

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF November 07, 2013 MEETING of the
PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, and TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Executive Office Building, 9th Floor Conference Room
7:00 pm to 9:30 pm**

Members Present: Colleen Mitchell, Vice Chair; Ramin Assa; Kristy Daphnis; Cpt. Tom Didone, MCPD; Darrel Droblich; Steve Friedman; Angel Garcia-Ablanque, MCPS; Alan Migdall; Reemberto Rodriguez, SSRSC; Jack Strausman; Tom Autrey (representing David Anspacher), M-NCPPC; Benjamin Fulton (representing Councilmember Valerie Ervin); Tom Pogue, MCDOT, (representing Art Holmes, Jr.), MCDOT; Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA; David Sharp (by phone)

Members Absent: Erwin Mack, Chair; David Anspacher, MNCPPC; Councilmember Valerie Ervin; Councilmember John Hall, City of Rockville; Arthur Holmes Jr., MCDOT; Alyce Ortuzar

County Staff: Joana Conklin, MCDOT; Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT (Pedestrian Safety Coordinator); Kamal Hamud, MCDOT; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Stacy Leach, MCDOT; Fred Lees, MCDOT; Michael Subin, County Executive's Office

Guests: Kate Mazzara, SHA; Karen Cordry, resident; Peggy Dennis, WMC/CAB; Peggy Urban, MCDPS

Vice-Chair Colleen Mitchell called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

1) PBTSAC Committee Business:

Colleen Mitchell, Vice-Chair

Welcome and Introductions Newly-appointed committee member, Kristy Daphnis, introduced herself. Board members, County staff and other guests introduced themselves.

Review of Meeting Summary from September – Approval/Changes – The September Meeting Summary was introduced.

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the September 9, 2013 Meeting Summary; it was voted and unanimously approved.

County Council Presentation – September 24 (Dunckel) – Jeff Dunckel reviewed the presentation given to County Council. The presentation covered Bikeshare program challenges, the pedestrian safety initiative, Safe Routes to Schools and parking lot collisions. Overall there has been a reduction in pedestrian collisions in high incidence areas where pedestrian safety outreach activities have been orchestrated. Benjamin Fulton shared that the Council's response was positive.

Capital Bikeshare Kickoff Event (Friedman) – Steve Friedman provided an overview of the Bikeshare kickoff event. He called the event well attended. Following the kickoff, a number of Capitol Bikeshare bicycles have been spotted on the streets, particularly between Friendship Heights and Bethesda. There are now more than 15 Bikeshare stations in operation in Montgomery County with all 51 to be finished soon.

Staff action requested: Steve Friedman requested information on the membership numbers for Montgomery County Bikeshare.

Report of Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Data – (Captain Didone) Capt. Didone spoke about the new ACRES Program (Automatic Crash Reporting System), an online, real-time reporting system expected to simplify crash data collection by allowing officers to report crash data directly from crash sites. This state-wide system is expected to be fully implemented in the County by February 1, 2014.

Crash Data:

Pedestrian crashes are up about 32 crashes (16%) over the first six months of 2013. Bicycle crashes are down about 32 crashes (47%) over the first six months of last year.

Traffic Officer Education – Share the Road

The process to educate the County's traffic officers on bicycle/vehicle safety and road laws is underway. Training will cover the importance of sharing the road with cyclists, the 3-foot rule, the different types of riders (professional, recreational, commuter, and competitive), and appropriate roadway laws. The possibility of enforcement involving traffic officers on bikes is being discussed.

Annual Report for 2013 – (Darrel Droblich) – Darrel Droblich presented his first draft of the 2013 annual report (handout).

Committee member action requested: Colleen Mitchell asked for edits or comments to be sent to Darrel by Thursday, November 14th. The committee thanked Darrel for a job well done.

2.) PBTSAC Follow-up on Issues of the Disabilities Community: (Peggy Urban, MCDPS; Kate Mazzara, MDSHA)

Travel Pathway: Sidewalks and Construction Impediments – Peggy Urban and Kate Mazzara spoke about Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) standards for pedestrian access or maintenance of traffic (MOT) at construction sites (handouts). Committee members raised a number of questions regarding the enforcement of State MOT standards, and the consequences for contractors in violation of the standards. Kate Mazzara and Peggy Urban responded with the following:

- Contractors are required to attend preconstruction meetings where pedestrian access and ADA standards are covered.
- SHA offers free ADA training for contractors.
- Contractors are required to assign a traffic manager, whose job includes addressing pedestrian access, communicating MOT standards to the contractor, and 24-hour on-call availability.
- When violations are reported, an inspector is sent to the construction site to investigate.
- Repeat violators could be fined, their bonds held, or be banned from the bidding process.

Maintenance of Access During Construction

SHA MOT standards for pedestrian access at construction sites contain detailed, illustrated requirements. Pedestrian pathways should be maintained at all times, where applicable. If construction impedes pedestrian access, walkways should be built or portions of traffic lanes sectioned off for pedestrian traffic. Maintaining pedestrian access during construction is a higher priority in the County's urbanized, high pedestrian trafficked locations. Closed sidewalks should have "Sidewalk Closed, Use Other Side" signs posted in appropriate areas, as specified in SHA MOT standards. PBTSAC members suggested that signs include a phone number for reporting construction site violations. Darrel Droblich suggested that contractors be required to either put up a sign or a sticker that directs the public to call a number to report any problems with construction impeding access. David Sharp cited the new bank construction at Rockville Pike and Beall Avenue as an example of problems created for wheelchair users where access is impeded.

Motion: Construction Signage – Pedestrian Safety Concerns -- Darrel Droblich introduced a motion: **Motion voted that the PBTSAC recommend to the County Executive (that the County) explore requiring appropriate signage at construction areas which provides information to the public where they can call or notify the County (e.g. 311) about possible improper impediments to the flow of pedestrian traffic or other potential pedestrian and traffic safety concerns; Mike Subin added an amendment to the motion that the PBTSAC requests that the County Executive ask the State to follow the same procedures.**

The motion was unanimously approved with the amendment.

Correction of Deficiencies During Repaving, Construction, Road Modifications – For the last two years, all SHA resurfacing jobs must be evaluated for modifications and striping to maximize any width for bicycles, pavement markings, and signs placement. Evaluations are not being made retrospectively at this time, but a project is underway to look at sections of roadways to determine whether article 11 signs are needed. SHA is open to engaging the cycling community to discuss sign placement. Discussion also focused on notifying communities well before improvements are constructed (e.g. under MCDOT’s Renew Montgomery program) so that sidewalk requests can be considered in the process.

Georgia Avenue Sidewalk/Intersection Re-construction Issues – Sidewalk access has been reestablished at the construction site on Georgia Avenue near Spring Street that previously closed half of the block to pedestrian traffic.

Signal Timing – Status Report on Changes to Timing

Kamal Hamud described the signal timing project, which began in 2009, is approximately 50% complete. Out of 850 signals, roughly 60-70 are retimed each year. To date, about 400 signals have been retimed. This ongoing effort is difficult, time consuming and complicated, and requires field work, data collection, record dissemination, coordination with the signal network. The high incidence areas have been prioritized.

3.) Parking Lot Pedestrian Safety and Other Campaigns (Nadji Kirby and Joana Conklin, MCDOT)

Parking Lot Pedestrian Safety: (Tom Pogue briefed the members on behalf of program lead Esther Bowring, PIO) – The County first became aware of this problems in 2008 when it was revealed that 20 percent of all pedestrian collisions occur in parking lots. According to MCPD data, parking lot pedestrian collisions have now increased from 74 collisions in 2010, to 125 collisions in 2012 – or nearly a third of our collisions. Twenty percent resulted in debilitating injuries, and many occurred in retail and privately-owned parking lots. Because the parking lots are on private property in most cases, a different strategy involving partnerships with the property owners must be employed.

Last fall, a working group was formed to review options for a parking lot pedestrian safety campaign. A detailed analysis was completed of the top 40 worst areas for pedestrian parking lot collisions, and a strategic plan developed.

The strategic plan includes:

- identifying research on the issue
- forging partnerships with various associations (e.g. AAA), and with property owners
- conducting detailed analysis of collision data
- developing improvement strategies for parking lots/garages
- implementing a public education/marketing campaign
- conducting informal reviews of lots with the highest collision rates

The County Council has appropriated \$50,000 for a public education campaign. The Parking Lot Pedestrian Safety campaign will be launched at a news event on November 21st at Dawson’s Market in Rockville.

High School Pedestrian Safety Outreach Program:– Nadji Kirby briefed the committee on the Walk Your Way Project, a new program designed to educate high school students about the importance of pedestrian safety. The program will award up to \$2,000 to schools interested in creating their own pedestrian safety campaigns. To apply, schools should visit walkyourway.org for the application and free resource kit. An awards contest for the high school with the best pedestrian safety idea was suggested.

Crosswalk Novella:– Joana Conklin briefed the committee on a new crosswalk safety campaign scheduled for launch in December. Designed to heavily target the Spanish-speaking population, the campaign will feature edgy, colorful, novella-spoofing comic strips that address the importance of crosswalk safety. The ads will be posted on bus interiors / exteriors, and at bus shelters. It was asked if any Latino groups had been consulted. Jeff Dunckel responded that two focus groups had been consulted with positive results – only one person found the ads unfavorable.

Street Smart Fall Safety Campaign

Jeff Dunckel briefed the committee on the fall regional campaign. The Blake High School Marching Band performed at the kickoff of the Fall Street Smart Campaign on Capitol Hill to commemorate the 76 lives lost last year to pedestrian collisions. There was good media coverage of the event.

4) Adherence to Bicycle Master Plan – Language Revisions to Motion –

Motion: Steve Friedman presented the revised motion, which was tabled in the September meeting. **Voted, that the PBTSAC recommend to the County Executive, County Council and M-NCPPC that whenever development or project road work is being performed on a County roadway, the appropriate public agency shall review the project for adherence to the Master Plan and where possible, within the scope of the project, require appropriate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations implementing master Plan recommendations. This includes new construction as well as reconstruction projects. ADA Best Practices and AASHTO Bicycle Guidance should be followed to provide both a walkable pedestrian environment, accessible to all users, and appropriate bicycle accommodations.**

The Motion was unanimously approved.

5) New Business/Comments

Issues to Discuss at Next Meeting:

Discussion ensued of making Shared Use of Utility Rights-of-Way – an agenda item for the January Meeting. Steve Friedman will conduct a work group to discuss direction for the shared-use of utilities rights-of ways for hiker/biker pathways in Montgomery County.

Committee member action requested: Steve Friedman will meet with Jack Strausman and Peggy Dennis, and any other committee members who may want to consider the issue before the January meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for **January 9, 2014.**

6) Adjourn – Colleen Mitchell adjourned the meeting at 9:39 pm.