



**Safety BPAC Subcommittee Meeting
September 22, 2016, 9:30 – 10:30am
Rutgers University
33 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ**

Attendees:

Andy Anderson – ECLTSP
Doug Gilberl – NJTIP
Andras Holzmann – Somerset County
Alan Huff – SJTPO
Sean Meehan – Rutgers – VTC
Joseph Milanese – Michael Baker
Mark Tozzi – NJDOT Safety
Ruchi Shrivastava – WSP PB

Summary:

Alan Huff began the meeting by proposing that members play a more proactive role in identifying DOT needs and picking projects accordingly.

First, members should investigate systemic solutions rather than location-specific solutions. High-risk locations often do not show up in the data. The systemic approach involves picking a general trait, developing a solution, and applying the solution to locations with the trait in question.

Second, there is interest in improving the safety of midblock crossings. DOT is specifically interested in passive detection. There is need for research on domestic and international best practices. Members recognized the importance of enforcement and suggested placing an early warning line before pedestrian crosswalks in order to better communicate expectations to drivers and safe crossing times to pedestrians.

Third, there is a need for greater data standardization and easy feedback from pedestrians and cyclists. Of particular interest are near misses. More research should be done on how states and cities are addressing this need. One potential avenue of data collection could be transportation apps.

Fourth, more information is needed on best practices for lighting at intersections and transit stops. Cities often focus on fulfilling only minimum standards.

A meeting will be held before the next BPAC. Alan Huff will send out an email shortly to check on availability. Members should research warning lines before this meeting.



Long Notes

Alan Huff opened the conversation by recalling DOT safety priorities as gleaned from a recent meeting:

1. A systemic approach versus an incident-specific approach.
 - a. Focus on addressing general types of situations rather than specific crash locations.
2. Need to improve midblock crosswalks.
 - a. DOT is interested in greater passive detection at these crossings.
 - b. Investigate domestic and international best practices. North Carolina and Iowa as potential examples.
3. Improved lighting at transit stops.
 - a. Moving cities above meeting minimum standards.
4. Standardized and expanded bike/pedestrian data.
 - a. We need to better understand near misses.
 - b. Potential for transportation apps to crowdsource data collection.

Andy Anderson on how to address the question of midblock crosswalks:

1. Fear among drivers of stopping, inviting pedestrian into the crosswalk, and having another driver pass them and endanger the pedestrian.
2. Potential of current policy to embolden pedestrians to the point of engaging in unsafe behavior.
3. Proposed solution: an early warning line to help delineate distances.
 - a. Signals to pedestrians when to cross.
 - b. Provides drivers information on the need to watch pedestrians.
4. The value of early flashing and signs, potential reduce "blocking the box."
 - a. Drawback of paint: high maintenance costs, potential for slick surfaces if excessively applied.
5. Excessive emphasis on enforcement rather than engineering changes.
6. Any movement forward on this idea would require experimental status with NJDOT, similar to painted bike lanes.
7. Andy Anderson expanded the challenge to general confusion over pedestrian rights and restrictions.
 - a. Problem of midblock crosswalks as arising from unsafe intersection crossings.
 - b. Lack of clarity about how cross signs work, short intervals leading to disproportionate number of fatalities among pedestrians 55 to 64.
 - c. Side discussion on eliminating right turns on red:
 - i. Andy Anderson: need for total elimination.
 - ii. Mark Tozzi on DOT preference for restrictions at particular intersections and times of day.



- iii. Value of light specifically for right turns. Joseph Milanese adds that there is Crash Modification Factor (CMF) analysis on this question.
8. Returning to the question of a warning line: there would need to be an investigation into potential liability issues.
9. Potential application of warning lines in Newark.
10. The importance of preserving the narrative in experimenting with new policies.
 - a. The distracted driving bill as a reform that was derailed by a negative narrative.

Potential action items going forward

1. Ruchi Shrivastava suggests looking into whether Waze or a similar app might enable pedestrians and cyclists to report problems and near misses.
 - a. Potential for health apps related to walking and running to fill this role.
 - b. Potential problems associated with distracted pedestrians.
2. Reaching out to bike clubs and law enforcement to promote awareness of cycling rules.

Alan Huff closes by proposing a meeting before the next BPAC.

1. Focus on researching what apps pedestrians and cyclists currently use. What percentage of cyclists uses these apps?
2. Learn more about current practices related to warning lines.
3. An email will be sent out shortly to check on availability.

At 10:25 am the meeting ended so members could attend the BPAC general meeting.

Next conference call: TBA