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

--DRAFT--

MEETING NOTES
Tuesday, April 25, 2017
4:00 p.m.

Attendees: Chair Sheldon Epstein, Harry Bhandari, Nate Evans, Ted Levin (arrived late), Allysha Lorber, Charlie Murphy, Francis Taylor, Mike Filsinger, Linda Grossman

Absent: Jared Barnhart, Grace Bristol, Jim Kelly, Robert Barrett, Pat McDougall

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

1. Introduction of Members and Announcements

Mr. Sheldon Epstein opened the meeting at 4:06 p.m. Mr. Epstein asked the members to introduce themselves. There were no announcements.

2. Review of Today's Agenda

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

3. Approval of Meeting Notes of November 15, 2016 Meeting

Mr. Epstein called for a motion to approve the meeting notes from the November 15, 2016 meeting. Mr. Fran Taylor made the motion and Mr. Harry Bhandari seconded. The approval was unanimous.

4. Presentation from EPS on stream restoration

Mr. Epstein invited Ms. Patricia Farr from the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability to speak to the committee about the County's stream restoration program. Ms. Farr began her presentation by asking the committee if the reason she was presenting was because there are questions about incorporating trails into stream restoration projects. The committee agreed.

Ms. Farr stated that the purpose is to restore a stream that it is out of equilibrium, which could be through erosion of the stream bank or excess sediment, with the ultimate goal being to improve water quality. EPS receives funding from various sources such as the EPA who have mandates for TMDLs. The County can get further mitigation credits by planting trees and connecting flood plains in areas adjacent to the restoration project. The Army Corps of Engineers and MDE have permit conditions. Stream restoration projects are very costly and even more so on private land since the County has to get right of access to get to the stream. The funding the County receives is earmarked only for stream restoration projects. With that being said, Ms. Farr did also state that there could be some area above the stream where a trail could be built, but that it would be unlikely on privately owned land.

During the discussion, committee members made the following points:

Ms. Allysha Lorber stated that she understood that the purpose is not to build a trail, since in many cases it would be inappropriate, but wanted to know if it's ever a consideration with conducting a project on County land, for example through a park. Ms. Farr answered that it could be a consideration, but that the primary function is to restore the stream and if someone wanted to build something in the stream buffer they would have to conduct an alternatives analysis and provide mitigation. She stated that people can always walk along the streams if they would like, but to make them active recreation is contrary to the program. Ms. Farr also stated that trail building is a function of the Department of Recreation and Parks. Ms. Lorber asked if this has ever been done in the County and Ms. Farr answered that she wasn't sure and that Recreation and Parks would have to decide on that.

Ms. Lorber mentioned that there was a stream restoration project done on Minebank Run and that a maintenance access drive had been created to get to the stream, but was then removed and reforested. Ms. Farr explained that removing the impervious surface and replanting gave the County credits and that the Army Corps and MDE want those impervious surfaces removed. Ms. Lorber then asked if there was a trail master plan that EPS looks at when they are planning for stream restoration projects. Ms. Farr answered that they do not look at any plans because trails are not part of their scope. Their purpose is to meet the federal regulations for TMDL reductions.

Mr. Nate Evans inquired as to who in the County manages Storm water management ponds and what is the maintenance schedule? Ms. Farr replied that the head of that division is Jim Markel

and she believes that they are on a 3-year rotation. Mr. Evans added that if there was increased agency coordination, it might be feasible to have options for trails that could meet the MDE goals without affecting the cost of design or construction

Mr. Fran Taylor stated that there is currently a shoreline restoration project in the 7th district close to Fort Howard where the County is removing old concrete rip rap and replacing it with stone. He stated that people currently use that area to fish and inquired as to whether or not they would still be able to continue to do so and if Rec and Parks has been collaborating with EPS. He also stated that this would be the perfect time for adding additional improvements such as trails since the County is already there doing work. Ms. Farr replied that people will still be able to walk down to the shoreline to fish once the work has been completed.

Mr. Harry Bhandari stated that he believes that there is a discrepancy between scientific knowledge and public perception and that education is needed for a better understating. He also wanted to know if there is a system for the study and research of these stream restoration projects. Ms. Farr replied that there are committees of people from federal and state agencies who evaluate the projects and have done so for many years. Their goals are to design projects that will work better and last longer, as well as to learn and make the projects more cost effective.

5. Report from Nate Evans on BMC BPAG

Mr. Epstein asked Mr. Nate Evans to give a committee report on the BMC BPAG. Mr. Evans informed the committee that he wasn't giving a report on the BMC BPAG, but on the Patapsco Regional Greenway. He stated that he is working as a consultant for the Baltimore Metropolitan Council on the concept of building a transportation trail from the Inner Harbor to Sykesville. He stated that they have already had two community meetings, one in Ellicott City and the other in Sykesville. The final report will have different alignments with hard and soft surface trails as well as how to build each section, the funding sources available, as well as the jurisdictions that would be responsible for the construction. The report will identify short, mid, and long term projects. The ultimate report is due at the end of June of this year. The report can be seen by visiting Baltometro.org. Mr. Evans then stated that most of the work in Baltimore County would fall under the jurisdiction of the state, with the exception of River Road. The plan is recommending it become one-way, but that they still need to discuss that with Public Works. He also said that this will tie into the #9 Trolley Trail and that they still need to identify some of the mountain biking and hiking trails in the park.

During the discussion, committee members made the following points:

Mr. Ted Levin wanted to know where the connection to the Gwynns Falls Trail would be located. Mr. Evan replied that it would be where the trail ends near Cherry Hill/Harbor Hospital and that they are proposing a continuation through Southwest Area Park, and signed bikes route in Woodlawn to the state park.

Mr. Epstein inquired as to the cost. Mr. Evans replied that that they have not conducted a cost analysis as of yet, but it will be a 35 mile trail, so it will be significant. However, the project is broken down into smaller more feasible chunks.

Mr. Charlie Murphy asked how many bridges in total are proposed and if the proposal is to go under Route 1. Mr. Evans answered that there are nine significant ones. The report makes recommendations that the Route 1 bridge be widened to include a shared use path and that they conducted a site visit and the bridge appears to be in poor condition.

6. Reports from District Committee Members on Projects

Mr. Epstein asked the committee members to report on any projects in their respective districts starting with District 1.

Mr. Murphy representing District 1 stated that they have completed the Short Line Trail, except for Bloomsbury Crossing which is a MD Bikeways Grant, where Catonsville Rails to Trails need to provide an in-kind match. He stated that the group has already cleared 18 tons of concrete along the trail and that they are slated to have a dedication on Memorial Day. He stated that the signage has been completed connecting the Short Line trail inside and outside of the beltway, and to Spring Grove where they have painted signs green and white indicating routes to UMBC. Mr. Murphy also said that the state still needs to install the signs on Frederick Road and Wilkens Avenue. He further stated that CRTT would like a detour around the #9 Trolley Trail when it's closed. He said that they have added signs to each of their trailheads and made a lot of repairs. The group would also like to connect the Short Line to the new elementary school and fields and to the Spring Grove Arboretum trail from Wilkens Ave. to Wade Ave. He also stated that there has been a lot of interest and support from the local communities and state delegates for the West Geipe Road connection. He said that CRTT has met with MORE and they would like to build the trail with the County's permission. He stated that they are having a meeting on May 6th before Bike to Work Day to help potential participants get more acquainted with biking to work. They are also holding a Bike Around Catonsville event. Lastly, Mr. Murphy said that CRTT is working with Mr. Scott Jeffery and he is using GIS to try and find ways to hook up the trails in the parks and streets and how to connect the two.

Mr. Lorber representing District 5 stated that they do not have a laundry list of items this year since it has not been fruitful in the previous years, but would like to request that the County focus on updating the County's Bike and Pedestrian Master Plans. The Eastern Plan was adopted in 2005 and there has been a lot of new development since then. She stated that she is concerned with safety and the lack of bikers. She also said that there should be priorities and an implementation plan in the plan update and with that hopefully more infrastructure might get built.

Mr. Bhandari representing District 6 said that he agrees with Ms. Lorber that the plans need to be updated. He stated that there is a Friends of the Northeast Trail group, but that they need to be

revitalized and become a non-profit group to attract volunteers and solicit funding sources. He said that the proposed alignment of the Northeast Trail connects many parks and schools and that there are several active community groups in support of the trail, so he thinks that trying to get the Friends group going again would be the priority at this time.

Mr. Taylor representing District 7 stated that the priority segment of the North Point Heritage Greenway Trail is from North Point State Park to Todd's Inheritance with the second phase being to Veteran's Park. He said that DNR has grant funding, but there are storm water management issues and he doesn't know if there will be enough money to do both segments. They are also interested in a citizen's Soldiers Trail that follows Bear Creek and ends at North Point State Park Battlefield at Trappe Road. He said it would connect three schools and would tell the story of the history of the area in regards to the War of 1812. He said that they are working with NeighborSpace and trying to get the cooperation of the schools, the County, and DNR. Mr. Taylor then stated that there needs to be a sidewalk replacement on North Point Road near Lodge Forest Drive. It is now macadam and it is almost worse than having no sidewalk at all. He said that there is another segment near the North Point Heritage site that also needs replacing. He stated that the Dundalk Loop is making progress and that all the signs appear to be up and the grates replaced, as well as the striping on Merritt Avenue. He also said that with Tradepoint Atlantic and the redevelopment of Sparrows Point, now would be the time to get more bike and pedestrian infrastructure for recreation and transportation. He would like to ask the County to appoint a planner to work with them, the Council office and Tradepoint Atlantic.

8. Other Business

Mr. Epstein asked if there was any other business. There was none.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Epstein asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Levin made the motion and Mr. Bhandari seconded. The approval was unanimous and the meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m. Ms. Lorber left the meeting before the CIM began.

**PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITIZEN INPUT MEETING SUMMARY**

April 25, 2017

Verbal comments were received from nine citizens.

Written comments were received from an additional six citizens.

(1) Deirdre Smith, Valleys Planning Council (VPC): She stated that VPC is starting a campaign by the community for the community to make the roads in the Valley safer. There was concern after a near fatal accident last year. The first part of the campaign will be signs to educate the public of the 3 ft. rule. The second will be digital speed signs. And the third will be the Pace Car program where drivers will sign a pledge of the rules of the road and then display a placard in their car indicating that they are a Pace Car. She also said that they are looking for partners. (Verbal with slides)

(2) William Wang, Mays Chapel: Mays Chapel has an active community of walkers. South of Padonia Road there are no connections to the next section of Mays Chapel, or to Graul's, or the swim club. There are three areas that could use improvements. The first is a sidewalk connecting the north side of Chatterton Road with the east side of Jenifer Road, connecting to the sidewalk on Sherbourne Drive. The second is the continuation of sidewalk along the east side of Greenpoint Road. The third is pedestrian crossing on Padonia Road at Mays Chapel Road. (Verbal with a pdf)

(3) Jose Parra: He would like to see the creation of a park near Beaver Dam Run, called Beaver Dam Run Park. The County acquired 2 parcels that are in the flood plain and can't be developed. They are immediately adjacent to an old railroad bed. The NCR Trail could be extended to the park and eventually across York Road. It could provide parking for the NCR Trail that would remove the need for the Ashland lot. There are two creek crossings that would need to be built. One of the old bridges still has its girders in place. It would be a much better terminus than Ashland. (Verbal with pictures)

(4) Eileen Endryos, South Perry Hall Community Association: She would like to advocate for the Northeast Trail. The association has worked with developers to build part of the trail along Perry Hall Blvd. from Rossville Blvd. to about a half a mile past Ridge Road. They've also been working with the developer of the Villages at White Marsh PUD who have agreed to build part of the trail at the eastern edge of the property, but not right along White Marsh Blvd. They would also like to see a spur at the intersection adjacent to White Marsh Mall and a future path to the Library and the Avenue. (Verbal)

(5) Abby Cohen, 212 Washington Ave, Towson: The curb cuts in downtown Towson need attention. There are streets with no curb cuts and some that only have them on one side. Some that are existing are unusable. This could potentially be a civil rights issue. (Verbal)

(6) Ray Bahr, Catonsville Rails to Trails (CRTT): CRTT has worked closely with the MD Bikeways Program and would like funding for an at-grade crossing, which is the final link of the Short Line Trail system. The issue is that there was a tunnel at this location at one point and the crossing requires a lot of fill. The project is currently under design. It will need to be ADA compliant and therefore will be expensive, probably close to \$300,000.00. (Verbal, map)

(7) 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. He stated this at last year's meeting as well. (Verbal)

(8) Skip Mills, Millers Island: He would like to ask for a bike-hike trail along the length of Millers Island Road. To save money it would only need to be on one side of the road and if there are problems creating the trail, it might be able to move back and forth across the road using crosswalks. (Written, read by Fran Taylor)

(9) Keith Taylor, North Point: It is hard for motorists to comply to the MD 3 ft. law in front of Sparrows Point Middle and High School and on other parts of the peninsula, since parts of the roads are being washed away. The sidewalks north of the school are privately owned. The people of Edgemere want safe cycling trails and walkways for pedestrians. (Written, read by Fran Taylor)

(10) Krystle Housley, The Franklinton Community Association: She offers the support of the community association for a pedestrian and bicycle connection at the end of West Geipe Road onto and across Route 40 to Nuwood Road. (Written)

(11) Barbara Schmertz, 235 East Timonium Road: She recommends that a bike lane be established on East Timonium Road in Timonium. The lane could begin at York Road and East Timonium and continue to Pot Springs or Dulaney Valley Road. With additional resources, a path could be established from the Lutherville light rail stop, continue across York (at Ridgely) and extend to Eastridge. The path could continue north on Eastridge to East Timonium and then continue eastward as suggested earlier. (Written)

(12) Daniel Artley, Northern Baltimore County: A bike path that follows the light rail under the Baltimore Beltway and through Lake Roland could easily tie into the Jones Falls Bike Path, and become part of the East Coast Greenway. (Written)

(13) Sharon Kleinfelter: There is a short section of Silver Spring Rd. in Perry Hall that is used by pedestrians that could benefit from paving. This section is from Honeygo Blvd. east, toward I-95. Bikers also use the road, which is hilly, narrow and dangerous, so a trail for bikes would also be beneficial. It would need to go from the shopping center entrance up to Silver Knoll Dr. It is probably less than 1/2 mile. (Written)

(14) Bonnie Dalzell, Rural Baltimore County: She lives in an area of the county that is very scenic but with most narrow roads having no shoulders. Packed "rock dust" trails may work for bicycles. Also the fine gravel from recycled asphalt can be mixed with a binder to make a "pavement" which is not sturdy enough for trucks but would support cycles. Some of the cycle clubs could select sections of road to "sponsor" for some improvement in the shoulder or in providing signage for roads indicating where cross roads have shoulders suitable for cycles (Written)

(15) Jessie Parker, 1918 Altavue Rd: She would like the County to approve a connection from the end of West Geipe Rd. onto and across Rt. 40 to Nuwood Rd. This would connect two popular biking routes and would be a safe alternative to Rolling Rd, particularly Rolling Rd at Route 40. (Written)