

**Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks, and Bikeways Committee**  
**Meeting Notes**  
**Regular Meeting - November 14, 2018**

Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035  
Conference Room 232

Web site: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/trails>

*Note taker: James Albright (Mason)*

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Representative At-Large and Chair Ken Comer, Robert Cosgriff (Braddock), Jim Klein (Mt. Vernon), Wade Smith (Dranesville), Stiven Foster (Providence), James Albright (Mason), Karl Liebert (Springfield), Karen Ampeh (Sully), Tom McFarland (Fairfax County Park Authority), Mark Tipton (Fairfax County Federation of Citizen's Associations)

**Committee Members Absent:** Jeff Anderson (Hunter Mill), Robert Michie (Lee), Soledad Portilla (Northern Virginia Builder's Industry Association), Chester Freedenthal (Fairfax Area Disability Services Board), Katie McDaniel (Clifton Horse Society), Dan Ilghaut (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority)

**County Staff Present:** Chris Wells (Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager, FCDOT)

**Others in Attendance:** Rod Hicks (Gabrielson Gardens Bridge), Jehanne Arslan (Gabrielson Gardens Bridge), Sheila Dunheimer (Gabrielson Gardens Bridge), Bill Niedringhaus (Potomac Trails), Karen Jones (Fairfax Trails and Streams/Potomac Heritage Trail Association)

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Representative At-Large and Chairman Ken Comer at 7:06pm

### **Agenda and Discussion Topics**

#### **Approval of the Minutes**

Two sets of Committee minutes (September 2018, October 2018) with edits were both approved by acclamation. Edits included correcting attendance of two participants and amendments to notes on the Huntley Meadows plan change proposal.

The Committee discussed the recent passing of Chris Maimone of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA). The Committee decided to include Mr. Maimone's name on the Committee letterhead in tribute to his service.

#### **Presentation**

There were no presentations.

## **Staff Report**

Chris Wells (Committee Staff, VDOT) presented the staff report to the Committee.

*Bike Report:* VDOT has not yet completed the 2018 paving project. Staff has begun the process of 2019 paving projects through setting up project reviews and public meetings. The focus in the last year has shifted to a position of speed reduction through the narrowing of road with stripes. The Committee expressed its pleasure with how well the paving has turned out this year.

*Capital Bikeshare:* Staff noted that the work on Capital Bikeshare expansion is complicated in Fairfax County because of its legal status as a compact. Current work involves to launch the Merrifield/Mosaic District site before the Christmas holiday. Upcoming projects include Phase 2 in Reston, Providence, and the I-66 Corridor.

The influx of scooters, not yet authorized in Fairfax County, has begun. Staff has unsuccessfully attempted to reach out to the company, Lime, promoting scooters. The County has reduced leverage vis-à-vis the District of Columbia and Arlington County because it doesn't own the streets. Wells indicated that he was prepared to brief members of the County Board of Supervisors on the dockless scooters.

The Committee discussed the location of Capital Bikeshare sites. Constraints shared were the need for access to solar power, accessibility by truck, and capacity for bicycle balancing. County Supervisors Storck and McKay were briefed by Wells to encourage them to support Bikeshare expansion at the Huntington Metro and Route 1 sites.

Returning to the topic of scooters, concern was raised about the lack of regulation for their use. VDOT has not expressed any interest in addressing this issue. Members discussed concerns that scooters and pedestrians needed to be served by different facilities and that pedestrian safety was a significant topic when reviewing scooter use. The County Attorney has suggested legislative relief to help the County determine how to regulate the scooter business. The Committee did not express a consensus on how to move forward on the scooter issue other than a proposal to dedicate a future meeting to the topic.

*Pedestrian Safety:* Pedestrian safety action funding has moved to the County Board for approval and funding for spot projects. The Committee discussed the maintenance of new "rapid flash" beacons; there is no consensus on who will support the maintenance costs of these over time. Many beacons are being proposed across the County. The new beacons have not been approved yet for general use, so there is some sensitivity to their placement. The beacons are being proposed by the County as part of the I-66 trail. For these proposed beacons, Fairfax County has committed to maintaining rather than VDOT. One challenge of maintenance is that beacons are made by multiple vendors.

Wells noted that the County is in the midst of a bicycle awareness enforcement campaign, known as Regional Safety Awareness; this is especially timely as there has been an increase in accidents with the change in daylight savings time.

*Tysons/Old Meadows Bridge:* This \$6M bridge ends on private property; in order to ensure public access per VDOT access rights must be secured. Tysons Corner Center proffered to let the

bridge land on their property as well as proffering \$100K for bridge. The County is in the process of establishing a public access easement to give access to the bridge across private property. Negotiations are proceeding amicably.

### **Unfinished Business**

*Committee Charter:* The revised Committee charter has been submitted as a “consideration” item for the County Board of Supervisors.

*Huntley Meadows:* Meetings are ongoing on the status of the plan amendments. The Planning Commission meeting to review the plan amendments has been pushed back to January 9<sup>th</sup>. The Lee District Land Use Committee meeting was pushed back to early December; the Board of Supervisors are scheduled to discuss this on January 22, 2019.

The Committee as a whole reviewed the proposed letter from the Committee. The discussion centered on making edits to the draft to reflect a different tone, to add the participation of the Friends of Huntley Meadows in the meetings, and clarified and simplified the language in the draft. All edits proposed to this time were reviewed by the Committee.

A motion was made by Jim Klein (Mt. Vernon) to approve the letter as modified by the discussion at the evening’s meeting and that Stiven Foster (Providence), drafter of the original letter, has discretion to edit for grammar and non-substantive changes for signature. The motion was seconded by Robert Cosgriff (Braddock). The motion passed unanimously with the exception of Thomas McFarland (FCPA) who abstained.

*Gabrielson Gardens Bridge Removal:* Karen Ampeh (Sully) shared that a meeting with Supervisor Smith regarding the Gabrielson Gardens project will be held at 7pm on November 15 at the Navy Elementary School. The meeting is to ask for the Supervisor’s support to get the bridge built. County FCPA staff shared that the meeting will begin at 6:45pm with a presentation of display board and a 7:15pm presentation. Staff and supervisors will speak and then participate in a question and answer session.

FCPA staff stated that a consultant is currently surveying the site; FCPS will conduct a feasibility study of cost impacts of a new bridge. Staff noted that the timeframe if FCPS funds and builds the project is 18 months, including minor site design, permits, and construction. The November 15 meeting will include information on the preliminary survey, floodplain maps, and before and after photos of the site. The goal of the meeting is to update the community on the project status and to seek public input.

The Committee asked about public-private partnerships; staff stated that these typically follow requirements in the Virginia Code. All public-private partnerships that involve the FCPA use the Park Foundation as the vehicle. Members of the public representing the community around Gabrielson Gardens expressed their interesting in participating in the feasibility study discussed earlier.

*Board Transportation Priorities Plan:* There was no update on the Plan; as there is no funding the schedule for plan elements will have to be amended.

*I-66 Outside the Beltway (OTB) Trail:* Staff met with the I-66 Consortium to discuss taking the proposed trail off the main roadway. In order to address safety concerns, higher barriers were proposed and agreed. The discussion included who will be building what parts of the trail and where they will be going. Staff shared that they intend to hold public meetings - starting no earlier than 2019 - about pedestrian and bicycled proposed improvements. Much of the plans are not presently available to the public for review.

The element of the OTB trail at the Nutley/I-66 interchange has been changed. Rather than a diverging diamond, the new plan is to use two roundabouts. This will affect the proposed pedestrian/bicycle improvements and their access to the interchange.

*Future Presentations (Proposed):* Jim Klein (Mt. Vernon) requested a presentation on maintenance and resiliency needs for County trails. The Committee discussed elevating maintenance element to trail planning. The Committee agreed to discuss this further at the January 2019 meeting.

Klein introduced two attendees, representatives from Fairfax Trail and Streams (501-c-3) and the Potomac Heritage Trail Association. He asked that the Committee consider a presentation by these two organizations at the December 2018 meeting on trail opportunities with which they are familiar. Other opportunities mentioned included the Potomac Heritage Trail, West County and Sully Loop, and general area connectivity.

There was a brief discussion on the Committee's response to snow events. Staff noted that the Committee followed the FCPS response to snow. A two-hour early closing or cancellation would mean that the Committee would not hold that month's meeting on that day; the meeting date could be changed rather than being cancelled outright.

Wade Smith (Dranesville) asked for the Committee to get a staff report on how police reports of pedestrian accidents are handled, with the purpose being the filling of gaps of information on response to accidents.

### **Additional Discussions**

Tom McFarland (FCPA) reported on the hiring of three new people for FCPA trail work. These include filling the project manager and program manager positions, and adding a trails coordinator as a new position. These staff members are expected to be in place by January 2019.

Jim Klein requested that the Committee members get additional time for waiver reviews (more than ten days). Staff noted that in order to maintain the County's concern with timeliness there was no possibility to extending the time for review.

Chair Kenneth Comer (At Large) raised the issue of the Braddock Road Spot Improvements program and proposed pedestrian bridges along that roadway. He noted that plans show the removal of pedestrian crosswalks to the extent that there will be a gap of almost one mile between crosswalks at one point. He asked that the Committee investigate this.

Committee members raised two further questions. For the recent Amazon Corporate announcement for their new office development in Arlington, staff noted that Fairfax county had not been involved regarding pedestrian and bicycle improvements related to this new development. Additionally, the Committee noted that the Exxon Mobil site at Routes 50 and 495 and Gallows Road is the subject of extensive development. Staff agreed to share sidewalk access issues related to the site as part of the December 2018 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.