



County of Fairfax, Virginia

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

Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

June 30, 2020

3:00 PM

Government Center, Conference Room 11

Board of Supervisors Members Present:

Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman

Penelope A. Gross, Mason District (Vice Chairman)

Walter L. Alcorn, Hunter Mill District (Committee Chairman)

Kathy L. Smith, Sully District (Committee Vice Chairman)

James R. Walkinshaw, Braddock District

John W. Foust, Dranesville District

Rodney L. Lusk, Lee District

Daniel G. Storck, Mount Vernon District

Dalia A. Palchik, Providence District

Pat Herrity, Springfield District

Board Members Absent: None

County Leadership:

Bryan Hill, County Executive

Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive

Beth Teare, County Attorney

Transportation Advisory Commission:

Jeffrey M. Parnes (Chair)

Link to agenda and presentation materials:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-supervisors-transportation-committee-meeting-june-30-2020>

Supervisor Alcorn called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Supervisor Alcorn recognized Commissioner Jeffrey M. Parnes, who attended this meeting as his last official meeting as the Chair of the Transportation Advisory Commission. Commissioner Parnes thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve the citizens of Fairfax County and staff from the Department of Transportation for their support. Supervisor Alcorn thanked Commissioner Parnes for his service to the County.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 4, 2020, meeting were accepted with no changes.

2. Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Initiative & ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan Updates Board Matter

Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive, Chis Wells and Lauren Delmare of the Department of Transportation (FCDOT), Lt. Jason Long, Police Department (FCPD), and Anna Ricklin, (FCHD), briefed the Board on the discussion of the [Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Initiative and ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan Updates Board Matter](#). A [map](#) of pedestrian fatality involved crashes from 2015 to 2019 was also presented. The areas and factors that caused fatalities were discussed. The proposed timeline and goals of the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan was presented to the Board. The County has completed hundreds of pedestrian and bicycle projects from 2007 to 2020, upgraded all pedestrian signals to countdown signals, and striped bike lanes with VDOT repaving cooperation. The Plan identified the policy challenges to increased safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in the County.

Chairman McKay inquired about the status of a pedestrian hybrid beacon signal (formerly HAWK signal) that was installed by VDOT on Backlick Road in Springfield as a pilot program. Mr. Wells replied that the signal has been approved by VDOT as a new traffic signal type. The cost for this new hybrid traffic signal is about the same as regular traffic signals. Staff and VDOT have had discussions about the best locations to install the pedestrian hybrid beacon signals in the County.

Regarding the lighting issue, Chairman McKay asked how lighting could be considered in prioritizing future improvements. Mr. Wells replied that the County does not have an official policy or dedicated funding only for lighting. Staff has completed lighting projects throughout the years by using the funding for streetlights. Most of the transportation funding is not available directly for lighting, only a small portion of funding is dedicated to safety only projects. Mr. Biesiadny stated that FCDOT is incorporating lighting into new projects located close to Metrorail stations. Supervisor Smith stated that staff should study the lighting issue near areas where pedestrian fatalities occurred and prepare a plan to address the problems. Supervisor Gross asked how the lighting fixtures and lumens are upgraded by Dominion Power. Mr. Wells stated that the upgrades can be new fixtures and new types of light bulbs. Supervisor Gross stated that some of the accidents and fatalities occurred in broad daylight. In some communities, they have asked for additional crosswalks and pedestrian signals to cross the streets. Supervisors Alcorn and Gross stated that lighting may be a topic for a future transportation committee meeting.

Chairman McKay stated that last year VDOT had agreed to add an additional mowing cycle. He stated that the issues with grass overgrowth in medians have become a pedestrian safety hazard. He directed staff to follow up with VDOT. Tom Biesiadny, FCDOT Director, responded that his staff will follow up with VDOT.

Supervisor Lusk stated that there are known factors regarding pedestrian accidents along Richmond Highway such as high speed and wide road. He asked staff to address this problem by using new technology for safety and other options. Mr. Biesiadny responded that as part of the rebuilding of Richmond Highway, there will be upgraded crosswalks, pedestrian signals, median refuges, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities on both sides of the roadway. Ms. Flynn stated that the County will request VDOT to reduce the speed limit along Richmond Highway and conduct traffic analysis studies. Supervisor Lusk stated that he was looking for interim solutions while

waiting for the completion of the rebuilding project on Richmond Highway. Lt. Long stated that the Police Department has established a fatal pedestrian crash review team to study the historical data. The team includes staff from multiple agencies and community groups. The team is studying patterns or common factors to prevent future fatalities in the County. Supervisor Lusk stated that he is willing to participate in those discussion. Ms. Delmare stated that new technologies could be implemented to improve the pedestrian signals along Richmond Highway.

Supervisor Palchick asked for the interim and long-term strategies to improve pedestrian safety. Mr. Wells stated that FCDOT and VDOT are partnering on a pedestrian safety action plan to deliver short-term and intermediate implementable projects, i.e. the rapid flashing beacons for pedestrians. They are also involved in discussions about long-term solutions. Regarding an issue with Blake Lane, Mr. Wells stated that he would propose low-cost and easy to implement solutions to address the problem.

Supervisor Storck asked staff to provide solutions to immediately address the issues on Richmond Highway. Mr. Biesiadny stated that any of the infrastructure changes that need to be done are multi-year projects. He stated that reduced speeds along the corridor would result in a significant improvement in pedestrian safety. However, there are not many immediate solutions that can be implemented in a short period of time. VDOT has initiated the development of a scope for a study of reducing the speed limit. Staff will provide the Board more detail on the timing and procedures that VDOT would take. The challenge for VDOT is to conduct the analysis during this time where traffic is not normal. Traffic is lighter and moving faster than normal. Ms. Flynn stated that staff could use a consultant to focus on walkability and bike-ability and to propose a pilot program. Supervisor Storck asked the Police Department for a fatality report within a shorter time, the findings, and what could be done to prevent future fatality accidents. Lt. Long responded that crashes could take several months to be fully investigated. After the investigation is completed, the police could provide a summary report to Supervisor Storck.

Supervisor Foust stated that many pedestrian projects cost too much and took too long to complete. He wanted to know how to control the costs and to expedite the timing. He stated that VDOT could do projects, i.e. medians, sidewalks, for about a third of the cost that it takes the County to do them.

3. Fairfax County and Franconia-Springfield Parkways Alternatives Analysis & Long-Term Planning Study – Preliminary Recommendations & Public Outreach Round 3

Tom Burke, FCDOT, briefed the Board on the preliminary recommendations and public outreach summary of the [Fairfax County and Franconia-Springfield Parkway Alternatives Analysis And Long-Term Planning Study](#). Three alternatives were studied and tested. The public outreach in spring 2019 included three meetings and an online survey. The study examined the re-evaluation of the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane concept. Based on the study, staff recommended the removal of HOV lanes from the Parkways. Five proposed preferred segment alternatives were discussed in detail. Staff noted they would appreciate Board and public feedback on these alternatives. The study should be ready for Board consideration in Winter 2021 followed by the initiation of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment in Spring 2021.

Commissioner Parnes stated that the study recommendations would put more traffic lights on the Parkways at locations that do not have traffic lights today. He suggested that staff explain the reasons to the affected communities. Supervisor Alcorn asked for order of magnitude cost estimates for each segment alternative for the Parkways. Mr. Biesiadny stated that this is still at the Comprehensive Plan level. Once the priorities of improvements are completed, staff could provide the general cost estimates.

Supervisor Walkinshaw stated the flyover over at Burke Centre Parkway was a preferable solution for the community. Regarding the HOV topic, he questioned whether the completion of the I-66 projects, could increase demand on the Parkways? He stated that should be a transit component on the Parkway for future consideration.

4. Changes to the Residential Traffic Administration Program (RTAP)

Neil Freschman, FCDOT, briefed the Board on the changes to the [Residential Traffic Administration Program \(RTAP\)](#). Staff sought Board concurrence to advance proposed revisions to the Traffic Calming Program. FCDOT updated the Traffic Calming Program to reflect VDOT's revised Traffic Calming Guide. FCDOT's proposed revisions will better accommodate roads with urban characteristics. The revisions enhance safety and allow more communities to adopt traffic calming measures. The proposed revisions are scheduled for Board consideration on July 28, 2020.

Supervisor Palchik asked how the program would define new projects under the proposed revision. Mr. Freschman stated that projects that are currently ongoing would be incorporated into the new guidelines. There are traffic calming requests from some older communities that have difficulty under the old guidelines. The new guidelines would help these communities to meet the requirements. Supervisor Storck asked if the negotiation with VDOT could result in some flexible guidelines. Mr. Freschman stated that FCDOT works closely with VDOT when VDOT develops state guidelines. The guidelines for Fairfax County will provide different communities with the same set of criteria. Supervisor Storck asked how to change some of the VDOT requirements, if needed for the County to be more flexible. Mr. Freschman stated that some requirements are state law. The County made some modification to the RTAP in 2019 to lower the volume so more roads could be eligible. Mr. Freschman stated that the changes that the County made were flexible and reasonable. Mr. Biesiadny stated the proposed changes will allow more roads are eligible for the program as the result of the changes. The VDOT guidelines had significant input from the County.

5. Electronic Bus Overview

Due to time constraints, the [Electronic Bus Overview](#) item was given as a handout for review to the Board.

6. Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation

Due to time constraints, the [Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation](#) was given as a handout for review to the Board.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m. The next Transportation Committee meeting has not been scheduled.