

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, March 23, 2012

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

PLACE: COG, 777 North Capitol Street, NE
First Floor, Rooms 4/5

CHAIR: Jeff Duncel
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, M-NCPPC, Prince George's County

Attendance:

Justin Antos	WMATA
Stacy Balk	FHWA (by phone)
Tim Bevins	NPS-GWMP
George Branyan	DDOT
Joana Conklin	Foursquare ITP
Jeff Duncel	Montgomery County
Dave Goodman	Arlington County DES (by phone)
Arkopal Goswami	Loudoun County (by phone)
Cindy Engelhart	VDOT
Michael Jackson	MDOT
Vaibhavi Kamdar	Prince William County
Larry Cole	M-NCPPC
Nohemy Miranda	Fairfax County DOT
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation (by phone)

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Marc Oliphant	Naval District Washington
Fred Shaffer	M-NCPPC
Gail Tait-Nouri	WMATA
Pat Turner	BikeLoudoun (by phone)
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	Northern Virginia Regional Commission
Victor Weissberg	Prince George's County DPWT (by phone)

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Huijing Qiang

1. General Introductions.

Mr. Dunckel chaired the meeting. Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the January 17th Meeting

Deferred.

3. Jurisdictional Updates

Maryland has funded Maryland Bikeways and Maryland Bikeshare. MDOT is reviewing seven applications for bike share, and expect to announce decisions in May. Maryland Bikeways will fund gaps in the bicycle network. Applications are due on May 4th. The Bikeways program is being funded entirely by State funds, while bike share is being funded by \$2 million in CMAQ funds.

Prince William County has been adding sidewalks and trails. Prince William County will have eight pit stops at this year's Bike to Work Day.

The L Street Cycle Track in the District of Columbia is under construction. It will use mixing zones at the intersection.

Naval District Washington is interested in walking and bicycling to work, to mitigate parking problems. Mr. Oliphant is based in the Washington Navy Yard. Mr. Goodman expressed interest in getting Mr. Oliphant's contact information.

National Park Service has started a study on bicycle access within and between Park Service properties.

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The bicycle coordinator for Montgomery County, Ms. Tait-Nouri, has left to work for WMATA. Montgomery County is down to 11 pedestrian fatalities for the year. Level 4/5 collisions have decreased as a percentage of collisions, from the low 30's to 26% currently. Speed cameras are helping. A Countystat meeting will be held on April 27th. Funding for pedestrian infrastructure has held steady.

VDOT lacks criteria on using hydraulic tunnels for bike paths. Ms. Engelhart will develop a white paper.

WMATA's Bike 'N Ride is nearly finished, with a ribbon cutting expected in April. Bike racks are being added steadily. Mr. Branyan asked why some of the new WMATA racks were so fat; it can make it hard to fit a small U-lock around them. Mr. Antos said that the fatter racks were considered more secure.

Possible dates for touring the Bike 'N Ride were discussed.

Ms. Tait-Nouri is working with Toole Design to correct ADA issues at Metrorail Stations.

Fairfax County is developing a countywide bicycle plan.

Arlington will put down three miles of bike lanes and sharrows in conjunction with its repaving program. The improvements on Joyce Street under 395 will be built this summer. Sidewalks will be widened to ten feet using a road diet. This will improve bike access between south and central Arlington. Bike counters will be deployed on the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor. A bicycle behavior campaign, PAL, Predictable Alert Lawful, was recently produced. It is aimed at getting bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists to be more courteous of each other. Materials are available to be borrowed.

4. Piney Branch Curb Marker Campaign

Ms. Conklin spoke to a hand-out. Piney Branch Road has historically had the highest rate of pedestrian collisions. Narrow sidewalks, few crossings, speeds, and poor night-time visibility contributed to collisions. Montgomery County worked with Casa De Maryland to put safety promotion teams on the street, giving pedestrians information on safety. This was a comprehensive three "E" effort. Stickers were placed on the curbs telling people where to cross and where not to cross. The stickers are reflective. Costs for the stickers are low.

Following the stickers, another two weeks of street team effort took place. The team gave out shopping bags with safety messages in English and Spanish. Many of the pedestrians did not understand the meaning of the flashing hand. Teen-agers were the most difficult to reach.

Following the education segment the police went out and ticketed on the corridor for two weeks,

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and then followed up every few months for a few days.

500 citations and 295 warnings were issued. Pedestrians are allowed to cross anywhere between uncontrolled intersections, but they do not have the right of way. Pedestrians have the right of way at uncontrolled intersections. Warnings were often safety warnings rather than legal warnings, since the pedestrians were not necessarily doing anything illegal. Pedestrians tend to cross between intersections because of the distance between intersections, and because of the reduction in turning movements mid-block relative to intersections.

The police got pretty good community support for this effort. There were Spanish translators with the police, but there was a need for Vietnamese translators as well. The police would not ticket if the person did not understand. The translator would usually start by saying that this had nothing to do with immigration. If the push buttons were not working, the police did not ticket.

The county will follow up with post-enforcement monitoring to determine the lingering effect by next Fall.

There was some question as to whether the stickers are traffic control device. The State considers them to be a traffic control device, and SHA approved the experiment.

A 50% reduction in mid-block crossing occurred. People are now using the crosswalk at Garland. Yielding to pedestrians at the crosswalk increased. People crossing close by got much of the benefit of the raised refuge islands. SHA would not allow a stutter beacon, which has a much higher motorist compliance rate.

5. Draft Regional Complete Streets Guidance and Policy Template

Mr. Farrell discussed a powerpoint which was not able to be presented to the TPB, along with the CAC comments. The TPB was not able to hear the powerpoint due to time constraints, but the TPB did hear the CAC comments. The CAC recommended that the TPB adopt a Complete Streets policy. Four of the five TPB members who offered comments recommended having a regional complete streets policy rather than a regional complete streets guidance and policy template. Having a template rather than a policy had been the recommendation of the TPB Technical Committee.

Mr. Farrell thought that most of the CAC comments on documentation were feasible, with a few exceptions.

A regional policy cannot be made binding on the federal government.

Mr. Muchnick suggested that the policy should concern reporting, not requiring compliance. The CAC would be satisfied with a policy on reporting.

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Mr. Farrell said that making the template a policy is probably not feasible, but policy a regional policy that concerns documentation is probably do-able. Mr. Meese suggested that we keep the template as it is, but add a section making the purpose and documentation sections as policies.

Mr. Muchnick suggested that a task force be set up. Ms. Engelhart said that we were past that phase; these concerns should go back to the TPB Technical Committee. Mr. Farrell said that the policy statement could be a general statement of preference, followed by specifics on documentation and the template.

Mr. Meese noted that the TPB did not have a full discussion with recommendations. From a strict bureaucratic point of view we should go back to the TPB for further instruction. Mr. Dunkel suggested that since this is a submission from the Technical Committee to the TPB, then it should go back to the Technical Committee for revision.

Mr. Farrell said that while we did not receive a strong mandate from the TPB, we are taking comments, including comments from the TPB.

Mr. Muchnick suggested that greater documentation should be added to the TIP on how well they are complying with Complete Streets. Mr. Weissberg noted that many projects were not applicable. Mr. Farrell replied that we can deal with exemptions. Degree of reporting in the TIP is still an item of contention.

6. Other TPB Program Updates

Other items were deferred due to lack of time. Mr. Farrell discussed Street Smart briefly, including the press event.

7. Adjourned