PBTSAC Meeting Minutes

2.23.2023

Attendees:

Christopher Conklin

Michael Paylor

Nima Upadhyay

Kristy Daphnis

Sanjida Rangwala

Eli Glazier

Jeremy Martin

Sonia Moore Williams

Erik K Palsson

Matt Johnson

Sara Morningstar

Richard Hoye

Seth Grimes

Francie Gilman

Kevin Permisohn

Jeff Parker

Steve Aldrich

Marybeth

Joseph Moges

Chappelle Branch

Wade Holland

Zachary C Weinstein

Natali Fani-González

**WELCOME**

K. Daphnis: Meeting called to attention at 7:00 p.m.

K. Daphnis:  Let’s welcome DTEO's newly hired Capital Projects Manager, Nima Upadhyay.

N. Upadhyay:  I am excited to join the Montgomery County Department of Transportation and support this committee.

K Daphnis: Let’s welcome the newly elected Councilmember Natali Fani-González to the committee. Natali will be replacing CM Hans Reimer.

K. Daphnis: CM Gonzalez hosted a Wheaton and Vicinity Transportation Infrastructure Townhall yesterday where all the planned projects within District 6's boundary were discussed.

CM Gonzalez: I am excited to be on the team and look forward to working with this committee.

K. Daphnis: Evan Glass is planning a press conference about the legislation for the Safe Streets Act of 2023. The legislation will be officially introduced to the Council on Tuesday, August 28, 2023.

**Legislative Update – Sara Morningstar, Office of Intergovernmental Relations**

K Daphnis: Sara Morningstar is here to provide some legislative updates

S. Morningstar: The 2023 legislative session started on January 11th and will adjourn on April 10th, 2023. On Friday, we will be halfway through the legislative session. I will provide an update on legislation that is of interest and that JPR is tracking.

S. Morningstar: Speed camera expansion (SB 577, HB 431, HB 710/SB 679, MC 6-23, HB 822, HB 353, SB 11). There are other speed camera bills to allow them at various locations in Anne Arundel County and on Indian Head Highway in Prince George’s County. People are extremely skeptical about adding speed cameras. They want to know where the money would go. MOCO has proposed that the money be used to fund HIN safety improvement projects. This is about 35 to 45 million dollars. The House environment and transportation committee seems to be quite conservative about the bill, which was withdrawn yesterday. We will go at it again next year.

S. Morningstar: HB 849, School Bus Camera, was a local bill that delegate Moon introduced, and we are closely tracking the bill. The HB 841 bill is regarding school bus stops on multilane highways with no median. The County Council had some safety concerns, and Delegate Moon is concerned about the cost of the fine.

S. Morningstar: There are House and Senate bills to close the Noah's Law loophole that let's those with DUI's but given probation before judgement to not have ignition interlocks. The drunk driving and Noah’s Law loophole bill is going to be closed.

S. Morningstar: Noise monitoring & street racing (HB 1130, HB 966, SB 616, HB 304, SB 229, HB 208, SB147 will be heard on April 2nd. It will also establish a 2-million-dollar fund to run this program. One of the MOCO County employees will come to Annapolis and provide an explanation of the law.

K. Daphnis: I recommend committee members to take a position on the HB 70 / SB 16 Safe Access of All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023 bike and pedestrian safety and submit to the County Government for approval and transmittal to the State Legislature.”. Wade, can you please take a vote.

W. Holland: Yes, I will

J. Martin: I will make the motion.

W. Holland: I will record the vote. Yes: Kristy Daphnis, Sonia Moore-Williams, Michael Paylor (proxy for Chris Conklin), Steve Aldrich, Jeremy Martin, Marybeth Cleveland, Sanjida Rangwala; Abstain: Zach Weinstein

K. Daphnis: I will circulate a draft letter of support.

S. M. Williams: I have a question about the school bus law. Does a driver have to stop for a school bus, even if he/she is on a multi lane road? What do you do if there is a median?

M. Paylor: Yes, the driver must stop on all roads that do not have a hard concrete median. It is legal to pass a school bus on a roadway with concrete median when you are travelling in an opposite direction to the stopped school bus.

**The Pedestrian Master Plan Update – Eli Glazier, Montgomery Planning**

K. Daphnis: E. Glazier is here to provide an update on the Pedestrian Master Plan

E. Glazier: Thanks for having me tonight. The goal of the master plan is to ensure that walking and rolling (using a mobility device) are safe, comfortable, convenient, and accessible for pedestrians of all ages and abilities across Montgomery County.

E. Glazier: The plan provides recommendations on Design, Policy, and Programming; Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area Prioritization; Complete Streets Design Guide Area Type Designations; Pedestrian Infrastructure (Pedestrian Shortcuts and Country Sidepaths).

E. Glazier: The plan focuses on creating a consistent approach to identifying BiPPAs areas and boundaries and prioritizes BiPPA areas.

E. Glazier: The plan identifies 310 pedestrian shortcut’s locations where public or private investment will shorten pedestrian trips and make the pedestrian network more accessible. The recommendation is to create a new Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project to build, reconstruct, and resurface these master-planned pedestrian shortcuts.

E. Glazier: The plan includes 21 sidepath recommendations where sidepaths should be built along roadways in the more rural parts of the county, in line with guidance in the Complete Streets Design Guide.

E. Glazier: The Montgomery County Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the Pedestrian Master Plan on March 23, 2023. Please read the plan and sign up for the public hearing.

K. Daphnis: Steve, are there any other plans that the committee needs to be aware of?

S. Aldrich: Great Seneca plan is ongoing and University Boulevard Master plan has a lot of interesting items related to improving multi-modal connectivity.

E. Glazier: Amherst bikeway plan is at mandatory referral phase and does excellent work on bicycle connection through Wheaton CBD and connect north south spine.

S. Aldrich: Viers Mill BRT, public meeting is scheduled for March 30, 2023.

**PBTSAC Membership List and PBTSAC Duties Revisited (30 min)**

N. Upadhyay: I will share the current PBTSAC membership list and the County code outlining committee’s duties.

W. Holland: I have posted the link to the code on the chat as well.

W. Holland: This committee has county staff, MC DOT Director, and public as voting members. Typically, in other committees, staff are not voting members. When the committee takes a position on a policy, does it make sense to have county staff as a voting member? The other item is who in the county takes overall equity goals and how those roles are structured. Right now, we have at large members, one member is assigned for Bicycle advocacy role, one member for persons of disability and Jeremy is the member for Maryland Municipal Board. Should we change this? The other item is that we have not developed a pedestrian safety report for the last 20 years. Should this duty be struck out? Let’s discuss under these three buckets, the first on the structure of the committee i.e., inclusion of both county staff and public representative, the second on how to get new committee members onboard and striking the need to develop annual report.

K. Daphnis: Wade, I am wondering if the Pedestrian Safety Final Report be changed to the Vision Zero implementation plan.

W. Holland: With the new County Executive, Vision Zero might be something else, it will be best to not keep changing the code.

K. Daphnis: Just for clarity, any changes must be made as per county code?

W. Holland: Yes, Beth Gochrach and the executive office will have to review it.

K. Daphnis: When we update the statue, will it also change the term of the committee member.

Wade: Not necessarily, we will confirm

K. Daphnis: Does County staff have a view on this unusual structure of county employees and public members working as a committee member on this board. I believe it helps cooperation and coordination.  It is beneficial to have a collaborative form to discuss things. I will welcome other views on this.

M. Paylor: I see the benefit of having a diverse group, I like this structure of having staff and better able to solve the problem. In my perspective, the structure is effective.

K Daphnis: I like the diversity and having the interaction between the county staff and public members.

K. Daphnis: One thing is missing, I like that we have bicycle advocate and disability advocate, one area we can do better as representatives from MCPS including students, parents, and teachers.

K. Daphnis: I would like to hear from the other members on the line.

S. Rangwala: This is different from other groups; this is short of trying to get things done with all the people who can get things done. It does not feel like we have accomplished a lot of things.

M. Cleveland: Sometimes it is hard to follow what is happening, I like the structure, it is very good. I agree we should have student representatives.

S. Aldrich: I wanted to say this committee can help DOT and SHA as they are trying to pursue projects. There have been tough projects such as Georgetown Road and Tuckerman Road. This group has a great opportunity to advise the County in general, on things we do well, and we do not do well.

K. Daphnis: Does, any other member have thought about overall membership, or changes to the code that Wade outlined.

S. Rangwala: Do we have anyone from the planning board?

K. Daphnis: We have Steve from the planning board. We would like to have MCPS members.

W. Holland: We can reach out to MCPS.

J. Martin: My role representing the Maryland Municipal League has changed; I should be a public member.

K Daphnis: Maybe we should reach out to the Maryland Municipal League and ask for members and get Jeremy to a public role

J. Moses: If you look at section C of the code, must appoint are critical, must invite are not mission critical.

K Daphnis: We are going a few minutes over and thank you for hanging in here. My next question is, what are the next steps here, how do we do ahead with recruiting the members including chair and vice chair.

M. Paylor: In the next PBTSAC meeting or two, we will continue this discussion regarding change to the committee and how to make the committee more effective. It can be similar to the Vision Zero programming meeting on how we want to advance the committee.

N. Upadhyay: Regarding the committee members’ vacancies, we will review the list and identify all the vacant members and work with Beth Gochrach on advertising these vacancies.

K Daphnis: What is the stepwise process of doing this? Do we post the vacancy first or provide the best advice on how to run the committee?

M. Paylor: We can do it simultaneously.

**Committee Business**

K. Daphnis: When is our next meeting scheduled?

N. Upadhyay: It is scheduled for March 23, 2023.

K. Daphnis: Maybe we have county staff layout some concrete advice on what changes need to be on the code to make the committee helpful and we will go back to Natalie and ask the same thing.

K. Daphnis: Meeting is adjourned at 8:47 pm.