particular cases. The meeting would be held at COG. Charlie Denny will get in touch with Barbara McMillen and have her get in touch with Mike.

The group should get comments back to Heather or Mike on regular events of which we should be cognizant.

Action Items:

- A working group meeting on the bike plan should be scheduled sometime in April. The meeting should result in recommendations on the content of the new plan, as well as a timetable.
- Mike Farrell, Barbara McMillen, and Charlie Denney should work together to arrange a Fall ADA seminar, to be held at COG.
- The group should get comments back to Heather or Mike on regular events of which we should be cognizant.

8. Other Business

No new information on bicycle routing software. No ideas were sent to Mike for new TERMS. We should have a follow-up on the status of the regional bike rack TERM. Who has the old bike racks? Mike Farrell promised to look into it. Eventually, ADC will run out of bike maps and do an update, so we should ask them when that is likely to happen. The last time it happened was 1998, so it could happen anytime. The Access for All Advisory Committee Report focused completely on transit, Heather noted. Mike explained that the committee's report reflected the testimony that it received. Bike people were invited but did not attend. The next advisory committee meeting is on March 28 at noon. Heather noted that in section 19, page 18 in the back-up information talks about bicycles and pedestrians, but it is not reflected in the summary, which speaks only about pedestrian safety. The word "access" is dropped. Gerry added that the report reflected the concerns of the committee, which was not interested in bicycle and pedestrian issues. Staff pushed them to consider pedestrian safety. Mike Farrell promised to look into the summary issue. Heather asked about the regional mobility and accessibility study. Someone should check to see if bicycle or pedestrian issues are relevant to that study.

Action Items:

- Mike Farrell will find out what happened to Maryland's racks under the old regional bike racks TERM.
- Mike Farrell will check with ADC to find out when they will be likely to need to do a regional bike map update.
- Mike Farrell will check with Malaika Abernathy on the summary Access for All Report. Members wishing to have input into that committee's activities should attend the Access for All Advisory Committee meetings. The next meeting is March 28 at noon.

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- Mike Farrell will look into the Regional Mobility and Accessibility Study to see if this subcommittee's input is needed.

Adjourned.