

MEETING NOTES

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE: Tuesday, November 19, 2002

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

PLACE: COG, 777 North Capitol Street, NE
First Floor, Room 1

CHAIR: Heather Wallenstrom
Virginia Department of Transportation

**VICE-
CHAIRS:** Michael Jackson
Maryland Department of Transportation,
Jim Sebastian
District Division of Transportation

Attendance:

Shaheer Assad	Loudoun County
Don Barclay	WalkDC
Marie Birnbaum	WalkDC
George Branyan	MD SHA Maryland Highway Safety Office
Harry Cepeda	DDOT
Charlie Denney	Arlington County
Bennett Elbo	Prince William County
Eric Gilliland	WABA
Chris Holben	DDOT
Jim Hudnall	Oxon Hill Bicycle and Trail Club
Dan Janousek	City of Gaithersburg
Chuck Kines	MNCPPC-Montgomery County
Brian King	VDOT – Planning
Karl Kratzer	Luchner
Bob Kuhns	Grove/Slade Associates
Rachel Lyons	Design House
Randy Mardres	College Park Area Bicycle Coalition
Debbie Mayer	City of Rockville

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Rich Metzinger	National Park Service
Allen Muchnick	Virginia Bicycling Federation
Jim Sebastian	District of Columbia
Fred Shaffer	MNCPPC
Katherine Shriver	Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Peter Steele	Prince William County
Gail Tait-Nouri	Montgomery County DPWT
Kenneth Todd	NCBW
Jan Vaughn	VDOT
Heather Wallenstrom	VDOT, NOVA
Chris Wells	Fairfax County DOT
Maria M. White	City of Alexandria
John Wetmore	Perils for Pedestrians
Chris Wells	Fairfax County DOT

COG Staff Attendance:

Michael Farrell
Andrew Meese
Gerald Miller

1. General Introductions.

Participants introduced themselves.

2. Review of the Minutes of the September 17, 2002 Meeting

Minutes were approved. A request was made that the sign-in sheet, with contact information, be distributed at every meeting.

3. Discussion of Nominations for the Top Ten Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects

Michael Farrell, COG

Michael suggested that we start with the existing list of projects that the region has already agreed are of high priority. The projects listed in the TCSP priority projects would be a good starting point. We could then delete projects that have been built, funded, or have dropped off in priority for some other region.

Jim Sebastian briefly described the process that went into creating the TCSP reports. Essentially, each jurisdiction nominated some projects, and then a committee selected regional priorities from that list. Service to regional activity centers was an important selection factor.

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Apart from the TCSP, the Top Ten list originated as a way of raising the profile of bicycle and pedestrian projects that were not getting into the TIP.

Heather said that the TCSP list might not be sufficiently geographically balanced. She was also concerned that a top twenty list might be too many to sell.

Jim suggested that we look at the last top ten list. Mike had not been able to find the last list.

There were about twelve on the last list. Projects that were funded were deleted from the next year's list. A question was asked about the purpose of the list, whether it was to consist of recreational or commuter facilities. The TCSP list looks recreational, while the newer nominations seem more commuter-focused. Allan Muchnick proposed that the main criterion for this list be that it need funding. Jim suggested that each jurisdiction nominate its top project in need of funding. Do not list things that are funded or already very likely to be funded. The list should consist of good projects not yet funded, and the purpose is to highlight these projects at a regional level, to improve their chances of being funded.

We have heard from six jurisdictions about the projects they would like to include. Heather suggested that we defer selecting the projects to a meeting of the Bike Plan Work Group.

Andy Meese added that having a list like this gives substance to the demand for more bicycle and pedestrian projects. The shortage of funding this year should be considered in choosing priority projects this year.

Harry Cepeda suggested that jurisdictions explain why their project should be funded immediately. Heather asked what information Michael would be needing. Michael explained that he already had asked for answers to a standard list of questions, but promised to re-visit it.

A question arose with respect to timing. Andy suggested that it would be best if we had a list to suggest to the TPB Technical Committee at its meeting this December. Michael suggested that we let the Bike Plan Work Group pick the list. The TPB Technical Committee meets December 6, so the Bike Plan Work Group will have to meet the first week of December. Allan suggested that each jurisdiction nominate its #1 priority for funding. Michael mentioned that he needed to know enough about the projects to be able to explain them to the TPB.

Chris Wells was concerned that Fairfax County's nominations had not gone through sufficient internal review. And many of his projects were large, cross-county projects without adequate scoping. The Board of Supervisors has not had a chance to review the list. Gail Tait-Nouri also expressed concern about narrowing priorities down to a single project; she has eleven projects that she would like to push for funding. Heather suggested that we need a short list; something that we want funded this year. The question was posed as to what funding source we were pursuing. Michael replied that bicycle and pedestrian projects are eligible for nearly all the funding pots within TEA-21. Heather added that we don't know precisely what funding source is going to be used, but lists such as this can be used when congressional earmarks are being developed. Another person added that the highway people typically do not worry about specific

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funding sources; they just do their studies and get everyone locked in to the idea that the project is going to be built.

A time of 10:00 a.m. on December 3 for the Bike Plan Work Group meeting was tentatively chosen, subject to room availability. The main item on the agenda will be developing a top ten list. Jim suggested that we also discuss other elements of the bike plan. We should keep the old list, eliminating the ones that have been funded, and adding a few new ones. Mike will circulate the existing list to the group.

- Mike will send out a meeting notice for the Bike Plan Work Group and the last list of Priority Pedestrian and Bicycle Projects.

4. Route 50 Traffic Calming Project
Jan Vaughn, VDOT

Route 50 is a rural minor arterial with about 10,000 vehicles per day. Two lanes, and the project length is twenty miles. Many of curves are below standard for the 55 mph speed limit, yet people are driving faster than that. Speed limits have been lowered to 50 mph between the towns, 25 mph in the towns, and 35 mph approaching the towns. Some of the traffic calming features are entrance features such as roundabouts and decorative signs to indicate to drivers that they are entering a town. Three single-lane roundabouts have been proposed to accommodate heavy left-turn volumes. Route 50 will remain a two-lane highway. In the rural areas a wide splitter island might be used to slow traffic and provide a refuge for vehicles turned left out of driveways. A stabilized grassy shoulder will be provided to allow broken-down to pull over, and will aid speed enforcement. The project was done as an alternative to widening and creating a bypass. Aggressive driving and speeding in the towns was a concern. Historic restrictions also apply, and minimizing tree removal was a priority. The project received \$13 million in federal demonstration project funding. Bicycle facilities were not provided because restricting roadway width is one of the traffic calming features, and a wider road would imply removing more trees.

Several subcommittee members expressed dismay that no bicycle lanes were to be provided on these stabilized shoulders. Tests of different shoulder stabilization materials will be carried out. Tests are for maintenance only, not for effect on speed. This is a pioneer rural traffic calming project.

One safety concern with the splitter islands was that they do not allow trucks to pass bicycles, forcing the bicyclist off the road. A paved shoulder should be provided at these splitter islands for safety reasons.

The raised intersections were discussed. The entire intersection is elevated. The material is concrete blocks. Bollards are set back from the curb at a radius of 40 degrees for fire trucks, but a white concrete band is set at a radius of 20 degrees, to encourage cars to take a tighter, slower

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turn. The existing radius at some of these intersections is ten degrees, fire trucks currently swing into the opposing lane to make their turns.

Jan Vaughn promised to send the presentation to Michael Farrell. Converted into a pdf., it could be distributed to the subcommittee.

- Michael Farrell will look into ways of getting this presentation more widely distributed.

5. **Bike Plan Schedule**
Michael Farrell, COG

The policies and principles chapter has already. It has already been reviewed. The data chapter is not ready, but will be updated when the data is available. A copy of the proposed on-line database and the policies and principles chapter was provided to the group for comment. Once the database is put on-line, corrections can be sent to Michael Farrell for update.

- Subcommittee members should think of what kind of data they would like to have in the on-line database, and send suggestions to Michael Farrell.

6. **Updated Bike to Work Guide**
Michael Farrell, COG

An updated version should be available within a few days.

7. **Bicycling and Walking to Work in the Washington Region: the 2000 Census**
Michael Farrell, COG

Michael presented the 2000 census results for bicycling and walking to work. Every jurisdiction except the District of Columbia has seen significant declines in walking and bicycling to work. The proportion of workers walking to work has remained constant since 1990, while the proportion bicycling to work rose. The data is from the census long form, which is addressed to people where people live. The entire trip must be on foot or by bicycle for it to count as a pedestrian or bicycle trip. The question is about the primary mode of transportation to work in the first week in April. Allan Muchnick suggested that we compare the weather in the first week in April with the weather in 2000. COG also does its own household travel survey, which includes non-work trips, which tend to be shorter and thus more likely to be taken on foot or by bicycle. Harry Cepeda asked for the proportion taking transit. Eric Gilliland mentioned that from the Bike to Work survey it appeared that the average commuting distance was ten miles. But the top two reasons given for not riding were lack of safe routes and lack of facilities, both things that we can control.

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- Michael promised to get the same information on transit use that he provided for walking and bicycling to work, as well as the latest COG household travel survey information.

8. **Education: ADA Course**
Michael Farrell

A one-day event at the Reeves Center sometime in January, it will involve field work, and food will be provided. Jim suggested that Michael prepare a flyer that can be e-mailed to the group to assist with promotion. The Reeves Center can accommodate 100 people. A final date has not yet been selected.

- The date should be finalized soon.

9. **Street Smart Update**
Rachel Lyons, Design House

Rachel Lyons discussed the Street Smart media campaign. The evaluation will be done by the end of next week. The impact of the sniper is unknown. 1,000 posters were distributed, and 535,000 inserts were placed in Maryland Driver's License renewal packets. The tip sheets are done, and Rachel is hoping to receive orders to avoid incurring a storage fee. Harry Cepeda complimented Rachel on the quality of the campaign.

10. **Studies Status Sheet**

Only two jurisdictions sent anything in for the studies status sheet. Heather asked the group to please send in updates, so that this can form a meaningful picture of what the region is doing.

11. **Adjourn**