



# County of Fairfax, Virginia

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

## Fairfax County Transportation Advisory Commission Meeting Notes

**REGULAR MEETING – August 18, 2020, 7:30 p.m.**

*Held electronically due to the COVID-19 pandemic*

Web Site: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/tac/meetings>

Note-Taker: Kevin Morse

**TAC Members in Attendance:** Mike Champness, Vice Chair (Dranesville), Roger Hoskin, Secretary (Mason), Kevin Morse (Braddock), Pete Sitnik (Mt. Vernon), Eric Thiel (Springfield), Mary Pauline Jones (Fairfax Area Disabilities Services Board), Linda Sperling (At Large), David Skiles (Sully), Jeremy Hancock (Providence).

**TAC Members Absent:** None.

**Others in Attendance:** Brent Riddle, FCDOT; Calvin Lam, FCDOT staff liaison to the TAC.

### **Opening Remarks of Chair, Roll Call, and Electronic Meeting and FOIA Procedures**

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Champness at 7:37 p.m. To fulfill procedural obligations of virtual meetings, Vice Chair Champness and Secretary Hoskin performed the same opening procedures as was accomplished during the July 21, 2020 meeting. The meeting notes from the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting were presented and approved unanimously by voice vote, with Commissioner Hancock abstaining.

Vice Chair Champness welcomed new Commissioner Jeremy Hancock, Providence District. He also congratulated Calvin Lam and his wife on the recent birth of their son, Jonathan.

### **Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) Officer Elections**

Mike Champness was elected as Chair.

Mary Pauline Joes was nominated as Vice Chair and Roger Hoskin was nominated as Secretary. Elections for these positions will take place during the September TAC meeting.

### **Discussion of TAC Role as Advisors to the Board of Supervisors (BOS)**

Chair Champness asked how much the TAC should continue doing what we did in the past vs. pursuing new ideas, and handed off to Commissioner Sperling to open the dialog.

Commissioner Sperling spoke favorably about what the TAC has learned but said that it was also time to consider a more vocal advisory role, for example like the Fairfax County Widening Project. She also thinks there should be outreach to and feedback from the respective magisterial districts.

Commissioner Skiles stated continuing education for the TAC is important but we should now examine the Covid-19 impact on transportation and how it has reduced demand for public transportation and increased demand for single-occupancy vehicles.

Commissioner Sitnik stated that we should look at new transportation needs and the concept of “Making Place”. He was joined by Commissioner Hancock in stating that we should explore traffic calming on our roads. Commissioner Sitnik further suggested that better pedestrian and bicycle access would further reduce the need for mass transit.

Commissioner Jones suggested that the transportation aides for each Supervisor brief us on what their respective Supervisors are looking for from the TAC. Commissioner Sperling suggested that that question could also be put directly to the BOS. Chair Champness mentioned that the TAC met previously with transportation aides to the Supervisors and that it might be time to do so again.

Commissioner Jones suggested that the TAC work more closely with the Trails and Sidewalks Committee. Commissioner Morse suggested the TAC Chair and the Trails and Sidewalk Chair keep each other informed of important topics. Commissioner Jones said this could also be done by sharing our respective agendas. Chair Champness introduced the possibility of having an informal or formal liaison with the Trails and Sidewalks Committee.

Commissioner Sitnik suggested we look at Deputy County Executive Rachel Flynn’s concept of “Making Place” where travel for work and other needs is largely in the area where you live. He also volunteered to liaison with her office on the issue. In addition, he also volunteered to liaison with the Trails and Sidewalk Committee.

Commissioner Thiel stated that in the past the TAC was effective as a sounding board for the BOS and in rare cases, referrals from the BOS. Chair Champness stated that in advising the BOS, it is important for the TAC be well informed and that there should be wider discussions with stakeholder groups. He also suggested that the TAC should look at transportation demand management (TDM) strategies, to include proffers.

Several commissioners spoke about the loss of transportation gas tax funds due to Covid-19 and also from the growing use of electric vehicles. At the same time, road construction costs are up. With reduced funding, a list of priority transportation projects should be produced. New transportation funding sources such as a vehicle miles tax and more tolling on roads can be explored. Commissioner Thiel stated that we cannot predict the long-term Covid-19 behavior of humans but we can expect budget uncertainties for the expected minimum two years it will take to develop herd immunity. Chair Champness cautioned the TAC that while it is important to be aware of funding concerns the TAC should be wary of taking on tax issues. Commissioner Hoskin reminded the TAC of court decisions that only elected officials and not boards can levy taxes.

Commissioner Morse questioned whether the TAC’s major outreach effort several years ago was successful. Commissioners Thiel and Hoskins responded that one outcome from that effort – a regional authority that could levy a tax – was overturned in court.



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Chair Champness said the TAC can better advise the BOS when we understand underlying issues. He suggested that TAC focus areas could be divided into projects and initiatives, and that he would like to see TAC efforts divided into pieces that Commissioners can work on separately or in a committee and then bring the results to the TAC.

Brent Riddle offered to provide FCDOT assistance, along with Calvin Lam, on TAC goals. At the request of Chair Champness, Brent agreed to send the TAC a copy of the FCDOT org chart.

Chair Champness said the TAC needs to approve any changes made by FCDOT or the County Attorney to the recently amended TAC bylaws. New TAC commissioners should review the bylaws but the chair does not want such review to delay final approval by the BOS, unless there has been a critical omission.

Chair Champness will attempt to meet with BOS Transportation Committee Chair Walter Alcorn for any input he may have on the TAC bylaws, and to discuss emerging TAC goals. He invited Commissioners to submit more written goals if they have them, and assured TAC members that he would make no official representations to Chair Alcorn without formal TAC concurrence.

## **Status of Committee on Planning for the Future**

Chair Champness acknowledged that much of this topic had already been discussed during the meeting. He mentioned that the focus of this committee has shifted from identifying specific issues to collaborating with stakeholders. Chair Champness referenced remarks he had made earlier about having wider discussions with stakeholder groups and to having Commissioners work on selected topics and bringing their results to the TAC for discussion, and he said he would like to have the TAC discuss issues that would have formerly been addressed by the committee.

## **Public Comment Period**

There were no members of the public attending the meeting who wished to speak.

## **Other Business and Announcements**

Commissioner Sitnik announced the upcoming appointment of new Commissioner Alexis Glenn from the Lee District.

Commissioner Morse requested acknowledgement letters of their service be sent to recently departed TAC members. Chair Champness replied that now he has been elected Chair, he will be pleased to work with Calvin to send these letters.

Chair Champness informed the TAC that he had previously discussed with Commissioner Jones the idea of trying to maintain remote access to TAC meetings as a way to make it easier for outside stakeholders and persons with disabilities to attend. He also mentioned that he would like to

streamline the process of preparing meeting notes, perhaps by taking advantage of the fact that TAC meetings are now being recorded to generate transcripts that could be edited.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

## **Proposed Topics for Future Meetings**

- **September 15, 2020:** Transportation Demand Management Update – Anna Nissinen and Marcus Moore (FCDOT)
- Update on curbside management study – Henri Stein McCartney (FCDOT)
- Presentation on Implementation Results of Fairfax Commuter Routes 698 and 699/Discuss results of alternate bus service during summer Orange and Silver Lines shut down
- General Assembly Special Session Update
- WMATA Blue/Orange/Silver Lines Optimization
- Review results of EDA Richmond Highway Corridor market assessment (end of 2020)
- Tour of the VDOT Operations Center at the McConnell Public Safety & Transportation Operations Center (Contingent upon COVID-19 situation)
- Visit and Review Mosaic District Autonomous Bus Service (CIB Group) (Contingent upon COVID-19 situation)
- Shared Mobility Devices (SMDs) (November 19, 2019 – Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance governing the use of SMDs, effective January 1, 2020)
- Conversation with Uber, Lyft, and Via
- Joint meeting date with the Planning Commission’s Transportation Committee on what their vision is for future development and any changes in planning and zoning guidelines that may be needed to account for future work environment given the pace and impacts of technology advances

## **Upcoming Events/Other Meetings:**

### **Upcoming TAC Meetings:**

<b>September 15, 2020</b>	<b>7:30 pm</b>	<b>TAC Regular Meeting (FCDOT)</b>
October 6, 2020	7:30 pm	TAC Work Session (FCDOT)
<b>October 20, 2020</b>	<b>7:30 pm</b>	<b>TAC Regular Meeting (FCDOT)</b>
November 3, 2020	7:30 pm	TAC Work Session (FCDOT)
<b>November 17, 2020</b>	<b>7:30 pm</b>	<b>TAC Regular Meeting (FCDOT)</b>
December 1, 2020	7:30 pm	TAC Work Session (FCDOT)
<b>December 15, 2020</b>	<b>7:30 pm</b>	<b>TAC Regular Meeting (FCDOT)</b>