



**BPAC General Meeting
March 9, 2021 9:30 am to 12 pm
Zoom Online Meeting**

Executive Council:

Elise Bremer-Nei | Charles Brown | 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 Charles Brown and all participants introduced themselves via the chat function of the Zoom meeting platform.

First Order

Charles Brown announced the meeting agenda.

Second Order

Elise Bremer-Nei updated everyone on the recent NJDOT efforts.

Third Order

Elise Bremer-Nei provided an overview on the relationship between BPAC and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP).

Fourth Order

Patrick Farley, Aimee Jefferson, Joe Rapp, Keith Hamas, and **Elise Bremer-Nei** provided an update from SHSP Action Leaders on current progress.

Fifth Order

Subcommittee chairs discussed 2021 work plan and needs.

Sixth Order

Attendees posted announcements or public comments via the chat function of Zoom meeting platform.

Long Notes:

Charles Brown began the general meeting at 9:30 am by welcoming everyone and summarizing the agenda.

Elise Bremer-Nei explained that **Alan Huff** would not be attending due to an injury. She then lost connection due to internet issues, and members of NJDOT used the moment to briefly describe recent activities within the department.

- **Michael Russo** explained that there are more DOT members attending than usual due to the increased activities, especially with regards to safety. They want to leverage all resources available and connect them to advance the goals of the SHSP.
- **Andy Swords** explained that DOT is always trying to coordinate with current activities at the NPO, county, and local levels.
- **Daniel Lisanti** expressed a hope that these activities will result in mutual learning.
- **William Riviere** summarized recent activities within the department, including a newfound department-wide focus on equity, local planning assistance projects in Trenton, Paterson and Camden, trail studies in Maple Shade, Pennsauken and Elk Township, an updated strategic plan for SRTS, and ongoing internal advocacy for bike lanes and pedestrian safety. He emphasizes safety as the crucial aspect in the departments goal of zero highway fatalities.

Elise Bremer-Nei returned via phone and **James Sinclair** presented the slides:

- Reviewed contents from June 2020 BPAC
- DOT updated the bylaws based on BPAC input but are not ready to vote on them yet. They will discuss and will hopefully vote at the next BPAC (April or May).
- Specific tasks will flow from the Annual Work Plan, led by DOT (with council input to be exchanged at retreats and via subcommittees.) Subcommittees will focus on Infrastructure & Design, Legislative & Policy, and Safety. Education was dropped after Cindy Steiner left the Bike-Walk Coalition, DOT still considering how to re-incorporate that element. They want to compile shared resources (like the NJ photo library), and share email lists. SHSP actions are broken up among subcommittees to match with subject content of action and to balance work effort.
- Workplan template was produced with help from Susan Blickstein and VTC consultants
- Thanked subcommittee chairs and SHSP Action Leaders for their effort and cooperation.
- Efforts are being made to improve BPAC effectiveness by coordinating resources, priorities and efforts. Explained the Big Picture of how BPAC and SHSP coordinate. (Slides will be distributed to all members for reference.)
- Next steps are that Subcommittee Chairs & NJDOT will develop the work plan, and NJDOT management will review bylaws in March. BPAC Executive Council will adopt the bylaws hopefully by May, with work plans finalized and presented at the May BPAC Meeting.
- **Michael Russo** asked about education and offered suggestions for how to leverage available resources (including NPO's and TMA's) to assist. For example, DHTS is a close partner with a huge messaging campaign that could assist with advancing BPAC's message. Another avenue is the Local Aid Resource Center. Bringing the Safety Resource Center online as a way to engage stakeholders. State Transportation Innovation Council could help with technology research, and also Bureau of Research could help carry the weight within the Policy & Legislative Subcommittee. He also brought up equity, mentioning Olivia Glenn at NJDEP's work on Environmental Justice Interagency Council. When the SHSP was wrapping up and the George Floyd movement started, the department elected to add equity into the selection process. They are looking to introduce the consideration of equity (along with resiliency) in how to better serve communities.

SHSP Action Leaders reports:

- **Patrick Farley**, representing the task team for suggesting design guidance improvements, explained a list of deliverables they are pursuing (with help from design subcommittee to flesh-out):
 - o Inventory of designs they are currently aware of in order to compare what is currently being done within DOT with what is missing relative to other design guides. 2 key elements they are focusing on: what specifically is missing from NJDOT's design guidance (relative to what the team is suggesting), and what are suggestions for other counties & municipalities to consider.
 - o They are looking for assistance from BPAC with identifying specific goals for focus groups and participants with different backgrounds. First draft of memo is due April 30th, but will need to be revisited after the focus groups.
 - o What elements are being seen elsewhere, but not in NJ
- **Amy Jefferson**, action leader for transit inventory and equity (Action Item 1F1C), spoke about results of several meetings (most recent Feb 25th) to find high-usage transit stops with high bike/ped crashes in areas with high inequity and prioritize locations for implementing bike/ped improvements. They are focusing their scope of work and seeking a methodology to identify and prioritize locations by April 2021. Then they will create an inventory of safety facilities available at transit stops. DOT, VTC, NJTPA all have excellent resources to help create a transit inventory in NJ, but she is looking for even more.
- **Keith Hamas** presented a slide deck regarding Street Smart NJ:
 - o Explanation of what the Street Smart NJ program is - an educational messaging campaign created in response to high rate of pedestrian fatalities, presented positive results from 2018-19 activities and explained scope of work.
 - o New directions moving forward are to implement statewide, strengthen community partnerships, emphasize equity in campaign selection, and tie-in to infrastructure improvements.
 - o Introduction of the Action Team members and their organizations (with an invitation for others to join)
 - o **William Yarzab** took over to highlight some aspects of the program: when the program was first started in 2013 the goal was to spread general awareness by working with police departments of all sizes (looking for it to become well-known like "Click it or ticket"). Now it is more data-focused and data-driven to focus on areas where it is really needed.
- **Joe Rapp** was present but inaudible, so **Sonia Szczesna** filled in for him. They are looking at Task 1A3A (to be renamed) as part of the Legislative subcommittee, to examine automated speed enforcement and vulnerable road-users law, what the laws around the country are and what would be the barriers to implementation in NJ. They hope to conclude their research of the literature by end of April.
- **Elize Bremer-Nei** explained the status of work being done in developing the action plan for the Complete Streets implementation review. Currently they are trying to gather the team officially to make decisions, but having difficulties due to the two different focuses of the action (one, looking at Complete Streets implementation at the regional and local level in NJ, and two, looking at internal procedure and policy within NJDOT). They hope to onboard new staff at the Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs, and anticipate they will be up and running in another month or so.

Lisa Lee stated she was glad to see the pictures of bike and scooter-share on the Street Smart slides. Bikes and micro-mobility may be used more as transportation in communities of concern where less people own cars. She hopes Street Smart NJ campaign will be expanded to work on cyclist safety as well as pedestrian and driver safe behaviors as is fitting with Complete Street policy goals.

Liza Betz commented that it is always helpful to get alerts on funding opportunities in order to realize bike projects. She asked if this is part of the goals of one of the three subcommittees, as a big stumbling block has been that funding for bikes is harder to find compared to other similar transportation projects (like Transportation Alternatives or Rails-To-Trails)

- **Andy Swords** suggested the Local Aid Resource Center Website, although he acknowledged it doesn't relate to the committee structure within BPAC. In addition, he pointed out that municipal aid money in NJ has been doubled in recent years, so there are potentially opportunities for municipalities to use that money for bicycle infrastructure projects.
- **Liza Betz** was still curious how BPAC integrates this information on where funding comes in: how do people get educated on how to take these opportunities and do it successfully to create more bicycle facilities in the state?
- **Charles Brown** offered to make that part of the announcements and ensure that executive council members with knowledge of those funding opportunities also make those announcements.
- **Ken Wedeen** asked how to locate recreationally-based bike ped grants.
- **Leigh Ann Von Hagen** specified that those are more trail-focused, and unfortunately DEP is not offering rec trails grants; those funds are mostly spent in State Parks. However, many counties do have county-level open space money for trails, but it varies by county.
- **Pete F Kremer** mentioned that **Michael Russo** does an annual presentation at the Bike-Walk Summit on the various funding resources and programs available, so maybe **Elise Bremer-Nei** and **Andy Swords** can share those slides.
- **Elise Bremer-Nei** agreed to provide the slides.

The presentations ended and the meeting was opened for discussion. The following links and information was posted by attendees in the chat window:

- *NJ DOT Local Aid Resource Center* - <https://njdotlocalaidrc.com/>
- *Funding guide by the DVRPC* - <https://www.dvrpc.org/Reports/14039.pdf>
- *Cross County Connection funding resource guide* - <http://www.driveless.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/05/CCCTMA-Funding-Guide-2020.pdf>
- *Transportation Alternatives funding is available for Design and construction of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation* - <https://njdotlocalaidrc.com/federally-funded-programs/transportation-alternatives>
- *2021 Municipal Aid recipients* - <https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/contribute/business/localaid/documents/FY2021MunicipalAidGrantRecipients.pdf>

Meeting adjourned by **Charles Brown**.