

PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
WILMAPCO Conference Room, December 16, 2019

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Mario Gangemi, Cecil County Chamber of Commerce
Ken Grant, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Dick Janney, Southern New Castle County
Bill Lower, Committee of 100
Barry Shotwell, 7/40 Alliance (Vice Chair)
Vic Singer, Civic League for New Castle County
Dave Tancredi, Milltown-Limestone Civic Alliance

Absent:

Mark Blake, GHADA
Kevin Caneco, SNCC
Katherine Caudle, Pike Creek Civic League
Pat Folk, Cecil County
Carlos de los Ramos, AARP
Bill Dunn, Civic League for New Castle County
Tom Fruehstorfer, City of Newark (Chair)
Givvel Marrero, Delaware Hispanic Commission
Tom Posatko, Delmarva Rail Passenger Association
Glenn Pusey, Bear Glasgow Council
Gail Seitz, City of New Castle
Eugene Truono, Centreville Civic Association
Dwight Walters, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
Norman Wehner, Cecil Board of Realtors

Staff Members:

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Randi Novakoff, Outreach Manager
Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Guests:

Kevin Racine

Minutes prepared by Dawn Voss from recording.

Barry Shotwell, PAC Vice Chair, called the meeting to order. Approval of the October 28, 2019 Minutes postponed to the February Meeting due to the lack of a quorum.

Mr. Vic Singer requested that three changes be made to the October 28, 2019, PAC Minutes:

- 1) On page 4, the fifth paragraph: "comparison" is spelled incorrectly
- 2) On page 4, the sixth paragraph: "Mr. Singer said the slope of the shoulder of the Southbound 896 exit ramp is downward." It should read, "...exit ramp from 95..."

- 3) On page 3, under Presentation/Discussion Items, strike, "Safety and LOS remain big concerns," because the data contradicted this statement.

2. Public Comment Period:

None.

3. Executive Director's Report:

Ms. Tigist Zegeye said the WILMAPCO Council meeting was held on November 14. During the meeting a number of TIP Amendments were passed and the Council approved federal funds for FY 2020. The Council also heard a presentation from Ken Grant on Auto Technology and Pedestrian Safety, and the Southern New Castle County Master Plan update was presented.

Ms. Tigist Zegeye shared the following public outreach information:

- On November 6 the Governor Printz kickoff bus tour and an advisory committee meeting was held. A Visioning Workshop will be planned for January.
- On November 7, the 2019 Transportation Justice Plan was presented to the American Planning Association (APA) of Delaware. The plan will be featured in the APA's "State of Transportation Planning" report next year.
- The SR 9 Master Plan Monitoring Committee met on November 19 and the next meeting will be on January 21.
- Staff participated in the Mill Creek pedestrian safety planning meeting as well as the North Claymont panel hosted by the Claymont Renaissance Development Corporation.
- Staff attended Delmarva Winter Freight meeting in Dover.
- The US 202/Concord Pike Workshop had 135 attendees. A survey is available online.
- December 19 there will be a joint TAC and AQS holiday lunch.
- On January 24 WILMAPCO will host a Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee meeting.
- Regarding the SNCC Master Plan, comments were due December 16. A comprehensive traffic analysis will be completed before going to the public again. The goal is to finish the plan by spring of 2020.
- The Newport Transportation Study held a walking tour and advisory committee meeting in October. A workshop will be scheduled for the public.
- A Transportation Justice Study recommendation will be incorporated into the Public Participation Plan prior to opening it to public comment by March.
- Churchman's Crossing plan update: Received 5 proposals for consultants. Will interview with our partners, DelDOT and New Castle County Land Use in late January.

ACTION ITEMS:

4. None.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

5. Auto Technology and Pedestrian Safety

Mr. Ken Grant of AAA Mid-Atlantic spoke about AAA's testing of pedestrian detection systems for self-driving vehicles. AAA works with manufacturers to test new technology. Technology such as lane departure warning or pedestrian braking systems is being marketed as safety features in vehicles. These systems can be helpful, but if they are not used properly or malfunction, they can be dangerous. AAA tested pedestrian detection braking systems, which detect pedestrians and automatically apply the brakes in the car.

In testing an adult crossing the road in 100% visibility, at 20 miles per hour collision was avoided 40% of the time and at 30 miles per hour collision was avoided only 1 time. In testing children darting out between cars, at 20 miles per hour, there was a collision 89% of the time and at 30 miles per hour, there was a collision 100% of the time.

In an intersection where a driver is making a right turn across a crosswalk, collisions happened 100% of the time. In testing a scenario where someone is standing in the road, at 20 miles per hour, there was a collision 80% of the time and at 30 miles per hour, collision was avoided only 1 time. In testing at night, the system did not work at all.

Work on this technology should continue, but drivers should know the technology in their vehicle and its limitations. There is no substitute for attentive driving.

Mr. Singer commented that the legal liability is with the driver. Mr. Grant confirmed that the operator is currently responsible for accidents that occur in vehicles driving in autonomous mode.

Mr. Singer expressed doubt that the technology would make fully automated cars a reality soon. Mr. Grant said that every major automobile manufacturer with the exception of Ferrari and Lamborghini is working on autonomous technology and that self-driving shuttles recently arrived in Delaware.

Mr. Dave Tancredi asked if AAA will release information about their findings as a press release. Mr. Grant replied that a press release had been sent out but was not widely picked up by media outlets.

Mr. Bill Lower asked Mr. Grant if he would let us know when he is available to come back after further research of the technology. Mr. Lower also suggested that Mr. Grant contact local government in areas with heavy pedestrian traffic to share this information.

6. New Castle County Bicycle Plan

Ms. Heather Dunigan presented an update about the New Castle County Bicycle Plan. The goal of the plan is to provide front door access to a bicycle network for all of types of users and all types of trips.

Seven public outreach events were hosted in partnership with local governments and also an advisory committee was formed, including members from the bicycle community and local governments. The process looked at level of bicycle/pedestrian traffic, whether or not there is a destination, demographics and population; service to minorities, the elderly, those with low income, and the disabled

A two-page form was sent to towns and New Castle County asking them to list their needs, which are as follows:

City of New Castle

- Markell Trail Extension to Battery Park
- School Lane Trail

City of Wilmington

- Baynard Bikeway
- Christina River Southbound Crossing
- Downtown - Riverfront Connector
- Northeast Blvd Bike Lanes
- Walnut Street
- Wilmington CBD Westbound Bikeway
- Adams and Jackson Streets
- Augustine Cut-off Trail and Connectors
- E. 4th Street Bridge
- Wilmington Brew Works Trail

New Castle County

- Augustine Cut-off Segment 1
- Commons Blvd Connector - Phase 2
- Middletown to South St. George Path
- Newark to Castle Trail Connector
- Newport Connector
- C&D Canal - South Bank
- New Castle to Delaware City Trail

Town of Middletown

- Middletown Bike Connections

City of Newark

- Newark Bikeways Low-stress Wayfinding, Phase 2
- Wyoming Road Bikeway
- Paper Mill Road Gap Connection

The scores are being packaged for submission to DeIDOT for funding. A report is being drafted for public comment this winter with a March adoption anticipated.

Mr. Singer asked if land running along high voltage power lines have been considered for use in the plan. Ms. Dunigan said there are a few recommendations along utility corridors.

7. Concord Pike (US 202) Corridor Master Plan

Mr. Dan Blevins said there was a public meeting at Brandywine High School on December 5th. The study area includes Concord Pike from PA to Wilmington line. The corridor is mostly six lanes from Wilmington to PA. It also serves both regional and local traffic and safety is a concern. It is difficult for pedestrians to cross east-west and unsuitable for biking. WILMAPCO is working on a Master Plan to balance future

redevelopment with the concerns of the residents. A market study was conducted in 2017 to determine what the corridor could handle. From multiple well attended events with businesses and residents in the area, it was determined that the public wants reduction in speeding and incorporation of pedestrian and bicycle trails and crossings.

One hundred and thirty-five people attended the December meeting, where it was explained that the approach to the analysis was reshaped to better match conclusions from earlier meetings. Brandywine Town Center, Fairfax, Talleyville and Widener areas may be redeveloped as buildings age. Results showed that people do not want large scale multifamily residential development. In Fairfax, there is a need for a different entrance allowing you to park your car in one spot rather than having to drive store to store. There were some preliminary zoning recommendations including targeted redevelopment area (existing non-residential development) and neighborhood preservation (keeping the character of the area). There was discussion of the historic overlay and additional historic properties and the public want better bike/pedestrian connectivity.

Transportation has some of the largest changes. WILMAPCO is evaluating how well Park and Rides are being used. DART had some short-term operational improvements, and a few re-routes. Seniors want to age in place and are asking for better access to transit.

DeIDOT has a tool to rank bike routes based on ease of use. Reviewing this information indicates 2-4 key locations to link multiple spots together to improve east-west connections.

WILMAPCO is looking at land use options and how side street networks for local traffic and bike path connections will affect intersection traffic flow. There is an expected 13% increase in traffic on the entire corridor by 2050. Some side street connectors and bike/pedestrian connectors can eliminate some of the burden. These plans are something WILMAPCO can use as a direction to relieve the traffic level stress. Two more workshops are expected to be held before coming back with recommendations.

Mr. Singer asked if new roads would be needed to relieve the traffic for the residents of the area. Mr. Blevins said there will be new connections proposed. Mr. Singer asked would DeIDOT consider doing an experiment using barriers to separate the near curb from the other lanes for a few months to see if they work. Mr. Blevins said that DeIDOT would likely not want to try that. Mr. Singer said, if bicycle/vehicle collisions happen at intersections, then channelizing the lanes would be an improvement. Mr. Blevins said that the multiway concept may be viable at the southern end of the project.

Mr. Grant asked about the McDonald's. Mr. Blevins said that a multiway may cure the way the drive-through backs up onto the road. It was discussed that more restaurants are going to cause similar situations, so a solution will happen over time.

Mr. Mario Gangemi asked how autonomous vehicles are included in the plan. Mr. Blevins said that this type of discussion is common, especially in freight. Two schools of thought are currently being debated are whether individuals end up own self-driving vehicles or use a service to drive them on demand. Mr. Grant said his personal opinion is that he sees a future where people do not own cars but order an autonomous car to take them to a destination, but it will be a difficult process to get there.

9. Adjournment

Attachments: (0)