

# **NYSAMPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Working Group Meeting**

Wednesday September 12, 2013

## **MEETING NOTES**

### **1. Introductions**

MPOS:

A/GFTC – Kate Mance

CDTC – Sandy Misiewicz, Jen Ceponis

ECTC – Scott Shaw

GTC – Bob Torzynski (phone)

HOCTS – Matt VanSlyke

OCTC – Chad Wade, John Czamanske

PDCTC – Emily Dozier

SMTC – Danielle Krol

UCTC – David Staas

NYSDOT:

NYSDOT Main Office –Cathy Kuzsman, Mary Harding (phone), Korie McAllister, Eric Ophardt

Region 2 – Sharon Heyboer

Region 4 – Bruce Cunningham (phone)

Region 7 – Lynn Godeck (phone)

Region 8 – Lisa Mondello, Jim Rapoli

Region 9 – Mark Bowers

Region 10 – Lanny Wexler

NYBC – Josh Wilson

NYSAMPO Staff: Steve Gayle, RSG (phone); Corey Mack, RSG

### **2. Review of Pressing Issues from Written Summaries**

#### **a) Feedback / Discussion of Best Roles for Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Councils (BPACs)**

Dozier requested further information on how the CDTC and other MPOs were working with BPACs. Ceponis described her experience with BPACs: monthly meetings, of about 20 participants with an email distribution list of about 50. The task force is intended to provide an opportunity to provide feedback on bicycle and pedestrian issues by transportation and community advocates. The CDTC BPAC will review plans and be involved in vision updates. Members of the CDTC BPAC include Capital Gardens, Dept of Health, AARP, Office of Aging, Dept of State, local planners, DOT and others. Faith based organizations have not been recruited but would be welcome. At first, BPAC membership was appointed but has since grown to allow organizations to join on their own. Wexler suggested that BPAC membership may include vehicle-focused advocates, such as DOT designers, traffic engineers, or AAA.

Bowers suggested that BPACs may be used to promote Complete Streets understanding.

Misiewicz stated that there are also task forces specifically for Complete Streets.

Czamanske suggested that the BPACs may consider organizing events to evaluate the condition of bicycle and pedestrian transportation in the field, supporting site walks and bike rides with leadership to highlight the challenges. Bowers related Region 9 has participated in police escorted rides through bicycle and pedestrian constrained facilities with the DPW, City, DOT and elected officials with positive results.

#### **b) Best Practices for Bicycle and Pedestrian Counts**

Dozier: have been conducting bicycle and pedestrian counts on a quarterly basis, now doing these counts every September. The counts are conducted for on- and off-road facilities and require considerable effort in organizing volunteers and data entry. Do any of the other MPOs or Regions have a different method?

Mance: looked into a camera / video based system but it was expensive. It required either digital analysis fees (dollars per hour of recording) or paying someone to watch the video and manually counting. The video was convenient for verification purposes – it can be watched again.

Misiewicz: CDTC encourages bicycle and pedestrian counts to be integrated into intersection TM counts and built into GIS data base.

Wade: OCTC traffic studies may include bicycle and pedestrian counts; a planning or permitting department may have counts.

Bowers: have seen infrared counters installed, but these have limitations – the counters need to be used on dedicated trails, it can't count intersections or decision points, must be used across a point along a corridor, and may miscount multiple people or bikes passing simultaneously.

Ceponis: Parks and Trails does automated counts, not sure how, but she will look into what their system is.

**Ceponis to determine the automated count system employed by Parks and Trails for counts.**

#### **c) Bike Parking Map**

Dozier: using GPS to locate and create a base map of bike racks and other parking. The GPS units are more expensive, but allow multiple fields to be coded into the data. Phones are good, but not as accurate or complete.

Wexler: along State highway right-of-way, Regional bike/ped coordinators reviewing highway permits should request bike racks from permittees where feasible.

The bicycle parking map will likely be maintained through field work and interns. Keeping the map up to date does require considerable effort. Given the wide spectrum of stakeholders, it may be possible to recruit help from other organizations such as AARP, Department of Health, bicycle advocates, schools, or others.

It may be possible to create a public internet based map, such as Google Maps, that anyone could drop a point or pin at a bike rack location. These points for racks could be verified in Streetview. Unfortunately, Streetview represents a snapshot in time and may not be up to date. Verification would likely still require field investigation.

#### **d) Regional Bike Routes – Coordination and Making Connections**

Bowers: developed criteria to identify potential bicycle routes. The process involved identifying which corridors satisfy these criteria and including as a data feature in the NYSDOT GIS database. When work programs come through, the DOT will have information that indicates that these routes are suitable or preferred for biking, and bicycle considerations can be addressed. Coordinating beyond the MPO and Regional boundaries would be preferable to ensure that these preferred routes, beyond the identified state bicycle routes, are consistent.

The group largely agreed that the existing and preferred network of bicycle routes should be consistent between Regions. The New York State Bike Route Plan is 20 years old and should be updated – this would need to be added to next year’s Work Plan. **Reigle and Mendoza to coordinate an update to the state bicycle route plan. Gayle to put update on directors agenda.**

Rapoli: Include through routes and scenic routes, and on- and off-road, and ideally shopping, restaurants, places to stay, historical markers, and other tourism enhancing opportunities.

To ensure bicycle needs are considered during planning, design, and construction of improvements along these identified “preferred” corridors, the group discussed the importance of participation throughout the project development process. Beyond identifying these preferred corridors, Region and MPO staff need to reference these corridors to upcoming projects.

#### **e) Recent Best Practices or Other Successes to Share**

Mance and others will be presenting “International Approaches to Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning” at the 2013 Annual Conference for the NY Upstate Chapter APA and ASLA in Schenectady, September 25 - 27.

Bowers: the successful partnership between municipalities, NYSDOT, and MPOs was highlighted by the recent rebranding of the Two Rivers Greenway by BMTS. The MPO hired a consultant, prepare design guide, and all impacted municipalities were involved and contributed through planning, design, and implementation. The signs will be installed this spring.

The group wanted more feedback on the issue of sidewalk maintenance policy and liability based on Ithaca’s recent experience. **deAragón to discuss at next meeting.**

### **3. Complete Streets Fact Sheet Update**

Gayle: the Complete Streets Fact Sheet has been updated with the creation of an addendum. The text has been revised and circulated to the B/P and Safety Working Groups, and the Directors. A list of local governments with complete streets policies has not been included – the list changes too often. Instead refer to Complete Streets section of the NYSDOT website

(<https://www.dot.ny.gov/programs/completestreets>); municipalities need to contact NYSDOT to be included on this list.

Updates to the Fact Sheet include: incorporating complete streets in simplified paving projects, also other low cost improvements; goods movements in complete streets designs; closing paragraph on complete streets implementation.

The Fact Sheet is near completion. Additional comments from the Working Group are welcome, looking for more comments and photos of applications from the group. The Fact Sheet is intended to be available at the AMPO conference in October. **Working Group to submit additional comments or photos for the Complete Streets Fact Sheet to Gayle.**

Van Slyke: comment – in the implementing complete streets section, “use accessible signals”. Shouldn’t all signals be designed for accessibility with audible – tactile devices? HAWK should be noted only as an example for mid-block crossings.

Gayle: change reference to MUTCD for crossing treatments, as acceptable treatments change. The Fact Sheet audience is intended for MPO member agencies including NYSDOT planning staff, primarily to educate and inform, not necessarily for the public. Reference to MUTCD should be acceptable.

Torzynski: Rochester has some complete streets details and photos for re-allocating street space. **Torzynski to send information and photos on complete streets applications in Rochester to Gayle.**

#### 4. Work Plan Implementation

##### a) Survey of past TEP, SRTS, Rec Trails funding recipients

Misiewicz: working with the subcommittees to compiling questions for the survey of past recipients of federal funding. The idea is to develop the survey with as few open ended questions as possible and understand the experience of working with HSIP, Recreational Trails, TEP, and SRTS funding sources.

Van Slyke: Some of the information may be available from NYSDOT databases, like project names, numbers contacts, etc. [Note that FHWA made the data available at last meeting.] Maybe this could help limit the number of questions.

Misiewicz: looking for honest evaluation. Project sponsor may have different opinion on federal funding experience than designer, project manager, or others. Additionally, the files may not have all the necessary information.

NYSDOT and MPOs are to coordinate to distribute surveys within their regions; NYSDOT is to send out the surveys to the rural recipients.

The survey should focus on results and impact on the community. Basic information should include project contact information for the person filing out the survey, their title, and their role in the project. Questions should focus on “Community Benefit”, “Implementation”, “Cost / Schedule”, “Would you do this project again?” “Have you done multiple?” “Is it easier the second time?” “Was it a good use of the money?” It was discussed that the survey should be as easy as possible to complete.

## **b) Driving Exam question(s)**

The Driving Exam questions have been submitted to the group for review but no action has been taken. **RSG to recirculate last permutation of the possible questions to the group.**

## **c) Bike Ped Checklist**

Kuzsman: Main Office has been preparing Complete Streets checklist and will involve the bicycle and pedestrian coordinator in the development process. The Complete Streets checklist will be released as an Engineering Bulletin (EB,) incorporating and replacing the Bicycle and Pedestrian checklist with the addition of consideration of all users of the transportation system (bicycle, pedestrian, transit, more). The Complete Streets checklist should be completed in January. Bicycle and Pedestrian coordinators will have an opportunity to review.

There is no checklist specifically for identification of pedestrian generators. Generator questions will be added in complete streets checklist.

Heyboer suggested that a section of “best practices” for low cost Complete Streets treatments and alternatives is included. **Bowers to send Kuzsman issues for consideration in the checklist.**

Heyboer: How will the checklist treat projects that have just enough money for repaving, but not for the improvements suggested by the checklist? Kuzsman: The checklist will document the consideration of these improvements, and if funds are not immediately available they will not be required. The checklist will be suggested to be completed for all projects, but implementation is up to the Region. Maintenance projects are not required under the State law to include consideration of Complete Streets improvements in the final project.

Heyboer – There are three workshops relating to the Complete Streets checklist coming up at CDTC, BMTS, and NYMTC. The attendees will include design staff. The CDTC workshop is slightly different with more statewide organizations. These workshops will not be open to the public. **Kuzsman to update group on workshops at next meeting.**

Wilson and Czamanske suggested that workshop attendees include economic development and tourism officials to ensure that the benefit of walking and biking to the local economy is addressed.

Misiewicz: suggest engaging communities and identifying municipalities who want to participate in the application of Complete Streets treatments. These communities should be given priority on checklist application and timing. The checklist needs to be used early in the process.

Bowers: Is there a standard process in applying these checklists among Regions? Kuzsman: application of the checklist is determined by the Region; the checklist is meant as a tool to help Regions ensure design criteria are addressed.

## **5. Opportunities for Collaboration with Safety Working Group**

Misiewicz: the opportunity for collaboration between groups has focused on data sharing, specifically data related to bicycle and pedestrian crashes. An effort is underway to map bicycle and pedestrian crash data. All MPOs have access to crashes records but not crash reports. Access is most likely given to three MPO staff members: likely the safety working group rep, the GIS manager, and one other.

The group was interested in ensuring that this data is used to appropriately inform decision making and infrastructure investment.

**Misiewicz to share the bicycle and pedestrian projects that have been funded from HSIP. Group to share specific bicycle and pedestrian issues and concerns to Regional Safety Evaluation Team.**

Analyze, and map data on GIS; how to extract bicycle and pedestrian crashes, injuries, and fatalities; how to determine if the single bike crash is an anomaly / random event, or systemic issue; an explanation into the goals and purpose of the HSIP program, what is eligible, and how can it be used.

Misiewicz: recently developed and launched an assessment model for use on Route 5. The model is meant to be replicated across the state to identify crash characteristics.

**Ceponis to forward press release and share initial assessment results at next meeting.**

Misiewicz: Safety Assessments should cost about \$20,000. The group discussed concerns with recommendations and liability – if you discover an unsafe condition during an assessment and don't address, the municipality may be liable. If you cannot address the issue right away, the municipality needs a documented long term plan to address the issues.

**Working Group to contact Misiewicz with more Safety / Bike-Ped Working Group collaboration opportunities.**

## 6. NYSDOT Initiatives

### a) Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) Update:

The final round of TEP grant applications are being reviewed by the Regions. Kuzsman and Harding had no updates.

BMTS had 8 applications; Region 8 had 10 applications; NYMTC received 40 applications with funding for 6-8 projects; Region 3 had 8 applications: 2 from SMTC, 2 from ITCTC, 3 from rural municipalities; Region 1 received 20 applications; Region 6 received 10 applications; Region 4 received 14 applications.

Deadline for reviews and recommendations is October 4.

### b) Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Update:

Kuzsman: A TAP Working Group of NYSDOT and MPO representatives has been convened with many topics of discussion, including funding targets, solicitation process, review process, and allocation for urban and rural areas.

Kuzsman: There will be two years of funding (FY 2013 and 2014) with one solicitation. Tentative schedule: program announcement in January; workshops January – March; applications due May; grant awards announced September. All TEP categories are included in TAP, \$28 million per year, minus \$2 million for the Recreational Trails program. The total TAP solicitation funding is \$52 million.

**c) Complete Streets**

As discussed in 4.c, there are three workshops relating to the Complete Streets coming up at the CDTC, BMTS, and NYMTC. These workshops will be open to MPOs, municipalities and bicycle and pedestrian advocates. Other workshops in other regions will be organized

**d) Status of Policy on Rumble Strips**

Kuzsman: the shoulder application rumble strip policy should be expected next summer. Until then there is no official policy on the application of shoulder rumble strips.

**Mendoza to highlight changes to past shoulder rumble strip policy at next meeting.**

**e) Status of Policy on Shared Lane Markings (Sharrows)**

Kuzsman: the Sharrow Policy should be expected in early 2014. The policy applies only to replacement of existing or placement of new sharrows. Existing sharrows will not be impacted.

Regulatory “BIKES MAY USE FULL LANE” signs are removed from the NY supplement to the MUTCD. An “IN LANE” supplemental plaque is instead recommended.

**RSG to recirculate draft Sharrow Policy.**

**f) Raised Crosswalk Engineering Instruction (EI)**

Kuzsman: Raised crosswalk EI is likely to be signed very soon.

**Kuzsman to send link to Raised Crosswalk EI when it is available.**

**g) Other NYSDOT Initiatives**

Kuzsman: EI 13-021 – Guidance for Pavement Marking Operations: Required Installation of Cards, Travel Lane Adjustments and Shoulder Lane Adjustment Engineering Instruction which directs the widening of shoulders, should be approved soon.

**Kuzsman to send link to Pavement Marking Operations EI when it is available.**

Chapter 18 of the NYSDOT Highway Design Manual – Pedestrian Facility Design - is in the process of being updated.

**Mendoza to highlight potential changes to Chapter 18 of the Highway Design Manual at the next meeting.**

**h) Status of Bike Map Printing**

Ophardt: RFP for bike map development and printing is still being developed. The statewide map will show routes and state facilities, but not including private facilities such as lodging, restaurants, or other activities.

Bike map should show points of interest, such as historical features. Could offer opportunity to coordinate with byways program?

**Ophardt to share Bike Map Printing RFP with group when developed.**

## 7. Work Plan Review

Czamanske: suggest uploading the Work Plan to Google Drive or Sharepoint so the document could be editable and living.

The 2013 Work Plan needs to be reviewed for the status of the current items. The Work Plan needs to be updated and progress measures need to be identified.

### a. Possible 2014 Work Plan Items:

- GTSC grant with Alta to compile all the bike-ped data. Wilson to provide more information.
- Organize purchase of count hardware. May utilize shared cost initiative to purchase count equipment.
- Continued Complete Streets training opportunities to municipalities.
- Continued collaboration with Safety Working Group.
- Fact sheet of countermeasures for bicycle and pedestrian safety, similar to PedSafe and BikeSafe. Identify appropriate countermeasures for crash patterns.
- A funding fact sheet to distribute to requests for funding mechanisms – perhaps a funding matrix of federal, state, local, private sources. (Cleaner Greener Communities, HUD, Small Cities, more). One sheet that could be emailed, and updated quarterly for upcoming deadlines and dates.
- Organize a series of off-road paths and trails for Google Streetview recording. (<http://www.google.com/help/maps/mapcontent/streetview/>)
- Additional enforcement training; develop a podcast program for bicycle and pedestrian law for short duration training; follow up with past trainings – has anything changed / what has been most effective?

**The Working Group to send additional ideas to Scott or Danielle.**

## 8. Scheduling of December and March Meetings

Thursday, December 12, 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM conference call

In person meeting in Elmira, NY – March 13, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, additional details to follow.