

Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2022 at 7:01 p.m.

Location: Remote Meeting via Microsoft Teams Software

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

Note Taker: Beth Iannetta

Committee Members in Attendance:

Ken Comer (At-Large / Chair), Bob Cosgriff (Braddock/ Vice-Chair), Alex Rough (Hunter Mill), Lydia Lawrence (Dranesville), Erin Partlan (Lee), Jim Klein (Mount Vernon), Karl Liebert (Springfield), Kathryn McDaniel (Clifton Horse Society), Elizabeth Iannetta (Fairfax County Park Authority), Howard Albers (Washington Area Bicyclists Association),

Committee Members Absent:

James Albright (Mason), Karen Ampeh (Sully District), Shawn Newman (Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling), Mark Tipton (Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association), Soledad Portillo (Northern Virginia Builders' Industry Association), Michael Depue (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority), *Vacant* (Providence), *Vacant* (Fairfax Area Disability Services Board)

Others in attendance:

Davis Loss (FCDOT), Chris Wells (FCDOT); Tim Kutz (FCDOT), Zach Desjardins (FCDOT)

Call to Order: This remote meeting used Microsoft Teams video conferencing. Mr. Comer read the recitals required under Virginia Code § 15.2-1413, the uncodified Fairfax County Board of Supervisors emergency ordinance adopted on 14 April 2020, and the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (Virginia Code §§ 2.2-3700 to -3714) pertaining to meetings that must be conducted remotely during a declared State of Emergency as being essential to the continuity of government. As required by the legal guidance, Mr. Comer introduced a motion, which was seconded, that this meeting is required for conducting an essential governmental function and must be conducted remotely. He requested that the motion be approved by acclimation and hearing no objections, declared the motion approved. Mr. Comer next conducted a roll call to determine which members, staff, and other participants were in attendance and that every member, staff, and other participants could hear every other attendee clearly. Following this roll call and determining that a quorum was reached, Mr. Comer moved that the committee confirm that every participant could hear every other participant clearly. The motion was seconded; Mr. Comer called for approval by acclimation and hearing no objections, declared the motion approved.

Approval of the Minutes: Review and approval of the April 2022 draft minutes was deferred.

Presentation: West Falls Church Gap Analysis

- Tim Kutz, FCDOT, presented an overview of the of the study that is currently underway. The study covers the 2-mile bikeshed around the West Falls Church Metro Station including the 1-mile walkshed. It consists of an Advisory Group of various community stakeholders and a Technical Advisory Group that consists of various agencies and staff representatives. The study follows the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the WMATA property and surrounding parcels for transit-oriented redevelopment. The goal is to evaluate and develop strategies and priorities to enhance the walking and biking options throughout the study area. The study kicked off in December 2021 and is expected to wrap up in July 2022. FCDOT will present the results in various public forums, submit the recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for endorsement and publish a report once the study is complete. Upcoming virtual community meetings are scheduled for May 17 & 19 from 7:00 – 8:30pm. An Advisory Group meeting is scheduled for mid-June. Mr. Kutz reviewed the various types of improvements being considered to enhance the active transportation network. Mr. Albers inquired about the applicability of VDOT’s walk score and bike score tools in terms of this study. Mr. Kutz explained that those don’t capture the comfort factor that has been analyzed in this study. Mr. Comer inquired about the adaptive lighting features mentioned in the presentation. Mr. Kutz explained the smart technology features which can be kept at a dimmer setting and can brighten utilizing motion sensors when a person is walking or biking along the facility. The technology is still under development and is focused within the City of Falls Church redevelopment area. Mr. Comer further commented that the study is a great integrated analysis. He wondered how this sort of analysis could be implemented in other areas like the Braddock Multimodal Improvements which doesn’t seem to be as comprehensive as this effort. Staff explained that the West Falls Church study was a follow-on motion derived from the recently approved plan amendment at the direction of the District Supervisor. The increase in density for the transit-oriented development was controversial from the surrounding stakeholders. This study was commissioned to help alleviate those concerns.

Discussion: Safe Routes to School Program Draft TSB Letter

- Mr. Comer distributed a re-draft of the proposed letter supporting the Safe Routes to School Program and funding recommendation for the school staff position. As part of FCDOT’s Safe Streets for All Program, funding has been requested for a county staff position to support that program. Given the synergies between the two programs and positions, TSB members considered combining the funding requests for both positions in the current draft of the letter. Mr. Albers asked if the passed of the budget yesterday has this effort been overtaken by events. Mr. Comer felt there was flexibility with other funding options for this effort to remain valid. Ms. Lawrence asked if the decisions on the marked-up budget would impact the school position. Again, the draft letter doesn’t direct which funding should be used it merely addressed the critical need of the position and that it should be funded with whatever funding may be available. Ms. Lawrence was supportive of the letter but concerned about the timing of its submission. Mr. Cosgriff was supportive of sending the letter. Mr. Klein also supported sending the letter and acknowledge that the position wasn’t funded in the approved budget, and it should be considered in future budget planning efforts.

Motion to Approve: Mr. Albers made a motion to approve the draft letter as revised. The motion, seconded by Mr. Klein, was approved by acclimation without objection.

Staff Report:

- **Route 1 Safety Improvements** – FCDOT staff followed up with VDOT and they replied that the study is ongoing, and the results have not been finalized or released. A public meeting is anticipated this summer or fall. Mr. Klein commented that the whole effort is pathetic considering they are conducting a speed study they already completed. Perhaps the TSB needs to send another letter to express the frustration with lack of an update.
- **I-66 Outside the Beltway Trail Improvement Projects-** The Vienna segment funding gap is closing through various funding pots. The FCPA trail segment at Random Hills Park is being held up in the permitting review and approval due to stormwater issues. The I-66 project expects to open the HOT lanes by the end of the year however the trail segments will likely take longer to complete. The Post Forest Road segment project agreement is in place, but more funding may be necessary. The existing bike lanes could serve as an interim solution. The Fair Lakes Circle segment has hit a hiccup with the project team's determination that they cannot construct what was proposed due to the impact to street trees. Several options have been offered but FCDOT was not supportive of them as proposed. Staff is weighing the merits of all the possibilities. Mr. Comer and Mr. Albers were notably frustrated with the possibility of the contractor walking away from their commitments to complete the commuter network as promised. VDOT staff is involved in the discussions on a solution. The western most trail segment still lacks funding and is not moving forward at this time.
- **TSB Member Vacancies-** No new updates at this time.
- **ActiveFairfax Phase 2-** This phase of the project is moving full steam ahead. The Technical Working Group meeting are being scheduled and group members being finalized. If anyone is interested in a particular group, reach out to Nicole Wynands. Ms. Iannetta inquired about the proposed process to reconcile discrepancies and conflicts among the overlapping responsibilities among the six different working groups. Mr. Wells stated the project has a governance structure to help that process. County staff recommended the ActiveFairfax project team brief the Steering Committee on the project but also may serve as the platform for resolutions. Mr. Albers noticed that some of the groups are mainly county staff. FCDOT noted that the groups were too staff heavy which is why they are reaching out for other stakeholders.

Citizen comments/Question & Answer Period: (if any)

- None

New/Active/Unresolved Issues:

- **Route 1 Safety Improvements/ Embark-**FCDOT held a meeting to discuss the need for turn lanes and completed an analysis of the overall network and some turn lanes were removed.

- **I-495 NEXT** – VDOT held a groundbreaking, and all the previous planned pedestrian/bicycle components are still included in the project.
- **Braddock Road Multimodal Project** – A shared use path is included in the project and staff believes it would extend to Ravensworth, east of the Beltway. Staff will follow up on what is included in Phase 1 of the project.
- **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail**- FCPA is working with NPS on its update to the corridor analysis. In previous years it was a compiled report, but they are working on a web-based platform to convey the information. This approach would be easier to update versus a printed report and would include more data than in previous years.
- **I-495 Southeast Express Lanes**- Public hearings are coming up in a few weeks. FCDOT staff informed them about the Comp Plan Trail Plan delineated along the Beltway to be included in the project. The trail network planning is underway. Mr. Klein added that getting under and through the Beltway interchanges and ramps is critical.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.