

**Greater Shady Grove
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
March 4, 2020**

Voting

John Brandt / Universities at Shady Grove
Benjamin Garcia / Neighborhood Representative
Steve Kelley / NIH – National Cancer Institute
Paul Yanoshik / RE/MAX Realty Services

Ex Officio

Catherine Matthews / Upcounty Regional Services Center
Capt. David McBain / Montgomery County Police

Staff

Nakengi Byrd / Montgomery County Commuter Services
Jim Carlson / Montgomery County Commuter Services

Absent

Sandra Brecher / Representing MC Dept. of Transportation (MCDOT) Director
Amy Frieder / Neighborhood Representative
McClellan Quinn / EYA

Guests

Jennifer Bolick / Van Eperen
Wade Holland / MCDOT
Gehmelle Johnson / NIH-National Cancer Institute

Item 1 & 2 – Introductions/ Minutes Review: Members and guest introduced themselves. September minutes were reviewed.

Item 3 – Vision Zero Presentation: Wade Holland, Vision Zero Coordinator with the MC Department of Transportation and the County Executive’s Office, presented the Vision Zero plan for Montgomery County. The guiding philosophy behind VZ is that all transportation deaths are preventable, and human life is the main priority behind road design. Speed is a huge factor in survival - 20 miles per hour, pedestrian has a 90 percent chance of survival vs. 40 mph or more pedestrian has only 10 percent chance of survival. A driver’s cone of visibility is reduced by speed, and also at night as vehicles tend to travel faster, what can be seen with headlights.

Mr. Holland said his role is to bring all the working parts of the VZ project together, working with the Police, Transportation, Public Information Office, Planning Department and, Health & Human Services. Other points of discussion:

- VZ began in Sweden in 1995, cutting fatalities in half; and in the US fatalities have been reduced 20 – 30 percent. VZ came to the US in 2014, in New York and San Francisco; 2015 in Washington, DC area and is growing.

- VZ Complete Street Design provides safe access to all by implementing engineering design for pedestrians, vehicles, buses, bikers and mobility impaired users installing shared use paths, bus lanes, dedicated lanes separating drivers and peds.
- Examples of Complete Street Designs show buffered shared use paths, grass median as a safe place b/w roadways, bus stop placements nearer to crosswalks, bump-out platforms around crosswalks which lower pedestrians exposure time in the roadway and reduce turning car speeds.

Mr. Holland discussed engineering efforts to reduce pedestrian and cyclist injuries.

- Pedestrian scramble-all lanes are stopped to vehicular traffic allowing pedestrians to cross on all sides at once also allowing diagonal crossing.
- Providing dedicated bike lanes and expanding a bike signal network.
- Pedestrian Hawk beacon signal installation- Used instead of traffic signals due to being cheaper also providing on demand signal for pedestrians and stopping traffic.
- Two lighting programs to improve lighting - installing cost-effective LED lighting. Central Business Districts update their lighting every few years as most crashes happen at night where there is less lighting.
- Vehicle occupant crashes have decreased, while pedestrian and cyclist crashes remain the same since implementation of VZ.
- Goals for serious injuries was set at 35% reduction; however, 28% was the actual reduction-goals were set by averaging for five years what a more likely reduction would be.
- Fatal crashes averages are 10-15 per year for pedestrians, 1 a year for cyclist.

High injury network shows higher rates of crashes in certain areas. These areas receive priority in traffic calming construction. High injury priority areas in the Greater Shady Grove are :

- East Guide Drive, 355, Crabbs Branch Way & Shady Grove Roads, Darnestown Road and portions of Sam Eig Highway.
- Data is also obtained by examining crash density, as some high density crash areas also have high poverty, are non-English speaking and have lower median age such as in Langley Park and Wheaton.
- There are 32 items on the VZ action plan to be completed for FY20. These will be implemented by using the 3 “Es”- Engineering, Education and Enforcement.
- Another aspect of the VZ program is constructing a safer procedure as to how officers respond to crashes and maintaining their safety during investigations preventing secondary crashes.

Mr. Holland explained that the Capital improvements Program-CIP Budget and Operating Budget are the two sources of project funding. However, most VZ funds come from the CIP budget. As bikeways, road and bridge improvement upgrades are made, funding is provided to incorporate VZ principles in the redesign. Some VZ projects include:

- Crosswalk upgrade at Muddy Branch.
- Hawk beacon at Needwood Road.
- Bike paths , Crabbs Branch Way b/w Redland and Shady Grove road – signal timing update.
- Sam Eig Highway project traffic calming construction to accommodate the increased development in the area.

- Hawk beacon installation at Muddy Branch, Tuckerman Lane, Bethesda Trolley Trail, Walter Johnson HS, Summit Ave. - working with State Highway Administration (SHA) installations on Georgia Ave. Veirs Mill Rd. Connecticut Ave. and Seneca Valley HS.
- Border improvements include Frederick Rd., shared use paths, an interim road diet on Middlebrook Rd., and adding bike lanes to narrow the roadway, thus slowing down traffic for the new Seneca Valley HS reopening - the largest in Maryland.

Mr. Holland explained that a Complete Streets approach on Crabbs Branch Rd would consist of – looking at Master Plan to see what can be implemented, adding additional crossings, signal phasing, constructing bump outs and parking management.

Interactive map on VZ webpage [montgomerycountymd.gov/vision zero](http://montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero) contains a project map showing construction and the various stages.

Item 4 - Crabbs Branch discussion: Benny Garcia discussed the traffic hazards in the Westside community. His community met to discuss the collaboration of EYA in partnership with the leading builders to complete build out of the Westside compound at the north side of the Shady Grove Metro Station. The Daley will add an additional 330 apartments along with 148 townhomes and condos on Columbus Ave. The fear is the additional population will lead to accidents with the unmitigated traffic in the area. Some of his points of discussion were:

- When the traffic issue was first presented to EYA and the police the response was that the road speed was proper for the development and the Police said that because it is a commercial area speed bumps or cameras could not be installed. He believes the lack of action has resulted in 3 traffic accidents with cars crashing into a Starbucks, a townhome and will eventually lead to a fatality as he and the residents are afraid to walk in the area.
- Although there will be a traffic study on April 17, there is confusion as to why the study has not been done before and he doesn't believe it is enough.
- School bus traveling on Gramercy Blvd in violation and lack of enforcement- follow up w/ **Todd Balkans**, Director of Transportation for MC Public Schools.
- Buses are causing parking issues due to them taking up space and drivers scrambling to fill in the vacant space when they leave causing another hazard.
- A survey or revealed that 52% of drivers go over the posted speed limit on Shady Grove Rd. and 42% on Crabbs Branch
- **Mr. Garcia** commented that cameras only slow drivers in the areas they are placed, then they continue speeding.
- Speed cameras will be installed along the Shady Grove Rd. & Crabbs Branch corridors as police requests can override zoning restrictions to installation-camera request are for corridors to increase mobility as they can be placed anywhere along the road.
- **Cathy Matthews**, Upcounty Regional Services Center, said she would assist **Mr. Garcia** in working with community partners to remedy the traffic issues in the community.

Item 5 – Employer Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans: **Mr. Carlson** reported that the plans will now be called Transportation Demand Management plans. The change is due to the NexGen regulations that were recently passed by County Council. All of the plans presented have worked with Marketing Contractors to ensure accurate completion.

The Committee recommended the approval of the TDM Plans.

Item 6 - Updates: Other announcements were as follows:

- Climate Summit with the County Executive- The County will follow up recommendations by hiring a Consultant to assist.
- The County's recommendation to WMATA regarding its budget priorities- community comment extended to Monday.
- Bike To Work Day May 15th.
- Police enforcement focus on distracted driving and extending equally to cyclists not obeying traffic laws- BTWD pit stops will be a focus.
- The US Census is targeting communities with low response rate and increasing salaries to \$29 an hour- notices go out March 12th.

Adjourn – Next meeting date: May 6, 2020