

D.C. Pedestrian Advisory Council

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

May 22, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Remote Public Meeting

Attendees: J.I. Swiderski, Charlotte Lee Jackson, Cheryle Adams, Dalton Howard, Ameen Beale, Heather Foote, and David Tumblin. Agency reps: George Branyan (DDOT), Rita Abou Samra (OP), Dulce Naime (DPR), Sergeant Terry Thorne (MPD).

Introductions: Foote convened the remote meeting at 7:00pm. Members introduced themselves, followed by DC agency representatives.

AGENCY REPORTS

DPR: Naime provided no updates other than reporting on DPR's continued work on the final version of "Ready to Play."

OP: Abou Samra provided an update on the Downtown Public Realm Plan, whose internal working group had its kick-off several weeks ago. They recently identified their internal working group and had their kickoff 2-3 weeks ago. Naime, along with other agency and community organization stakeholders, comprise the group. Community engagement is expected in June. OP Project co-lead is Tim Maher. This project is part of the Mayor's post-covid downtown recovery efforts. In the project's Phase I, "Streets for People," OP identified five BIDs (Downtown, Golden Triangle, DuPont Circle, Adams Morgan, and Mount Vernon) and provided Public Space Activation grants. These are now being evaluated for lessons learned, along with the Streatery and other programs. This work is in tandem with the Mayor's Come Back Plan and discussion around introducing residential use in downtown. Abou Samra will advise PAC members of public meetings. In response to questions, she said that she's also working in collaboration with the Downtown BID Pedestrian Safety and Access Plan, which is a separate project.

DDOT: Branyan presented Karyn McAllister's report and added additional updates. The Street Smart Campaign was kicked off on April 13th in Wheaton with a press event attended by regional safety leaders including DDOT deputy director, Sharon Kershbaum. It generated 10 media stories and included crosswalk enforcement conducted by MPD. Other project activities included ads on transit, shelters, and billboards, and education exhibits at DMV offices on Benning Road and Rhode Island Avenue. In the District, enforcement was conducted and 320 tickets were issued from April 10th to 15th, including one for a driver going 30 MPH over the speed limit. Three arrests were made for people with outstanding warrants. The Vision Zero program has been moved from DDOT to The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Operations and Infrastructure (DMOI). With the departure of Vision Zero director Linda Bailey, staff include Acting Director Charlie Willson and Transportation Specialist Christine Mayeur. A new project on efforts to reduce speeding will target 30,000 people in the DMV area. Text messages will be sent to drivers who already received speeding and red light citations to communicate that they are at risk of hurting themselves or someone else based on their past driving behavior. The practice is called social norming messaging. It communicates that you think you are a safe driver but you are actually a risky driver. Drivers may receive texts, letters, or both, to determine which method may have an effect. The project also includes an interview portion. In-depth interviews with a subset of individuals identified by the predictive risky driver model will be conducted to get nuanced feedback on what motivates people and to identify what messages will or won't resonate with drivers. The goal is to use this information to design

campaigns to reach risky drivers more effectively. Finally, the Vision Zero team is placing decals at ground level that explain safety improvements such as pedestrian refuge zones, curb extensions, center median islands and bus platforms at three locations in each Ward. Ward 8 will have four locations.

PAC members requested a copy of the report and said this activity responds to PAC recommendations for more non-electronic public information so that residents understand infrastructure countermeasures to increase safety. Branyan said he could check with the Vision Zero Team on how it would be assessed. In response a question, Branyan explained DDOT's use of "transit signals" which allows queue jumping so that the bus is allowed to go forward 5-6 seconds ahead of other traffic. Swiderski said in Ward 1 there are such signals at 16th & U as well as at Irving crossing 16th Street where H2 and H4 don't have bus lanes. Foote asked Branyan about the status of the current law that was on the books to allocate a portion ATE camera revenue to Vision Zero projects and whether it was rescinded. In response to a question, Branyan said the Council approved funding for a new Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator and also a Sidewalk Gap Program Manager to do more sidewalk gap work, as well as funds for DDOT to do 25 school area safety studies. DDOT had previously done 18 studies. DDOT is actually trying to do 30, and is working on a procurement for a more expanded safety analysis contract.

MPD: Sergeant Thorne reported that the uncontrolled sidewalk enforcement on Good Hope Road resulted in 24 tickets. He noted that this was better compliance compared with that on Georgia Avenue and Bladensburg Road.

NEW BUSINESS:

FY24 Budget: Foote referred to the May 16th "mark-up" of the FY24 DDOT budget by the Committee of the Whole and invited comment. Swiderski noted that next week's second vote by the committee will be the Council's last action on the upcoming year's budget. There are two bills coming up for this second and final vote. Foote summarized a meeting called by DDOT Director Lott for advisory council chairs and the WABA and GGW executives. The meeting focused on the Mayor's call for the K Street Transitway as part of her vision of downtown revitalization. The Council did not fully fund the transitway, which allowed for funding for three Circulated routes that had been slated for elimination. The PAC had supported restitution of funding for the three routes. The Circulator routes will be re-visited in March 2024.

Consideration of draft PAC testimony: The PAC was invited to present testimony at the May 23rd Roundtable on Traffic Enforcement. The testimony under consideration is independent from the joint statement adopted at the April 24th PAC meeting; in the upcoming roundtable, each of the three advisory councils will present its own testimony, and the joint statement will be entered into the hearing record. Swiderski led a discussion on the draft testimony. Foote recalled that the PAC has consistently focused on re-engineering of the road and other safety measures. The PAC has supported enforcement through the ATE program since 2019 with the understanding and very strong recommendation that a portion of the revenue from those fines go towards promoting Vision Zero. A version of that was passed into law, although the FY24 budget ended that revenue stream to the Vision Zero program. Testimony encourages continuing efforts to support Vision Zero, and shows how Vision Zero supports pedestrian safety through re-engineering. Tumblin introduced a motion to approve testimony as written with minor, non-substantive changes to be made as discussed. Adams seconded the motion. The motion passed with the seven members present voting in favor. The joint statement was re-approved with 6 votes in favor, with one member absent. It was unclear if Beale would be available to testify and Swiderski offered to serve as potential back-up. PAC members also approved a slight modification in the joint statement adopted at the April meeting; it will be included in the joint statement presented at the roundtable.

ADMINISTRATIVE TOPICS

Approval of minutes: There were no draft minutes to approve. They will be circulated at a later date.

Treasurer's Report: There were no credits or debits on the PAC checking account during the month of April 2023. The beginning and ending balance is \$8,245. There are two checks, one from march for \$120 and another for April for \$416 being processed. That will take the account to a balance of \$7,210 dollars in May.

Next meetings: June 26th & July 24th: Foote opened a discussion on meeting topics for June and July. Councilmember Henderson's appointee will no longer be able to join the PAC. Swiderski has reached out to contacts regarding their interest in serving on the PAC. Foote said there are a number of PAC vacancies that need to be filled. She proposed a discussion about onboarding for new PAC members at the June meeting. PAC members shared expectations for new members and administrative support. There are two remaining PAC meetings prior to officer elections at the September meeting. Adams pointed out there is a time commitment required greater than simply attending monthly meetings. Swiderski said it would be important to have written expectations for all members, and the officers in particular.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:19pm.