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

--APPROVED SEPTEMBER 13, 2016--

MEETING NOTES
Tuesday, March 8, 2016
4:30 p.m.

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

Absent: Grace Bristol, Nate Evans, Ted Levin, Charlie Murphy, Myron Williams, Robert Barrett

Department of Planning staff present included Jeff Mayhew, Kathy Schlabach, Janice Graves, and Jen Nugent.

1. Introduction of Members and Announcements

Mr. Sheldon Epstein opened the meeting at 4:38 p.m. Mr. Epstein asked the members to introduce themselves and then welcomed Councilman David Marks who was in the audience. Mr. Epstein then made two announcements:

- There is a location change for next meeting of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee on April 12th. The meeting will be held in the large conference room on the second floor of this building.
- The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board is hosting a workshop on March 16 from 3 to 5 p.m. about the Transportation Alternatives, Maryland Bikeways, and Recreational Trails Programs. Kathy Schlabach will send the members more information.

2. Review of Today's Agenda

Mr. Epstein noted that there were no changes to the agenda that had been previously sent to the committee members.

3. Approval of Meeting Notes of November 10, 2015 Meeting

Mr. Epstein remarked that since a quorum of members was not present, the committee would move onto the next agenda item.

4. Report from the Towson Greenway Network Planning Committee

Mr. Epstein called on Ms. Allysha Lorber for a report from the Towson Greenway Network Planning Committee. Ms. Lorber explained that Councilman David Marks had assembled a group of approximately 15 community members with a variety of expertise. The goal of the group is to provide access to green space and alternatives to get around town, including destinations such as Towson University and Goucher College. The grand vision is for two main trail alignments. A north/south trail would link the NCR Trail at Gunpowder Falls State Park with Lake Roland where the Jones Falls Trail terminates. The trail would follow the light rail and other rail right-of-ways with spurs to Lutherville and the Warren Road light rail stop.

An east/west trail, a second priority, between Lake Roland and Loch Raven Drive at the Loch Raven Reservoir, would follow Charles Street and Towsontown Boulevard using sidepaths along roads and utility corridors to connect communities with Towson University, which is planning a bicycle/pedestrian loop around its campus, the library, Radabaugh Park and Black and Decker, ultimately using the BGE right-of-way adjacent to Cromwell Bridge Road to reach Loch Raven Reservoir. A spur would access Goucher College which is also considering a campus loop.

Ms. Lorber said feasibility studies, public outreach, cost estimates and phasing would comprise the next steps. She acknowledged that these are expensive projects and discussed ideas for combining potential funding sources including federal programs such as TIGER, Transportation Alternatives, Livable Communities, and Congestion Management and Air Quality, or state programs such as Maryland Bikeways and Program Open Space for land acquisition.

During discussion, Mr. Fran Taylor remarked that the National Park Service might be of assistance. Mr. Harry Bhandari mentioned the Northeast Trail as another trail project and asked about the requirements for a TIGER grant. Ms. Lorber replied that it is national in scope and requires that the proposed project be a major transportation investment with economic benefits.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE CITIZEN INPUT MEETING SUMMARY

March 8, 2016

Verbal comments were received from seven citizens. Two committee members discussed priorities within their council district. Written comments were received from an additional 22 citizens.

1) Linwood Jackson, Turner Station: The lack of sidewalks on a stretch of road from Main Street to Pittsburgh Avenue and puddling requires people to walk in the street, a very dangerous situation. It is a very active location with two churches, a bus stop and a laundromat. (Verbal, photographs submitted)

2) Roger Gookin, Towsongate: He suggests the county install embedded lights such as are used in Vermont and California because it is so difficult to cross the roads in his area. A student has been killed crossing Dulaney Valley Road. Bus stops at the mall and other locations around Towson have no accommodations for users. (Verbal)

3) Julie Collier: Towson is not pedestrian friendly. At the circle, police and other vehicles do not stop. Stores and residences do not clear sidewalks of snow, forcing people to walk in the streets with only one vehicle lane cleared, a very dangerous situation. Nationwide, 25% of the population are walkers who need protection. (Verbal)

4) Matthew Riesner, Ingleside Neighborhood Association of Catonsville: He requests that the county assist the community association with a Safe Routes to School grant. The community association is working with Westowne Elementary School and the PTA, and need help with mapping, cost estimates and a 20% match. Referencing the Western Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan, he notes priorities for completing and repairing sidewalks along Ingleside Avenue (#415), and a path behind the school used by students that is in dire need of being repaved (#958). In a subsequent letter, he lists eight total recommendations from the plan (Verbal and written)

Additional emails and letters received from a number of citizens requesting sidewalk improvements in the vicinity of Westowne Elementary School, many referencing nine sidewalk recommendations contained in the Western Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan. These improvements will result in a safer, more walkable community, link significant destinations, be relatively low in cost, and have strong community support. The requests include:

- #410 – Ingleside Ave from Edmondson Ave to Frederick Rd
- #412 – Edmondson Ave from Baltimore City Line to Harlem Lane
- #415 – Ingleside Ave from Baltimore National Pike to Edmondson Ave
- #485 – Edmondson Ave from Harlem Lane to Beaumont Ave
- #488 – Academy Rd from Old Frederick Rd to Edmondson Ave
- #489 – Old Frederick Rd from Baltimore National Pike to Charing Cross Rd
- # 25 – Curb ramp at Harlem Lane and Maple Forest Rd
- # 26 – Curb ramp at Harlem Lane and Harlem Lane
- #958 – Shared Use Path from Longview Drive to Westowne Elementary

5) Sarah Frondlier (with additional material regarding the Safe Routes to School initiative at Westowne Elementary School)

6) George Winkfield

7) Justine Stull

- 8) **Rebecca and Nathanael Busbee** (with photos)
- 9) **Abigail Metcalf**: specifically requests sidewalks on Ingleside Avenue
- 10) **Chris Metcalf**: specifically requests sidewalks on Ingleside Avenue
- 11) **Stephanie Berger**: specifically requests sidewalks on Ingleside Avenue, and projects #26 and #958
- 12) **Brook Peterson**
- 13) **Bryan and Lindsey Johnson**

(14) Greg Hinchliffe, East Coast Greenway: The East Coast Greenway (ECG) is a trail from Maine to Key West, Florida. In Baltimore County, the Torrey C. Brown Trail and Kurtz Avenue paths are the only offroad segments—everything else is on-road. The entire length of the ECG should be a trail for safety. He suggests prioritizing the proposed trail from the Torrey C. Brown Trail to Lake Roland Park, but if that can't be done yet, then traffic calming and sidewalks should be installed. (Verbal)

15) Vince Gugliuzza: Around the Towson University campus perimeter, all intersections have pedestrian crosswalks with traffic signals except for Towsontown Blvd. and Osler Drive where there are constant vehicles turning. He has contacted the state but nothing has been done. Kenilworth Equities was paid \$25,000 and county said they would put in sidewalk, but that hasn't been done. What is there is 200 yards of dirt and mud but installing a traffic signal is what is really needed. (Verbal)

16) Reid Mumford: Towson Loop is a success, but it can't be accessed safely by bikes. He suggests that since Osler Drive is not wide enough for bike lanes on both sides, just one lane should be provided on the uphill side. He also mentioned Springlake Way, but through discussion, it was determined that the road is not in the county. (Verbal)

17) Fran Taylor, PBAC: For District 7, there are four priorities for pedestrian and bicycle improvements: 1) sidewalks and bike lanes on North Point Road from North Point Boulevard to Charlesmont Road to connect the Battle Acre Park and North Point State Battlefield, 2) signage and bike lane striping on Merritt Avenue between Sollers Point Rd. and Merritt Blvd. to connect the Dundalk Bike Beltway to communities and amenities, 3) pedestrian and bike trail improvements at Bauernschmidt Manor Park and Turkey Point Park where there are currently horse trails, and 4) signage and bike lane striping on Northpoint Road in Edgemere to support the first phase of the North Point Heritage Greenway Trail that is being planned by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. (Verbal with written material submitted).

18) Harry Bhandari, PBAC: He requests that the committee address the letter received by the Friends of the Northeast Trail, a coalition of several community associations. Reading the letter, he said the trail would extend from Hazelwood to Perry Hall and would provide safer pedestrian and bicycle access to parks, schools, libraries, commercial areas and employment centers. The letter asks that while the trail is the primary focus, it should also be viewed in the context of other regional efforts including the proposed extension of the Herring Run Trail in Baltimore City. (Verbal)

(19) Dennis M. Robinson, Jr., Friends of the Northeast Trail: See above. (Written)

(20) Ann Greenbaum: She supports lowered speed limits on bicycling roads and more segregated bike lanes in Towson. She notes that Towson University is planning a perimeter pathway around the campus which will need to be connected to downtown Towson and surrounding communities. (Written)

(21) Jack Lattimore: He suggests a pedestrian/bike route from Woodbridge Valley to Franklinton, ultimately connecting Patapsco Valley State Park to Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The route would follow several recommendations of the Western Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan, including Crosby Road (#482), Woodlawn Drive (#946), Security Boulevard (#890), and N. Forest Park Avenue/Ingleside Avenue (#956) to the Gwynns Falls Trail, and would also consider a path along the Red Line (#891), should the rail line be constructed. (Written material submitted)

(22) Joe La Bella, President, Towson Manor Village Community Association and Co-chair, Towson Greenway Committee: He supports undertaking a feasibility study for the proposed Towson Greenway. The proposal will provide access to alternative transportation options (hike and bike) for the growing Towson area, as well as connect to communities, commercial centers and amenities throughout Baltimore County and Maryland. (Written)

(23) Kate Traut: A member of the Towson Greenway Committee, she supports the initiation of a feasibility study as an exciting opportunity to connect communities via safe pedestrian and cycling trails and to engage residents in nature and active alternative transportation. (Written)

(24) Laurie Taylor-Mitchell: She does not support a bicycle trail through Cromwell Valley Park proposed as an alternative to using the BGE right-of-way along Cromwell Bridge Road. The park is popular for more passive recreational activities. Bicycle use would negatively impact the park's environment as well as the enjoyment and safety of current park users. It would also place a hardship on the private property owners along Cromwell Bridge Road who would be affected by a trail through their properties. (Written)

Additional emails and letters received opposing a trail through Cromwell Valley Park and adjoining properties:

(25) Patricia Novak, President, Cromwell Valley Park Council

(26) Rose Anderson

(27) Brian and Mia Walsh (residents adjoining Cromwell Valley Park, also oppose a trail using the BGE right-of-way due to the severe erosion that is occurring)

(28) Kevin Gary: He is requesting the county undertake a youth education program on bicycle safety, referencing Bike Maryland's Bike-Minded Safety Program. He has noticed that many cyclists do not follow the rules of the road. (Written)