



KEVIN KAMENETZ
County Executive

ANDREA VAN ARSDALE, *Director*
Department of Planning

BALTIMORE COUNTY PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Sheldon S. Epstein, Chair

--APPROVED APRIL 14, 2015--

MEETING NOTES
Tuesday, March 10, 2015
4:00 p.m.

Attendees: Chair Sheldon Epstein, Harry Bhandari, Jim Kelly, Ted Levin, Allysha Lorber, Francis Taylor, Myron Williams, Mike Filsinger, Linda Grossman, Pat McDougall

Absent: Robert Barrett, Nate Evans, Charlie Murphy

Department of Planning staff present included Jeff Mayhew, Kathy Schlabach, Janice Graves, and Jessie Bialek.

1. Introduction of Members and Announcements

Mr. Sheldon Epstein opened the meeting at 4:09 p.m. After introductions, Mr. Epstein made the following announcements:

- The new members, Charlie Murphy, first district, Francis Taylor, seventh district, Mike Filsinger, Department of Public Works are welcomed to the committee.
- The Maryland Trails Summit will be held by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources at 9 a.m. on March 12th at the Conference Center at the Maritime Institute in Linthicum.
- The Annual Bike Maryland Bicycle Symposium is being held on March 17th from 10 to 3 p.m. in Annapolis.

2. Review of Today's Agenda

There was one change to the agenda to welcome Mr. Zach Kaufman as the presenter of the report from the Baltimore Metropolitan Council.

3. Approval of Meeting Notes of the November 18, 2014 Meeting

Mr. Epstein called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the November 18, 2014 meeting. Mr. Jim Kelly made the motion and Mr. Harry Bhandari seconded. The approval was unanimous.

4. Special Presentation: Baltimore County Pedestrian Safety Program, Fire Director Jennifer Utz, Fire-Rescue Academy, Baltimore County Fire Department and Sergeant Steve Troutman, Baltimore County Police Department

Fire Director Jennifer Utz and Sergeant Steve Troutman started the Baltimore County Pedestrian Safety Program together in 2013. Through their research and studies at both the local and national levels, they discovered that for Baltimore County the median age of a pedestrian being hit and killed is 46. The fire department responds to approximately 420 calls per year for pedestrian crashes. The highest number of crashes occur on Fridays between 3 and 10 p.m. and in the months of June, October, and November. From 2009-2013, there was an average of 17 fatalities per year and 85% of the time the pedestrian was at fault, meaning that they did not use the proper method for crossing the street, such as using a crosswalk or waiting for the light.

There has been community outreach during the last year. In 2014 there was a slight drop in the number of fatalities. Currently, they are working on developing more ways to improve pedestrian safety through education, engineering, enforcement, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). They are also working with other state agencies and the State Highway Administration (SHA) to try and come up with solutions and reduce the number of fatalities.

During the discussion committee members made the following points:

Ms. Allysha Lorber stated that one of the reasons that people aren't using crosswalks is because they are faced with poor choices because of roadway design and, therefore, the pedestrians shouldn't always be to blame. Also, since Eastern Avenue has been getting national press, she would like to know what is being done to address the safety issues along that route. Ms. Lorber also said that Johns Hopkins has a safety campaign called Stop, Wait, Go, Slow and maybe that program or a similar program could be used statewide. Fire Director Utz answered that even though Eastern Avenue is a state road, Baltimore County has the responsibility to respond to the incidents, not the state police. Also, she concurred that they would like to see a statewide campaign similar to the one that was done at Hopkins, but doesn't think that they are quite ready to initiate one.

Mr. Ted Levin asked what Montgomery County and Ocean City have been doing and if their strategies could be effective in Baltimore County. Sergeant Troutman stated that in both jurisdictions they started with education, then engineering, and have now followed up with enforcement of the pedestrians and that is proving to be successful.

Mr. Bhandari suggested that it might be a useful to publish the statistics in various community newsletters since most community associations use them to disseminate information. Both Sergeant Troutman and Fire Director Utz said that would be possible.

Special Presentation: Maryland State Highway Administration's Pedestrian Safety Program, Dustin Kuzan, MDSHA Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator

Mr. Dustin Kuzan stated that up until 2012 the state's safety program was mostly focused on ADA compliance, when national research showed that Maryland was 1 of the 4 states with a high (20% or more) fatal pedestrian crash rate. The governor directed SHA to develop a strategy to help solve this problem.

Their new program identifies high crash segments (10 pedestrian crashes over a one mile segment over a 5 year span). There are now 50 segments that meet that criteria. To date they have 22 active locations. They now involve more stakeholders and use more data, such as pedestrian counts and bus stop locations to try and understand why these crashes are occurring and what can be done to address them. They are in the process of developing best practices to address pedestrian safety issues.

During the discussion committee members made the following points:

Ms. Lorber stated that she knows of places in Baltimore County where the walk signal and the green turn arrow conflict and that this needs to be remedied. Ms. Lorber asked if they have a separate program for bicycles. Mr. Kuzan replied that bicycles are included with the pedestrians and that he would look into where there are turn arrow conflicts.

Mr. Levin noted that in Montgomery County there are instances where all of the intersection traffic is stopped at one time so that pedestrians can cross the street without any vehicle conflicts. He asked if the funding that was used for ADA compliance has been shifted to these high crash segments. Mr. Kuzan replied that he was not aware of this particular intersection and believes that Montgomery County must be using a separate set of criteria to justify that remedy. He also said that yes, the ADA compliance money has been shifted to help fund these high crash segments.

5. Report from the Baltimore Metropolitan Council Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group.

Mr. Zach Kaufman of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group reported that May 15, 2015 is Bike to Work Day. In 2013 they had 1,400 registrants and in 2014 they had 1,300 (probably less because of the bad weather). The rain date for this year will be May 29th. Registration will be open the week on March 16th and the website for the event is bike2workcentralmaryland.com.

He also mentioned that this year they are adding additional locations and that their goal is to have 2,000 riders. They are trying to raise \$20,000 for t-shirts and other give-aways. They are trying to increase the use of social media to help spread the word.

6. Report from the Fifth District Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee

Ms. Lorber gave a report on the committee's activities and identified some priority projects such as the continuation of the Northeast Trail from Hazelwood Avenue to Joppa Road, and including the use of a BGE corridor. Other priority projects are to expand the Towson Spokes Plan, which was only partially funded in 2013, add a sidepath trail to York Road and Towson Boulevard in front of Towson University, add striping and bike lanes along Charles Street to the city line, and the add sidewalks along Loch Raven Boulevard. Finally, the NCR Trail should be extended south along the abandoned rail line to the Jones Falls Trail.

7. Other Business

Mr. Epstein asked if Ms. Kathy Schlabach had any other business to bring to the attention of the committee. Ms. Schlabach gave a brief update of the county's implementation of bicycle projects. The UMBC/Halethorpe MARC project has been completed and Edmondson Avenue is in progress and should be completed by July of 2015. In FY 2015 there are 8 projects where plans are being finalized and should be completed by September 2015. Franklinton funding for bike safe drainage gates is set for September 2016. Altogether, over \$500,000 has been awarded to the county by the Maryland Bikeways program for improvements.

8. Adjournment

The chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jim Kelly made the motion and Mr. Bhandari seconded. The approval was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned at 5:35.

Summary of Comments

Citizen Input Meeting on Priority Projects

March 10, 2015

Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee

CIM Verbal Comments:

1. Allysha Lorber, Fifth District Pedestrian and Bicycle Group (at regular PBAC Meeting)
 - a) Northeast Trail
 - b) Expansion of Towson Spokes Plan to include Osler Drive, Stevenson Road, Putty Hill Ave, Towsontown Blvd., Chesapeake Ave, Pennsylvania Ave, Virginia Ave, Washington Ave. (Estimated cost \$210K). Also upgrade the drainage grates along these roads.
 - c) Sidepath along Towson University frontage on York Road and Towsontown Blvd.
 - d) Improvements for state roads: Bike lanes on Charles Street, sidewalks on Loch Raven Blvd. from Joppa Road south, extension of the MD 43 sidepath to Walther Blvd.
 - e) Extension of the NCR trail to the city's Jones Falls Trail.
(Written material submitted)
2. Dennis Robinson, Perry Hall Improvement Association and Friends of the Northeast Trail: No other project in the county will link more neighborhoods with shopping, parks, schools, libraries, and employment areas than this one. The project is supported by a coalition of several active community organizations, and is recommended by the Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan, the Overlea-Fullerton Community Plan and the Perry Hall Community Plan. (Subsequent written material submitted).
3. David Marks, Councilman, Fifth District: After thanking the PBAC for their service, expressed support for the projects recommended by Ms. Lorber on behalf of the Fifth District Pedestrian and Bicycle Group.
4. Greg Hook: Extension of Towson bike beltway to Parkville along Putty Hill Avenue, connecting Towson with the bike lanes on Harford road, and providing access to several schools. It's a neighborhood road posted at 30 mph.
5. Celso Guitian, UMBC Campus Planner: UMBC is making bicycle access improvements to the campus. Want to connect to Catonsville and Arbutus but existing roadways, particularly Wilkens Avenue, are barriers to biking and walking, including lack of sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and allowing cars to make free right turns. (Written material submitted).
6. Mia Walsh, Cromwell Valley Park Council: supports a feasibility study for creating a trail along Cromwell Bridge Road, but does not want it in the park. As owner of Long Island Farm, and speaking for others who own property on Cromwell Bridge Road, they also do not want it on their properties. (Subsequent written materials received).
7. Jack Lattimore, Franklintown Community Association and BikeMore: The Western Bike/Ped plans recommend a sidepath (#946) along Woodlawn Drive. The intersection at Parallel Drive and under I-70 is being studied as part of the Red Line. There are narrow sidewalks now, but he is concerned that a sidepath will not be provided. It is needed to connect Rolling Road communities to shopping, Franklintown, the Gwynns Falls Trail and ultimately the Inner Harbor. (Written material submitted).
8. Joe Heldmann: The curb bumpout on Edmondson Avenue makes it difficult to make right turns. There needs to be additional safety rules for bicyclists, including lights, reflectors and helmets. Edmondson Avenue needs sidewalks on both sides.
9. Gabe Makhlof: Bike lanes are not being designed to go through intersections safely. We should be spending the money needed to create safe bicycle facilities, not just more of them.
10. Ann Greenbaum: teaches at Towson University, and wants to promote bike access, especially for those that live within 3 miles. Roadway speed and traffic are a hindrance.

11. John Simms: Suggests two routes, one from Rodgers Forge Elementary School to Towson University using Lanark and Stanmore Roads, and a second crossing Towson High School to Wiltondale swimming pool parking lot and then on to Stoneleigh Elementary School. (Subsequent written comments received).
12. Ray Reed: Supports an extension of the NCR trail.

Written Comments Only:

1. Patricia Branum: Would like the committee to be aware of the flagrant disregard bicyclists have towards traffic laws, particularly at Ruxton Road and Hilltop Road, and would like to know what the committee will do about it.
2. Marjorie Carl: Concerned about the many dangerous pedestrian crossings of Back River Neck Road between McDonalds and the Farm Store, and would like consideration of additional safe crosswalks.
3. David Diaz: Suggests the use of rumble strips between motorized vehicle lanes and bike lanes, to alert motorists that they are moving out of their lane.
4. Jessie Parker: Suggests improving Rolling Road between Route 40 and Security Avenue. Currently, the road is not even well-marked for motorists, as it switches from two lanes to one when cars are parked. A better solution would be to mark one lane with a center turn lane and bike lanes. This improvement would be relatively low in cost and is a route that would connect cyclists to significant destinations, including Catonsville, Security Mall, the future Red Line, Social Security Administration and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid.
5. Jessie Parker: Suggests fixing the crossing of Route 40 at W. Geipe Road and Nuwood Road with a short paved pathway for pedestrians and cyclists.
6. Lisa Geiger: Supports the addition of bike lanes to the White Marsh Shopping/Business District.
7. Joseph Muscella: Supports bike lanes and sidewalks on Edmondson Avenue between Winters Lane and Ingleside Avenue.
8. Eileen Endryas: Supports the Northeast Trail. Additional funding is needed to complete construction to the mall's shops and restaurants at Honeygo Blvd. Currently people are walking and biking on a shoulder that is in poor condition and adjacent to high speed traffic.
9. Kimberly Bankard, President, Moore's Orchard HOA: Requests sidewalks along Joppa Road in Perry Hall from Cowenton Avenue Circle to Honeygo Blvd, to connect neighborhoods to the newly opened Gough Park, and extend a little further to connect to the new Soukup Arena. Not having sidewalks is very dangerous and upsetting that you can't access them by walking.
10. Pat France: Concerned about the safety of cyclists in Towson because the bike lanes suddenly stop forcing bikes into traffic, and also because people are parking in bike lanes.
11. Carroll Pupa: adds his support for the Northeast Trail to that received by Dennis Robinson, Jr. on behalf of the "Friends of the Northeast Trail."
12. Fran Taylor: Requests for District 7 Pedestrian Bike Projects including:
 - a) Sidewalks and bikeway on North Point Road from North Point Boulevard to Charlesmont Road to address needed pedestrian and bicycle safety issues, and provide connections to Battle Acre Park and North Point State Battlefield; and
 - b) Signage and bike lane striping on Merritt Avenue between Sollers Point Road and Merritt Boulevard to connect the proposed Dundalk Loop to the new bike lanes on Merritt Boulevard. From Merritt Avenue, cyclists can access Merritt Point Park, and traveling further via the Peninsula Expressway, Chesterwood Park and a number of commercial destinations. The route will also provide access to the variety of shopping, restaurants, a public library and government facilities on Merritt Blvd.
13. Troy and Sandra Chronister: Support for the extension of the NCR Trail to the Warren Road Light Rail stop. The trail would be an asset to the Knollbrook community, raising property values, and providing economic opportunities to old town Cockeysville.