

**Draft Summary of December 1, 2016 MEETING of the PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE and TRAFFIC SAFETY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Office Building, 9th Floor Conference Room**

Members Present: Darrel Droblich, Chair; Kristy Daphnis, Vice Chair; George Branyan; Jeremy Martin, Rockville/Municipal League; Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA; Capt. Thomas Didone, MCPD; Heidi Coleman, Bicycle Advocate; Chris Conklin (representing Al Roshdieh, MCDOT); Wendy Leibowitz; Leah Walton; Aaron Kraut (representing Councilman Roger Berliner); Reemberto Rodriguez, SSRSC.

Members Absent: Ramin Assa; Roger Berliner, Councilmember; Marybeth Cleveland; Al Roshdieh, MCDOT; Valeria Carranza.

County Staff: Venu Nemani, Chief of Traffic Engineering and Operations Division, MCDOT; Michael Subin, CEO; Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Mark Terry, MCDOT; Shawn Brennan, DHHS – Aging and Disabilities Services.

Guests: John Wetmore, Perils for Pedestrians; Peggy Dennis; Garrett Hennigan, WABA; David Helms, Potomac Pedalers; MarieAnnette Otero, Safe Routes to School National Partnership; Jennifer Hosey, ACT; Richard Havelik, Arrow Health; Xiao-Feng Xie WIOMAX; Nathan George; RK&K.

PBTSAC Committee Business:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Darrel Droblich at 7:05 pm. Introductions - the newest member, Heidi Coleman introduced herself as the new Bicycle Advocate from Silver Spring.

Review of Summary from October 1 Meeting

MOTION: The October meeting summary was approved unanimously.

Search Committee for New Nominations

Twelve applications have been received. Interviews are scheduled for December 8 and 12. The selection committee is comprised of Jeff Dunckel, George Branyan, Marybeth Cleveland and Venu Nemani. Expect recommendations to be submitted to the County Executive in January.

Status of Annual Report

Darrel Droblich will be preparing a draft of the annual report to submit to the committee for review.

Discussion of Plan for Vision Zero:

Nathan George, RK&K, handed out a conceptual framework. Michael Subin discussed the current status: a draft of the Vision Zero plan was to be submitted to the PBTSAC in November. Nathan George, Will Haynes from RK&K, Andy Clarke from Toole Design, Venu Nemani, Fred Lees, Emil Wolanin, Captain Tom Didone, and Lt. Dave McBain are the Steering Committee assembling the plan. When work on the plan began in June, the committee's intent was to have a complete draft report by now. The process will be a dynamic process over many years. The group is taking its time to be sure all that needs are covered. Six task group meetings have been held since September. Didone convinced the group that Impaired Driving and Distracted Driving need to be two separate groups. Outside interests asked to participate and have now been included in the process so it is a transparent, responsive process and not just a government run program. A public hearing will be held at the end of the process in January and a final draft of the report presented to the PBTSAC at their February meeting. Based on comments, the plan will be revised.

Darrel commented that the process has been difficult for others to participate in since all the meetings have been held during the day, not the evening. Will Haynes has been asked to schedule meetings in the evening or at least have a WebEx option so people can call into meetings. Cpt. Didone and Mr. Subin clarified that while the planning proceeds, safety improvements and activities are continuing throughout the County.

Mr. George gave a presentation on the conceptual framework. A lot of background work has been done to analyze the problem of collisions. There are approximately 40 traffic fatalities a year in Montgomery County, including pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. Six or seven emphasis areas were identified that essentially mirror the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Meetings are being conducted with each of the focus groups for each emphasis area. All actions are being considered, including possible legislation. Recommendation has been made to the State to adopt a Vision Zero approach. The group will come up with goals through this process. Emphasis areas include Bike/Ped, Aggressive Driving, Impaired Driving, Distracted Driving, Vehicle Technology and Occupant Protection, Roadway Infrastructure, and Traffic Incident Management. Discussion addressed how to best gather data, analyze the data and identify appropriate actions to improve safety: using fatal crash reports, having cross-section reviews that include citizens in a NSTB model – a board to scrub the reports, breaking down the data into meaningful detail to enable better analysis, reducing speeding, creating legislation that addresses legal impediments to improving safety.

Functional Zero vs. Actual Zero: it was suggested that some crashes are unpreventable and therefore nothing could have been done to prevent them - - that false expectations should not be created. The committee felt this reduced the effectiveness of the Vision Zero mission and would prevent success. While zero may not be achieved because of the occasional freak accident, the acceptance that some collisions are just going to occur regardless of anything we do undermines the whole philosophy that every death is to be avoided to the maximum extent possible. Focus needs to be on why the fatal collision occurred so that preventive countermeasures can be identified where such countermeasures exist. The public message can't be nuanced. Nearly all crashes are human error; that death from human error can be prevented is the basic premise of Vision Zero.

Broad based participation of different stakeholders is needed and data drives the actions where Vision Zero has been successful. Involving the stakeholders early or later was debated. And public portals of accessible data and reporting are key.

Update on 2016 Pedestrian - Bicycle Collisions and Fatalities:

Cpt. Tom Didone reviewed the current pedestrian crash data. The numbers for 2016 have not yet been finalized – but expecting 440 to 450 ped crashes for the year. As of now, there have been 7 pedestrian fatalities and 3 bicycle fatalities. Enforcement has been increasing since 2014, with the addition of funding to expand the program. This year, there has been 1,700 work hours of officers dedicated to pedestrian traffic safety enforcement. With these hours, there were 2,277 citations issued: 1,329 citations were issued to drivers; 948 citations were issued to pedestrians. In less serious crashes, 60% are drivers at fault. In fatal and serious collisions, 60% are pedestrians at fault (the reverse.) Education needs to be expanded to support the enforcement effort. Pedestrians need to be mindful that they must not stop into a crosswalk if there is insufficient distance for a car to reasonably stop. Where enforcement has occurred, there has been a marked improvement in compliance with the laws. But there needs to be more combined education and enforcement, saturating areas rather than just spot actions.

Cpt. Didone reviewed the circumstances of each fatality described in the list included in the meeting packet – identifying key factors and some countermeasures used by MCPD and MCDOT as a result. One key concern is large, multiple lane, high speed roadways without any provisions for signalized crossings for pedestrians (like the recent Georgia and Regina fatal crash, the third fatality at that location.) We need to look at such corridors.

Key factors revealed in the review of fatal crash reports include: five fatalities were associated with transit stops; pedestrians and bikes were not using the available pedestrian signals in several; the bicyclists were at fault in the three bicycle fatalities; in five of the pedestrian fatalities, the pedestrians were at fault; one pedestrian fatality was driver at fault; and one is unknown who was at fault; engineering solutions could have helped prevent two of the pedestrian fatalities. In the move to Vision Zero, all the contributing factors to fatal collisions should be examined to identify potential countermeasures.

Several members implored SHA and MCDOT to do something about the dangerous 1-mile corridor of Georgia Avenue where there are no pedestrian crossing facilities and lots of transit passengers crossing the wide, high speed roadway, being put at risk, with three people killed at the Georgia Avenue and Regina intersection.

State Roads and Connectivity/Crossings – Priority Locations:

Darrel Droblich reviewed a recording and photos he had made of Connecticut Avenue between Kensington and Georgia Avenue (Aspen Hill Home Depot.) Sidewalk connections did not exist at several locations. Curb cuts in the medians were without corresponding crosswalks. Snow emergency conditions only exacerbate the problem of lack of sidewalk connectivity. Bus stops with ADA compliant improvements may be creating hazardous crossing situations for transit passengers. Bus stops need to be looked at for possible consolidation with improved, signalized crossings on roads like Connecticut and Georgia. Boardings need to be evaluated for which stops can be combined. Droblich formally requested that Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA undertake a road safety audit.

Dave Helms, Potomac Pedalers – concerns about Matthew Henson Trail Crossing on Veirs Mill

Visibility is a concern at this trail crossing. There is much roadside obstruction of sight lines for cyclists as well as drivers and pedestrians. Speed is a problem at this crossing; should be 35 mph. Additional sidewalks along Veirs Mill are needed here. This situation is not unique with this crossing, it is system wide. There are many dangerous trail crossings in the County. Language of signage needs to be in Spanish at this location, or use icons– there is a large Latino population here. Automated enforcement is needed to assure speeds stay down at this crossing. Mr. Helms referenced the Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area (BiPPA) study of this location; its recommendations should be enacted here. Lessons learned at this crossing could and should be applied across the County. A punch list of action items is needed – only a scatter-gun approach now. Mr. Helms web site documenting much of this can be seen at:

<https://tourbuilder.withgoogle.com/builder#play/ahJzfmnd3ZWltdG91cmJ1aWxkZXJyEQsSBFRvdXIYgIDAsp23tQkM>

See letter submitted and posted in the meeting packet:

Insert link here

Review of Committee Motion Tracking Report

Darrel Droblich reviewed the tracking report:

School Bus Cameras:	100 cameras have been implemented with 775 citations issued in the two months of the program. 500 more cameras will be installed by the end of the school year. With the old vendor, over 4000 citations were issued.
Pedestrian Safety Education:	More funding needed. Currently County-wide education, including for schools is \$232,000. A full County-wide campaign was costed at the start of the Pedestrian Safety Initiative at \$750,000. The regional Street Smart Campaign is budgeted at \$650,000 annually.
Bicycle Safety Education:	SHA has provided 2000 copies of their most recent bicycle safety brochure. This is now being disseminated to County bike shops. Additional copies are being printed.
BiPPA Funding:	Funding was increased last year (could not hear in recording what it was). Chris Conklin was to find out.
Crosswalk Striping	MCDOT has installed upgraded (high-visibility) crosswalks in the Urban Districts of Silver Spring and Bethesda. Funding was increased a couple of years ago, and was again increased this year. MCDOT can now repaint all sidewalks every three years. They are being done more frequently in urban districts and high pedestrian trafficked areas.
Pedestrian Consideration for Speed Cameras	Already is the prime factor for selecting speed camera locations.
Pedestrian Safety Master Plan	Darrel wants a formal response on this from MCDOT
Purple Line Project	Darrel and Jeff will revisit and revise. Chris Conklin suggested monitoring the final design and implementation, identifying any punch list items to make stops safer for pedestrians.
Construction Signage	Locations in Bethesda were observed to have signs complying with the law. There was uncertainty about where these were. Darrel would follow up. Chris Conklin noted that the language on notification was included in the bill regarding closure of private streets. Darrel and Chris will confer on this to update this item.
Pepco ROW Trail	Dunckel reported that project is proceeding well. Design of the trail is underway. Pepco is to return in February to provide an update. Quarterly updates were suggested by Pepco while the project is getting underway and being designed.
Bike Master Plan	Project is progressing well and on schedule.

Snow Plan	County has been surveyed, but data has not been placed into a GIS layer yet. Jeff will track down for next meeting.
State Testing Requirements	Still need to follow up with Peter Moe.
Must Appear Bill	Didone has support for bill from advocacy groups, but no legislator to sponsor the bill.
Brief MCPD on Bike Facilities	Pat Shepherd and Matt Johnson briefed all traffic Sergeants on January 9, 2017. Will conduct follow up briefings as facilities are built.

Darrel will use these updates in his drafting of the Annual Report, along with the meeting summaries.

Chris Conklin announced to the Committee that after Al Roshdieh interviewed Kristy Daphnis this morning, Mr. Roshdieh has decided to recommend Kristy to County Executive Leggett to be the next Chair of the PBTSAC. Everyone was most pleased with this decision and applauded heartily. Kristy outlined her priorities for the coming year: reaching out to other community members; engaging the PBTSAC's citizen members a little bit more; and continuing to maintain the collegial working relationship so we can continue to get stuff done.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:34 pm.