PBTSAC Meeting Minutes

5.26.22

Attendees:

Kristy Daphnis

Wade Holland

John Hoobler

Jim Brown

Eli Glazier

John Kellenberg

Kevin Permisohn

Francie Gilman

Zachary Weinstein

Stephen Aldrich

Alfred Minichiello

Gail Landi

Jeremy Martin

Kentner Singleton

Marybeth Cleveland

Carolyn Chen

Marissa Valeri

Steve Ashurst

Sanjida Rangwala

Richard Hoye

Sonia Moore-Williams

Emily Troutman

Fabiola Yurcisin

Patrick Sheehan

Trabeek Haithem

**WELCOME**

K Daphnis: Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm.

K Daphnis: Introductions for guests and members.

K Daphnis: Going to hear from Eli Glazier and Wade Holland tonight, and a couple orders of business at the end of the meeting.

K Daphnis: Hopefully soon we can meet in person, but for now because of COVID stuck in Teams.

**Montgomery Planning Pedestrian Master Plan Update**

E Glazier: I am the project manager for the Pedestrian Master Plan.

E Glazier: The goal is to make short trips safe and convenient to access on foot, by wheelchair, or with another mobility device.

E Glazier: The plan is not just for sidewalks, covering lots of type of facilities.

E Glazier: My agency does not implement, we tend to vision and then enforce Master Plans; other agencies in this meeting like Police and Permitting and Transportation are responsible for implementing.

E Glazier: Goal is for each person to have a safe and equitable transportation network, including for walking; the report includes data from the Census, the Pedestrian Level of Comfort (PLOC), a Countywide Pedestrian Survey, and more; more information available online.

E Glazier: The PLOC is a way to determine how comfortable pathways and crossings are in the county; want to evaluate the pedestrian environment; we created detailed linework for the entire County; the PLOC works to differentiate experiences and comfort levels, also looks at disparity in access in different localities and regions.

E Glazier: The PLOC scoring is from Very Comfortable to Undesirable; there are lots of things that go into the scoring, like separation from the road, the width of the sidewalk, the speed of the road, etc.

E Glazier: About 58% of sidewalk miles are Very Comfortable or Somewhat Comfortable, but only 44% of the crossing locations are, so we are seeing that it is at crossings where we have a bigger need.

E Glazier: One of the things we looked at was school access, to see where we can get high benefit opportunities for student access (as well as transit access and more).

E Glazier: We worked with MCPS on a student travel tally and noted that younger students tended to walk to school in higher percentages than older students.

E Glazier: We also looked at pedestrian crashes between 2015-2020; there is a lot of information on this included in the existing conditions report; a disproportionate number of pedestrian crashes are in our Equity Focus Areas (lower English proficiency, higher Black and Brown populations, lower home prices); there is a disparity in pedestrian safety in these communities.

E Glazier: We also broke out the County to look at Urban, Transit Corridor, and Rural / Exurban areas to get an idea of crashes by those areas; we found that Urban areas make up ~5% of the total miles, but ~50% of the pedestrians killed or seriously injured; this points out locations and opportunities to focus investment to reduce crashes and spare injuries for pedestrians.

E Glazier: We did a Countywide Pedestrian Survey to 60k households and received enough responses to have a margin of error of ~2%; we found that overall satisfaction was >50%, but there was a disparity in responses between those with vs those without a disability for Transit corridors, but that disparity was not present for Urban corridors.

E Glazier: There was a declining satisfaction towards Exurban / Rural areas regarding access to retail, restaurants, and parks, which supports an intuitive finding that those things are easier to access in Urban areas.

E Glazier: There was general 32% and 31% satisfaction for Lighting Experience, and I am working on a grant project with John Hoobler to update the County’s Lighting Standards through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; a good example of MNCPPC and MCDOT working together to fix some of these issues.

E Glazier: More information about the Pedestrian Master Plan and next steps available on Planning’s website at [www.montgomeryplanning.org/walkinghere](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/walkinghere).

E Glazier: The demand drastically outpaces our ability to provide amenities, so the plan recommends funding sources.

E Glazier: We are planning on presenting our draft recommendations to interagency partners and our community advisory group in June; engaging with the community in July and August, presenting to the Planning Board in September, writing the draft plan September – December 2022, and then going to the Planning Board for review in 2023.

K Daphnis: You talked about policy and recommendations for building improvements, are you basing those recommendations off the Complete Streets Design Guide (CSDG)? Will that play a role?
E Glazier: Yes, the CSDG, which MNCPPC worked with MCDOT on to show how streets should look for different streets throughout the County; because of the great work that the CSDG does, we can work off that document to make recommendations that fill in the gaps of the CSDG and to address things it does not address.

S Aldrich: The CSDG focused a lot on the pedestrian realm and the active zone (originally “pedestrian clear zone”), where the area is supposed to be clear of everything like grates, that part is extremely important and could be reinforced in the Pedestrian Master Plan; one thing that could be addressed also is that if these environments are able to facilitate all modes.

E Glazier: The CSDG can be found at [www.montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Montgomery-County-CSDG\_Approved-2021.pdf](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Montgomery-County-CSDG_Approved-2021.pdf).

K Daphnis: How does this work when the rubber meets the road? Some of the recommendations for the new Wheaton Master Plan are for sidewalks that will not be sufficient for the needs.

Z Weinstein: Does the PLOC survey consider sidewalk obstructions?

E Glazier: There was some of the data limitations with the data collected that ended up meaning some of the data was excluded, including some for obstructions; we also had some issues being comfortable using the data we had to speak to the lighting conditions based on the data limitations; we have performance measures for sidewalks and are building our data measures for the future.

F Yurcisin: Kids walking to schools are a good priority; what other recommendations?

E Glazier: Focused on where the County should create new pedestrian facilities; we are publishing a tool next month that is an interactive map where you can put weight on different variables and visualize the implications of that weight to see the investment; looking to see how we can improve pedestrian infrastructure as part of the school construction process.

K Daphnis: This committee has done a great job of pushing for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) improvements, including testifying for a recent bill that has really made a different to how MCPS does their pedestrian access.

J Hoobler: The SRTS program has been doing a lot of good work including our countywide sidewalk survey, where we are prioritizing sidewalk gaps for improvements for schoolkids; we are using the PLOC as part of the prioritization rubric; we are also making sure that the walksheds, which are defined by MCPS, are thoroughly examined to see if there are boundaries that need improvements as well.

K Daphnis: Montgomery County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations (MCCPTA) reached out to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and MCDOT to start up recurring meetings to increase coordination.

F Yurcisin: This is helpful for us to think about in how we affect the priorities.

K Permisohn: Saw W Holland’s great presentation yesterday at Maryland Quality Initiative Conference, how are you coordinating with the other groups?

E Glazier: We have tried to not make recommendations about specific intersections or streets, instead to defer to the systemic view; we have been very supportive in our recommendations in moving the needle at the Countywide level to achieve Vision Zero.

MB Cleveland: Thanks for the presentation, very good and informative; there is a lot of construction in the future, which is exciting, but construction zones can be challenging for people with disabilities, is there something we can do to ensure construction is safe for pedestrians?

E Glazier: There was a bill before the County Council just before COVID for detours for pedestrian construction, some of MNCPPC’s recommendations were implemented as part of that.

K Daphnis: The Master Plans are decades long plans and are visioning, not implementation; construction will not happen anytime soon after this.

J Kellenberg: Terrific presentation; have the recommendations been costed out?

E Glazier: No, I assume a fiscal analysis will be done as part of the plan adoption process by County Council.

C Chen: Excellent presentation; in the stakeholder list for people with disabilities, was it only physical disabilities?

E Glazier: We met twice with the Commission on People with Disabilities to address their communities’ issues; if there are other groups you think would be helpful let us connect offline.

C Chen: If County Council does not participate as part of the engagement, there is very little time for us to go through all of the work that has been going on for so long and things can get delayed; I can help get councilmember staff to participate so you can be up to date.

E Glazier: Absolutely.

S Moore-Williams: Different sectors of the population will see things differently, what format will the community participation take?

E Glazier: Great question, still trying to figure that out fully, we will be meeting in different ways to make sure we reach everyone.

K Daphnis: The PBTSAC also has a seat on the recommendation committee.

M Valeri: Crossing times for Veirs Mill Road is not acceptable for how humans walk and / or roll, is that a part of this?

E Glazier: It was not, we are interested in collecting that information.

M Valeri: Can we work more closely together between City of Rockville and the County?

E Glazier: Dave Anspacher is speaking with them now.

J Hoobler: MCDOT, City of Rockville, and MDOT SHA meet quarterly to go through things.

M Valeri: We have no problem with MCDOT, have heard nothing but good things from those meetings, our issues are with MDOT SHA.

R Hoye: I attended the first few introductory meetings for the public and my experience was going to the Aspen Hill Library and coming off the main street by bus and bike, and I am met with the backdoor of a brand new facility, and I have to go around the facility to where the parking is for the community entrance; same thing with the brand new Wheaton Library – the entrance off MD 97 is the back entrance, so I have to go around it; The Bethesda Library removed the Arlington entrance, now only available from the parking lot; the tool takes the focus away from the process of creating the environment that we want; people do not know what they do not see; we need to have tools in this plan that are creative and construct a model environment.

R Hoye: I would like to know where it is legal and safe to cross a street; my street in Bethesda is a dead end street that is 15’ wide.

E Glazier: We have recommendations in the plan to ensure that public buildings have their main entrance in a pedestrian space so that it is easy to access the pedestrian space; there are recommendations in the CSDG for target roads; they are much lower and the idea is to ensure that the design of the road is such that it reinforces the speed limit.

K Daphnis: Thank you Eli for engaging content and good conversation.

**Committee Business**

K Daphnis: We will be posting empty slots for the committee relatively soon through the County’s Boards, Committees, and Commissions process; think about folks in your communities and in Montgomery County who may be interested, especially underrepresented groups.

**Moved** by K Daphnis and seconded by MB Cleveland: To approve the meeting minutes from the past meetings that were submitted ahead of this meeting.

**Vote**: Passed unanimously by members present.

K Daphnis: The Pedestrian Master Plan meeting is coming up next month; no other major events or activities coming up that I know of.

S Aldrich: The CSDG was approved last year and is going to be taken to the County Council, not for review of the document, but for proposed County Code changes, going to be presented in June; it will also change the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways to the CSDG.

**Vision Zero Quarter 3 Update**

W Holland: We do quarterly updates as part of the Vision Zero program, we have over twenty different departments involved in doing the quarterly updates and after the Steering Committee confirms it they go to the webpage; it can be found at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero).

W Holland: Highlights from the last quarter include installing our 18th Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, including some from State; installed a couple recently at Fenton & Roeder and Fenton & Whole Foods, those are now active after PEPCO provided power to the beacons.

W Holland: Capital Crescent Trail Phase I was built, a little bit of work that was completed in April.

W Holland: Beach Drive over Silver Creek was done, including some Rock Creek Trail work.

W Holland: We just finished construction on our third protected intersection located in Silver Spring.

W Holland: Over 3.7 miles of sidewalk installed year to date; did our field audit for our New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650) High Injury Network project being done with SHA and Prince George’s County.

W Holland: New pedestrian underpass connecting NIH to Walter Reed was opened; direct connection to metro; grand opening in quarter three.

W Holland: The County Executive released his recommended Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget, including $433M programmed for Vision Zero related projects; we will be able to fast track some improvements; just today the County Council approved the FY23-28 CIP.

W Holland: We did a lot of outreach including our Heads Up, Phones Down contest, and had 170 students from 18 high schools involved; worked on impaired driving including our annual St. Patrick’s Day focus; pushed SoberRide; had 419 arrests for impaired driving in quarter three.

W Holland: You can get into the action items in the update document.

K Daphnis: What is the overall take on this budget?

W Holland: One of our better budget years, the County Executive put out some really good budget items, and the County Council mainly added budget items; really good to see the increase in programs like the Pedestrian Safety CIP.

K Daphnis: Always feels like the progress in these areas is slow, but when you look over time, we are making progress and changing the culture to reinvest to the right places.

K Daphnis: Meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.