



Safety BPAC Subcommittee Meeting
March 14, 2018 9:30am to 10:30am
Rutgers University
33 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ

Attendees:

State:

Amon Boucher – NJDOT

Jennifer Buison – NJTransit (Chair)

Sean Meehan – VTC

Catherine Bull – VTC

Leigh Ann Von Hagen – VTC

Ben Peacock – VTC

MPO:

Will Yarzab – NJTPA

Alan Huff -- SJTPO

County and Municipal:

Arnold Anderson -- ECCPSA

Private:

Matt Carmody -- AKRF

Summary:

Meeting began with a round of introductions before Subcommittee Chair Jennifer Buison brought the group to order.

First order:

Jennifer Buison asked the group to provide a solid and encompassing description of the differences between Complete Street Policy and a Vision Zero goal. Vision Zero was outlined as an overall goal, which included efforts from all sectors; be they government, health, physical education, etc. Complete Streets are more of an engineering task, improving on streets for multimodal use. Vision Zero goal includes methods of changing the behavior of residents.

Enforcement is seen as an important part of the vision zero goal by several of the members of the subcommittee. Residents are often unaware of laws initially and need to be reminded. Efforts to avoid tickets are effective ways to curb adverse behaviors.

Vision Zero is a data driven goal, while Complete Streets are more visual reliant. Currently Complete Streets are more grassroots, while vision zero is top down. Currently Vision Zero and Towards Zero Death goals require strong levels of government support, either from state, county, or municipality.

Second Order:

Should the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council suggest to the NJ Department of Transportation to adopt a Vision Zero Goal? These goals are already in place, but should the DOT be more aggressive with their targets is



the real question. Fatalities have been increasing over the past year, despite these goals. If the department fails to reach goals again real consequences will be enforced; mainly that the 50% of their safety budget that they flex will have to go solely to fund safety projects. The Advisory Council may be able to help with these issues by creating a multi-disciplinary approach, echoing the efforts taken in New York City, and establishing a Brand Book. This will include a number of things, enforcement, engineering, education, and low cost systemic improvements.

Next steps for Vision Zero goal would be to gather data on existing systems. New York State has such a program that can be examined. Need to identify any other states with existing plans or Vision Zero goals. Greater Mercer TMA holding a Vision Zero Summit/Workshop that members of the subcommittee should attend.

Third Order:

Leigh Ann Von Hagen updated the subcommittee on efforts taken by the VTC at Rutgers University in regards to their near miss detection software. A proposal had just been completed and sent to the National Science Foundation. Looking to test out their software because they have had issues getting tech companies to come aboard for near miss software because it reuses existing software and often companies do not see the need.

Next meeting: TBA

Long Notes

Jennifer Buison, Safety Subcommittee Chair, opened the meeting with a round of introductions for the group. After everyone told the group their name and organization the meeting began with Jennifer asking the group for some clarification between Vision Zero and Complete Streets. There has been much discussion about these two topics and much confusion even among planners, which begs the needs for outreach materials.

Answer to this question was provided by Alan Huff and Arnold Anderson

1. Vision Zero is a goal that is more all-encompassing than Complete Streets. Complete streets are more of an engineering task, gearing streets and roads for multimodal use. Complete streets involve physical environment solutions.
2. On the other hand, Vision Zero involves more groups and people. Government bodies, health groups, physical education initiatives, and other programs to influence behavior are included in a vision zero goal.
3. Vision Zero attempts to change behaviors, while Complete Streets just enable different users.
 - a. Important to understand how people perceive what others do compare to how they actually act.
 - i. Example of High school students and seat belts. Most students believed others did not use seat belts, but most responded that they did use belts. Though a higher percentage of those aged 18-20 do not use seat belts, which was reflected in fatality rates for that age group.
 - b. Enforcement is another key part of a Vision Zero Goal.



- i. People will attempt to avoid tickets, and the threat of a ticket can help shape their behavior. Click it or Ticket is an example of enforcement influencing behavior.
- ii. At times youth or adults are unaware of laws that exist and a stop (not necessarily a ticket) can be the warning they need.
- c. Vision zero is also seen as a data driven method of tackling issues with a goal in mind. Complete streets are more visual changes. Another distinction made is that often times complete streets are grass roots while Vision Zero is more top down.

Jennifer Buison then asked a follow up question: Should the Advisory Council suggest that New Jersey Department of Transportation have/maintain a Vision Zero or Toward Zero Death goal?

1. Support for such goals is accepted within the subcommittee, with most members giving assent.
2. The discussion moves to how the DOT is doing on achieving their current goals. Currently they have not set very aggressive goals for Vision Zero, but they have failed to achieve their goals twice. If another goal is not reached serious consequences will be triggered. Currently the DOT has the option to flex 50% of their Safety budget, but if the next goal is not reached this funding will only be available for safety projects.
3. How do we help reach this vision Zero Goal?
 - a. New York City has a brand book for Vision Zero. Helps make Vision Zero more understandable for the police and common citizens. Law enforcement training is a must.
 - i. Issues of enforcement on minorities brought up very briefly; need for police reform while moving towards Vision Zero.
 - ii. Non-Financial Ticket enforcement as a method of spreading information.
 - iii. Education and Enforcement have done a good job over engineering/planning.
 - b. Alan Huff also speaks about how speed studies are often not used. On county streets often times speeding is an issue, which goes hand and hand with aggression. But even if issues are known counties planning departments and engineers do not want to complete speed studies.
 - c. Need to get help from engineers to help streets reach target speed limits. Also need for systemic improvements, that often face push back from local and county's.

Leigh Ann Von Hagen let the subcommittee know that Straight Line Diagrams are available for local streets. Most people of the subcommittee were surprised by this. Needs to be requested from the DOT to gain access. Not publicly available. Leigh Ann offers to request the data on behalf of the VTC or BPAC.

1. Possibly there are some errors in the data, but it is accepted by the subcommittee that any data is better than no data.

Implementing cost effective solutions

1. The question was asked if restriping is available for HSIP funding.
 - a. The CMF for narrowing lanes are very high. Lane reductions of 1 or 2 feet have very real improvements.



- b. Low cost improvements such as restriping and adding high friction surfaces should be added to all repaving projects. Also can add rumble strips or high visibility improvements. By adding these low cost improvements to all plans there can be large reductions in fatalities. Providing the biggest bang for their buck.
- c. Bike safety was brought up, if restriping to add on to shoulder could instead be bike lanes. Often times counties do not want to add bike lanes but would be okay adding to the shoulder because they do not have to maintain shoulders.
 - i. Biking/walking in the shoulder is allowed if the pavement is of good quality.

Next steps for a Vision Zero Action Plan; need to research existing Vision Zero Plans

1. Jersey City has a Vision Zero Action plan
 - a. Need to do internal training process before unveiling a plan.
2. It may be good for safety to fail targets, increasing the funding used for safety projects. Only potential issue is local level resistance to changes.
 - a. Climate is currently good for such an action plan. There is increasing funding for Transportation projects specially to help improve safety and transit service.
3. Subcommittee members should look to attend the Greater Mercer TMA Summit/Workshop for Vision Zero.
4. Need to Identify other states with Vision Zero Action Plans
 - a. No other statewide plans, mostly just talk at the state level.
 - b. NYC only place bucking the national trend by decreasing fatality rates, so need to study what they are doing.
 - c. Philadelphia is also pushing Vision Zero goals and their Safe Routes policies.

Leigh Ann Von Hagen of the VTC updates the Subcommittee on their efforts with near miss software.

1. A proposal had just been completed and sent to the National Science Foundation.
 - a. The software was created within Rutgers University. The software uses existing technology which has not been very interesting for existing tech companies. Already use such tech to complete traffic counts, but need to update for calculating near misses, which is a much more difficult task.
 - b. There is not much of a market for calculating near misses at the moment.
2. New York State developed a systemic program that looked at high crash pedestrian crossings and the infrastructure that was available at the intersection.
 - a. Allowed researchers to identify areas with need of improvement and show that these improvements have tangible benefits. In future these programs can remove the need to do engineering studies for some pedestrian improvements.