

Fairfax County Sidewalk and Trail Committee
Minutes of the December 12, 2007 Meeting

Members Attending: Deborah Leser (Sully District), Brent Reynolds, (Braddock District), Wade Smith (Dranesville District), Bruce Wright (Hunter Mill District), Robert Michie (Lee District), Peter Christensen (Mount Vernon District), Roger Diedrich (Providence District), Gene Bartlow (Springfield District), Dennis Frew (WABA), Paul Johnson (NVBIA), and Jenny Pate (FCPA).

Staff Attending: Charlie Strunk and Jeffrey Hermann (FCDOT), David Marshall (DPZ).

Guests Attending: Rob Airaghi (Sully District volunteer), Joseph Harmon (City of Fairfax).

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 PM by Wade Smith, Vice Chairman.

Minutes of the October Meeting: A motion was made by Bruce Wright and seconded by Peter Christensen to approve the minutes with no changes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Staff Report – David Marshall

Mr. Leu continues to need the updated trail maps from district representatives. Bruce Wright and Wade Smith discussed how they had done their districts. Deb Leser introduced Rob Airaghi, a volunteer from Sully District who is currently working to update the maps. Mr. Airaghi was instrumental in the creation of the original existing trails maps as well.

Staff Report – Charlie Strunk

The map of bicycle routes is the number one priority of the office of the FDOT Bicycle Planner. A study network map is being created by a consultant with the assistance of the FABB using the Trails Plan map and aerial maps. The next step is the identification of bicycle level facilities on these maps. George Mason University students are being used for data collection. Trole Design Group is the consultant involved. The goal is to have an accurate functioning paper map by May 16, 2008 for Bike To Work Day. An electronic version may be available earlier. Meetings will be held with the cities of Herndon and Fairfax to incorporate their information into the maps. Charlie Strunk has already met with people from Arlington and Alexandria.

The on road bicycle initiative continues with some progress and some hold-ups. The plan is to add bike lanes on Westmoreland Street from Chain Bridge Road to the Arlington County line. This coming summer, VDOT will overlay Westmoreland Street from Chain Bridge to Kirby. That will be the first section to get the new pavement markings. Fairfax DOT will prepare the striping plan for Kirby to the Arlington County Line but actual implementation will have to wait until VDOT schedules the overlay work. Gallows Road bike lanes and Tyson's to the W&OD, is taking longer than expected.

FCDOT is preparing for Bike to Work Day, which is the 3rd Friday in May. Bruce Wright is coordinating the effort in Reston and Charlie Strunk is coordinating activities in Fairfax Corner. The Peterson Companies and REI are sponsoring activities for that day.

Bruce Wright commented that public meetings will begin in January for the bicycle route map. He was asked to ensure that the meetings not conflict with the Tyson's Land Use Committee meeting.

Robert Michie noted that the Clairmont Road closing has been delayed by a year and may not now occur.

Trails Day Events and the City of Fairfax – Joseph Harman (Vice Chair, City of Fairfax Parks and Recreation Advisory Board)

Joseph Harman came to describe the events sponsored by the City of Fairfax for National Trails Day and to encourage Fairfax County to work with the city to coordinate events for National Trails Day. Last year, the City of Fairfax and the American Hiking Society held a variety of events throughout the city, including a 5K race which drew 200 people.

The City of Fairfax has 22 miles of trail in the 6 square mile city. The majority of the trails are gravel or natural surface. A PDF map of these trails is available on their web site, www.fairfaxtrailsday.com. They are striving to create an interactive web site as well.

Jenny Pate noted that Fairfax County has had many events over the past few years on National Trails Day, such as horse rides and hikes of the Cross County Trail. This year the Potomac Heritage Trail may be a focus but there is great potential for cosponsored events.

Mr. Harman can be reached at joseph@questox.com or phone 703-963-3863. The phone number for Fairfax City's Trails Day programs is 703-385-7858.

Waiver Process Discussion

The committee members discussed the document presented by Gene Bartlow, *A Proposed Set of New Fairfax Policies and Procedures For the Management of Trails and Sidewalks*. Issues that were discussed included:

- Money that is submitted for escrows in lieu of trail construction is rarely used but instead remains in the county accounts.
- There is a lack of consistency countywide on when and how to allow waivers for trails and sidewalks.
- There is a lack of predictability for developers on criteria that will allow a trail or sidewalk to be waived.
- There is a lack of documentation about the process used to determine whether or not a trail or sidewalk will be waived.
- The escrow system itself is the most problematic element. Paul Johnson noted that this is a state wide problem. He stated that Prince William County has \$47

million for road proffers that is not available for use because of the restrictions of the escrow system. Legislation was proposed in 2007, Senate Bill 1252, which would have made some of these monies available but the bill did not become law.

- The relatively new District Walkway Funds provide an option but do not address many of the issues of unpredictability and lack of consistency.

Bruce Wright moved and Dennis Frew seconded the motion that the Trails and Sidewalks Committee refer the following recommendations to the Board of Supervisors:

- Require the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services to draft a comprehensive Policy and Procedures Manual for the Management of Trails and Sidewalks. The new draft Manual should be coordinated with the Trails and Sidewalks Committee prior to being submitted to the County Board of Supervisors for approval.
- Require the Fairfax County Government Staff, Zoning Evaluation Division, DPZ, to develop a Quarterly Trail and Sidewalk Waiver Report to the Trails and Sidewalks Committee outlining in a one page Executive Summary the status of each and every waiver currently in effect and/or under review/consideration. The new “Quarterly Trails and Sidewalks Waiver Report” (individually updated monthly as changes occur) should identify the title, file number, site and map description/reference, land owner (contact points and law firm representative as applicable), date of application, date of waiver approval/rejection, a detailed description of the rationale what was offered justifying the waiver, whether or not an escrow account was established and the dollar amount, names of staff who recommended approval/disapproval, staff comments on any errors in the Trail Plan (if applicable), and a staff recommendation as to current disposition. Each member of the Board of Supervisors and the Trails and Sidewalks Committee should be provided a copy of the reports.
- Certify that it is the intent of the Board of Supervisors that Waivers to the Trail Plan are to be granted only in exceptional circumstances, that the bias should be to reject applications for waivers, and that future construction escrow account deposits and contributions to the District Pedestrian Walkway Improvement Funds should be sufficient to construct the trail within two years or at the time of the waiver.
- Require that the Trail Plan be updated to change or eliminate the requirements for trails and sidewalks that are no longer viable or practical due to new circumstances and to identify new trail or sidewalk options that have surface since the last Plan update.
- Identify the top three priority requirements for trails and/or sidewalks that have yet to be constructed in each Supervisor’s District. This listing of District priorities should be coordinated with and approved by the Trails and Sidewalks Committee.
- Consider approving quick-take authority for priority trail projects.

The committee members voted unanimously to accept the recommendations. The wording of the recommendations to be send to the Board of Supervisors will be reviewed

and decided upon at the January meeting. Members are encouraged to send their recommendations to Gene Bartlow by December 31st, 2007.

McLean Citizens Association Resolution Regarding Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes Affected by the Public/Private Partnership Widening the Capital Beltway.

The McLean Citizens Association has sent a resolution to VDOT recommending that VDOT and the private entities widening the Beltway for the addition of HOT lanes adhere to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan and construct the pedestrian and bicycle routes on the plan.

Bruce Wright moved and Roger Diedrich seconded the motion that the Trails and Sidewalks Committee endorse the resolution of the McLean Citizens Association. The motion massed unanimously with one abstention.

Further discussion ensued as to whether the committee should again send a letter to VDOT and/or the Board of Supervisors asking them to require the Public/Private Partnership to adhere to the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan and construct the pedestrian and bicycle route on the plan. The project involved over 500 million dollars of money from the state as well as federal funds.

Roger Diedrich moved and Bruce Wright seconded a motion that the Trails and Sidewalks Committee should send a letter asking that the Comprehensive Plan be adhered to. The motion passed unanimously.

Plans for the Coming Year

Discussion of the integration of non-motorized transportation projects into all county construction projects and quick take authority for trail projects will be postponed.

The committee will review the list of issues discussed in October for pertinence at the January meeting.

Elections for the coming year are scheduled for January.

Snow Removal on Trails and Sidewalks

The committee discussed the email sent by Ann Pimley and the recommendations for the Board of Supervisors contained therein for encouraging snow removal from Trails and Sidewalks. They are:

- Fairfax County would release a press release about the importance for all property owners to shovel their sidewalks.
- Produce a public service announcement to be broadcast on Channel 16.
- Contact the Council of Governments (COG) to see if they would do some public service announcements for the Metropolitan area about snow shoveling.

- Have someone contact the news and weather sections of all the local channels, ask them to make periodic announcements especially before impending snow storms, during snow fall, and after any snow storms.
- Have someone contact other jurisdictions in the Metropolitan area, and ask if they try to get public service announcements on TV also.
- Contact the School Board and ask them to put a public service announcement on their channel asking parents to shovel the sidewalks so children don't have to walk in the streets.

Gene Bartlow suggested that another recommendation involve a request of Home Owner Associations in the county to remove snow within their purview as well.

Deb Leser moved and Bruce Wright seconded a motion that all seven recommendations be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors as soon as possible. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 PM.

Submitted by Deborah Rimmer Leser, Secretary