

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF JUNE 4, 2015 MEETING of the
PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, and TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Office Building, 9th Floor Conference Room**

Members Present: Darrel Droblich, Chair; Steve Friedman; Angel Garcia-Ablanque, MCPS; Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA; Drew Morrison (for Roger Berliner), County Council; Reemberto Rodriguez, SSRSC; Colleen Mitchell, Vice Chair; David Anspacher, MNCPPC; Wendy Leibowitz; Marybeth Cleveland; Fred Lees, MCDOT (for Al Roshdieh); Leah Walton

Members Absent: George Branyan; Kristy Daphnis; Captain Thomas Didone, MCPD; Ramin Assa; Al Roshdieh, MCDOT; Roger Berliner, County Council

County Staff: Shawn Brennan, MCHHS Aging and Disability Services; Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Michael Subin, MC-CEX; Shae Wilson, MCDOT

Guests: Sarah Gotbaum, Women's Aging Alliance; John Wetmore, Perils for Pedestrians; Peggy Schwartz, North Bethesda TMD; Dustin Kuzan, MDSHA; Peggy Dennis, Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board; Jon Morrison, Maryland Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee

PBTSAC Committee Business:

Chair Darrel Droblich called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, calling for introductions. Jeff Dunckel announced that the Office of Boards, Committees and Commissions would be posting the announcement for the vacancies on the committee in the next couple of weeks. Steve Friedman and Colleen Mitchell will be concluding their second terms, so there will be two open positions in the next appointment process. Approval of the meeting summary was deferred until a quorum was present.

Presentation on Bicycle Master Plan Update (David Anspacher)

David Anspacher of Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission presented a video and PowerPoint presentation of the upcoming effort to update the current Bicycle Facilities Master Plan. Anspacher thanked the committee for encouraging the updating of the plan; the committee first suggested the update a year ago. The plan update was just approved in MNCPPC's work plan for FY16. The plan will address the increased demand for bicycling and the need for new facilities. The first bike plan was developed in 1978 and has not been substantively updated since then.

Anspacher outlined the different user groups: the strong and fearless users (1%); enthused and confident users (10%); interested but concerned users (60%); and the no-way, no-how, non-users (29%). Traffic volume and speeds are factors of concern, with separated bicycle facilities being perceived as encouraging more of the interested and concerned bicyclists to ride. Historically, the County has planned facilities primarily for the strong and fearless, and enthused and confident users; bike lanes and use of traffic lanes have been adopted for these two groups. Anspacher reviewed preliminary work done for the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center area, including assessing the levels of stress for different user groups when bicycling on various road types and bike facilities.

Anspacher reviewed the various bicycle facilities supporting bikes that have been implemented in the region. These facilities will be incorporated into the plan. The plan update will get underway in July (FY16), but some preliminary work is being done at the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and White Flint, as redevelopment of these two locations is very active at this time. The Planning Board will approve the scope of the work; the staff draft of the plan is expected in November of 2016.

A bicycle summit is being held on June 6 at the Silver Spring Civic Center from 10:00 to noon; Anspacher invited committee members to participate. The move to make Montgomery County a world-class bicycling area will be explored at the summit. The PBTSAC supports this effort. The mechanisms of work group interactions and the inclusion of comparative costs to auto facilities will be considered

when the plan update gets underway in July. Broad community support is key to moving forward. Bicycles are moving from the realm of recreation to one of transportation – with associated conflicts emerging. The plan will attempt to address some of this. Other issues to consider include maintenance concerns, incorporating data from Capital Bikeshare, and making the State a partner to the Bicycle Master Plan.

Can the Bicycle Master Plan be a model for a future Pedestrian Master Plan?

Development of a Walk-along Event for Seniors and Disabled (Marybeth Cleveland/Shawn Brennan)

Drobnich introduced Marybeth Cleveland (PBTSAC Disabilities Community Representative) and Shawn Brennan (MCDHHS Senior Mobility Program Manager) who are organizing a tour of pedestrian facilities, modeled on the successful Bicycle Ride-along of a couple of years ago. The purpose of the tour, with County decision makers accompanying seniors and those with disabilities, is to experience the walking environment in the shoes of those who have to walk it and roll it (in wheelchairs), helping County leaders to understand the needs of the aged and those with disabilities.

Brennan explained the effort to identify an area that is typical of walking environments that are challenges for seniors in the community, perhaps including a parking lot. Ideally an area that had some examples of recent improvements as well as remaining needs could be identified. Late August is being considered, before the County Council returns in September. People who are seniors and those with disabilities will accompany the group to help everyone understand the challenges they encounter.

Drew Morrison reported that the first Council session after summer break is September 8. Cleveland suggested having a facilitated discussion following the Walk-along to help document the issues and concerns observed in the Walk-along. Jeff Dunckel explained that the format of the previous Ride-along was to first discuss the facilities to be observed and the issues to be sensitive to, then tour the facilities to experience them first-hand, and then follow up with a discussion of what was seen, what the key issues are, what needs to be done to correct the problems, and what the next step are.

Drobnich suggested bringing walkers, wheelchairs, and blindfolds for the able-bodied participants to use and experience getting around like those with disabilities. The mission is to let others walk in the shoes of those who have to navigate roadways and parking lots when aged or disabled. Angel Garcia-Ablanque suggested doing this right after Labor Day, when traffic congestion increases. Multiple events were suggested. John Wetmore cited a You Tube video on non-visual wayfinding that presents the challenges to finding your way when visually impaired.

Action: John Wetmore to provide link to non-visual wayfinding video on You Tube for group to review before the event.

Drobnich requested that others recommend individuals and groups to invite to participate. The PBTSAC would like to make this a very inclusive event.

Distribution of State Bicycle Safety Educational Materials (Dustin Kuzan)

Dunckel introduced Dustin Kuzan, who is the Maryland Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Coordinator, creating a program where previously none existed, leading the pedestrian road safety audit activities for the State's high-crash locations and spearheading the effort to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in the Maryland. Kuzan cited his involvement with Montgomery County bicyclists, including Steve Friedman and Denise Cohen of Potomac Peddlers, in developing a bicycle safety campaign for the State a couple of years ago. Kuzan came to address the issue of bicycle safety information materials the State has, and how they are being distributed in bike shops.

Kuzan explained that he did not have materials to distribute because he did not have a sufficient budget to print more than a small number; the written materials also have to be updated to reflect the recent changes in the new laws for bicycles. When the revisions are made, then more will be printed. Until then, only a handful of materials are available for dissemination. He shared with the PBTSAC the materials the State does have to distribute - - the State law does not specify what safety information to distribute, only that bicycle safety information (unspecified) is to be distributed - - and only that it is to be made available to bike shops. So while there is a Maryland law requiring that materials be made available, there is currently no money or no other resources to make information available to bike shops.

Dunckel suggested that the County and State could partner together to help get materials into County bike shops. Kuzan mentioned a “yellow booklet” that is being updated by the State and would be the information needed for bike shops. An updated list of County bike shops is needed. Currently the State only provides materials upon request. Michael Jackson, of the MDOT, specified that the “yellow booklet” would be the information that would meet the letter of the law and it was to be provided to bike shops when it is printed. It was last printed five years ago; there is no stock of these to distribute to the bike shops. Kuzan passed out what the State had to distribute instead of the “yellow booklet.”

Much discussion ensued from the committee on what was most appropriate to hand out to whom. Several of the pieces Kuzan distributed were thought to be appropriate for distribution to targeted audiences. Other points of educational opportunities besides bike shops should also be considered: sitting at the MVA or when license renewal happens.

Action: Angel Garcia-Ablanque stated that if provided with 3,000 copies of the brochure targeting drivers by August 15, he would distribute it to his school bus drivers during summer training. He also requested 300 by July 2 so he could use them in a session for driver trainers being held in Salisbury on July 7.

Kuzan offered to provide the County with 5,000 copies of each of the three brochures he distributed to the committee. These could be provided to bike shops by volunteers and others.

Kuzan explained all the functions his office is currently involved with implementing. Statewide best-management practices for pedestrian facilities are now being developed. Asked what other counties were doing good things, he cited Howard County’s Bicycle Master Plan as a good example because it identified project costs so they could be funded and implemented. Some of the links to bicycle safety information on the SHA web site were reported to be broken.

Action: Kuzan agreed to provide the printed copies of bicycle safety information for Montgomery County bike shops to handout to their customers. Montgomery County will help identify the bike shops in the County and help distribute the information to the bike shops. This should include Target, Costco, Kmart, Sears and other stores that sell less expensive bicycles.

Meeting Summary from April 1, 2015

As some of the committee members began to depart early, Droblich called for a vote on approving the meeting summary from April 1.

Motion: Moved and seconded to approve summary of the April 1, 2015 meeting. Committee voted unanimously to approve.

Discussion of Current Budget Line Items for FY16

Fred Lees noted Emil Wolanin’s report at the last meeting that 3 percent budget cuts were being directed at MCDOT and that pedestrian safety programs could be affected. Lees cited Droblich’s letter to the

County Council requesting funding for the pedestrian safety program as having had a positive effect on the Council's deliberations. Lee's reported that the County Council restored the proposed cuts and that safety related programs would continue to be funded in FY16; some activities would have increased funding:

- \$100,000 for additional pedestrian safety education (to augment enforcement)
- \$350,000 for planning for the sidewalk snow removal (inventory of sidewalks)
- \$80,000 for enhanced pedestrian safety enforcement (overtime)
- \$75,000 to fund the update of the Bicycle Master Plan
- \$15.2 million to the road resurfacing budget (can provide improved bicycle/pedestrian facilities)
- Construction money for the Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Areas was restored by Council
- Restored funding for construction of Falls Road hiker/biker trail
- Restored funding for construction of MacArthur Blvd. bike path
- Restored funding for Tuckerman and Seven Locks bicycle shared use path facility
- Funds to build the County's portion of the Metropolitan Branch Trail (Spring 2019)
- A position in Department of Permitting Services to enforce sidewalk closure permits during construction

The Wynn case may jeopardize some of these items; some may have to be cut in a future savings plan to address the fiscal impacts of this Supreme Court decision on Maryland's tax laws.

Approval of the Annual Report

MOTION: Steve Friedman moved the motion to approve the 2014 Annual Report; Angel Garcia-Ablanque seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Program Updates

Motion tracking report/table: Droblich stated that we appear to be caught up on the outstanding issues. Droblich will number the items from now on. Droblich went through each item and commented on developments. Garcia-Ablanque noted that fewer drivers are passing school buses where cameras have been deployed; additional school bus cameras were not requested in the County Executive's budget. Additional Capital Bikeshare Grants are being pursued. Increased crosswalk stripping is budgeted and being upgraded throughout the County – County is now on a three-year cycle for remarking crosswalks. Purple Line - - still awaiting a decision from the Governor. Adherence to the Bicycle Master Plan is still an issue that needs resolution - - who enforces? The Maryland Public Service Commission approved the PEPSCO/Exelon merger with the construction of shared use trails on their ROW as a condition of approval.

Education Outreach: Nadji Kirby is expanding and consolidating the Safe Routes to School Web Page (Elementary and Middle Schools) and the YOLO Site (High Schools) to create a more universal school education resource. She recently participated in a Tweeter Chat of pedestrian safety; she is expanding the use of social media in the school education program. More schools are doing Bike Rodeos using the County's trailer. The program is being expanded to train others to train the kids. Kuzan mentioned that Bike Maryland may be an additional resource for the County program.

New Business

Topics for Next Meeting: Walk-about will be a topic for next meeting
Use of Bike Boxes in County (such as Cedar Lane @ MD 355)

The Meeting Adjourned at 9:28 pm