

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

June 15, 2023

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held on Thursday, June 15, 2023, at WILMAPCO, 100 Discovery Boulevard, Suite 800, Newark, DE 19713 and via video conference/conference call.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Matthew Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use, and TAC Chair, brought the TAC meeting to order at 10:07 a.m.

2. TAC Members present:

David Dahlstrom, Maryland Department of Planning
Gwinneth Kaminsky, City of Wilmington Planning
Quinn Krenzel, Town of Elkton Planning
Matthew Rogers, New Castle County Department of Land Use
Derrick Sexton, Maryland State Highway Administration
Catherine Smith, Delaware Transit Corporation

TAC Ex-Officio Members present:

Enos Han, U.S. Federal Highway Administration

TAC Members absent:

Cecil County Division of Planning and Zoning
City of Newark
City of Wilmington Department of Public Works
Delaware Department of Transportation
Delaware Division of Small Business, Development, and Tourism
Delaware Office of State Planning
Delaware River and Bay Authority
DNREC
Maryland Department of the Environment
Maryland Department of Transportation
Maryland Transit Administration

TAC Ex-Officio Members absent:

Amtrak
Diamond State Port Corporation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Federal Transit Administration

Guests and Invitees:

Staff:

Dan Blevins, Principal Planner
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Sharen Elcock, Executive Assistant
Dave Gula, Principal Planner
Bill Swiatek, Principal Planner
Jacob Thompson, Senior Planner
Dawn Voss, Outreach Coordinator

Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director

Minutes prepared by: Dawn Voss.

3. MINUTES

Approval of the May 18, 2023, TAC Minutes was postponed due to lack of a quorum.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

a. Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the Nonmotorized Transportation Working Group met June 6th. They discussed the TJ Bus Connectivity Analysis and thought it was a helpful analysis that can feed into our plans and programs. The group discussed New Castle County Safe Streets for All including interest in expanding the analysis and debate about language used when talking about crash victims and personal responsibility. Ms. Dunigan gave an update of the New Castle County bicycle/pedestrian improvements for the Delaware program, where the Commons Boulevard Connector was approved by DelDOT to receive \$1 million in funding. The group discussed an application from Port Deposit for the Cecil County TAP program.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

ACTION ITEMS

6. To recommend acceptance of the FY 2024 Transportation Alternatives Program Application

Ms. Heather Dunigan said this spring WILMAPCO, in partnership with Maryland SHA, called for applications for the Maryland TAP Program. One was received from Port Deposit for improvements to their Marina Park. Port Deposit reached out as they drafted their application, and through those discussions it was determined that some parts would be appropriate for TAP and some for the Recreational Trails Program. The application includes improvements to connections to the park, improvements to the parking area, trailhead parking, and expansion and improvements to pathways in the marina area. The funding amounts for TAP and Recreational Trails are listed together. SHA will determine the shares of the funding and the funding sources, as this is not in the Philadelphia Urbanized Area. It is part of the Bel Air area.

Vote was held via email due to lack of a quorum.

ACTION: TAC recommended acceptance of the FY 2024 Transportation Alternatives Program Application via email vote.

7. To recommend endorsement of the Ardens Transportation Plan.

Mr. Bill Swiatek said Connecting with the Ardens: A Transportation Plan was developed under the guidance of a Steering Committee comprised of local and state representatives. The four goals of the plan are to manage vehicle speeds and deploy safety countermeasures, provide enhanced pedestrian crossings, develop a bike and pedestrian network through the Ardens, and enhance transit and school bus stops. The plan builds off previous work, including the Harvey Road Traffic Calming Study in 1998, Ardentown Paths Plan in 2017, Wilmington Montessori

Safe Routes to School Program, and the community's Water Quality Master Plan. Public feedback informed the development and selection of locally preferred alternatives. This included a walkable community workshop, three in-person workshops, two community-wide surveys, and a parallel youth engagement process including a separate workshop and survey. Key recommendations include a suite of traffic calming measures to reduce speeds and improve safety on Harvey and Veale Roads, installation of better crossings along Harvey and Veale Roads, a complete pathway network in the villages, and three priority school and public bus stop locations, which provide better east-west bus connections. The plan recommends the installation of traffic signal preemption equipment on several vehicles associated with the Claymont Fire Company. As the recommendations advance, the plan calls for the use of context-sensitive materials that adhere to the local community design palette, the consideration of a part installation opportunities, and the use of stormwater management best practices. The plan is out for public comment through June 19th. Residents will consider endorsement of the plan at three concurrent village meetings on June 26th. We are hoping for Council endorsement in July.

Vote was held via email due to lack of a quorum.

ACTION: TAC recommended endorsement of the Ardens Transportation Plan via email vote.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

8. Safe Street for All

Ms. Heather Dunigan said the Safe Streets for All process is nearly finished. The Safe Systems approach is a paradigm shift championed by the US Department of Transportation, which focuses on preventing the most serious and fatal crashes. Realizing that we cannot rely on people to behave properly, multiple layers of protection are needed to collaboratively work towards reducing crashes. Street speeds need to be appropriate for their context. Rather than over relying on enforcement, we need to design self-enforcing roads and have redundant systems to prevent the most serious crashes. The Advisory Committee will review the draft recommendations being developed from stakeholder outreach and data analysis. The report will be available in early July to assist New Castle County and the City of Newark with their federal grant applications. During the outreach from March 9th to May 14th, ninety-one online surveys were completed, and three hundred and seventy-five comments were added to the interactive map. There were three pop-up events where people shared their best idea for improvement in a "selfie for safety". The draft goal is to reduce serious injuries and deaths by 50% by 2030 and eliminating them by 2040. The draft core values are, "Everyone regardless of background, ability, or age deserves a safe place to live and travel around, and no group should be disproportionately impacted by traffic crashes. We must prioritize and collaborate to make this happen, using a proactive approach guided by data and community engagement. Our quest for Vision Zero is not done until there are none."

The crash analysis showed crashes clustered in the northern part of the county, in the City of Wilmington, and along major roads. Pedestrian and bicycle crashes were clustered in the northern part of the county and in Middletown. When overlaid with our environmental justice and mobility challenged areas, they are clustered in the City of Wilmington and on the roads stemming out of the city. This data was used to create a high-injury crash network, then we overlaid that with the worst intersections for crashes. The high crash areas are focused on higher-speed roads that are heavily transit used or in densely populated walkable areas. Sixty percent of primary causes of crashes fall within five top categories, which will be the focus of our strategies for crash prevention. Speeding was added to this list though cited as a primary cause

of four percent of the crashes. There is a belief that it is underrepresented. Thirty-five percent of fatal crashes involved a bicycle or pedestrian, though they have less than two percent of the mode share.

Recommendations will focus on policy and process changes, supplemental planning, and implementation recommendations. FHWA has a lot of information on the best countermeasures for different types of crashes. We drew from this information and expanded it with newer options. County-wide options being considered are selecting projects that prioritize the high-injury street network for improvements. We need to ensure there is enough funding for improvements. We need to provide good options to driving and focus projects on what can be implemented quickly. Other county-wide measures involve designing streets to ensure safety is prioritized over speed and that speed limits are appropriate for surrounding land uses. We could do traffic calming. Automated enforcement is suggested as an interim approach. Delaware's Complete Streets design guide is out for public comment and WILMAPCO can coordinate with DeIDOT to incorporate Complete Streets into our Paving and Rehab Program. Gaps in the network without pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be filled and better street lighting is needed. Rethinking Land Use is part of this discussion to create walkable communities. Speed cameras, though not legal in Delaware, are effective and so recommended. Enforcement is a stop gap measure until roads are designed to be self-enforcing. Crash data reporting needs improvements. Other recommendations include expanding the safety audit program and implementing the recommendations from those audits. For single vehicle crashes, recommendations include high friction surface treatment, SafetyEdge, wider edge lines, and rumble strips, which should be designed with bicyclists in mind. Lighting makes a significant impact on pedestrian crashes versus all crashes. Avoiding long gaps between crosswalks, crosswalk visibility enhancements, signal enhancements, and refuge islands are recommended. Roundabouts have a proven safety record where the traffic volumes are appropriate. This was one of the less popular options in the survey, but that may be a matter of comfort level from the community. Some newer options include offset turn lanes, and options that move turns away from the intersection. Protected intersections reduce travel distance for both bicycles and pedestrians by breaking up the intersection into pieces. There is the Dutch left which has turning traffic go around a median. To make pedestrians and bicyclists comfortable, protected bike lanes can be used or advisory bike lanes. DeIDOT has done a number of road diets with good serious crash reduction. Many of the Vision Zero communities reduced their standard speed limit in urban or residential areas to fifteen or twenty miles an hour, because you are more likely to survive a crash at slower speeds, and slower drivers are more able to see people walking or riding bicycles. To reduce serious crashes by 2030, things will need to be built quickly. The University of Delaware Living Lab has done a number of demonstration projects to test an idea, gauge public reaction, and collect data. This can be a quick demonstration or a lengthy demonstration project, or even a full quick build project until the full build can be done.

Mr. David Dahlstrom asked where the photo of low stress roads was taken. Ms. Dunigan said that is part of the new cycle track in the City of Newark.

INFORMATION ITEMS

11. Staff Report

Ms. Heather Dunigan reported the following updates:

- The third Churchman's Crossing Monitoring Committee meeting was on May 24th, and they discussed prioritization criteria.
- Wilmington Initiatives will meet on June 21st. A Wilmington Initiatives Open House Workshop is scheduled for June 15th.

- Newport Transportation Study will have their final Management Committee meeting on June 13th and will review information about the Newport Train Station proposal.
- A community meeting for the Glasgow Avenue Study was held on May 23rd at Hodgson Vo-Tech High School. DelDOT spoke about implementation, which was delayed to FY 2027. The community asked for temporary traffic calming measures to address speeding concerns.
- Staff presented to the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce Infrastructure Committee on June 13th to talk about the MPO process.
- Staff continue to coordinate with DVRPC on a climate pollution reduction grant for the region. DVRPC is taking the lead on this work with WILMAPCO in support.
- The West Side Grows Together Steering Committee met on June 5th and talked about an updated West Side Revitalization Plan.
- The Ardens Transportation Plan had their final workshop on June 6th. The three villages are meeting together on June 26th to discuss endorsement, which will be on the agenda for Council in July.
- Southbridge Transportation Action Plan had a final public workshop, June 10th. The report will be available on our website soon. It will go to Council in September.
- WILMAPCO is seeking consultant services for the East Elton Traffic Circulation Study. This is in the UPWP as two projects, the Muddy Lane/Lancaster Road Corridor Study and the Belle Hill Road Safety Audit. The proposals are due June 26th.
- Staff were keynote presenters on May 10th at the Commercial Industrial Reality Council of New Castle County lunch, where they presented an update on Delaware's roads, rails, and trails.
- The Governor Printz/North Claymont Area Master Plan Final Report is available on our website. The final Monitoring Committee meeting was on May 24th.
- The month of May is National Bike Month, and staff participated in a number of events in the City of Newark including the Downes Elementary School Bike to School Day on May 3rd, City of Newark Bike to Work Day on May 19th, and Downes Bicycle Rodeo on May 30th. Staff has assisted the City of Newark for years with their Bicycle-Friendly Community application, and they were promoted from bronze to silver this year.
- On May 25th staff attended a meeting organized by Senator Poore to discuss a path forward for the City of New Castle Transportation Plan.
- The Safe Streets for All Advisory Committee will meet in June.

OTHER BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT:

The TAC adjourned at 10:56 a.m.

Attachments (0)