

**DRAFT SUMMARY OF July 10, 2014 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: Erwin Mack, Chair; Angel Garcia-Ablanque; David Anspacher, MNCPPC; Roger Berliner, County Council; Kristy Daphnis; Cpt. Tom Didone, MCPD; Darrel Droblich; Jeremy Martin, MML; Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA; Reemberto Rodriguez, SSRSC; David Sharp; Jack Strausman

Members Absent: Ramin Assa; Steve Friedman; Arthur Holmes Jr., MCDOT Alan Migdall; Coleen Mitchell

County Staff: Josh Faust, Council; Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT (Pedestrian Safety Coordinator); Kim Funderburk, MCDOT; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Fred Lees, MCDOT; Al Roshdieh, MCDOT; Michael Subin, CEX; Alicia Thomas, MCDOT

Guests: Nancy J. Balz; George Branyan, DDOT; Peggy Dennis, WMC/CAB; Sarah Gotbaum; Richard Hoyt; William Selby

Chair Mack called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

1.) PBTSAC Committee Business:

Erwin Mack, Chair

Welcome and Introduction – Erwin Mack welcomed Councilmember Roger Berliner and introduced incoming Committee member Jeremy Martin; Jeremy Martin lives in Rockville and represents the Maryland Municipal League (MML.)

Review of Meeting Summary from March – The May Meeting Summary was unanimously approved.

County Stat Review of Pedestrian Safety Initiative – Jeff Dunckel reported that the CountyStat Review originally scheduled for June 25th was postponed to July 23rd. Crash data was analyzed in an attempt to determine causality for the increase in 2013 pedestrian collisions (up 60 from last year); preliminary results showed that for 40 of the additional 60 collisions were level-one severity that resulted in no reported injuries. MCDOT and MCPD will present the review. Chair Erwin Mack will attend. All PBTSAC members and other interested persons are invited to attend.

Update on Applications for New Members – The announcement requesting applications for new appointments was posted in June; the posting will close July 11th. Applications are expected to be processed in the next few weeks; committee members interested in serving on the Selection Committee should inform Darrel Droblich or Jeff Dunckel; generally two or three Committee members (in addition to Committee chair and Jeff Dunckel) are needed to form the Selection Committee. Interviews will be held with candidates and recommendations submitted to the County Executive, hopefully before the September meeting.

Update on Pedestrian and Bicycle Collisions and Fatalities – Captain Thomas Didone reported that there have been five pedestrian fatalities this year. The latest pedestrian fatality made local news. The

collision occurred on the soccer field of Eastern Middle School. The vehicle was being operated by an unlicensed driver, practicing driving in the school parking lot when they lost control of the vehicle and ran into the soccer field. A 33-year old woman was injured and a 13-year old girl killed. While this type of accident is categorized as a non-traffic collision by both the MCPS and the State, it is still counted as a pedestrian fatality. There is no clear action that would have prevented this type of tragedy.

MCPD is in discussions with the State in an effort to gain real-time access to the State's new Automated Collision Reporting System (ACRS) collision data gathered by the State and County; grant funding was provided to the State for development of a software tool that will allow access to the real-time data. It is unclear when access to the State's system can be expected, or what the project's priority is at this time. Montgomery County is one of the first local jurisdictions using the system – the entire state will be switched over to the new system by January 2015.

Follow-up on Committee Motions – Darrel Droblich reported that a review of motions submitted to the County Executive and County Council over the last three years is complete. A grid of motions selected for follow-up (handout #2) is being finalized; once finalized, a select few will be chosen for follow-up; the purpose of this endeavor is to discover what the County Executive and the County Council have done with the recommendations sent to them, in order to give credence to the motions voted by the members of the PBTSAC, the actions taken by the Committee and to maintain accountability to those communities represented by the PBTSAC.

Al Roshdiah commented that recommendations to the CE on this level should first come to MCDOT, and before following up with the CE and Council, it should first be determined whether or not the motions in questions were submitted. During his tenure, incoming Chair, Darrel Droblich, will require Committee members to submit a letter of explanation along with every proposed motion - - this can then be used to draft the transmittals of the motions that the Chair will take responsibility for, with MCDOT support.

Chair Erwin Mack introduced Councilmember Roger Berliner and asked if he had any comments. Councilmember Berliner thanked Mack and the Committee for their good work, citing the Committee's good work as his reason for joining the PTBSAC. The Committee is scheduled to go before the County Council's Transportation and Environment Committee on July 28th. Councilmember Berliner encouraged the Committee to prioritize follow-up motions, to create a priority list of 2-3 items, and to clearly communicate why the selected motions are important and what the Committee is asking Council to do. Councilmember Berliner stressed the importance of the Committee's role, stating: PBTSAC represents part of the community that cares deeply about these issues and its advice and input is needed, Berliner went on to say that Montgomery County is transitioning from suburban to urban living. In seeking a more walkable, bikeable community where traffic volume has increased, Berliner is promoting modifications to road code that would slow down vehicle speeds and reduce lane widths. Bill 33-13 is expected to receive lots of push back; Berliner will be counting on the Committee to provide needed input from the people that the bill is actually designed for – those who want a more walkable, bikeable community. Chair Erwin Mack thanked Councilmember Berliner for attending tonight's meeting and encouraged him to attend future meetings as well. Darrel Droblich requested that the County Council inform the PBTSAC of issues the Council seeks input on - - the Committee will gladly provide that input.

Commission on Aging Improving Senior Mobility – Representing the elderly and disabled citizens of the County, Sarah Gotbaum expressed concern over the condition of sidewalks, crosswalks and bus stops in the aftermath of numerous snowfalls this past winter. She is asking the County to develop a snow removal policy for wheelchair access on public streets and sidewalks, and also that the County should require bus companies to stop in front of public health centers, senior medical facilities and other locations frequented by seniors and disabled residents. Ms. Gotbaum met with Jeff Dunckel and presented an idea called Safe Paths for Seniors. While Ms. Gotbaum acknowledged that some changes have been made, not enough is being done to assure safe access for seniors. Chair Mack asked her to present her ideas to the Committee in writing; the Committee will revisit the subject in subsequent meetings.

2.) Presentation on the District of Columbia’s Pedestrian Master Plan – George Branyan, DDOT Pedestrian Safety Program Manager, made a presentation on the District’s Pedestrian Master Plan. Colleen Mitchell had worked with George Branyan on creating the plan prior to her becoming a member of the PBTSAC. The project began by reviewing walking data in the District of Columbia (DC). DC has a lot of attractions that promote walking, i.e.: retail, restaurants, the Circulator and The Metropolitan Branch Trail, and has 800,000 visitors a month. The pedestrian master plan was designed by analyzing eight corridors of high pedestrian traffic, using mode data, and pedestrian crash trends and fatalities. The three major elements of the master plan are: Policies, Priority Corridors and Design Guidance. Priority pedestrian corridors were identified and pedestrian activity levels estimated; locations with poor conditions for pedestrians were identified and an index of uncontrolled crossings created. At the completion of the study, recommendations were made to meet national best practices for a number of pedestrian safety-related elements, including: crosswalk markings, pedestrian refuge islands and curb extensions. The entire presentation made by Mr. Branyan is available on the PBTSAC website and can be seen at:

The District of Columbia Pedestrian Master Plan can be found at:

<http://ddot.dc.gov/page/pedestrian-master-plan-2009>

3.) Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Budgets for FY15 – Alicia Thomas (for Tony Alexiou) presented the Pedestrian Safety Funding – FY15 County Executive Recommended Budget (handout #4). The FY15 budget does not include funding for enhanced police enforcement in high incidence areas (HIAs) and reduces funding for HIA engineering and education. In FY14, a great deal of HIA police enforcement was funded using overtime budgets. Darrel Droblich stressed the importance of funding being reinstated and for sustained police enforcement rather than periodic enforcement. There needs to be consistent enforcement and dedicated personnel in an effort to maintain the level of community awareness and continued pedestrian safety education efforts. Mr. Droblich would like the importance of sustained efforts be stressed at the upcoming CountyStat Review meeting, as well as with the County Executive. Jeff Dunckel stated that pedestrian safety education efforts in HIAs has now moved away from Group 1 HIAs (Piney Branch, Four Corners, Randolph and Veirs Mill, Connecticut Avenue at Aspen Hill, and Reddie Drive) last fiscal year. Fiscal Year 2015, efforts will be concentrated in the central business districts of Bethesda, Silver Spring, and the Rockville Pike corridor.

4.) Recognition of Erwin Mack: Passing of the Gavel – Chair Erwin Mack addressed the committee. Chair Mack’s third term on the committee ends in July. Jeff Dunckel made a tribute to Chair Mack and presented him with a certificate of appreciation from the County Executive and an inscribed gavel on behalf of the Committee. The members of the PBTSAC gave Mack a standing ovation and Mack was very moved by the gestures and thanked the committee for allowing him to serve as Chair for six years. Mack went on to present incoming Chair, Darrell Droblich with a hand-crafted gavel that Mack had made, and officially turned the chairmanship over to Mr. Droblich.

Motion: Move that the Committee thank Jeff Dunckel for his years of service. The motion was unanimously approved. The finalized motion will be presented at the September meeting.

5.) New Business/Comments/Topics for September Meeting

- Recent Bicycle Controversy: Recent article in the Washington Post by columnist Courtland Milloy sparked a war of words in the blogosphere, pitting motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists against each other.
- Next Ride-along: No decision was made on the next ride-along
- Next Meeting Date will be September 4, 2014

: Potential Topics

- Review of DOT’s FY16 Budget/Program Priorities for Next Fiscal Year
- Review of High School Education Program
- Presentation on CountyStat Review
- Report on Bikeshare – One Year Anniversary
- Pedestrian Access to Transit Centers
- Follow-up on Motions in Matrix

Chair Darrel Droblich adjourned the meeting at 9:35 pm