



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 – April 20, 2021, 7:30 p.m.

Held electronically due to the COVID-19 pandemic

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

Note-Taker: Roger Hoskin

TAC Members in Attendance: Chair Mike Champness (Dranesville), Vice Chair MaryPauline Jones (Fairfax Area Disability Services Board), Secretary Roger Hoskin (Mason), Kevin Morse (Braddock), Kelley Westenhoff (Hunter Mill), Alexis Glenn (Lee), Pete Sitnik (Mount Vernon), Jeremy Hancock (Providence) and Eric Thiel (Springfield).

TAC Members Absent: Linda Sperling (At-Large) and M. David Skiles (Sully).

Others in Attendance: FCDOT staff: Mike Garcia, Jeff Hermann, Brent Riddle and Calvin Lam.

Special Guests/Observers: N/A

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Champness at 7:38 p.m. To fulfill procedural obligations of virtual meetings, Chair Champness and Vice Chair Jones performed the opening procedures for a virtual meeting via WebEx. Meeting recording and materials will be posted online at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/tac/meetings

The location of each member was announced by voice because they are participating remotely from their private residence.

- Chair Michael Champness – McLean
- Vice Chair MaryPauline Jones (Fairfax Area Disability Services Board) – Herndon
- Secretary Roger Hoskin (Mason) – Falls Church
- Kevin Morse (Braddock) – Burke
- Kelley Westenhoff (Hunter Mill) – Reston
- Alexis Glenn (Lee) – Alexandria
- Roger Hoskin (Mason) – Falls Church
- Pete Sitnik (Mount Vernon) – Mount Vernon
- Jeremy Hancock (Providence) – Falls Church

Chair Champness made a first motion to *“determine that each member’s voice can be adequately heard by each other member of this Commission”*. It was seconded by Commissioner Morse, and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Chair Champness made a second motion that *“the State of Emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic makes it unsafe for this Commission to physically assemble and unsafe for the public to physically attend any such meeting. I further move that this Commission may conduct this meeting electronically through a dedicated audio-conferencing line, and that the public may access this meeting by Webex online platform or by calling: 1-415-655-0001 or 1-844-621-3956 Toll Free and entering the Access Code: 129 295 4185. The phone number for ADA is 711. Access information is also available at the TAC website at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/tac/meetings”*. It was seconded by Commissioner Sitnik, and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Chair Champness made a third motion that *“all of the matters on the agenda previously furnished and posted on the TAC website are necessary for continuity in Fairfax County government, and/or are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and the discharge of this Commission’s lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities”*. It was seconded by Commissioner Hancock, and unanimously approved by the Commission.

Consideration of the February meeting minutes, a motion was made and approved to delay approval of the February meeting minutes until the April meeting to give commissioners an opportunity to review them.

County Comprehensive Plan

Michael Garcia, Chief, Transportation Planning Section; and Jeff Hermann, Chief, Transportation Planning Division, FCDOT, presented the discussion of the Comprehensive Plan. Framework of County Transportation Plan is the legal basis for comprehensive plan. The Comprehensive Plan is required by Commonwealth Law. The Policy Plan is comprised of eleven functional areas and four planning areas with Planning Districts. There are four plan maps: Transportation Planning map, Trails Plan Map, Bicycle Plan Map and a Land Use Map. This presentation will concentrate on the Policy Plan. The Policy Plan has four overarching areas: Goals, which set the general direction regarding the aspirations of the community; Objective: statements that provide direction to achieve a goal; Policies, approaches for pursuing a giving objective for implementing an objective; Guidelines, which provide explicit guidance of achieving policies.

Under the Transportation Goal, land use balance with land use, can the program be implementer, minimize environmental and community impact, balance among modes, reduction in use of single occupancy automobiles, and sidewalks and trails should be developed and not just for recreational purposes. There are thirteen Objective under the goals. Summarizing, provide a multimodal transportation system, increase non-auto use, promote transportation demand management. The goals are joint with protecting the environment and community, ensuring cost-effective improvements, maximizing facility efficiency, insuring user safety, and fiscal soundness identifying and using public funds. Objectives and plans should be updated on a regular basis. Samples of recent Plan updates were presented. Two examples of how the Plan is used in development review and developing capital projects.

All transportation policies fit into TAC topic areas which were developed in the March TAC planning meeting. The policies and plan are not Board of Supervisors authorized; so, there is no timeline for implementation. The TAC would be most useful in the Community outreach phase.

After the presentation there was discussion regarding coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and particularly how the plan update process is implemented with community involvement. Questions on the specific Plan update near INOVA hospital were raised. In regard to funding, non-motorized projects may not be scored for funding as highly as those for auto oriented projects. While this is true, the process is changing to give greater credence to non-motorized projects. One of the guiding principles of the TAC is integrating economic and commercial development with the Plan. What is the relationship to Complete Streets to the Plan? Complete Streets could be inserted into the updating of the Policy Plan. This could be integrated into the planning process within the next year. In what format and in what way can the TAC contribute to the Plan updating process? TAC can contribute by reaching out to the community during planning process. There was a discussion of Complete Streets. Complete Streets should be thought of within the context of where the street is and its surround land uses.

Possible Topics for Active Fairfax Plan

Possible topics raised for inclusion in an Active Fairfax Plan included: Mobility through construction areas, TAC requests for data, Public-private spaces and issues regarding law enforcement in pedestrian/auto crashes.

The law is specific regarding signage, redirecting traffic and detours during a road disruption. There are no formal requirements when construction blocks pathways and trails used by pedestrians and non-motorized traffic. The recommendation would be to require a similar standard, with appropriate requirements, for all detours affecting bicycle and pedestrian traffic that would exist for a period of (say) 24 hours. examples were also illustrated. The Active Fairfax Plan should require similar rules for non-motorized traffic as exists for automobiles. VDOT should support a 311 service where persons can report instances where work zone accommodations are inadequate.

How can TAC access data that cross agencies? As an example, what is the nexus between road type and fatal crashes. Data is collected by different agencies; it is disbursed through different channels. It is not clear which agency is responsible for which data and how can an inquiry be made.

Public-Private Spaces. Presently, this is an issue along the Silver Line. Public-Private partnerships allow private parties who hold a lease on public property to administer public spaces. Consequently, the private party and establish rules of use in public places. This is especially a problem with bicycle parking. Fairfax County has bicycle parking guidelines. The guidelines classify bicycle parking, establish minimum requirements based on square footage and building use, specify equipment choices and placement and installation of the equipment. The guidelines do not specify penalties for failure to comply, rules for public-private spaces nor commercial properties developed before the guidelines were available. It is recommended TAC should ask FCDOT about how to determine the public-private spaces.

Enforcement of Law in Crashes. Specifically, how will Virginia enforce the new code as regards pedestrian safety when violations occur. Can the FCPD supply data on the incidents involving motorists and cyclist/pedestrians and who was cited at fault. This data could be used to inform FCDOT and the Board of Supervisors (BOS) how best to invest funds in designing pedestrian and cycling corridors for safety.

The Commission was generally supportive of these recommendations. Ambiguity in bicycle parking rules stand out as problematic. Issues regarding bicycle parking are especially suited for Active Fairfax. It was suggested that these recommendations need not be linked to Active Fairfax but could be taken directly to the BOS.

Further discussion centered on the discontinuity of sidewalks in our neighborhood and specifically along Richmond Highway.

Discussion continued as to the TAC relationship to Active Fairfax. Active Fairfax is a long-range program and while the TAC can contribute to that process. The TAC may have some policy recommendations that can go forward to FCDOT or the BOS sooner. The recommendations presented to the TAC, especially the enforcement recommendation, could be forwarded now to FCDOT.

Public Comment Period

There were no members of the public attending the meeting.

Other Business and Announcements

The meeting concluded with discussion on the topics for the May 4th Work Session and the May 18 meeting. The subject May 4th Work Session will be Active Fairfax Transportation Plan. Commissioners added final comments and the meeting concluded.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m.