



County of Fairfax, Virginia

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

Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee (TSB)

December 11, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Room 8, Fairfax County Government Center

12000 Government Center Pkwy

Fairfax, VA 22035

Website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/trails>

Howard Albers, Secretary

Members Present:

Ken Comer (At Large/Chair), Bob Cosgriff (Braddock District/Vice-Chair), Jim Klein (Mount Vernon District), Jim Corcoran (Fairfax County Park Authority), James Albright (Mason District), Noel Popwell (Springfield), Brooks Stephens (Providence District), Erin Parlan (Franconia District),

Members Absent:

Shawn Newman (Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling - FABB), Howard Albers (Washington Area Bicyclists Association), Mike DePue (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority), Karen Ampeh (Sully District), Mark Tipton (Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association), Kathryn McDaniel (Clifton Horse Society), Lydia Lawrence (Dranesville District), Alex Rough (Hunter Mill District), Maria Lashinger (Northern Virginia Builders Industry Association), Fairfax Area Disability Services Board (seat vacant)

Others in Attendance: Andrew Sheldon (FCDOT); Sandy Klanfer (FCDOT)

Call to Order: Ken Comer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Following motions and seconds, the October and November, 2024 minutes were approved.

Presentation:

Sandy Klanfer (FCDOT) briefed the committee on the FCDOT Active Transportation Wayfinding Program which is employed on various types of active transportation (hereinafter "AT") infrastructure, including shared-use trails, cycle tracks, and shared streets (bike lanes). Wayfinding signage must meet the needs of all users in order to: 1) direct them to key destinations; 2) provide turn-by-turn guidance; and 3) raise awareness of AT infrastructure. FCDOT uses the signs that are compliant with the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). (In Tysons, there are other unique "urban design" signs used as part of the master plan.) In determining where to create AT routes, an effort is made to minimize distance, elevation changes, and turns in order to create a low-stress experience. Sign placements are coordinated with VDOT and FCPA as warranted by location. FCDOT presently uses a contractor to fabricate and place signs. FCDOT is trying to hire an Engineering Tech II to oversee the FCDOT

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AT Wayfinding program, to include expanding the AT network, determining which “routes” to prioritize, and developing a county-wide signage prioritization and implementation plan.

Following the presentation, committee members asked questions and provided some recommendations for consideration in terms of deciding on “routes” and then making them know to the public (e.g., in the forthcoming ActiveFairfax Transportation Bike Map). Other issues discussed were: 1) the definition of “destination”; 2) possible need for signs in Spanish; 3) what happens to signage when a “route” changes? (e.g., the Fort Hunt Road “road diet” project will make that route better for cyclists than Telegraph Road). A final consideration was the need to let district supervisors know what “routes” lie within their respective districts. Sandy said he would provide a district-by-district map so that magisterial appointees and supervisors/staff aides would have that information.

Jim Corcoran (FCPA) then made a presentation on wayfinding in county parks. Presently, park signage reflects the fact that different types of signs have been used at different times since 1949. Many signs are out-of-date or deteriorated, which underscores the need for standard approach. A basic requirement for signs is that they be informative and welcoming. Different types of signs are appropriate for park entrances and trailheads, as opposed to on-trail signage. Signage types might vary depending on the type of trail (i.e., paved or natural surface). Jim showed examples of various types of signs. The initial cost of material and the life-cycle durability are important factors in deciding on what kind of signage to use. FCPA received \$50,000 in the most recent bond issue to help pay for signs (not only trail signs but other park signs as well). Given the 300-plus miles of trails in Fairfax County parks, this amount is not sufficient to replace existing signs as needed or to make new signs for new trails. The Fairfax County Park Foundation has provided some funding in the past for signs.

Noel Popwell (Springfield) asked about performance measures for trails (e.g., user counts) in terms of return-on-investment. Jim Corcoran stated that FCPA does needs assessments and user surveys (however, the surveys may not ask specifically about wayfinding signage). Counters are expensive so at present are not used.

Staff Report:

Andrew Sheldon reported that a new section head has been hired: Laura Ghosh coming from Loudoun County. She will start on 30 December, replacing Lauren Delmare.

The public comment period for the ActiveFairfax Transportation Plan ends on 20 December. Inputs will be compiled and analyzed, then the revised draft plan will be briefed to the Board’s Transportation Committee in the early spring of 2025 with the goal of approval by the end of FY25 or by the end of calendar year 2025.

In terms of revisiting the committee’s March, 2023 “turn-calming” letter to the BOS, Andrew said that each district is compiling a list of 10 locations so that they can be prioritized and potentially funded. VDOT approval is required and FCDOT projects that VDOT will not approve all of them. FCDOT is developing an implementation and maintenance plan. Andrew will send the magisterial

representatives the list for each respective district to enable coordination with their supervisor's staff aides.

Citizen Input: There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

New Business:

Brook Stephens (Providence) brought up the point that the 2024 pedestrian fatality toll is approaching the level that prompted our March, 2023 letter (see above). The Vice-chair responded that Jim Klein (Bike/Ped Safety Working Group) is researching this very issue and will report to the committee in January on findings and recommendations for action.

Erin Partlan (Franconia) discussed the Urban Development and Placemaking Committee (of the Fairfax County Planning Commission) in connection with our strategic priority of greater involvement in the land use planning process. Linking our committee with this group (which is an outgrowth of 'urban' planning zones like Mosaic and Tysons) might enable us to get in early on the planning process in order to emphasize the value in connecting a trail network to urban destinations. The Vice-chair will add this committee to the list of future presentations for 2025.

Brooks Stephens (Providence) mentioned that the FCDOT has been holding community meetings on the Gallows Road Corridor (Annandale to Tysons). A survey is available online. There are three corridor segments. He asked that committee members take a look at the survey and provide comments prior to the end date.

Upcoming Presentations:

The following topics were suggested for the next TSB committee meeting:

- January, 2025—Strategic Action Working Group reports
- March, 2025 (tentative)—Mayor Read, City of Fairfax (update from March, 2024 presentation on multimodal plans)
- TBD—Urban Development and Placemaking Committee

Adjourn: There being no further business, a motion to adjourn being moved and seconded, Chair Ken Comer adjourned the meeting at 8:54 p.m.

Minutes were approved by the TSB Committee on January 8, 2025.