

**Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
October Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 14, 2011
Maryland Department of Transportation
Hanover, Maryland**

Members Present

Vincent J. Browne, Jr.
Steve Carr
Richard Cushwa
Greg Hinchliffe
Beverly Malone
Michael Mason
Kevin Racine
Patrick Sheehan
Jeff Springer
Michael Jackson for Beverley Swaim-Staley
Jim Swift
Michael Tagliaferri
James G. Titus
Cari Watrous
John Z. Wetmore

Members Absent

Steven H. Allan
Erin Penniston
Carl Rebele
Marci Ross
Fred Shaffer

Visitors Present

Catherine Agostino, MD State Highway Administration (SHA), Office of Hwy Development
Michael Sonnenfeld, Board Member, Bike Maryland

MBPAC Chair Jim Swift called meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

1. Approval of the August Meeting Minutes

Steve Carr moved and Kevin Racine seconded a motion to approve the August meeting minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Subcommittee Reports

- A. Education and Awareness – E&A Subcommittee Chair Vincent Browne stated there were no formal actions of the subcommittee to report on. Dick Cushwa discussed a need for bicycle education in Washington County. Michael Mason said the Maryland Highway Safety Office funding of the successful middle school bicycle safety curriculum training for physical education instructors needs additional funding to expand to program to cover Maryland's Eastern Shore and

to pay for tricycles for students with disabilities who participate. Michael Jackson discussed on-going work in maintaining and introducing bicycle safety classes at Montgomery College and Allegany College of Maryland, respectively.

- B. Legislative & Government Affairs –Subcommittee Chair Patrick Sheehan submitted an electronic report. He discussed an August 24th meeting between SHA and members of a blindness advocacy group regarding a status update on SHA’s on-going retrofitting of selected signalized intersections with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS). Patrick reported that the federal Quiet Cars Advisory Committee issued recommendations requiring motor vehicle companies to ensure that their vehicles emitted audible sounds when the engines are running so as to alert persons, particularly individuals with visual disabilities, to their presence. He said their recommendations mirror the conclusions made by the now defunct Maryland Quiet Cars Task Force.

Patrick said a Notice of Rulemaking was recently issued regarding proposed Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) by the US Access Board, thus allowing the public to comment on these guidelines. A meeting will be held on November 9 at the US Access Board to discuss the guidelines.

Michael Jackson discussed his concerns about the relationship between current sidewalk snow removal policies and their effectiveness in maintaining access for sidewalk users and asked for feedback. He noted there had been preliminary discussions at MDOT on this issue. Cari Watrous said maintaining accessibility for sidewalk users is a requirement for State/local government (whichever entity owns the sidewalk) and the ADA. Complaints can be made to the Department of Justice. Patrick said sidewalks blocked with snow increase requests for paratransit service from pedestrians with disabilities and noted that paratransit service is very expensive per passenger compared to cost of passenger transport by bus and rail. Kevin mentioned that bus stops are often knocked down by snow plow operators resulting in service disruptions to passengers boarding and alighting at those locations. Sgt. Michael Tagliaferri noted piled snow on sidewalks can pose a traffic hazard to motorists if the snow piles block visibility at intersections. Greg Hinchliffe, commenting on regulations that require adjacent property owners to clear snow from sidewalks, asked what is the procedure regarding snow removal on bridges with sidewalks since there may not be an adjacent property owner, consistent with the intent of these regulations. Jeff Springer said that providing a 5 foot wide buffer between the sidewalk and the roadway would be beneficial as a snow storage area. Catherine Agostino said SHA preferred to build sidewalks with buffer zones but right-of-way and other constraints may prevent the inclusion of buffer zones between sidewalks and roadways along State highways. John Wetmore suggested compiling a GIS database of sidewalks with 5 foot wide clear paths. Michael Jackson thanked the members for their comments.

- C. Tourism & Product Development – T&PD Subcommittee Chair Dick Cushwa provided a written subcommittee report. He noted that the Washington County

Department of Public Works has designated Mr. Merle Saville as the county's Bicycle Coordinator. Dick also stated that it would be desirable to designate an on-road bikeway alignment paralleling the C&O Canal Trail for use as a detour route for bypassing segments of the C&O Canal Trail that are closed due to periodic flooding. Steve Carr informed the attendees that the Department of Natural Resources planned a series of regional roundtables on trail issues instead of having a central trail summit like the one previously held. He said the Governor's Office has made the development of a uniform GIS base map for trail maps that various State agencies could use a priority. This could then lead to on-line users seeking trail information to be provided information offered from various State agencies at one on-line site.

There was discussion on the status of the Patuxent River crossing planned for the Washington, Baltimore and Annapolis (WB&A) Trail. Due to political opposition to the trail's original planned alignment following the old WB&A Railroad right-of-way in Anne Arundel County an alternative river crossing is being proposed. Because of concerns regarding the alternative river crossing design, it was reported that Prince George's County wants to again pursue the originally planned crossing alignment. Greg noted the trail connection would help ameliorate the traffic impacts of the BRAC development at Fort Meade. John said it would be preferable to delay the project than implement a badly designed project. Jim Titus asked Steve Carr if he could find out for the next meeting what commitments and encouragement the State has provided for this detour alignment and the information on which it is based.

It was reported that Delegate Glen Glass asked Kevin Racine if he could make himself available during the 2012 legislative session to provide advice on ADA and transit issues. Jim Titus mentioned he would like the State Highway Administration to ask the National Park Service to provide a shared use path as part of a segment of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway slated for widening. Michael Jackson said he had already relayed this request to SHA and it is under consideration.

Greg distributed a draft Bicycle Friendly Building checklist intended for State employment sites that are required to provide bicycle access including bicycle parking by law. He requested that a mechanism be developed to publicize this checklist once it is finalized by MBPAC.

3. Screening of draft MD Law Enforcement Bicycle Traffic Safety Video

Michael Jackson showed a 28 minute draft video that is intended to serve as training material for Maryland law enforcement officers with traffic enforcement and crash investigation responsibilities, developed by the Maryland State Police and MDOT and solicited comments from members. Cari stated that the video needed to be captioned for individuals who are deaf/hard of hearing. Michael Sonnenfeld questioned 2009 statistics that reported bicyclists were judged at fault in the majority of bicycle/motor vehicle

collisions that resulted in bicyclist injuries or fatalities. Jeff requested that a second screening be held and that the video not be finalized until questions raised have been addressed.

4. Other Business

Preliminary Cycle Maryland Results

Catherine Agostino of SHA presented survey results from bicyclists regarding how their travel habits and preferences regarding bicycling journeys. A summary of the September 28th findings were distributed to the members.

Anacostia River Trail Grand Opening

Steve announced that Governor Martin O'Malley is hosting a Cycle Maryland event officially opening an extension of the Anacostia Trail at Bladensburg Waterfront Park on Friday, November 4th at 10 AM and that the members are invited to attend.

Large Scale Bicycling Events

Sgt. Tagliaferri raised questions regarding the fiscal impact of large scale bicycle events on public roadways on government agencies. Michael Jackson promised to follow up on this matter.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12 Noon.