



**Safety BPAC Subcommittee Meeting
December 14th, 2017, 9:30 – 10:30am
Rutgers University
33 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ**

Attendees:

Alan Huff – SJTPO
Sean Meehan – Rutgers – VTC
Leigh Ann Van Hagen – Rutgers – VTC
Ruchi Shrivastava – WSP
Jennifer Buison – NJ Transit
Joe Milanese – Michael Baker International

Meeting Notes:

Alan Huff opened the meeting by welcoming Jennifer Buison, who had previously expressed interest in becoming the chair of the safety subcommittee. She has a background in safety as she was involved with the traffic operations at Rutgers CAIT and now she is working with NJ Transit. Alan Huff asked if the other members had any questions or comments for Jennifer being appointed as the new chair of the subcommittee. All the members agreed to the appointment.

Alan Huff began the discussion by mentioning near-misses. Everyone has been aware that the near-miss roundtable is something that Leigh Ann and others have been working on and trying to put together for a while. It is understood that collecting data on near-misses has been a challenge, but it is important to have that data for funding which requires a data-driven approach.

- a) Leigh Ann noted that bike-ped crashes are about 30% of all crashes.
- b) Alan stated how it can be frustrating that if you are dealing with one location where you've got a couple of serious fatal crashes then next year there would be another location with similar issues which didn't seem like a problem before. He states how nobody has an idea of what a bad intersection or location is for pedestrians before there is a fatality.
 - a. Police officers and safety professionals do know these issues, but the problem is with HSIP or local safety funding. Knowing about these issues is not enough to get those funds. There needs to be supporting data evidence.
 - b. Positive steps from DOT. DOT is allowing to bring in other data that is not necessarily the proof of a crash problem but proof of the need in the area, for example, one can talk about environmental justice, schools nearby, the density of the grid, social services available.
- c) Jennifer asked about what specific accommodation that the DOT has done
- d) Leigh Ann responded by saying they have allowed land use to be considered.



- e) Alan responds by saying how under normal circumstances for a regular roadway crash they care less about EJ, less about other services. It is more about following the crash data to the location to determine the problem and use the crash data to determine the solution. He mentions that they are still trying to do that as best as they can but there are also other requirements. Where the HSM analysis requires a benefit cost of over one but there is a problem for bike-ped that eventually there are going to be more projects than there are funds for those projects. In that scenario, theoretically, HSM benefit cost will be used to say this a better safety benefit than this project. And for bike-ped, they are lucky to have it over one. He states an example in Salem City for which they got it to 0.94 but still it's not over 1.
- f) Leigh Ann mentioned how Highway 130 was a "boulevard of death." She then talked about the importance of public outreach where she worked with the police department and stated how trained professionals are not valuing the input of the police department. Leigh also asks for ways to figure out how to add police input in projects and how to bring police and local folk together for road safety.

Leigh Ann brings forth the challenge that towns fear the liability of identifying dangerous things without fixing them.

- a) Jennifer states that ADA improvements form a significant portion of current issues where the problem is that property owners are afraid to know the issues. She suggests the next step should be an action plan which covers the liability of knowing the issues.
- b) Alan agrees to state that if you have a process in place, one can start working on the liability.
- c) Leigh Ann adds to the conversation by stating how that can be translated into funding.
- d) Joe suggests identifying and listing the local issues, followed by rating and quantifying them.
- e) Alan states how at the municipal level one can identify problem locations which is primarily a data-driven process and not suitable in terms of HSIP funding.

Leigh Ann states the example of a software application in Newark for traffic cameras

- a) Alan states that in the area they are working on they are looking at the software to use it for traffic counting which majorly depends on the view of the cameras.
- b) Leigh Ann mentions that the software currently is being used by the police to recreate crash data where they already have cameras. She suggests that the data could also be leveraged to do something else, depending on how long they are keeping recordings. Also, the positive is that where there are already cameras they won't need to buy new equipment. And the cameras have been put up in areas where there are already issues and they wouldn't have to go through a different selection process
- c) Jennifer asks if that could skew the results as if you are looking for a problem in areas that have already been identified by the camera program.
- d) Leigh Ann responds that the stuff they are talking about is only counting near misses



- e) Alan suggests that theoretically all those locations where the cameras were put in was because there was not the same safety problem. They weren't put there for pedestrian purposes but for a safety problem. He asks what about all the other cameras at regular intersections
- f) Leigh Ann agrees with this point and states that they wouldn't have the money to try this out at many places so they might be able to leverage what is already out there.
- g) Alan asks whether the software identifies near misses or it has to be a person.
- h) Leigh Ann responds that the software would identify and a person would validate it.
- i) Joe states that with the near misses what could constitute a camera picking up a pedestrian near miss.
- j) Leigh Ann responds that there needs to be a clear definition of a near miss.

Leigh mentions that Dr. Clint Andrews and other researchers at Rutgers CAIT are currently working on this. The discussion then moves on to the crash data analysis software that the sub-committee members have used previously and their experiences in using the software.

At 10:30 AM, the meeting ended so members can attend the BPAC general meeting