



**Safety BPAC Subcommittee Meeting
July 21, 2021 10:30am to 11:25 am
Online Zoom Meeting**

Attendees:

State

Yvonne Mikalopas, NJDOH
William Riviere, NJDOT
Aimee Jefferson, NJTPA
Ken Wedeen, Somerset County
Brandee Chapman, DEP
Kayt Hester, Hudson TMA
Alan Huff, SJTPO
Frank Neary, NJDHTS
Eric Heitmann, NJDHTS

Jeniffer Buison, NJ Transit
Laura Cerutti, TMA
Linda Rapacki, RideWise TMA
Lisa Lee, EZ Ride TMA

Private

Andrew Lappitt, Sam Schwartz
Charlie Romanow, WSP

Non-Profit

Luis Diaz, East Coast Greenway Alliance

Long Notes - Breakout room – Safety

Subcommittee chair Jennifer Buison began the meeting with a discussion of action items from the previous (March 9) subcommittee meeting. She informed that there will be a review of action items and their status in a meeting at a later date. She introduced the work plan to brainstorm action items that can be worked out as a group including new ideas that have been on hold until now or were planned before the pandemic.

Linda Rapacki was concerned that Education committee was merged with the Safety committee citing the importance on Education on the Agenda. Jennifer Buison informed that the Education committee was without a chair at the moment, and hence it was on a hiatus. Sean Meehan said that he would seek some clarity on this. During the general meeting, it was confirmed that the Education subcommittee could be restarted if someone volunteered to coordinate the group.

Part of the past tasks, Alan Huff suggested Zig Zag pavement stripping approaching an intersection for pedestrian crossing, previously used in Oregon. It was meant to work as a visual rumble strip for drivers. He also added that this would be especially useful in settings where drivers do not expect a crosswalk.

- Aimee Jefforsen, NJTPA informed that her team is working on a trail crossings effort to develop a database of locations and existing safety features and deficiencies ([https://www.njtpa.org/NJTPA/media/Documents/Planning/Plans-Guidance/Work-Program-\(UPWP\)/FY22-UPWP/NJTPA_FY22_UPWP_Chapter-I_CentralStaff_March2021_Final.pdf](https://www.njtpa.org/NJTPA/media/Documents/Planning/Plans-Guidance/Work-Program-(UPWP)/FY22-UPWP/NJTPA_FY22_UPWP_Chapter-I_CentralStaff_March2021_Final.pdf)).
- Brandee Chapman, NJDEP informed about compiling statewide trail geodatabase to be released this fall, a first for New Jersey. She added that one of the envisioned uses of the database was looking at trail crossings along roadways and prioritizing identified areas that need improvement for pedestrian and bicycle safety. The statewide geodatabase would include all types of trails in



one place. Brandee also mentioned that one of the host events at Greenway and Trail Summit was the formation of a New Jersey Trail Action Network (NJTAN).

After a discussion of the past tasks, Jennifer moved the discussion to new tasks that the committee would want to elaborate on.

Lisa Lee, EZ Ride, proposed a new task to improve communication with County planners and engineers and within various departments to work on identifying routes for improving county and local road safety. She stated that a lot of residents have made complaints about speed limits and lack of updated pavement markings etc.

- Aimee Jefferson suggested to improve transparency, perhaps with an app like Newark Connect to see where people are making complaints and what is being done about it. Something of the sort can be helpful from a safety point of view.
- Alan Huff, SJTPO highlighted that there are jurisdiction hurdles to improve and fix infrastructure issues. Lot of towns shed responsibility for county administered roads. Problem is magnified with the many municipalities and administrative boundaries of New Jersey. There is reluctance to take responsibility which needs to be addressed by the committee.
- Ken Wedeen, Somerset County suggested that there should be an online portal or database for the public to know who is responsible for any roadway and how to contact them. People should have access to suggest improvement or make complaints for each road in New Jersey. This can be also worked with a phone app, that records the issue with locational data.
- Alan Huff added that resources are a major reason for the aforementioned gap between municipalities and counties. A lot of them do not have a planner or an engineer that works for them and can handle these problems head-on.
- Brandee Chapman agreed and added that an app would be best for noting county or city issues that can be pinpointed using GPS and would be most user-friendly and efficient.
- Jennifer Buison suggested that an app can identify the jurisdiction of the complaint and the issue can be redirected to them.
- Lisa concluded by agreeing that an app could be really useful in this situation and can also improve transparency as people can follow up on. There is need of a commitment to follow up on the issues generated by the app.

Yvonne Mikalopas, NJDOH insisted that education should go hand in hand with safety. She highlighted that cars do not yield to pedestrians or cyclists on crosswalks. It seems like road users are having issues with the rules of the road. Education might play an important role in tackling this problem.

- Jennifer Buison will follow up on the present state of the education committee. She also suggested adding a sub chair to this committee while education was absorbed into safety. This would help the chair keep track on the education action items and make sure they are accounted for.

Meeting closed as everyone was directed to the online general meeting room.