



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

## Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee

March 8, 2023, 7:08 p.m.

Room 8, Fairfax County Government Center

12000 Government Center Pkwy

Fairfax, VA 22035

Website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/trails>

Note Taker: Beth Iannetta

### Members Present: \* denotes remote participation

Ken Comer, PhD, Chair (At Large), Bob Cosgriff, Vice Chair (Braddock), Lydia Lawrence (Dranesville), James Albright (Mason), Jim Klein (Mount Vernon), Brooks Stephens (Providence), Tyler Schiefelbein (Springfield), Karen Ampeh (Sully), Shawn Newman (Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling), Beth Iannetta (Fairfax County Park Authority), Howard Albers (Washington Area Bicyclists Association)

### Members Absent:

Erin Partlan (Franconia), Katie McDaniel (Clifton Horse Society), Diane Monning (Fairfax Disability Services Board), Mark Tipton (Fairfax Federation of Citizens Associations), Soledad Portilla (NOVA Builders' Industry Association), Mike DePue (NOVA Parks), Alex Rough (Hunter Mill)

**Others in Attendance:** Nicole Wynands (FCDOT), Sonia Breehey (Coalition for Smarter Growth), Mr. Evan Wiener, resident

**Call meeting to order:** Ken Comer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

**Review/approval of February 2023 minutes:** Ms. Iannetta noted the review and approval of the February minutes would be deferred.

**Presentation - Coalition for Smarter Growth:** Sonya Breehey began her presentation with an overview of their mission. The group covers the Metro DC area and Sonia covers the Northern VA area. They advocate for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all. She showed pictures of large vacant parking lots and massive highway widenings which they consider detrimental to the community. The Coalition published a "Blueprint for a Better Region" for putting development in the right place. She demonstrated how

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the Arlington, VA region developed around the WMATA Metro. She included data showing the difference between walk-bike mode vs auto dependent mode as well as before and after transformation of urban development. She noted dangerous arterials in Fairfax and how their group is keeping pressure where necessary for areas like the Route 7 and Route 1 corridors. She described the local efforts working to influence the proposed Route 1 cross sections. She noted the Safe Streets for Bailey's Crossroads ongoing initiative between the Coalition and CASA with a walkability survey and Audit Report to help evaluate community and to have their concerns heard. Ms. Breehey co-coordinates with the Fairfax Healthy Communities which brings a number of groups into a network; FHC Trails Workgroup attempts to bring environmental and trail advocates together to build trust and work together. She shared her contact information. She noted an upcoming event at MetroBar in NE DC. Mr. Comer noted this committee recently sent a pedestrian safety letter to the Board of Supervisors including recommendations for a turn calming program and that existing crosswalks with fatalities do not get eliminated. He noted that typically user groups are split between recreational cyclists and commuter cyclists and the trail type/design caters to one than the other. Ms. Breehey responded that her group tries to answer to both groups and thinks the facilities can be more than "this or that". Mr. Albright noted Route 7 Culmore conversations with VDOT and how projects are planned 10 years in advance. This creates a disconnect on spot improvements which have a more immediate need. Ms. Breehey has witnessed VDOT's reluctance to stripe and install flex posts on roadways to designate a space using VDOT policy and bureaucracy with rotating excuses. Mr. Albers inquired how the Coalition could get help from this committee. The Columbia Pike study is completed but lacks funding. Mr. Stephens commented on street design and integrating cycling into the cross section where VDOT standard answer is "no". Ms. Breehey stated she has found some avenues for hope in their advocacy but noted it has mainly been incremental change. She considered the improvements around the Vienna metro a positive collaborative effort. Mr. Newman commented that the Coalition has a large email network to create campaigns to help spread the word. Mr. Comer suggested it might be useful to create a counternarrative to those who support trees and advocate against removal. However, the tree canopy gets replaced/replanted as part of the projects.

### **Citizen Inputs/Comments/Q&A**

- **Citizen Inputs/Comments/Q&A – Mr. Evan Wiener**-inquired about various Reston projects related to corridor study, inquired about developers installing a certain type of bike racks, and issue at the Wiehle metro kiss and ride involving Comstock, and inquired about a conversation with the Hunter Mill District transportation aide e-bike rebate.

### **Staff Report:** (Nicole Wynands, FCDOT)

- Upcoming Presentations:
  - April: Director Jai Cole, Executive Director, Fairfax County Park Authority
  - May: Proposed - Andrew Sheldon, new FCPS Safe Routes to School Coordinator

- June: Proposed – Fairfax County Police Department
  - Ms. Wynands noted the W&OD Wiehle Avenue overpass groundbreaking event scheduled for tomorrow, March 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - Forty-five (45) Capital Bikeshare e-bikes are being launched within the system.
  - Bike to Work Day is on May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Registration is now open.
  - VDOT Annual Repaving district meetings are scheduled for April 2023. Check out the FCDOT website for more information.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM