



**BPAC Legislative and Policy Subcommittee Meeting  
December 15, 2016  
Rutgers University  
33 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ**

**Attendees:**

Janna Chernetz, Kathleen Lewis, Emily Armstrong, Travers Martin, Cyndi Steiner, Ranjit Walia, Susan Blickstein

**First Order: Stakeholder meeting led by Ranjit Walia and Susan Blickstein**

**Meeting Introduction:** Ranjit and Susan are working on a bicycle safety enforcement education project. Among other things, they are developing:

- Protocols for police to enforce bicycle laws.
- Education components - police and bicyclists need to understand those laws.
- Effective ways to work with communities (education).
- Ways to make protocols into an opportunity to educate people who are stopped by police officers.

They are seeking stakeholders' perspective on educating bicyclists and motorists about laws, perceptions and enforcement. This will be used to develop a framework for education, advocacy, enforcement, and operations (and how to pair outreach and enforcement).

**Review of Education Subcommittee/General Discussion**

**Do you think online or in person education classes would be more appealing?**

- Regardless, people need an incentive. More people might participate in education program if there was an incentive tied to it.
- Maybe there could be incentives with employers or universities.
  - E.g. Discounts for health insurance if you attend enough programs (such as a bicycle education program - How do you safely commute to work? Become more multi modal?).

**How are bicyclists educated?**

- Recap: They have to be motivated and seeking something out.
  - Maybe we need pop up bicycle education. Maybe education needs to go to the people.
  - Brochures are only in English. These materials do not reach many immigrant populations.
    - Could be opportunity to work with restaurants to educate employees about bicycle safety.



- Incentivize participation with helmets, reflective gear, lights.
- In order to do this, you need a touchstone in the community.  
There can be skepticism about participation without a community member to motivate people.
- Consensus from the education subcommittee - we have the challenge of speaking with multiple audiences.
  - Youth Outreach Ideas:
    - Required elementary school bicycle education program in order to have permission to ride to school (Westfield example from Janna).
    - Bike safety badges with boy and girl scout groups.
    - Greenway programs: They will cross streets at some point, but the education component can't be long. If you got the greenways to do it you might get more people to participate (shorter class length).
  - Adult Outreach Ideas:
    - Smart cycling curriculum (League of American Bicyclists curriculum)
      - People have to seek it out and many don't think they need it. It is called bicycle safety when it should be called traffic skills.
    - It is hard to get adults to show up to league meetings. Among women participating in focus groups this fall, at least a third of them are interested in on-the-road group riding and education, but they are unable to pay for it. They won't go to league meetings because there is no appeal.
    - In general, women are much more likely to come to training than men.

#### **How are motorists educated?**

- Recap: Motorists are not really educated and if so it is sporadic. People may not learn courtesy without experience as a bicyclist or pedestrian.
- Ideas from education subcommittee:
  - Messages on registration; integrating with drivers ed; mailer with registration; broad campaign on the order of Click it or Ticket; working through social service agencies to teach bike skills and travel training; experiential classroom learning (matchbook example); work with New Jersey Business and Industry Association.
  - In a nutshell: While there are some promising programs to explore, there's room for growth.

#### **Most impactful education techniques?**

- Recap: Experiential education is important. People need to experience something to understand it. YouTube/online education is very helpful. Effective programs are usually layered, with things working in synergy. Different approaches are required for different populations.
- Signage is impactful, people learn a lot from being on the street.
  - Signage communicate to others that bicycles belong on the road and indicates to motorists they should be looking to cyclists.



- Infrastructure is also important. People rely on infrastructure to tell them how to use the road.
  - We put a heavy education burden on bicyclists because we don't have the same level of infrastructure to give people instructions.
- NJTPA pedestrian safety campaign (Street Smart).
  - Effective campaign, but as of yet there isn't anything comparable for bicyclists.

**Is the law clear? What local bicycle ordinances are worth emulating?**

- No, the law is not clear
- Title 39 is not that clear; addendums and additions make things even less clear.
- Many police departments and officers don't know the law.
  - Even if they have current information concerning bicycles on the road. There is a lot up for interpretation with Title 39.
  - There is no 'this is the way it is.' This is a real problem. If you're going to enforce a law, grey is not good. Police officers need something that is as authoritative as possible so when they are making a decision it is clear.
- Barriers to authoritative interpretation.
  - The AD's office is supposed to give official advice, but they are often hesitant because it ends up in writing.
  - And even if they put it in writing, there are issues with information dissemination. It's not guaranteed police officers are aware of the interpretation (reason for small AAA book).
  - Hundreds of municipal courts interpret these laws, leading to different outcomes depending on the police officer, judge, etc.
- Training and law enforcement advisories can provide authoritative interpretation.
  - Again, the AD is hesitant to do this and there also issues with information dissemination.
- Local ordinances can be useful, but statewide ordinances could be much more effective. People travel through multiple municipalities when they travel in New Jersey.
  - In New Jersey, the statewide safe passing law lets municipalities opt in. So far we're at two.
- Police Officer Outreach:
  - AAA book given to police officers.
    - Carried by almost every police officer. There is a separate page on bicycles in the last book (sharing the road). Contains the laws and the most frequent provisions they will write tickets for. It is updated every two years.
  - Roadmap to safety symposium hosted by AAA.
    - Four sessions on safer roads: Drunk driving; Lifetime of safe driving (teens, seniors); Dangerous behaviors (distracted, drowsy, aggressive); Multimodal use.



- Report will be put out early 2017. Will be a road map for the next two years and will be used to create a traffic safety track for the NHTSA region II child traffic safety conference (in Long Branch, March 2018).
  - AAA running a traffic safety track. It will be a captive audience of traffic safety officers and transportation safety advocates. Will be symposium + other important topics.
- An issue with training - municipal budgets have contracted over the last decade, including in police forces. When they contract, no one has time to do training.
  - So training has to be online or in places that they're already doing things. They're not going to add education to regular training. We have to find ways to get it into the dialogue before that.

#### **Dynamic between bikers and law enforcement in NJ**

- It depends on the town and on what the police officers are focused on (there are different police department priorities between municipalities).
  - Fairhaven, NJ shows that not everywhere is biased. Everyone rides to school there and police officers support it.
- Police officers are not necessarily biased. Cars are just all they know and they enforce what they don't know (bicycles).

#### **Equal obligations for bikers and motorists to follow laws?**

- Yes, but if a motorist doesn't obey it can be catastrophic for others.

#### **Relationship between design and following laws?**

- Yes there is a relationship.

#### **Law enforcement programs that focus on bike laws?**

- Diversion programs (NYC)
- Title 39: A Bike Side View (Les' highway traffic safety program)

#### **Noteworthy bike patrol units?**

- Is there a correlation between bike patrol units and enforcement?

#### **Where should enforcement be concentrated? Bicyclists? Motorists? Both Equally?**

- Both, then people don't feel targeted.
- Programs directed at motorists will create anti-bicycle people across the state.
  - This explains the focus on local quantified passing laws. They allow us to test out methods.