Montgomery County Vision Zero Equity Task Force Meeting #4 Summary

June 18, 2019

Purpose of the Meeting

This was the fourth Equity Task Force Meeting for the Montgomery County Vision Zero Plan. Montgomery County developed an Equity Task Force as part of the implementation in a two-year Vision Zero Action Plan. The Task Force was comprised of County staff, members of the *Pedestrian, Bicycle, Traffic Safety Advisory Committee* (PBTSAC), residents, and other organizations. The goals of the Task Force are to define what equity means within the context of Vision Zero. When based on that definition, determine what action items should be developed in the areas of engineering, education, and enforcement. The fourth meeting consisted of a brief presentation around traffic data and traffic law enforcement from the County and Police Department as well as the engaged the attendees to draft the equity statement and framework for Montgomery County.

Meeting Information

The meeting was held on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 from 7pm – 9pm at the Gaithersburg Library, 18330 Montgomery Village Ave, Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Attendance

Approximately 12 members of the Equity Task Force attended the fourth meeting with 5 members attending through the livestream. These attendees included residents, members of PBTSAC, staff of MCDOT, SVHS PTSA, ACLU, Community Vision for Takoma, and Greater Shady Grove Area TMD Advisory Committee. (See attached sign-in sheet)

Format

1. Introduction

During the introduction, Wade Holland from Montgomery County, along with the members of the project team, Veronica O. Davis, Chancee Lundy, Mei Fang, Jazmin Kimble and Cipriana Eckford, introduced themselves. The microphone was then passed around the room for the members of the Equity Task Force to give brief introductions. They stated their name, city of residence, affiliation, and reason for attendance. Wade introduced the meeting agenda and the purpose of the Task Force explaining the four parts: Defining Equity, Engineering, Education and Enforcement.

Wade gave a recap of the first three meetings. He shared the goals for this meeting:

1. Review data and practices for traffic law enforcement.
2. Revise draft equity statement developed from meeting #3.
3. Discuss equity framework considerations and scorecard for engineering and education.

2. County's Presentation

Wade began the presentation with an overview of Vision Zero project and traffic stop data. Wade showed the Vision Zero operating and capital budget, followed by 2013 to 2018 Montgomery traffic stop and enforcement data. Attendees asked questions during the presentation.

Q. Where does the revenue go for the speed camera?
A. Part of the revenue goes to the vendor who is responsible for installation and maintenance of the system. The remainder goes into the County's general fund.

Q. Why is DUI (Driving Under Influence) not included in the top 20 charges?
A. In the traffic violations dataset used for slide 16, DUI was slightly under the top 20 charges. To better show DUI arrests, slide 17 uses MCPD's crimedata set. It is better data set since it comes from criminal data, which includes people being processed.

Officer Captain Didone gave a presentation about automated enforcement in Montgomery County. He started his presentation by introducing his background. Captain Didone has a background in data analysis. He explained, at the beginning of his career, the county approached traffic hotspot by analysis the data. There were no high visibility pedestrian safety enforcements implemented before 2006. He mentioned that, 2010 was when they started to view the issue from an engineering approach. The team found that drivers totaled 60% of the total violations, while pedestrians were 40%, that's when they realized to conduct enforcement on traffic.

In 2015, they were given $80,000for performing high visibility pedestrian safety enforcement on overtime. Sometimes the cause of crashes were people illegally crossing the roads. It is not illegal to cross mid-block when at least one end does not have a traffic control signal, but it's illegal when they are not paying attention the cross signals. Pedestrians do not have right of way all the time. At that time, they started to do enforcement on jaywalking and cars that do not yield.

Captain Didone stated that the purpose of enforcement is not the ticket but to change behavior. He mentioned that engineering comes first, education follows, and enforcement is the final solution to prevent the dangerous behavior.

Some questions were generated during his presentation.

Q. Is it possible for some people to receive several warnings?
A. MCPD uses the e-tickets now, which means everything is recorded. An officer can see if someone received previous warnings and citations.

Q. You talked about engineering solution, and when there's a long way to get to the crosswalk, how do you prevent people cross mid-block and make it pedestrian friendly?
A. Captain Didone mentioned that barrier could be a tool to use. High visibility enforcement where pedestrians are given warnings and citations is done at marked crosswalks.

John mentioned in the engineering solution, we have to follow the design guideline, parking, streetscape to determine the crosswalk. Also, the number of pedestrians cross and vehicles drive through must be take into consideration.

Q. How can we involve police in giving feedback to engineering
A. The traffic officer will know if they suspect an engineering factor or lighting issue. MCPD is going to train 30-50 officers on engineering and speed management. There are fields in the crash report for road design and engineering. However, the problem now is most officers are trained to collect data for the State database.

Q. Is it possible to get the driver's education back in school taught by high schools?
A. There was a program where they were in high schools talking to them about traffic safety. Schools are under different constraints now. He also mentioned when the D.A.R.E. program ended about a decade ago has lost its ability to be in elementary school. Right now, they would love to have the education back in middle school.

Q. MCPD has crossing guards. Can they be used to provide education?
A. There are 170 cross guards and thousand of safety patrols, most of them talk to the kids.

Q. Is there crossing guard at all schools?
A. No. Some schools are nestled in the neighborhood so they do not warrant having a crossing guard. However, anyone can submit a request for a crossing guard.

Q. Has the poorly lit roads been an issue?
A. Many of residents do not like bright lights by their house. The County studies enhancing lighting on the critical intersections where there are sharp turn, biking and pedestrian crossing. Lighting recommendations are also made during the Pedestrian Road Safety Audit if the review team finds the lighting inadequate.

Q. If you worried about the cost of lighting, have you thought about the motion lighting?
A. Yes, the LED lighting is in the 5-year schedule, but not now.

Q. What happens to County's vehicle when they get tickets?
A. A citation goes to the fleet and then they send to the respective agency. They will do an investigation and the driver must pay the ticket.

Q. Any high-tech portion in the enforcement?
A. A few years ago, some tried to use the goggles.

They both mentioned Noah's law:
- 1/3 of the fatalities involve impaired drivers.
- Arrest over 3,000 impaired drivers.

Captain Didone also mentioned that Uber has helped but didn't change the behavior. The impaired drivers don't see pedestrian better than drunk drivers.

Wade finished the presentation by stated that the County will have warning posters and signs since the July 4th is coming.

3. Discussion

The project team drafted the Vision Zero equity statement based on the discussion from previous meeting by using the attendee's words and sentences. After providing time for everyone to review the vision statements silently, Wade and Chanceé asked everyone's thought the statement.

Based on the discussion, below are some points that attendees provided:
- They agreed that the statement has improved since the last meeting.
- Need to prioritize pedestrian-friendly solutions on engineering and education
- The equity statement should include more discussion of people with disabilities such as handicap. Also, include high injury network too.

Editorial Comments:
- In some places, the document uses crashes, but in engineering its written as accidents. Change everything to crashes.
- Under existence of pedestrian destinations – would suggest adding population centers, such as entertainment and business districts, which includes a focus on pedestrian impaired at night.
- In the "Land Use" – should talk about bicycling as well as pedestrians. In general, when pedestrians are mentioned, also include bicycling.

Background statement:
- It is about disparities upfront and then talk about special attention to the high injury network. The considerations of framework don't speak to the quantitative filters in accessing high injury and were people are underserved.

Some suggestion that would like to add to the framework list:
- Bicycle lanes

- Metro and MARC vicinity – how all the intersections work with the system
- Partner with SHA
- Potential crash locations like hot spots
- Bus stop

Others:
- Increase education near MARC and metro
- Adding public transportation system and people with disabilities
- Should add discussion about the solutions and best practice
- Do we want to focus on equity emphasis area?
- Initial vision zero equity statement
  - Call out walking specifically under access.
  - Understanding of Vision Zero - changing the emphasis from driver error and moving towards engineering solutions.
  - Equity emphasis areas - MWCOG has equity emphasis areas may be interesting to look at as a way to prioritize where investments are made
  - Vulnerable populations - concentration of poverty, low car ownership
- Adding maps would be helpful

Q. Is the high crash area and density data enough or do we need to specifically call out the equity areas?
A. The equity areas don't get enough attention. We do not have enough resources for the entire high injury network. If we don't build equity in funding, the investment will continue to go to squeaky wheel. Road diet that reduced crashes will be taken out because of the squeaky wheel. However, we should not just pay attention to squeaky wheel.

Q. Does the history of funding matter?
A. Yes, it matters. If there is a neighborhood that needs and they don't have a voice, please take a look at the history.

Q. How do you measure the funding?
A. Funding for a highway ramp is different than something that improves walkability. So, if we look at the history of funding we should be clear to define what that means.

Upcoming Meeting

Chanceé and Wade ended the discussion and mentioned the next steps for the upcoming meeting. The project team will improve the statements from the feedback we

got at this meeting and highlight what is a priority. We will discuss and summarized the points. Wade will post online if there's addition information or meeting.