



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

January 12, 2021
11:00 am
Electronic Meeting

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 Herry, Springfield District

Board Members Absent: None

County Leadership:

Bryan Hill, County Executive
Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive
Beth Teare, County Attorney

Link to agenda and presentation materials:

[Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee Meeting: Jan. 12, 2021 | Board Of Supervisors \(fairfaxcounty.gov\)](#)

Committee Chairman Alcorn called the virtual meeting to order at 11:07 am. Board members participated in the meeting from their respective district offices.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 8, 2020, meeting were accepted with no changes.

2. Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Initiative Update

Chris Wells, Active Transportation Program Manager, and Tom Biesiadny, FCDOT Director, updated the Board on the Countywide Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Initiative, which makes Fairfax County safer for pedestrians and cyclists through the application of new tools and technologies to improve safety and to achieve measurable safety goals such as Vision Zero, while simultaneously addressing safety equity according to the One Fairfax policy plan. On January 28, 2020, Supervisors Alcorn and Lusk introduced a joint Board matter emphasizing the importance of pedestrian and bicycle safety. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and FCDOT have done a significant amount of work in terms of bike and pedestrian safety. The VDOT Pedestrian Safety Action Plan recommended safety measures such as high visibility crosswalks, curb extensions, LED countdown pedestrian signals, leading pedestrian intervals, pedestrian hybrid beacons (HAWK), rectangular rapid-flashing beacons (RRFBs), pedestrian refuge islands, road diets, and sidewalks. Staff has been successful in discussions with VDOT about adding four quadrant crosswalks to the intersections included in the Route 7 Widening Project from the Dulles Toll Road to Old Reston Avenue. VDOT also considered applying the recommendations from their Pedestrian Safety Action Plan for a Richmond Highway pilot project. Staff asked the Board for their reactions and suggestions regarding the safety initiatives and any other initiatives that staff should be exploring.

Mr. Biesiadny noted that VDOT has been working closely with the County in terms of prioritizing pedestrian safety in the Route 7 and Richmond Highway corridors. He stated that there are some challenges regarding the statewide policies. He commended VDOT for stepping up to the challenges to improve pedestrian safety. Committee Chairman Alcorn cautioned that as more electric vehicles are on the road with quiet engine noise, they could contribute to more pedestrian accidents.

Chairman McKay asked for a short analysis of the differences between the County's Vision Zero goal and the state's "Towards Zero Deaths" campaign, and any shortcomings that the state needs to address. Mr. Biesiadny responded that staff will provide the analysis to the Board as requested by Chairman McKay. Supervisor Lusk raised a concern about the mid-block crossing on Richmond Highway. He also said that the lighting is inadequate at nighttime. He recommended using social media to target specific locations for improvements.

Supervisor Palchik asked for a list or a map of future locations of the rectangular rapid-flashing beacons. She recommended working with the police department to develop additional education and enforcement campaigns and not only focus on pedestrians, but also on drivers, regarding the new safety initiatives. She asked for an update on the speed camera project. Mr. Biesiadny responded that there is a multi-agency team working on the issue. She asked for an assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the pedestrian safety measures.

Supervisor Storck asked for the timeline for the Richmond Highway pilot project. Mr. Biesiadny stated that some of the measures can be done by Summer 2021, like the implementation of the pedestrian intervals. Staff is working to identify funding sources for pedestrian safety. For issues like mid-block crossings, FCDOT will need more time to identify funding sources, but several of the other measures could be implemented later this year. Staff will work with Supervisors Storck and Lusk on community outreach. The Richmond Highway pilot project is a combination programmatic changes such as signal programming changes, crosswalk striping changes, and signage changes that VDOT has agreed to pilot along segments of Richmond Highway. They also include project changes both in the near-term in advance of the major projects, and as part of the VDOT Richmond Highway Widening Project and the County Richmond Highway Bus Rapid Transit (RHBRT) Project, such as adding additional signalized crosswalks. Supervisor Storck asked how the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) design will address the issue of mid-block crossings. Mr. Biesiadny stated that the BRT team is working on that topic. VDOT is beginning to conduct a study on reducing the speed limits on Richmond Highway.

Supervisor Foust commended VDOT for their work on improving pedestrian safety and applauded Mr. Biesiadny and FCDOT staff for their commitments to make a significant impact to improve pedestrian safety as well. He recommended the Board increase funding for safety projects. He asked if the state will be providing new resources to help fund projects that were deferred because of the actions that the General Assembly took during 2018. Mr. Biesiadny acknowledged that the General Assembly redirected \$102 million per year of Northern Virginia transportation dollars to address the funding issues with Metro. Since then, the General Assembly has restored about \$50 million of the \$102 million to Northern Virginia. Some of the funding will not be available until May 2021. For a six-year period, Fairfax County experiences about a \$150 million shortage of transportation funding. As a result, staff has not recommended the Board to add new projects to the Transportation Priority Plan. He stated that he did not know when new funding will come from the General Assembly but remained hopeful. Supervisor Foust asked if there is data to suggest that the red-light camera program would improve pedestrian safety. Mr. Biesiadny stated that staff has been working on a memo to the Board to address the issue.

3. ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan

Chris Wells, Active Transportation Program Manager, and Nicole Wynands, Transportation Planner III, Active Transportation, FCDOT, updated the Committee on the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan. The goals are to update and streamline comprehensive plan guidance for the development of an active transportation network; provide design and program guidance on active transportation safety and comfort; develop funding prioritization recommendations and performance measures reflecting equity needs and demand; and policy and program recommendations to support implementation and usage. The project has two phases. Funding was received for Phase One in 2019. A consultant was hired to support plan development. The project team has had multiple meetings with stakeholders, prepared a community engagement

plan, and completed a health assessment, equity need and demand analyses. The entire project is estimated to be complete in 2022.

Committee Chairman Alcorn asked if the Plan includes remedies for lighting issues that were raised by Supervisor Lusk from the previous presentation. Mr. Wells responded that the Plan would identify issues and made recommendations of those shortcomings, but additional discussions with the Board about lighting will be necessary.

Supervisor Walkinshaw asked for data including the time of the day, location of the pedestrian accidents, and a future education campaign to raise awareness. Mr. Biesiadny responded that staff will work on a plan to present to the Board. Mr. Wells stated that he hopes that in addition to the “when” and “where,” staff will combine all data and will also identify the “why” to help prepare an action plan.

Supervisor Storck asked how the Plan addressed different issues, for example, the environmental and health impacts and the connectivity issues. He asked when staff would share with the Board the community engagement and public launch plan for the outreach. Ms. Wynands responded that staff is working on the plan by working with the external advisory committees and will share the draft plan with the Board when it is ready by April 2021. Supervisor Storck questioned how data from the 2019 bicycle trips data would be compatible with the bicycle usage from Mount Vernon area. Mr. Wells replied that staff has the same concerns and observations about the data. The pedestrian walking data still needs further analysis by the consultant and staff. The data are collected through cellphone tracking to determine usage, but due to limitations, does not differentiate between trip types or trip location. For example, a long walk inside a regional mall shows up as a pedestrian trip. Staff will be further filtering the data and will share the results.

Supervisor Herrity stated that the County needs to set the public expectation correctly regarding the Plan. He stated that there are many unfunded trails, unfinished connections, and maintenance issues. He suggested keeping track of the maintenance and life cycle costs.

4. Silver Line Phase 2 Phase 2 Implementation

Martha Coello, Chief of Special Projects Division, FCDOT, updated the Committee on the construction progress and discussion of outstanding items for Phase 2 of the Silver Line.

For Silver Line Phase 1, regarding the Old Meadow Road realignment, the only remaining work is to finish the new pedestrian signal pole tie-in. Remaining work on VDOT’s punch list is expected to be complete in summer 2021. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) is working to complete work on the VDOT punch list for Phase 1.

Phase 2 is 99 percent complete. Package A (work on the rail line, system, and stations) is scheduled to be completed in spring 2021. Package B (work on the rail yard at Dulles) is scheduled to be completed in early 2021. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

(WMATA) estimates that they will need approximately six months after “substantial completion” to complete testing and open the system. The WMATA Board will establish a revenue operation date at the completion of successful testing and after it receives the project form MWAA.

MWAA and WMATA have identified significant issues with the concrete panel deficiencies, concrete ties/cross-level deficiencies, fouled ballast at Dulles Rail Yard, automatic train control, and other issues. Discussions on remediations are ongoing.

The construction of the Herndon Station Garage is 100 percent complete. The substantial completion for the Innovation Center Station Garage was June 2020 with some punch list work remaining. The Silver Line Phase 2 bus service plan was briefed to the Committee on December 8, 2020. The Board will consider the recommendation plan at a meeting in March 2021. FCDOT continues to work with Phase 2 partners to encourage the resolution of construction quality issues.

Committee Chairman Alcorn asked staff to update the Committee on the timeline for completion of Package A and B and any outstanding items.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m. The next Board Transportation Committee is scheduled for May 25, 2021, at 11:00 a.m.