

**Draft Summary of April 6, 2017 MEETING of the PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE and TRAFFIC SAFETY ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
Executive Office Building, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**Members Present:** Kristy Daphnis, Chair; Darrel Droblich; Jeremy Martin, Rockville/Municipal League; David Murnan (representing Anyesha Mookherjee, MSH; Capt. Thomas Didone, MCPD; Aaron Kraut (representing Councilman Roger Berliner); Richard Bingham (representing Reemberto Rodriguez, SSRSC); Marybeth Cleveland; Steve Aldrich (MNCPPC); George Branyan; Leah Walton

**Members Absent:** Ramin Assa; Roger Berliner, Councilmember; Al Roshdieh, MCDOT; Wendy Leibowitz; Reemberto Rodriguez; Anyesha Mookherjee; Valeria Carranza; Heidi Coleman, Bicycle Advocate

**County Staff:** Venu Nemani, Chief of Traffic Engineering and Operations Division, MCDOT; Dewa Salihi, MCDOT; Jeff Dunckel, MCDOT; Nadji Kirby, MCDOT; Wade Holland, CountyStat;

**Guests:** John Wetmore, Perils for Pedestrians; Peggy Dennis; Garrett Hennigan, WABA; MarieAnnette Otero, Safe Routes to School National Partnership; Richard Havlik; Rachel Maleh

**PBTSAC Committee Business:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kristi Daphnis at 7:02 pm, with introductions of members and those visiting.

**Review of Summary from February 2, 2017 Meeting**

**ACTION: As the summary was not distributed prior to the meeting, Daphnis asked Darrel Droblich to send it out as a doodle poll or email for a vote for approval or any changes.**

**Search Committee for New Nominations**

Twelve applications were received; nine applicants were interviewed. All nine were excellent. Interviews were conducted December 8 and 12. The nomination committee rankings were compiled and two applicants were nominated for membership to the committee. The memo with the recommendations is now with the County Executive for approval and submission to the County Council.

**Status of Annual Report**

Darrel Droblich has completed a draft of the 2016 Annual Report. He distributed the draft at the meeting and will follow up with a survey monkey to get approval or comments from the membership. He will give the committee a week to review it before tabulating votes. Droblich updated the 2015 report updates of what occurred in 2016 and highlighted activities the committee is still working on. Once the committee approves it, Droblich will send it the County Executive and the County Council with a cover letter. Daphnis instructed the committee to send any edits or additions to Droblich, cc'ing her, for inclusion in a final version of the report – any edits or additions should be submitted by April 13. Venu Nemani asked that the Annual Report be sent out as a word document so that comments and additions could be added more easily.

**Preparation of the 2017 Annual Report**

Daphnis asked for volunteers to prepare the 2017 Annual Report. She reminded everyone that it is not every day you get to white wash a fence, and it is not every day you can draft a summary document that will memorialize the fine work of this committee. Daphnis decided to table the issue until the next meeting when two new members are expected to be on-board.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Schedule**

With Reemberto Rodriguez's second term coming to an end (representing the County Executive's Regional Services Center,) the Director of the Mid-county Regional Services Center (Wheaton) would like to be appointed to the PBTSAC. However, she has a conflict on the first Thursday of the month. Daphnis asked if the committee would consider changing the meeting date so Luisa Montero would be able to serve. A doodle-poll will be sent out by Jeff Dunckel to assess what other nights may work in people's schedules.

**ACTION: Jeff Dunckel will determine what nights the EOB 9th Floor Conference Room is available and will then send out a doodle poll to the committee members to determine whether it is feasible to schedule the meetings for a night other than the first Thursday of the month.**

Daphnis suggested taking PBTSAC meetings into different communities in the future so that members of those areas could have a chance to interact with the committee and provide input and feedback on the pedestrian and bicycle safety issues. Perhaps there could be additional special meetings with only part of the PBTSAC attending. Perhaps meetings of other county groups could be used to hold such PBTSAC meetings – using the County's list of other boards, commissions and committees. This would be an opportunity to both gather and share information more directly with the communities. Years ago, the PBTSAC had gone out to meet with the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board, as well as the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board. Such an effort could assist the Vision Zero outreach effort.

**ACTION: Kristy Daphnis will review the list of other committees and boards to see which may be appropriate to do outreach with, and let everyone know via email with a list of what she finds.**

Dunckel suggested reaching out the Regional Services Center Directors as they are often in the know on what groups would be good for the PBTSAC to interact with.

### **Report on Ride On Bus Stop Siting and Bus Stop Improvements:**

Stacy Coletta, Manager of Ride On Passenger Facilities, made a presentation on the County's Bus Stop Improvement Program. Ride On, started in 1975, is now comprised of 343 Buses serving 79 routes and 24 million passengers annually – all of who are pedestrians at some point. This means a lot of pedestrian crashes in Montgomery County are happening at bus stops. In the County, there are over 5,264 bus stops; an inventory was completed in 2004 that identified bus stop geo-coded locations and the safety and ADA compliance improvements that were needed at each bus stop (each location assessed for 500 attributes.) All this information was entered in a GIS-referenced database. 3,083 bus stops have been modified and improved under this program. The average cost of each bus stop improvement is about \$3,000. Coletta made a Power Point presentation on the types of bus stops and the improvements made throughout the County (see the meeting packet at: <http://pbtsac.blogspot.com/2017/04/>) One unique design of Montgomery County bus stops is called a "knee wall," a 4-foot high wall at the back of the bus stop where there are grades (just high enough to serve as a bench,) to protect wheelchairs from falling off or prevent dirt from washing over the bus stop. These can be seen throughout the County. Coletta described the many factors to be considered in rendering bus stops safer and ADA compliant, showing examples of many of the treatments that have now been implemented. There were issues raised about the use of dectables at bus stops, to guide the blind – though not required, may be helpful. George Branyan stated that a "guide strip" bolted down to the concrete could be used to guide blind passengers safely to the bus stop platform. Under Vision

Zero, such safety improvements beyond minimal ADA requirements may be needed. The original program is being finished; the last of the bus stops are requiring some right-of-way acquisition. There continue to be bus stop construction and improvements where new bus routes are being established or capital projects and development relocate bus stops.

Ride On has not looked at corridors for safety improvements, but has improved the individual bus stops along corridors. WMATA is consolidating stops on major arterials. An adopt a bus stop program is being discussed. All 500 sheltered bus stops are cleared of snow; 500 other stops are also cleared by MCDOT, addressing about 70% of the County's transit ridership. Venu Nemani noted that MCDOT has done a great deal to improve getting to the bus stop, but that more needs to be done to improve safety of getting across the road – need to focus on the crossings now, perhaps adding more signalized crossings. HAWK signals were cited as an option; DC now has 14 HAWK signals installed. DC has observed a 90% compliance rate of drivers stopping for pedestrians. They are used successfully in Arizona. Tuscan has 140 HAWK signals. If bus stops are to be consolidated, need to look at more than just the crossing, but where the passengers will need to get to and from - - need to be sure there are safe pathways and reasonable distances to walk.

#### **Updates on State Traffic Safety Legislation:**

Venu Nemani reported that the bills on lowering maximum speed limits did not go forward. The bill on lowering the floor of minimum speeds from 25 MPH to 20 MPH did pass the House and is moving to the Senate – it was amended to require a speed study to lower speed limits. Cpt. Tom Didone reported that HB 1414, Ryan's Law, requiring that drivers cited as being negligent or reckless "Must Appear" in court if someone is killed, was defeated by Montgomery County Delegate Katherine Dumas. The crosswalk bill (HB 997) protecting bicyclist in the crosswalk is going to pass – drivers will be required under law to stop for bicyclists using a crosswalk. Branyan question whether this law would also require that bicyclists cannot enter the road so suddenly that a vehicle cannot stop, as it is written for pedestrians. Not explicitly – only stipulates pedestrians cannot enter the roadway suddenly. The state is creating a bicycle task force to address these and other issues, such as allowing bicycles on sidewalks. The issue about whether vehicles must stop for pedestrians and bicyclists if they are waiting at the crosswalk, but not in the roadway can also be addressed in future legislation, perhaps addressed by this bicycle task force.

The bill authorizing the State to use HAWK Signals by defining them as a beacon instead of a traffic signal (enabling them to remain dark until activated) was defeated by SHA opposition and SHA's issuance of a press release that an "enhanced HAWK" signal (HAWK with a constant flashing yellow and no flashing red phase) would be constructed at Veirs Mill Road and the Matthew Henson Trail Crossing. It is unclear whether any other such signals will be permitted in the State. The SHA is now requesting FHA approval of the "enhanced HAWK" which operates differently from the approved HAWK in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD,) used nationally. Cpt. Didone expressed optimism that the delegation learned how to better present a similar bill next year to obtain legislative approval for use of a standard HAWK signal in Montgomery County. The Maryland Legislative Session begins in January and ends in April.

#### **Report on Washington Regional Vision Zero Summit:**

Jeremy Martin reported that the Summit was well attended (many Montgomery County participants), and was a very useful sharing of information and perspectives on Vision Zero. Different jurisdictions and organizations had different emphasis. Some focused on engineering, others on education, others on

enforcement. Reliance on enforcement with high fines may be an issue for socio-economic equity – poor people being more severely punished. Steve Aldrich discussed the excellent use of data to accomplish Vision Zero that was presented in the Summit and the experience with regional implementation to achieve overall culture change. Reporting and feedback from use of metrics is also very important. How do you “get it done,” and how do you keep getting “better and better.” Venu Nemani emphasized that there are human impacts to everything we do and that the summit helped make that clear. Two points cited by Nemani were that “Complete Street Designs” are an important step towards achieving Vision Zero and the need for cross-jurisdictional cooperation. New York’s Vision Zero relies on data displayed through their “Vision Zero View” software application that displays crash and safety information spatially. Data transparency is an important component of Vision Zero initiatives. From the experience of other jurisdictions, public interaction, information, and outreach are very important. There will also be significant cost and budget implications to any Vision Zero Plan.

There was extensive discussion of how Vision Zero may be implemented in Montgomery County, given all the lessons learned from other jurisdictions and organization that participated in the summit. This will be incorporated into the planning here.

#### **Update on Montgomery County Vision Zero Planning:**

Kristy Daphnis asked for an update on the County’s effort. Darrel Droblich informed the committee that the contractor being used by MCDOT has been removed from the project and that Droblich will be taking the lead role, along with Lorraine Driscoll from the Office of Public Information, in drafting the Two-Year Plan for Vision Zero. They are working closely with Cpt. Didone, Wade Holland (CountyStat), and Venu Nemani. Droblich hopes to have a draft that could be shared with the public by the end of April. The data is going to need to be expanded and reworked from the first effort. This will then be tied to actual action items. Daphnis emphasized that some type of draft plan should be issued by the end of the month, given the delays and stalled effort to date, and the commitment made to the public back in March. This draft can be used to get more public input, “buy-in,” and cross jurisdictional participation that can lead to development of the larger Ten-Year Plan for Vision Zero. Holding another public meeting in May to review the revised draft plan has proposed. Didone expressed appreciation for the recent addition of Wade Holland to the effort, to strengthen the use of data in the planning effort.

#### **Update on State Highway Administration Projects:**

Dave Murnan provided a quick overview of the following projects. **Veirs Mill Road and Turkey Branch:** SHA is not installing a HAWK, but rather a pedestrian activated signal - - similar to the one at University and Reddie Drive in Wheaton – with installation expected in mid-summer. SHA still does not allow the use of HAWK signals (contrary to the recent press release). **Grubb Road and East West Highway:** Improvements are being made this summer, including a wider crosswalk, relocation of signal poles, landing areas (waiting areas) will be expanded at crossings, additional sidewalk connections, modifications to the signal phasing including addition of flashing red signalization, elimination of left turns without arrow from Grubb to westbound E-W Highway during school arrival and dismissal hours, right turn arrow from southbound Grubb to E-W Highway, advanced pedestrian walk phase (lead pedestrian interval – of LPI) for the west-leg crosswalk, and MCDOT will do traffic calming and sidewalks on Grubb Road. **Safety Study of Georgia Avenue, from Glenmont to Heathfield Road:** A PRSA has been performed by SHA between Regina and Heathfield. SHA is making improvements to Layhill Road, east of Georgia. Speeds on Georgia Avenue are 50 MPH. Signals are likely to eventually be constructed along this stretch of roadway. A signal has been designed and approved for the Heathfield Road intersection, but not yet scheduled for construction. The intersection at Ralph is being considered for a signal. SHA is studying the Regina Drive intersection as well, aware that 3 people have died there. **Pedestrian Fence**

**at MD 355 and Gunners Branch:** The design has been approved for construction; awaiting the funding to build it. It could be funded by MCDOT.

**MCPD Update on Enforcement:**

**ACTION: Jeff Dunckel to remind Cpt. Tom Didone to bring video from school bus cameras of passing violations and video montage (modeled on State Seat Belt campaign) of the fatalities that have occurred in Montgomery County.**

School Bus Cameras: in 110 days, 7500 citations have been issued, expect 10,000 by end of school year. 233 cameras will soon be installed, expanding the coverage. Eventually all 1,200 buses will be equipped.

Speed Cameras: 5 mobile units, 38 fixed camera poles, 34 portable units (moved to different locations), 526,000 citations were issued in 2016. In the first two months of 2017, 74,000 citations issued.

Red Light Cameras: 50 cameras are located at 39 intersections. 71,800 citations issued in 2016.

Police Enforcement: In 2016, there were 285 recorded enforcement details (actions/stings) involving 931 officers for 1770 hours. In 2017, 180 details have been conducted as of end of February.

**Safe Routes To School/County-wide Education:** deferred to next meeting do to time

**Status of County Projects:**

Dewa Salihi reported that the Middlebrook Road PRSA report was received in March. It is being reviewed. Four Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (RRFBs) are expected to be installed by April 20 – the first on County roadways. On Arlington Road, lighting, signing and marking improvements are being made now, with a safety study of the corridor being conducted over the next 90 days.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm**