

Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
April Meeting Minutes
Friday, April 12, 2013
Maryland Department of Transportation
Hanover, Maryland

Members Present

Steve Carr
Robert Gaston
Greg Hinchliffe
Michael Mason
(*Michael Jackson for*) Darrell Mobley
Erin Penniston
Kevin Racine
Carl Rebele
(*Jennifer Jones for*) Marci Ross
Fred Shaffer
Patrick Sheehan
Carol Silldorff
Jim Swift
1st Sgt. Michael Tagliaferri
Hon. Jennifer Terrasa
James G. Titus
Cari Watrous
John Z. Wetmore

Michael Jackson (staff)

Chairperson Jim Swift called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

1. Approval of the February Meeting Minutes

The February meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Subcommittee Reports

A. Tourism and Product Development – T&PD Chair Dick Cushwa submitted a written report but was unable to attend. Jennifer Jones gave an update on Office of Tourism Development Activities. Steve Carr gave an update on Department of Natural Resources activities including urging the members to go on-line and respond to survey questions regarding their opinion of the State Recreational Plan update, particularly regarding trail issues

Members Absent

Dick Cushwa
Scott Hansen
Beverly Malone

Steve also mentioned that there is an electronic portal to access various Maryland maps, including Cycle Maryland bicycling and hiking maps, called “Maryland I-map” It can be reached at <http://www.imap.maryland.gov/Portal/applications.asp>.

B. Commuting and Transportation – C&T Subcommittee chair Greg Hinchliffe submitted a written report. There was a spirited discussion regarding House Bill 339, which would have required mandatory helmet use of all persons riding bicycles in Maryland. HB 339 did not pass although concern was expressed by a bill opponent that it would likely be re-introduced next year. Michael Jackson described plans to improve the quality of information received regarding bicycle crashes and injuries which would better help decision-makers and advocates in focusing on countermeasures to improve safety.

These plans include considering the adoption of software called the Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Analysis Tool (PBCAT). He passed out copies of a report of bicycle crashes and injuries developed by the North Carolina Department of Transportation using the PBCAT software. Patrick Sheehan asked if PBCAT could be used to drill down to determine collisions and injuries involving pedestrians with disabilities. Michael promised to forward Patrick information on PBCAT.

Jim Titus asked whether pedestrian advocates would be present at an upcoming State Highway Administration event regarding non-motorized safety. Michael said he would follow up on this matter. Kevin Racine reported on discussions he has undertaken with the Greyhound Corporation regarding carrying bicyclists and their bicycles on their bus routes operating between Baltimore and Philadelphia.

There was a discussion of whether MDOT’s adoption of Complete Streets policies have resulted in improved facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists as some members provided anecdotal reports of various recent highway projects not providing improved non-motorized facilities. Michael noted that adoption of Complete Streets policies does not guarantee non-motorized improvements in every highway project as these policies allow exceptions (e.g. environmental, historic, cost considerations). Furthermore MDOT’s adoption of Complete Streets policies is not binding on the State’s political subdivisions. Greg and Michael agreed together to develop a system for collecting and analyzing complaints regarding highway projects that do not improve bicycle and pedestrian access to determine whether adopted Complete Streets policies had been violated.

C. Education and Awareness – E&A Subcommittee Chair Beverly Malone submitted a written subcommittee report but was unable to attend. Michael discussed problems with a Maryland Highway Safety Office funded bicycle education program operated by the Washington Area Bicyclists Association. These problems included reports of reimbursement difficulties, untrained volunteers inadvertently damaging bicycles and other equipment, and operational difficulties serving counties that are distant from the Washington metropolitan area. Michael Mason reported that there are schools who consider this education program valuable. Carol Silldorff said Bike Maryland might be interested in taking over some of the schools currently served by WABA.

Michael Jackson stated he had spoken separately with WABA and MHSO staff regarding the reimbursement matter and that MHSO staff have offered to schedule time with WABA staff to getting the reimbursement requests properly submitted. He will also schedule a meeting between MHSO, WABA, and Bike Maryland staff to discuss the future of this program.

Carol and Michael Jackson discussed recent initiatives to encourage Maryland's colleges and universities to promote bicycling including the Bike Maryland/League of American Bicyclists recently sponsored Bicycle Friendly University workshop held in March at Johns Hopkins University and attended by representatives from several Baltimore area schools. Michael mentioned his efforts to encourage community colleges to promote bicycling including Montgomery College, Howard Community College and Allegany College of Maryland.

Erin Penniston reported that the Surgeon General of America is soliciting input regarding barriers to walking and evidence based strategies that encourage walking. She also distributed handouts describing a webinar sponsored by America Walks on the topic of working with State and local officials to prioritize walking in transportation planning that will take place on April 26th. The handout included registration information.

D. Legislative and Government Affairs – L&GA Subcommittee Chair Patrick Sheehan submitted an electronic report. There was discussion on the fate of various pieces of legislation submitted and considered in the 2013 legislative session. There was discussion regarding bicycle community support of HB 1515, which increases the State's gasoline tax, including speculation of how the non-motorized community will benefit from the passage of this bill. Michael will send members a copy of MDOT's current Consolidated Transportation Program for their information on planned transportation projects over the next six years.

HB 139 passed which requires at least one member of the State's public bodies to receive training on the requirements of Maryland's Open Meetings Act. This law will apply to MBPAC. By consensus Michael Jackson was designated as the person to receive this training.

3. Other Business

The members posed for a group photo wearing Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee caps that Michael distributed. Jim Swift thanked MDOT Acting Secretary Darrell Mobley on making complimentary remarks regarding bicycling and walking in the *Message from the Acting Secretary of Transportation* portion of MDOT's 2013 Attainment Report

John Wetmore reported on his findings regarding why obstructions are placed on sidewalks abutting State roadways. He said that the Maryland State Highway Administration has a policy to provide a minimum of 5 feet of clearance along such sidewalks. However federal law only requires a minimum of 3 feet of clearance. Often

utility companies will not honor SHA's policy as it does not have the force of law. John acknowledged that 3 feet of clearance will permit wheelchair users to pass but says that SHA's 5 feet clearance is still preferable for pedestrian convenience. John also noted that 4 foot wide sidewalk snow plows cannot maneuver past 3 foot wide clearances. It was decided that MBPAC should form a Sidewalk Obstructions Task Force to further examine this issue and to make recommendations as appropriate.

Cari Watrous, Kevin and Patrick agreed to join John as task force members. Michael Jackson will schedule the first task force meeting.

4. Adjournment

Jim Swift adjourned the meeting at 11:35 AM.