



Minutes: General BPAC Meeting

December 14, 2017, 10:30 -- 12:00 pm

Summary:

- Welcome and Introductions
- New Jersey Department of Transportation Updates
- Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Safety Subcommittee
 - B. Design & Infrastructure Subcommittee
 - C. Education and Outreach Subcommittee
 - D. Legislative & Policy Committee
- DVRPC's Bicycle LTS and Connectivity Analysis
- ~~Equity Matters: Lessons learned from adult bicycling education case studies~~
- Announcements and Public Comments
- BPAC General Meeting Adjournment

Welcome and Introductions

James announced he will be chairing the General Meeting today on behalf of Charles.

James announced Valeria Galarza as new member of the Executive Council, specialty in policy (background includes Cooper's Ferry, public health).

New Jersey Department of Transportation Updates

- Updates from DOT (Elise)
- New Commissioner position is still pending an appointment
- New (Murphy) administration is transitioning in.
- Another planner in training has been added to staff – now a 6-person staff. New member will help review DOT projects and will work with engineers on bike/ped friendly infrastructure design.
- Working with MPO on getting a fund dispersal plan on current funds to utilize (local authorization is needed). If not utilized, funds will be reduced in the next budget year.

Subcommittee Reports

A. Safety Subcommittee (Alan Huff)

- Safety Subcommittee needs a new leader. Alan nominates Jennifer Boison, who expressed interest. Alan emphasized Jennifer's experience with her work with Rutgers CAIT and the Executive subcommittee.
- Alan called a vote. Vote was seconded. Jennifer is hereby voted in.
- Crash data

B. Design & Infrastructure Subcommittee

(Report by Betsey Mostaliol, sitting in on Executive Committee today for Cassidy Boulan)

- Group shared individual reports and projects
- Updates included Sara from DVRPC on mapping projects
- Resources to have 'at the ready' to remove obstacles. Looking to compile a list identifying obstacles as well as identifying successful local and regional examples to have readily available.
- Examination of what to do in the new year. New format idea: someone brings a project that is 'in the works' to get feedback from the group. Group agreed this would be useful.

C. Education & Outreach Committee

(Report by Trish from VTC, in lieu of Cyndi Steiner)

- Group is working towards a Resolution of support for Complete Streets
- Complete Streets outreach, benefits, and what CS it is
- A complete streets tool kit (outlined in lay terms)
- Policy adoption component then guide on how to implement
- Also: Tie in complete streets with TMA's safe streets campaign.

D. Legislative & Policy Subcommittee

- White paper for transition team and the Murphy administration (transportation and infrastructure transition team)
- 6 broad categories (issues facing the state with bike/ped). Issues are being chosen to put forth so next admin knows where we want to see what direction bike and ped safety initiatives need to move in going forward
- A Google Doc of the white paper has been developed. A sign-in sheet will be passed around to the general assembly for anyone who wants access to this draft white paper to give comments (no edits).

Sections:

1. Statewide bike/ped issues
2. Complete Streets
3. Equity
4. Trails and Vision Zero deaths

Floor open to questions for Executive Committee:

What is the overall goal of the white paper?

Legislative agenda is a discussion of bills. Equity and access. Trails. TAP. The paper is not a manual or all-encompassing document – it is a brief overview. If administration has questions, they can contact advocates/specialists individually.

It might be handy to mention in white paper Motion to change language from accident to crash. (Along 55, the sign language has been changed from accident to crash).

NJcommuter.com is a resource: has checklists, mapping, and it is a good resource.

Mondays and Thursdays are legislative days. Good days to consider for advocates to testify in front of legislature.

DVRPC's Bicycle LTS and Connectivity Analysis

Presented by Sara Moran

Bicycle LTS and Connectivity Analysis

1.5 year project

Project Background: Southeastern PA suburban bike lanes was the focus

Goals:

- To identify which road segments would have meaningful impacts on low-stress bicycle connectivity and would be worth investing in for redesign
- To find roads to target for infrastructure improvement funding to bridge the islands
- Level of traffic stress. Identify a rating system for road comfort of cyclists utilizing the road segment of the study area

Methods and challenges

- Roads in the network which allowed for the most origins and the most destinations. Used census block level as origins and destinations.
- Trail heads and train stations could be used in future assessments, but were excluded in this study.

LTS Scale explained:

- Wanted to identify the shortest paths from origin to destination (on a census block level). Low stress islands are formed when taking out high and med-high (level 4 and 3) roads, leaving level 1 and 2 rated roadways (less stressful corridors).
- Criteria: Number of lanes. Speed. Bike infrastructure present.
- Turns were weighted to capture the differing levels of stress for cyclists at various maneuvers. Left turns were times x2. U turns were excluded.
- From nodes and too nodes were linked. Turns had separate table. Ran shortest path search. Calculated choice path per island rather than waiting for data processing. To quicken the process.
- Ran the algorithm on cluster and overlaps

Results:

- Most bang for buck (Level 3 paths that could benefit most from reductions in negative incidence).
- Gave an output of shortest paths going through + level 3 (this was the match' output)
- Provided a spatial layout that'll hopefully help to connect isolated islands to the wider existing low stress network.
- "Islands" were identified = areas of low stress, level 1 and level 2 roads
- DVRPC screens a list of upcoming road repaving projects to improve bike network connectivity and to add infrastructure improvements. This data analysis can be used to justify these efforts.

Next steps:

- Analysis: include NJ counties and formally include Philly. O-D attributes/weights. Incorporate trail access points.
- Products: interactive network modification with on-the-fly calculations

Questions from the audience:

- Were you planning to add any circuit trails? Yes, circuit trails are in the network but there are missing connections in the network so there are many intersections that are missing. Breakout circuit trails further to capture missing intersections.

- LTS 1 is not everyone. Does not include children. Especially not 14 and below. Makes a difference in the analysis – ‘for all’ is not for all. Maybe restriping isn’t enough if we instead need to look at the bigger picture (ideal placement of planned schools). LTS 0 might be useful too.

- Python and SQL: can you give an example of how SQL can be incorporated in to a map analysis? Post GIS extension. Read it and make the output in table form. Table form was useful to work in SQL. Python was used to loop over different queries multiple times to automate /reduce the redundancies.

- STRAVA heat maps, other data from open source to get the real on the ground data from riders. Model demand for where cyclists want to go. TO look at whether or not infrastructure is there to connect places. So not so much a demand side analysis, more of what we have to work with.

- Strava is trying to boost ridership of commuters so this might be a good way to incorporate demand side. Crowdsourcing existing data could help with insight on where local people ride.

- How well has it been working for the coordinated effort on advance knowledge on county road improvements?

This data can hopefully support the argument of justifying funding for connectivity.

- Are there NJ-side challenges that might exist that you didn’t see on PA side? Once we have the network in place, we can draw upon the same process to apply it to analysis efforts in NJ. QAQC side – not sure about the quality of data points. Speed data on PENDOT roads. Not sure what is available in terms of data on the NJ side.

- Suburban working group: story and language on connectivity and the bridging of municipality and state level gaps in road management is important.

- Tie in for repaving projects is great. Targeted enforcement on connecting roads would be good info to give to local police. Comparing PENDOT data on state roads found that it is useful to error on the side of higher speeds to reduce minimizing the hazard and stress level actually encountered.

- Case studies on adult bicycling will be given at next meeting. She will present at next meeting.

Announcements and Public Comments

- Somerset County Bicycling Trail Plan RFP is going live. Check the Somerset website, under ‘purchasing area.’ Info is also available on the NJTPA website. Next step is to hold focus groups.

- JD Dominico – get well card was passed around

- Ben Franklin Bridge ramping up construction. Bridge stairs on south side in Camden will close mid January, north side will be open.

Meeting adjourned at 11:54 am.

Next General Body Meeting: March 2017