

**Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
June Meeting Minutes
Friday, June 13, 2014
Maryland Department of Transportation
Hanover, Maryland**

Members Present

Janice Arnold
Steve Carr
Richard Cushwa
Robert Gaston
Scott Hansen
Greg Hinchliffe
Erin Penniston
Kevin Racine
(Jennifer Jones for) Marci Ross
Fred Shaffer
(Michael Jackson for) James T. Smith, Jr.
Michael Tagliaferri
Jennifer Terrasa
James G. Titus
John Z. Wetmore

Michael Jackson (staff)

Visitors Present

Charlotte Davis, Rural Maryland Council
Dustin Kuzan, State Highway Administration
Steve Whetstone

Acting Chair Dick Cushwa called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

1. Approval of April Meeting Minutes

Greg Hinchliffe moved and Jim Titus seconded Greg's motion to approve the April MBPAC meeting minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Subcommittee Reports

A. Tourism and Product Development - T&PD Subcommittee Chair Dick Cushwa submitted a written report. He reported that Carl Rebele was working on proposals to provide a pedestrian bridge along Herrington Manor Road over the Youghiogheny River so as to improve non-motorized access between Oakland and state parks west of the Youghiogheny River and to provide a shared use path between Friendsville and Ohiopyle, PA to connect Friendsville with the Great Allegheny Passage Trail. Jennifer Jones reported that a bicycle tourism poster has been added to the South Mountain Welcome Centers

along I-70 in Frederick County. She said the Office of Tourism Development will publicize bicycle tourism activities. Bob Gaston discussed meetings with Cecil County officials regarding plans to move the route of the East Coast Greenway to a planned shared use path corridor. He is also helping with GIS mapping of a planned shared use path alignment for the ECG in both Harford and Cecil counties. Bob also met with Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway staff to assist with mapping, trail design and construction activities.

Dick noted that Governor Martin O'Malley signed SB 520 in May which would permit continuous bicycle travel on certain highways with speed limits above 50 mph where bicyclists may use the shoulders but the shoulders are briefly overlain with deceleration and acceleration lanes. Bicyclists are prohibited from traveling on roadways with speed limits of 55 mph or greater and the deceleration and acceleration lanes are legally part of the roadway but the shoulders are not. He hoped this will resolve concerns that have placed consideration of proposed US Bicycle Route 11 on hold until resolution of this matter. He noted that the 4 day, 3 nights, 65 mile bicycle tour of C&O Canal had been cancelled.

The City of Hagerstown received a \$70,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) for additional bikeway improvements. Hagerstown is hosting a variety of bicycling events, including a weekend of bicycle racing in June expected to attract between 350 and 400 cyclists. These events are a boon for local businesses. Dick also reported that all Hagerstown city police officers have viewed the Maryland State Police-MDOT bicycle traffic safety training video and that the city produced their own bicycle safety video which can be viewed at www.hagerstownmd.org/bicycling.

Steve Carr noted that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has started using Google as their email message delivery provider and that he has a new email; steve.carr@maryland.gov. He said this is the email address convention that all State agencies will use eventually. DNR is continuing its digital mapping by offering downloadable PDF maps and trail guides for State parks. Currently this feature is only available at selected parks. DNR has announced a construction schedule for construction of the 4.5 mile segment of the next extension of the Western Maryland Rail Trail between Pearre Station and Little Orleans. DNR staff has recognized that improvements are needed in some state parks to resolve access problems due to the separation of disabled only parking spaces and the location of ADA accessible trails.

Steve attended a public hearing regarding plans for the renovation and/or replacement of the Amtrak railroad bridge over the Susquehanna River due to his interest in seeing that a shared use path is included in the renovation and/or replacement plans. He said both DNR and State Highway Administration staff attending this public hearing expressed support for the inclusion of a shared use path. The chief engineer of this project told Steve that this was a good time to voice support for the shared use path. Steve praised SHA's support. Kevin Racine noted that the Amtrak railroad right-of-way passes through downtown business districts of both Havre de Grace and Perryville. Scott Hansen says he attends monthly State interagency meetings on behalf of the Maryland Department of Planning. The purpose of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for state agency staff to review and comment on projects being proposed by their sister agencies. Scott says MDP supports the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facility on a renovated or replacement Amtrak Railroad Bridge. Greg attended the public hearing and said he was not as optimistic as Steve regarding the inclusion of a shared use path on the Amtrak Bridge.

It was agreed that Greg would draft a letter for Dick's signature as MBPAC acting chair addressed to MDOT Secretary James T. Smith, Jr. stating the MBPAC supports the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian

access on a renovated or replacement Amtrak Bridge over the Susquehanna River as part of the project's Needs and Purpose statement.

B. Commuting and Transportation – C&T Subcommittee chair Greg Hinchliffe provided an electronic report. Jim would like to see the WB&A Trail extended from its present western terminus across the Capital Beltway and then southerly along MD 704/Dr. Martin Luther King Highway to the DC line. Dustin Kuzan said he would set up a meeting between SHA and MNCPPC-PG and Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation about the construction of a shared use side path along MD 704. A major sticking point appears to be whether MNCPPC or DPW&T will accept maintenance responsibility for this proposed side path. Jim asked Fred Shaffer to get more information regarding the maintenance issue. Jim also expressed his desire for better bicycle parking facilities at MARC rail stations like the enclosed bicycle parking room facility at the College Park Metrorail station because the threat of theft and vandalism deters MARC patrons from arriving by bicycle to MARC stations. He also noted being unable to find guidance for minimum accommodation of pedestrians on State highways comparable to newly adopted engineering designs for bicyclists such as the use of R4-11/Bicycles May Use Full Lane signs. Jim feels that some highway design features being used in places where there are no specific pedestrian accommodations are detrimental to pedestrian safety and comfort.

Scott presented MDP's Transit-Oriented Development Website (www.planning.maryland.gov/ourwork/tod) at the Makeover Montgomery II Conference last month. The website provides TOD best practices through the use of an interactive map. In addition to the activities Bob Gaston reported during the T&PD subcommittee report he plans on representing bicyclists and pedestrian views regarding increased equestrian usage in the Fair Hill Natural Resource Area at an upcoming meeting of the Maryland Horse Industry Board. Bob is in the process of building a "monument" trail in Pennsylvania that will connect the Tri-State marker (MD/PA/DE) and the ARC marker (western terminus of the circular PA/DE state boundary) with White Clay Creek trail heads in Pennsylvania and Delaware and finalizing a contract with a bicycle club and the City of Newark, DE to build a hiker/biker trail in William Redd Park.

There was discussion about MBPAC taking a role in monitoring and reviewing various proposed SHA projects on a statewide basis. Greg suggested that at the very least all members should sign up to get on SHA's project planning mailing list so to be aware of opportunities to advocate for bicycle and pedestrian improvements at the project level. Michael Jackson recommended that the C&T subcommittee schedule a meeting where the pros and cons could be discussed at greater detail. He thought that SHA staff should be trusted to look out for the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians on a routine basis, particularly since SHA has adopted their own Complete Streets policy. Dustin will see if SHA has an electronic list of projects that MBPAC members could review on a routine basis.

The topic of community opposition to SHA's plans to reduce the width of MD 170 in the vicinity of I-695 including adding marked bike lanes was discussed. Dustin said SHA has created a committee with local residents that is intended to educate the residents on the project and also to try to accommodate community requests when accommodation is possible. It was reported that SHA is sticking with its plans for a MD 170 "road diet" beneath the I-695 overpass.

C. Education and Awareness – E&A Subcommittee chair Erin Penniston submitted a written report. She noted the National Physical Activity Plan Alliance issued the first ever report card for Physical Activity for Children and Youth in the US. The nation received a grade of "F" in the Active Transportation category because the vast majority of American youth are driven to school. Less than 13 percent of children walk

or bike to school. Jan Arnold reported that the Society of Health And Physical Education (SHAPE) in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have produced a free bicycle safety training curriculum for students in grades 6 through 12 for use by physical education teachers and recreation specialists. The curriculum package includes a parents' guide.

The E&A subcommittee report included findings from the 2014 Benchmarking Report produced by the Alliance for Biking and Walking. Among those findings presented was news that Maryland ranked 45th among states in percentage of federal transportation funds applied to bicycle and pedestrian projects and last among states in per capita allocation of federal transportation funds toward bicycle and pedestrian projects. Michael Jackson thanked Erin for the opportunity to provide context to the federal funding allocation findings.

He noted that Maryland used non-federal funds for bicycle and pedestrian projects and that there was not a clear causal effect between percentage of federal funds spent on bicycle and pedestrian projects and a state's ranking in terms of bicycle friendliness. For example while Maryland was ranked last in terms of per capita use of federal funds, the League of American Bicyclists ranked Maryland higher than all but six states in terms of bicycle friendliness in their current Bicycle Friendly States rankings. Michael handed out a chart comparing each state's rank in allocation percentage of federal funds for non-motorized transportation projects and its 2014 BFS ranking. Only half of the states had scores from both categories within 10 places of each other. While Maryland had a greatest discrepancy between rank of federal funds allocated to bicycling and walking projects and the 2014 BFS ranking (#50 and #7 respectively) there were other significant discrepancies. He noted that Florida was ranked #2 in per capita use of federal funds for bicycling and walking projects but #28 in terms of bicycle friendliness. Wisconsin was ranked #37 in terms of per capita federal funding allocation but #3 in terms of bicycle friendliness.

D. Legislative and Government Affairs – Michael Jackson submitted a written report. He announced that Carol Silldorff had resigned her position as L&GA subcommittee chair due to her no longer being executive director of Bike Maryland. He said that Jon Morrison had agreed to succeed Carol as subcommittee chair a few days earlier. However since Jon was unable to attend the June MBPAC meeting and had little time to prepare a subcommittee report Michael did so on his behalf. He provided a 2014 legislative summary, discussed Maryland's 2014 BFS ranking and described Eco-Counter's Eco-Multi weather module software MDOT had purchased.

The weather module provides temperature, rainfall, snowfall, wind speed and weather type (e.g. sunny, cloudy, stormy) information in an overlay over bicycle and pedestrian count number at the automated bicycle and pedestrian counter recently installed on the BWI Trail. Michael distributed a printout of the May bicycle/pedestrian counts with the weather information overlaid so the members could see how this information was displayed.

3. Rural Maryland Council

Charlotte Davis, Executive Director of the Rural Maryland Council, gave a power point presentation on the purpose and activities of the RMC. This independent state agency represents the interests of rural Marylanders. She noted that rural Marylanders generally had higher unemployment rates, had lower incomes and suffered disproportionately from preventable diseases like diabetes and cardiovascular illnesses. She noted the economic impact that bicycle tourism provides and that increased bicycling and walking could help alleviate some of the economic and health problems in the state's rural regions. For

example the annual Seagull Century bike ride attracts an average of 7,100 cyclists annually who pump \$2.5 million into the economy of the Lower Eastern Shore. It was agreed that MBPAC and the RMC would look for partnership opportunities to promote bicycling and walking in rural Maryland.

4. Other Business

John Wetmore announced plans to work with state legislators to garner support for adding consideration of shared use paths along utility rights-of-way when considering public interest aspects of public utilities.

5. Public Comment

Steve Whetstone noted that his concern about admission policies affecting bicyclists entering states (bicyclists are not to be charged vehicle admission fees) had been satisfactorily resolved with the help of Steve Carr.

6. Adjournment – Dick adjourned the meeting at 11:59 PM.