

**Draft Summary of November 30, 2015 MEETING of the PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE and TRAFFIC SAFETY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Executive Office Building, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**Members Present:** Capt. Thomas Didone, MCPD; Reemberto Rodriguez, Silver Spring Regional Services Center; Kristy Daphnis; Drew Morrison (representing Councilmember Roger Berliner; Darrel Droblich, Chair; Jeremy Martin, Rockville/Municipal League; Tom Autrey, MNCPPC; Emil Wolanin (representing Al Roshdieh, MCDOT); Marybeth Cleveland

**Members Absent:** Ramin Assa; George Branyan; Steve Friedman, Bicycle Advocate; Angel Garcia-Ablanque, MCPS; Wendy Leibowitz; Colleen Mitchell, Vice-chair; Anyesha Mookherjee, MSHA; Al Roshdieh, MCDOT; Roger Berliner, Councilmember; Leah Walton.

**County Staff:** Fred Lees, MCDOT; Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT; Trish Jenkins, MC311; Leslie Hamm, MC311; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Derrick Harrigan, MCDOT; Bruce Johnston, MCDOT; Josh Faust, MCDOT; Richard Dorsey, MCDOT .

**Guests:** Shawn Brennan, Aging and Disability Services; Peggy Dennis, WMCCAB; John Wetmore; Darlene Martin

**PBTSAC Committee Business:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Darrel Droblich at 7:02pm. The next meeting will be held on Feb 4. The October meeting summary was approved. There was a change submitted by Nadji Kirby (please see the meeting packet, item 4). The Committee approved the summary with this amendment.

**Item 3: Interviews for Community Member Vacancies (Darrel Droblich and Jeff Dunckel)**

There are 15 applicants and the Selection Committee is setting up interviews in the next couple of weeks. The interviews will take place at the BCC Regional Services Center and the Civic Center. Interviews will be completed before December 25. The Selection Committee is comprised of Droblich, Dunckel, Assa, and Daphnis.

**Review of Draft Annual Report Outline (Darrel Droblich)**

Darrel Droblich provided a draft outline of the annual report. The initial outline focuses on the walk-about, the holiday event with fire and rescue and police departments, and some of the outreach Jeff Dunckel and Nadji Kirby have done throughout the year. Darrel Droblich will be working with Wendy Leibowitz to finalize the Annual Report over the holidays and will send an email out to the board to vote approval of the report.

**Sidewalk Mapping (Bruce Johnston and Richard Dorsey, MCDOT)**

Briefings were provided by Johnston and Dorsey. The concrete that the County has been using for the last three years is scaling on curbs and sidewalks. Scaling sidewalks are not unique to Montgomery County—it's being noticed in Virginia, region-wide, and nationally. MCDOT Engineering performed tests and found that the bottom portion of the concrete (4-5" thick) is very stable concrete, but the top 16<sup>th</sup> of an inch is falling apart. What MCDOT Engineering has found is that the water used to finish the concrete is rising to the top and then the top level of the concrete has less strength. MCDOT Engineering has been doing this for years and they are not sure as to why this is creating a problem now.

MCDOT Engineering is embarking on a number of steps to address this issue:

- Requiring contractors to seal the concrete after 28 days (setting period) to mitigate the salt disturbing the top eight of an inch.
- At seven pilot locations, MCDOT Engineering is testing six different mixes (some with sealant and some without).
- At locations in the County that have extreme scaling, the top 8<sup>th</sup> inch is being taken off and resealed. The sealant process started at the end of October and should be completed by the end of December.
- MCDOT Engineering is in contact with other jurisdictions to see what works over the next couple of years.

Inventory of County Sidewalks: MCDOT Engineering is making an inventory of sidewalks on state roads, primary arterials, and then secondary roads. Over the next six or seven months MCDOT Engineering will be finished with the inventory. Creating a map is contingent upon the data that we find from the inventory and because inventory is not finished, a platform for the map cannot be created yet. DTS is waiting until the inventory is half-way completed (mid-March/April) so that they can start the process of developing the GIS map of sidewalks. The inventory and map should be finished at the end of this fiscal year.

**Review of MC311 System (Leslie Hamm, Director of MC311 Program and Chris Jenkins, Business Analyst for MCDOT)**

**A presentation on the MC311 system was provided by Leslie Hamm.** See the entire MC311 PowerPoint presentation here: [http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/Resources/Files/PBTSAC/County311\\_PBTSAC\\_presentation-11-30-15.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/Resources/Files/PBTSAC/County311_PBTSAC_presentation-11-30-15.pdf)

**MC 311 Overview –**

- 45 Customer Service Reps (CSR) in four shifts.
- Open from 7am to 7pm, Mon-Fri.
- Each CSR takes anywhere from 50-100 calls.
- About 10,000 calls per week; 500,000 requests for service each year.
- Launched June 17, 2010 and recently celebrated their 3-millionth service request.
- Average amount of time it takes to reach a CSR: 23 seconds (goal: 20 seconds, so this number is slightly over; they have had some staffing issues. We're probably the most surveyed service in the County).
- Customer Satisfaction rating: 85%
- Cost per customer contact: \$3.50.
- Avg. rate of serve request created on MC311 website and the mobile enabled portal: 30%
- Avg. rate of first call resolution: 83%
- Avg. rate of calls that come into 311 but are not answered by a CSR: 9%
- Avg. rate of callers requesting to speak Spanish: 4.9% (this is lower than the number of Spanish speakers in the County).
- 80% of calls can actually be serviced over the phone while the remaining 20% have to go back to the departments for servicing.
- Service Level Agreements with each department vary from one day for general information to up to three years for more complicated issues. The service level of the SLAs is determined by the

departments. These are agreements between the department and 311 as to how long it will take to service a request.

- Customers can tweet requests to 311 on Twitter – a new development not yet publicized.
- Information about MC 311 is available on TV monitors at the Regional Service Centers and EOB lobby. There are also brochures available and giveaway items.
- You can call MC311 for any reason.

### **Discussion: September Walkabout and Event Recommendations**

On September 10th, 2015, the PBTSAC held a Seniors/Disabled Walk-About in Gaithersburg. Elected officials and County and State officials joined seniors and disabled pedestrians to walk (and roll) a mile of Frederick Avenue, between Chestnut Street and Perry Parkway. Together, the group examined the state of pedestrian walkways, sidewalks, and signals. Afterwards, everyone met at the Bohrer Park Activity Center to debrief, discuss their findings and develop a plan of action to make Montgomery County more walkable and accessible for all its residents.

List of issues identified at the debriefing session:

- Develop a Pedestrian Master Plan— work with seniors and the disabilities community and develop an overall vision for the County going forward.
- Crosswalk stripping and treatment policy needs to include hazard indication beacons where there are several lanes of roadway.
- Crosswalk policies where there are as much as 6 lanes of traffic needs to be reconsidered.
- People are not stopping for pedestrians. Education about yielding the right away to pedestrians is needed.

Councilmember Katz asked for specific recommendations for the roads visited on the Walk About. The Committee will send recommends to the County Council and Executive.

**ACTION: Darrel Droblich asked the Committee to email any concerns, issues, or suggestions to Shawn, Darrel and Marybeth and they will address them.**

There is much concern about putting uncontrolled crosswalk markings where there are multiple lanes of traffic. Didone and Droblich discussed the hazards experienced on Massachusetts Avenue during Councilmember Berliner's Day of Action event - - cars would not stop for pedestrians using the marked crosswalk in front of Westland Middle School. This is a State roadway. Can drivers be educated in new and continuing driver education programs - - to stop for pedestrians using crosswalks. Droblich suggested targeting crosswalk stings at areas around shopping centers and schools. Charley Siguera from Federal Highway Administration did a study a few years ago on what measures should be employed for crosswalks in which situations – John Wetmore offered to provide the study to the committee.

The Jewish Centers for the Aging (JCA) has grant money available to do an education campaign. Shawn Brennan suggested doing bus sides or bus shelter advertisements before the new StreetSmart campaign comes out in March. It was also suggested that the messaging be a specific call to action. A meeting will be held with JCA and Jeff Dunckel to discuss messaging and artwork ideas.

### **Pedestrian Safety Initiative Update – CountyStat Review (Jeff Dunckel)**

See the entire CountyStat Pedestrian Safety presentation here:

[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/Resources/Files/PBTSAC/Nov%202015%20Ped%20Safety%20Update\\_FINAL2\\_shared.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-PedSafety/Resources/Files/PBTSAC/Nov%202015%20Ped%20Safety%20Update_FINAL2_shared.pdf)

Jeff Dunckel gave the committee an update on the CountyStat presentation on the Pedestrian Safety Initiative and explained that Pedestrian Safety is probably one of the more analyzed programs within CountyStat.

### **2014 Collision Trends**

Jeff Dunckel explains that there has been a modest decline in pedestrian collisions overall. However, there has been a 28% decline in level 4 and 5 collisions - - severe collisions where the pedestrians are either killed or incapacitated by injuries. 2014 fell below the pre-initiative average for total pedestrian and vehicle collisions, reversing a two-year trend in the rise of total collisions. There was not a lot of new information that came out of this last review, other than to affirm that what we have been doing seems to be working to reduce collisions.

Dunckel reviewed the summary slides in the presentation (see link above.) Targeting resources at the County's High Incidence Areas has resulted in overall declines in collisions in those locations. The success of the initiative has been in targeting high incidence areas (HIAs). The number of HIAs fell 15% from 41 collisions in 2013 to 35 collisions in 2014. Over the course of time, most of the HIAs have seen a great reduction in pedestrian collisions (between 40-55%). From 2013 to 2014 there was a 13% drop in reported pedestrian collisions in the County. Level 1 collisions dropped by 80%, from 65 to 2013 to 13 in 2014. Collisions decreased for all roadway types except municipal collisions. The amount of severe (level 4 and 5) collisions occurring on state roads did increase in 2014, after having decreased previously. The party at fault has been relatively stable over the past four years, with drivers at fault in 59% of collision and pedestrians at fault in 36% of collisions, on average from 2011 to 2014. There was an uptick in the 10- to 19-year-old population (probably due to distraction) and there has also seen an uptick in the early 30- to 39-year-olds. It's important to use education and enforcement to reach these audiences. With respect to drivers, there were decreases for those under 49 years of age and an increase for each age group 50- to 59- (except for the 70- to 79- year-olds).

There seems to be a correlation between the Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (BiPPAs) and pedestrian collisions (Silver Spring, Veirs Mill, Grosvenor, Glenmont, etc.). As the BiPPAs are made safer for bicycles and pedestrians, there is an expectation that pedestrian collisions will decline. 22% of the collisions in the County occurred in incorporated cities, towns and villages, with Rockville accounting for 12% of collisions. Middle, high school, and college-aged pedestrian collisions have been increasing.

October is the highest month for traffic collisions. This year we increased our education in October. In traffic calming areas, the average speed dropped by 6.9%. Over the last four years, the highest number of collision times have occurred between 5pm and 8pm. Lighting is a major concern, as the increased number of collisions seems to be correlated to the hours of darkness

Sidewalk projects are ongoing, but getting more and more difficult due to right-of-way constraints. The cost of sidewalk construction is increasing.

### **County Council Day of Action (Drew Morrison)**

The Day of Action hosted by Councilmember Roger Berliner was spurred by two tragic fatalities. Roger Berliner wanted to see something real and tangible being done to combat distracted driving. The Day of Action was a success and dozens of stories made the news. If you look at the County and Maryland—

there is a lot of distracted driving and drunk driving and a lot of it is on State highways. The County Council worked with DOT, the State, and Fire and Rescue to get the word out about safety, but the State needs to focus more on our State highways. Most of the traffic calming concerns the Council gets are about State highways. The Sidewalk Closure Bill should help mitigate issues in the January Council session. The Council is taking particular concern with respect to pedestrian safety at our schools. If more incidents are at high schools, why can't we put more crossing guards at high schools? For example, reports look at collisions within a quarter mile of a school. However, high schoolers and middle-schoolers are walking farther than that How do we improve safety along these routes? Schools seem to be the next point for the pedestrian safety initiatives. A possible answer is to include schools in the pedestrian master plan—creating connectivity between the bicycle master plan and pedestrian master plan, etc.

#### **Program Updates – Tracking Report (Darrel Droblich)**

Brochures on bicycle safety have not been received but Dunckel will let the committee know when they have been supplied by the State.

#### **MCPD Update on Enforcement (Capt. Thomas Didone)**

The County should have the ability by the beginning of the year to get all of the pedestrian collision data reported back by the Maryland State Police. There have been 34 traffic collisions where 35 people have died. Of these 34 collisions, there have been 11 pedestrian collisions and one bicycle collision; nine of which are confirmed that the pedestrian was at fault (issue: alcohol or dark clothing). In one recent fatality on US29 at Oak Leaf, there was no crosswalk, but there were curb cuts and ADA access in the center median. The question becomes, does this become an unmarked crosswalk—because the pedestrian is in it at the time of the collision. The question that keeps coming up is that when you make engineering changes in the mid-block and you facilitate a crossing at the location, does it qualify as a crosswalk? The question becomes, who has the right-of-way?

Cpt. Didone reviewed the circumstances of the bicyclist crash on Massachusetts Avenue last August. The driver was found to be at fault; the bicyclist was traveling with traffic off the travel lane, along the shoulder when he was struck. Drowsy driving is thought to be the cause. The driver was issued citations.

#### **School Bus Cameras**

MCPS would like to proceed with getting cameras for all 1200 school buses. MCPD needs to draft a decision memo to the CAO and once he signs off on it, the school board will be looking to piggy-back off of a Texas' contract for school bus cameras. MCPD will pilot the program to make sure everything works as the Texas vendor indicates it should. MCPS would like all school buses equipped with cameras by the beginning of the next school year. With the current fine rate of \$125, the vendor will keep all the money. The County will receive about \$80,000 in free cameras each year. But if the fine goes up, the County may get a percentage of the increase.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:29pm**