

## **BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP**

May 15, 2019

Baltimore Metropolitan Council

1:05 to 2:55 P.M.

### **MINUTES**

Ms. Tanya Asman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 P.M.

#### **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Asman welcomed attendees and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES**

The minutes of the March meeting were presented. Mr. Albert Engel noted that his name had been misspelled. The correction was noted and a motion presented by Mr. Peter Sotherland and seconded by Ms. Clare Stewart for approval was carried unanimously.

#### **3. STRATEGIC PLANNING PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The subgroups working on the three priority interest areas identified in previous meetings: 1) assisting with grant applications and developing typical costs of projects, 2) encouraging and promoting a regional dialog on Complete Streets, and 3) setting a baseline for walking and biking in the region reported to BPAG. These reports prompted lively discussions among the members and summations of those discussions follow.

- **Typical Costs** – Mr. Engel stated that a major challenge for local planners was knowing how much grant money to ask for and that a tool, which could be used region-wide, would be very helpful. This tool would be kept at the concept level and be developed using actual costs of previous projects. Ms. Marty Baker said that effective communication between planners and engineers would be a key component and that an online form might be a way to facilitate that. Ms. Regina Aris mentioned that the BRTB would be considering the need for consultant services this fall and that developing a costs estimates tool could be a good candidate. She also suggested that BPAG develop a list of other projects for consideration.
- **Complete Streets** – Ms. Stewart reported that her group believes that listing resources online should be the first step and that the biggest obstacle to Complete Streets planning is the lack of communication, between departments such as planning and public works. This communication breakdown is usually the result of different points of view concerning design, construction, and maintenance. Mr. Kris Nebre mentioned the need for webinars and training

for both public works personnel and planners on Complete Streets implementation. Mr. Dan Janousek reiterated that it's often difficult to bring conceptions to life because of existing engineering practices and sometimes outdated guidelines. He said that education for everyone involved was key. Ms. Asman also added that she felt legislation mandating Complete Street polices was important.

- **Baseline** – Ms. Molla Sarros told members that her group suggests counts of transportation-related trips and that careful consideration be given to the placement of counters. She also said that factors such as special events, weather, and travel trends be considered when any collected information is reviewed. Her group feels that collecting any existing data region-wide would be a good first step. Because no baseline exists, the group could not develop SMART objectives. It is suggested, however, that BPAG help develop protocols for counts and help BMC, MDOT, and the jurisdictions to update base layers.

She also stressed the need for standardized counting throughout the region and encouraged researching different technologies. Ultimately, BMC would be responsible with support from the jurisdictions. Ms. Aris mentioned that Census Bureau information from the ACS could be helpful. Ms. Asman said that according to what she heard at the Bike Summit, ACS information was flawed because of how questions were asked. Mr. Janousek stated that using Level of Comfort is the best way to plan for bike-ped facilities. He added that any tool developed could be used in different ways, not just for meeting mode-share goals. Mr. Sotherland suggested adding a land-use component. Ms. Sarros reminded the group that income disparity and the fact some people are dependent on walking are often overlooked by planners but need to be considered. Ms. Asman asked if permanent counters actually promoted biking and walking. Mr. Engel said that they could be useful to determine how weather and time of year affect volume. Ms. Asman asked if cost-benefit analyses are done for bike-ped facilities and that counts could be helpful for that purpose. Ms. Baker reminded members that counts are often required for grants.

BMC staff will review the drafts submitted by the subgroups and recommend next steps at a future meeting.

#### **4. RECAP OF APRIL MBPAC MEETING HELD AT BMC**

Ms. Asman and Mr. Russ Ulrich reported on the April 26 meeting of the Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (MBPAC), which was hosted by the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB). That meeting featured a roundtable discussion, much like BPAG's but involving jurisdictions throughout the entire state. The major component of that meeting, however, was Ms. Asman's presentation on the structure and responsibilities of the BRTB and its relationship with BMC. Ms. Asman, assisted by Mr. Ulrich, also briefed the MBPAC on several regional initiatives, including the Patapsco Regional Greenway, Bike to Work Day 2019, and the Regional Bike Map. Mr. Ulrich stated that the MBPAC members had lots of questions and seemed interested and pleased to hear of our region's activities. Mr. Ulrich also said that perhaps the biggest revelation of the meeting was Mr. Patrick McMahon's announcement about the expansion of bike-car service on MARC's Penn Line. There will now be cars available on most trains every day.

## 5. UPDATE ON THE LOOK ALIVE TRAFFIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Mr. Bala Akundi briefed the group on **Look Alive**, a brand-new pedestrian and bicycle safety education and outreach campaign for the Baltimore region. The region has seen an alarming increase in pedestrian crashes, fatalities and serious injuries over the past several years prompting the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and its highway safety office (MHSO) to step up efforts across the 4Es – engineering, education, enforcement and EMS.

The new campaign, developed over the course of the past 9 months with a \$300,000 grant from MHSO, features Signal Woman – the walk signal sign personified. A fun and spunky character, Signal Woman reminds drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists to look out for each other, obey signals and laws, reduce speed, and be respectful of one another. The centerpiece of the campaign are two video spots that will air on local TV and can be seen on the [lookalivemd.org](http://lookalivemd.org) website.

**Look Alive** integrates several components, including television, outdoor, digital engagement, community outreach, and media relations. Education is coupled with high-visibility enforcement waves, in which police put an added emphasis on enforcing traffic safety laws to protect people walking and biking in the greater Baltimore region.

It is expected that this campaign will be implemented in the region for the next 3-5 years with additional grant funding support from the Maryland Highway Safety Office.

## 6. ROUNDTABLE AND UPDATES

Updates were presented by individual members. Highlights follow:

- Carroll County is completing its first bike/ped master plan, which is going to the Planning Commission for review at the end of May. The County Commission appears very supportive. The County's Safe Routes to School projects have been put on hold because of personnel turnover in the planning office.
- The Maryland Department of the Environment has been working hard to promote alternative transportation during Clean Commute Month and Bike to Work Week. MDE will hold a special reception for employees who bike on May 17.
- Howard County has a new administrator in its transportation office, Mr. Bruce Gartner. Several projects identified during the U.S. 1 safety evaluation are moving into design phase and resurfacing of bike lanes throughout the County will begin shortly.
- Harford County is continuing work on segments of the MA & PA Trail and will report more at the July meeting.
- Anne Arundel County is completing its updated Transportation Master Plan. The County also held a ribbon cutting for a 1.8 mile section of the South Shore Trail and is working with the City of Annapolis on hosting a Traffic Garden, which is a traffic safety course for school children.

The County is losing the sponsor for its Bike Share program and is considering a proposal by Zagster, its BikeShare contractor, to implement ScooterShare as a way to offset operating expenses.

- Baltimore Metropolitan Council and its member jurisdictions continue Bike to Work Day planning and coordination. As of 10:00 that morning, 1,680 riders registered, which is ahead of last year's, and over \$30,000 in sponsorships had been raised. Bike to Work Day has grown and a serious discussion needs to take place to determine how the effort may be more effectively coordinated. Also, BMC's offices are undergoing a renovation so they will effectively be closed to visitors until September. The next BPAG meeting, set for July 17, will take place at MDOT.
- Maryland Department of Transportation reminded members that applications for the Transportation Alternatives and Recreational Trails grants were due at midnight. Also, the Department will host a webinar for Bike/Walk Friendly Employers on May 21.
- State Highway Administration can help with grant applications. SHA is currently updating the Maryland Bicycle Map and may ask for help from the MPOs when coordinating with local jurisdictions. SHA has also formed a working group to improve GIS layers by showing level of traffic stress along routes. More information on that will be forthcoming.
- The position of Planning Director is vacant in the City of Annapolis, which could delay some projects. The City is also working with Anne Arundel County on trail extensions.
- Baltimore County's new administration is making a stronger commitment to bicycle and pedestrian projects. The County is hiring a new transportation planner and a bike-ped coordinator, and a kick-off meeting was held on the Towson University Bike Loop.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Asman adjourned the meeting at 2:55 PM.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### ***Members***

Tanya Asman – Anne Arundel County Office of Transportation  
Marty Baker – Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)  
Eric Borchers – City of Annapolis  
Albert Engel – Howard County  
Jon Leishman – Harford County Department of Planning & Zoning  
Kris Nebre – Baltimore County Department of Public Works  
Clare Stewart – Carroll County Department of Planning  
Molla Sarros – Maryland Department of the Environment  
Peter Sotherland – MDOT State Highway Administration

### ***Staff and Guests***

Regina Aris – Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC)  
Bala Akundi - BMC  
Dan Janousek - MDOT  
Russ Ulrich – BMC