



BPAC General Meeting
July 21, 2021 9:30 am to 12 pm
Zoom Online Meeting

Executive Council:

Elise Bremer-Nei | Leigh Ann Von Hagen | Sutapa Bandyopadhyay | Cassidy Boulan | John Boyle | Jen Buison | Brandee Chapman | Janna Chernetz | Debra Kagan | Eric Heitmann | Keith Hamas | Alan Huff | Larry Lindstrom | Yvonne Mikalopas | Jessica O'Connor | Julia Raskin | Linda Rapacki | Sonia Szczesna | Mike Viscardi

Subcommittee Chairs:

Jennifer Buison, Chair, Safety Subcommittee, JBuison@njtransit.com
Betsy Mastaglio, Chair, Design & Infrastructure Subcommittee, bmastaglio@dvrpc.org
Sonia Szczesna, Chair, Legislation and Policy Subcommittee, sonia@tstc.org

Summary:

The meeting was brought to order by **Leigh Ann Von Hagen**, who shared the agenda with all participants.

First Order

Elise Bremer-Nei updated everyone on recent NJDOT efforts, including Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Studies and Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) actions.

Second Order

Elise Bremer-Nei informed everyone about changes within the NJ Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center (BPRC) and introduced **Leigh Ann Von Hagen** as the new Chairperson for BPAC.

Third Order

George Klevorn, Hailey Graf, Leigh Ann Von Hagen, James Sinclair, Jim Hunt, Keith Hamas, Janna Chernetz, Sonia Szczesna, and **Michael Dannemiller** provided updates and highlights of various successes around the state.

Fourth Order

Subcommittees discussed individual topics.

Fifth Order

Subcommittee chairs reported on outcomes of their discussions and members shared comments on the Education committee

Long Notes:

Leigh Ann Von Hagen began the general meeting at 9:30am by welcoming everyone and summarizing the agenda.

Elise Bremer-Nei walked through the updates from NJDOT:

- Safe Routes to School Grants:
 - o A reminder that applications for Safe Routes to School grants are due October 14. Those interested in applying for funding, can find more information and resources on the New Jersey Safe Routes website –saferoutesnj.org. You can also register for a free grant training webinar, which will review the application process in detail and provide tips on making your application stronger. There are two webinars scheduled for Thursday, August 19 from 10am to 11:30am, and Wednesday, September 9 from 3pm to 4:30pm. Registration for these webinars can be completed through the NJ Safe Routes website.
- Safe Routes Academy
 - o Elise thanked all who attended the 2021 Safe Routes Academy that was held as part of the NJ Bike and Walk Summit in June. The feedback on all the sessions from this year's attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Elise also thanked the staff at the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center at Rutgers who worked very hard to create and run several informative sessions on a wide variety of topics including current policies, community benefits, practical infrastructure design, equity and environmental justice, techniques for building local support, and project funding. She also thanked the NJ Bike Walk Coalition for pivoting from an in-person event to an online summit and making it look easy. Elise also particularly thanked Deb Kagan from the NJ Bike Walk Coalition for allowing NJDOT to have a session dedicated to the Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Many NJDOT colleagues stated that they found the session helpful and Elise appreciated the opportunity to present about the Bike/Ped Emphasis Area. Recordings of all the sessions are posted online on both the NJ Bike & Walk Coalition's website and the NJ Safe Routes Resource Center's website.
- NJ Trails and Greenways Summit
 - o New Jersey's first ever Trails and Greenways Summit is scheduled to take place this September. This will be a 2-day online Summit hosted jointly by NJDOT and NJDEP and will highlight trail and greenway projects all-around the State. The past year in particular has seen skyrocketing usage of trails and greenways as gyms and other indoor areas closed. Municipalities and counties are working on more trail projects than ever and this summit is an opportunity to supplement conversations around complete streets and overall bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, while providing resources and information specific to trails. The Summit planning committee includes many organizations including Tri-State, NJ Bike & Walk Coalition, Bike Coalition of Greater Philly, East Coast Greenway, NJ Conservation Foundation, NJ Parks & Recreation Association, Lawrence-Hopewell Trail and others including our state Division of Travel and Tourism. VTC, Civic Eye Collaborative and NV5 are managing the virtual summit hosting and logistics. More information about the summit and registration will be coming shortly. Contact Leigh Ann Von Hagen at VTC with any questions.
- Complete Streets Summit
 - o Also, a reminder to save the date for this year's New Jersey Complete Streets Summit, which is scheduled for Friday, October 22. This year's Summit will be celebrating 10

years of Complete Streets in New Jersey. More information about this summit will be coming later in the summer as well.

- Montgomery Trail
 - o Elise also recognized Montgomery Township and their recent completion of a new trail, the Skillman Pathway, which provides safe connections between the township's schools, parks, and neighborhoods. The project includes ADA-compliant crosswalk and curb ramp upgrades, lowered speed limits, new safety signage, and an innovative permeable pavement installation intended to reduce stormwater runoff. Rutgers CAIT will be monitoring the pavement as part of a study. The project was funded through a combination of NJDOT Municipal Aid grant money and the township's Open Space Tax.
- League Bicycle Friendly State Rankings
 - o The League of American Bicyclists have asked NJDOT to complete their 2021 Bicycle Friendly State survey for their national rankings update. In their last update, released in 2019, New Jersey ranked 12th overall, and NJ are looking to improve this year. The deadline for the survey is August 20, and this year's rankings are expected to be released sometime this fall. Elise will be reaching out if she needs help completing this survey.
- Local Technical Assistance (LTA) Updates
 - o NJDOT have recently completed studies in Hammonton and Absecon. These studies are continuing the trend of bicycle facilities and connectivity throughout Atlantic County.
 - o NJDOT are close to wrapping up a study of the Perry Street corridor in Trenton. They are working closely with faith leaders in the area, awaiting some final input from the locals
 - o The Passaic County LTA is a study in partnership with the County and the City of Paterson. There are bi-weekly meetings discussing progress and the team is working on the best ways of connecting with people all over the city, collecting public input. The team are conducting focus groups as well, making sure to drill down to the real issues at hand.
 - o The Camden study is in the data collection phase. NJDOT are working closely with the city to provide project updates on the city website, as well as access to a Wikimap so that residents can easily provide input. Discussions with the city on other modes of public input are ongoing.
 - o NJDOT is very pleased to have recently begun studies with Woodbine and Eatontown. Eatontown has been a leader in the Complete Streets movement in NJ, and this study will provide continued momentum. Woodbine is a returnee to the program, having last completed a study in 2012. They have been highly successful in leveraging the previous study into many grants and improvements over the past decade. They recently worked with DCA to create a new Master plan, and NJDOT are excited to help them deal with their growth over the past decade, and to propel their bicycle and pedestrian planning into the 2020's.
 - o Bill Riviere continues to manage this program. NJDOT is looking at ways to improve the LTA program and will have more information on that in the near future.
- SHSP Updates
 - o ACTION NUMBER 1.A.1.b. Complete Streets Task Force
 - Leaders: **Elise Bremer-Nei & Paul Lenarczyk**
 - The first Complete Streets Task Force meeting was held June 29th. They had a virtual meeting where they broke out into two groups to discuss policy, research, and processes to advance the State's Complete Streets policies. The group will be working to make sure guidelines keep pace with current best

- practices and work in tandem with other safety initiatives to meet the goals of reducing deaths and serious injuries on NJ's roadways. Another meeting will be announced soon. Please let Elise know if you would like to participate.
- ACTION NUMBER 1.A.3.a. Automated Speed Enforcement & Vulnerable Road User Laws
 - Leaders: **Joe Rapp & Sonia Szczesna**
 - VTC has completed research on ASE and VRU laws and developed two PowerPoint presentations for discussion at the next Action Team meetings.
 - VTC is planning to schedule interviews with individuals in other states that have adopted ASE and/or VRU laws. These will be held beginning of September.
 - VTC is also working on white papers on the two topics that include considerations for New Jersey.
 - ACTION NUMBER 1.B.1.a. Strategies to improve design guidance for the state, counties and municipalities
 - LEADER: **Patrick Farley**
 - The last meeting of the group was in May.
 - Making good progress
 - **Jeevanjot Singh**, Section Chief, Engineering, spoke to the group about NJDOT's Capital Project Delivery process.
 - Discussion was focused how the NJDOT Roadway Design Manual (RDM) and the NJ Complete Streets Design Guide are used in the delivery of projects.
 - Key Issues:
 - As of now, state and national Complete Streets documents are just planning documents, not design standards. If the elements of the Complete Streets Guide and national guides such as NACTO, are not endorsed as design standards in engineering documents like the RDM, they not likely to be used by roadway designers.
 - Guidance will be needed on how the task team can best recommend possible changes to design guides in NJ. This task is complicated by the fact that Complete Streets design guidance and training for NJ is currently being updated.
 - Goals moving forward:
 - Resume monthly meetings.
 - Identify which best practices in national guidance should be provided to NJDOT and local agencies for possible inclusion in their design guides.
 - Identify best practices in education and training on Complete Streets design.
 - ACTION NUMBER 1.C.4.a Street Smart Action aims to develop a strategy for performance - based implementation of Street Smart across the state.
 - Leader: **Keith Hamas** at NJTPA
 - The NJTPA gathered action team input from the first meeting (April 29) and subsequently from a shared team review of the draft action scope. The scope includes the following tasks:
 - Communication mechanisms regarding upgrade
 - Analysis of how campaigns should operate in community - based ways
 - A list of priority locations based on equity, with local assistance

- A list of possible funding sources for additional Street Smart campaigns
 - A technical memorandum summarizing findings
 - A Statewide Communications Plan
- The NJTPA action team leaders are meeting internally on July 28 to organize mapping analyses, which will inform the list of priority locations for this action (based on equity and crash data).
- The NJTPA is incorporating action team input into a draft tech memo, which will be shared for action team review in August. The next team meeting will also be scheduled in August to discuss enhanced communications mechanisms, additional program funding options, and the status of priority locations mapping analyses.
- ACTION NUMBER 1F1c Transit Inventory & Equity Prioritization
 - Leader: **Aimee Jefferson**
 - A scope of work has been developed with on-call consultant to develop a methodology and process to audit bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at bus stops and develop actionable improvement recommendations that address equity.
 - Goal: The consultant team is finalizing the crash analysis to identify the top 200 bus stop priority locations based on crash history and severity and ridership
 - The next step is to apply an equity component to the methodology, identifying the top 100 locations. This should include coordination with the Equity Emphasis Area Team, the NJDEP Overburdened Communities criteria and others based on action item team input. (We need an update on Equity EAT progress as part of this step)
 - Concurrently, we are developing an audit checklist based on a previous project. The checklist from the previous report will be updated with additional infrastructure elements per the recommendations of the action item team.
 - Pilot audits will be developed to further streamline/test the checklist before a broader audit program is launched.

Elise Bremer-Nei introduced the changes within the BPAC team:

- **Paul Lenarczyk** is new to NJDOT's Bureau of Safety, Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs. He is a Project Engineer and comes to this job from Operations where he oversaw pavement projects for the Department. He enjoys cycling and participated in Bike to Work Day this past year.
- **Brandee Chapman** is co-managing NJ's first Trails and Greenways Summit with Elise. She oversees the Recreational Trails Program at NJDEP and has been part of BPAC for a while.
- **Leigh Ann Von Hagen** is taking over as BPAC Chairperson. **Charles Brown** has left Rutgers to strike out on his own. **Leigh Ann** will oversee both resource centers within VTC. **James Sinclair** will co-manage the **Bike-Ped Resource Center** and **Sean Meehan** will co-manage the **Safe Routes Resource Center**. **Leigh Ann** has been a part of BPAC since 1999, when it was only focused on pedestrian safety. BPAC has always been a committee focused on advising NJDOT, and Leigh Ann is looking forward to leading BPAC forward. All BPAC members are encouraged to reach out to her.
- The end-of-year meeting will be moved to early December. Currently any in-person meeting over 10 people needs explicit approval from the Chancellor so for now, BPAC meetings will continue to be virtual.

Recent activities and highlights:

- **George Kleborn** reported that the ban on e-bikes on NJ Transit has been lifted. They are planning to implement a social media campaign and posters/fliers to inform users of new policy.
- Micro-mobility rollout in NJ towns
 - o **Haily Graf** reported on Newark:
 - Considering new NJ Transit policy on e-bikes, they plan to deploy e-vehicles throughout the city specifically targeting underserved communities.
 - E-bike and e-scooter sharing systems provide useful trip data to NJ Transit.
 - These services tie in with Governor Murphy's transportation plan.
 - o **Leigh Ann Von Haven** and **James Sinclair** reported on Rutgers and New Brunswick:
 - The Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy (EJB) is working with Rutgers on research in conjunction with the computer science school.
 - E-scooters are in service throughout the New Brunswick campus (including Piscataway) but no students are on campus yet, so it is difficult to determine usage. Regardless, there are currently more scooter users than bus system riders and most trips are from campus-to-campus.
 - E-bikes will be rolled out on campus in the fall. RU had initially hoped for the municipalities of New Brunswick and Highland Park to sign on.
 - Discussions are in process in Highland Park.
 - Conversations with New Brunswick were held in May/June but there has been no progress. (Perhaps New Brunswick residents could let officials know they want shared micromobility?)
 - o **Leigh Ann Von Hagen** reported on Asbury Park:
 - Bike share is not implemented yet, but e-scooters are.
 - The E-scooter sharing portion seems to be growing in most locations.
 - The original vendor went out of business. Superpedestrian has taken over as the new vendor under the brand Link.
- **Jim Hunt** discussed the new 4-foot passing law:
 - o Thanks to everyone who helped write the legislation and get it through the NJ Senate and Assembly. They are waiting for the Governor to sign it into law and are hoping it can be signed before the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) Bicycle Friendly State Survey is due to be submitted.
 - o The new law will require drivers to slow down and move over to another lane to pass cyclists and pedestrians and covers more situations than most other safe passing laws.
 - o There will be an event in Metuchen on 7/29 at 4 pm to thank legislators and other sponsors and honor the young cyclist who was killed there. Anyone who wants to attend can reach out via email.
 - o They are planning an awareness campaign with police officers during the 7-month period between signing and implementation.
- **Keith Hamas** reported on Round 3 of NJTPA's Complete Streets Technical Assistance (CSTA):
 - o July 1st is the start of the new Fiscal Year so new cycles will be beginning, including Complete Streets Technical Assistance.
 - o The program provides technical training and assistance for municipalities to incorporate Complete Streets into their plans for future improvement projects. It is implemented with a contract between VTC and Sustainable Jersey.
 - o There are two main parts to the program:

- Training – funded in part by NJDOT, available to all for free. Still determining if it will be all-virtual or not.
 - Technical services – offered on competitive basis to municipalities in the NJTPA region. In the past, the program has offered services for bicycle network planning, conceptual renderings, walkable community workshops, demonstration project guidance, and crime prevention through environmental design, training and assessment.
- NJTPA provided services to 18 communities in 2020, where each had a field assessment and several project team meetings to collaborate and develop final drafts for submittal.
- NJDOT is developing a new scope of work for the third round, trying to organize the official schedule for applications.
- **James Sinclair** mentioned that the training portion is based on NJDOT Complete Streets training, which is currently being updated. Municipalities without a CS policy in place who wish to participate are recommended to use the Complete and Green Streets Model Policy and Guide. This time around, we are generally recommending more green aspects, as the impacts of climate change are increasing.
- Essex-Hudson Greenway status:
 - **Janna Chernetz** mentioned that after the op-ed ran, the editorial board of NJ.com showed interest in running another piece about the project’s benefits to the state.
 - https://www.nj.com/opinion/2021/07/gov-lets-make-this-njs-high-line-but-bigger-and-better-editorial.html?outputType=amp&_twitter_impression=true&fbclid=IwAR0X2oBKlke5CNjRx6SKtWp-YBvuXRKRucUGzrE3S31Lirz5YITVoJ32Quq
 - <https://www.nj.com/opinion/2021/07/fulop-baraka-gill-this-dream-of-an-essex-hudson-greenway-is-slipping-away-opinion.html>
 - **Sonia Szczesna** mentioned that Governor Murphy has expressed support for the project but has not officially taken action so they still need everyone to call and write letters.
 - <https://www.essexhudsongreenway.org/support/>
 - <https://www.essexhudsongreenway.org/essex-hudson-greenway-general-support-letters/>
 - **Michael Dannemiller** explained that the deal is being brokered between Norfolk Southern and the Open Space Institute. The first deadline was missed, so the end of the calendar year is the final deadline for Norfolk-Southern to sell this property or not. The Governor has expressed tacit support but nothing concrete, so any grassroots support right now would be very timely.
 - **Jim Hunt** asked if there are any plans for an on the ground in person demo.
 - **Michael Dannemiller** answered that **Russell Nee** of the 9/11 Trail is planning to walk the route on 9/11. However, individuals should not go alone, as it is trespassing. We do not want to make Norfolk-Southern angry.

Attendees shifted into virtual breakout rooms for each subcommittee.

After returning, subcommittee chairs reported on the outcomes of their discussions and members shared comments on the Education committee:

- **Sonia Szczesna** announced there will be two separate meetings to talk about topics from legislative committee, and anyone can email her if they are interested in attending.
- **Debra Kagan** emphasized that we are in a new phase in the Essex-Hudson Greenway due to the tremendous support from advocates, businesses, local officials. The government seems to be

working on a new funding package, although there is nothing concrete yet. However, the Governor has spoken support of it on the radio. She urged members not to let up on advocacy and encouraged everyone to call and email as we are approaching the deadline for the current proposal.

- **Jennifer Buison** reported that the safety subcommittee agenda had been shelved, so they were instead brainstorming tasks. Some examples were trail crossing treatments, how road safety requests can be better referred to the correct jurisdictions, and how to track safety improvements. There was also the question of where education-related topics “live” now.
 - o **James Sinclair** pointed out that BPAC bylaws allow subcommittees to be created as needed, so one can be reestablished for Education.
- **Betsy Mastaglio** reported that the design/infrastructure subcommittee had a general update from everyone on the call. Some common topics were data-driven safety analysis (particularly in Middlesex County), advancement from planning/policy to demonstration (temporary to permanent), and how to accommodate the role of freight movement in Complete Streets policy.

The meeting was adjourned by **Leigh Ann Von Hagen**.