

REGIONAL PEDESTRIAN COMMITTEE

Minutes

19 October 2006

Attendees

Roger Bazeley

John Knox White

Heath Maddox

Lisa Klein

Cole Portocarrero

Ana Validzic

Jason Patton

Rochelle Wheeler

Lucy Wicks

Nancy Baer

Beth Thomas

Sean Co

I. Introductions

Vice-chair Jason Patton called the meeting to order and asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Summary of August Meeting

Brad Beck volunteered to take minutes. Jason Patton volunteered to do the minutes for the next meeting, assuming that the chair is back.

Sean Co noted that MTC would send a letter to public works directors on MTC's resolution on routine accommodation. The timeline is for MTC to adopt the routine accommodation checklist in early 2007.

Bike Plan and Routine Accommodation Consultant Update

Sean Co noted that MTC had selected the Eisen/Letunic and Fehr and Peers team for the RBP and routine accommodation scope, which was included, along with the timeline, in the meeting packet.

Sean asked for volunteers to serve on a subcommittee that would help develop the routine accommodation checklist. The subcommittee would be made up of representatives from the Regional Bicycle Working Group (RBWG) and Local Streets and Roads Committee (LSRC) as well as this committee. He said they hoped to hold the meeting next week. He thought that, because the schedule was so short, the time commitment would be relatively slight. The current schedule was to present a draft checklist to the LSRC at their November 3 meeting. Jason asked if it wouldn't be better if they only took a general statement of approach instead. The consensus was that November 3 was too short a time for the subcom-

MINUTES

Regional Pedestrian Committee

Page 2

mittee to provide meaningful comments on a draft. Sean and Lisa Klein agreed to consider taking the draft to the December LSRC meeting instead.

Jason, Rochelle Wheeler and Brad Beck volunteered to serve on the committee.

Strategic Highway Safety Plan Update

Sean noted that the plan was recently completed and signed off on. It identified 16 areas to study for implementation and raised a number of questions on funding and implementation that still need to be resolved. Caltrans still needs members for several committees.

To learn more about the SHSP, contact Jesse Bhullar (Jesse.Bhullar@dot.ca.gov or (916) 654-5026) or visit the following webpage:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/survey/SHSP/>

Jason noted that this was an opportunity to bring more attention (and dollars) to issues of safety for bicyclists and pedestrians who have disproportionately bad safety statistics.

Nancy Baer noted that California has higher share of pedestrian fatalities (as a percentage of all fatalities) than the nation as a whole (17 percent compared to 11 percent). Ana Validzic noted that the latest NTSA statistics showed the national share rising to 14 percent. Beth Thomas said that Richard Hagstrom at Caltrans was a good contact although, because he travels a lot for training, he may be hard to get a hold of. Roger Bazeley also noted the safety issues faced by older drivers.

TALC TravelChoice Study

John Knox White from the Transportation and Land Use Coalition reported on the evaluation of TALC's TravelChoice Program. This program, which began in April 2006 in Alameda, was designed to reduce driving and increase physical activity. In it, households were contacted, by phone or door-by-door, and asked to identify obstacles keeping household members from using "environmentally-friendly" modes of travel. Surveyors then identified ways of overcoming these obstacles. The program targeted *all* trips, not just utilitarian trips, and *all* environmentally-friendly modes, and emphasized the health benefits of increased physical activity. Examples of support provided included personalized bus schedules between the nearest bus stop and the person's destination, brochures on using transit, and pedometers.

Nelson|Nygaard (NNA) was hired to conduct a survey of the program's effectiveness. They began by collecting baseline data in March, before the program began, and conducted follow-up after the program ended in May. The survey results included the 30 percent of households contacted but declining to participate. The survey found the "drive-alone" rate

MINUTES

Regional Pedestrian Committee

Page 3

dropped 14.1 percent while the number of trips made by environmentally-friendly modes increases 13.3 percent. The biggest percentage increase was for bicycling (a 183 percent increase) while the biggest numerical increase was for transit (although the numerical increases for transit, carpooling and bicycling were very close to each other). John said that increases in gas prices during the outreach period didn't have a significant impact on changes in behavior. He also said that TALC will survey next year as well; other programs have found that the changes "stick".

The program was an outgrowth of the TALC strategic plan. They hope to eventually get 60 percent of the households in the Bay Area to get training.

Rochelle asked if TALC sees itself as an ongoing resource. John said that, no, the program is designed as a one-time outreach to change behavior. He said that 40–60 percent of the households asked for walking information. Jason thought that it would be good to estimate linked trips to understand the role that walking plays in increases in transit trips.

He suggested that comparing Fruitvale and Alameda could help us understand how facilities, the physical environment, and socio-economic conditions affect the shift to other modes. Sean thought it would be good to fund a study area that better matched the average Bay Area demographic. John responded that Alameda does represent communities in the Bay Area but that they would never be able to replicate the diversity of the whole Bay Area. Roger suggested emphasizing trip chaining.

City of Berkeley Pedestrian Plan

Heath Maddox reported on the City of Berkeley's use of GIS to estimate pedestrian activity as part of their pedestrian plan. The City hopes to complete the plan in early 2007. A key component of the plan is the use of a pedestrian activity model. The model builds on a newly-digitized layer of sidewalks, crosswalks and ramps and land use data to forecast pedestrian activity and analyze pedestrian exposure. The data required was fairly extensive. Besides digitizing 50-year-old vellums of facilities, the City created updated information from "machine vision tapes" prepared by the Fire Department.

The data was sent to Space Syntax in London to generate estimated pedestrian volumes and exposure to collisions. The Space Syntax report reported not only the absolute number of pedestrian collisions but also the number of collisions by pedestrian volumes and vehicle volumes. The City's consultant then generated a list of potential projects.

Rochelle asked if the assessment of the number of pedestrian collisions by pedestrian and vehicle volumes was the focus of the study. Heath said they were important but the absolute number of collisions was important as well. Roger suggested that the data on infrastructure could be used to determine standards for pedestrian facilities. Jason suggested

MINUTES

Regional Pedestrian Committee

Page 4

that the City give the data to UCB to analyze matched pairs of intersections to determine which physical treatments work best.

Work Plan discussion

Sean noted that he will have an update on the work plan at the December meeting. Jason asked if we identify specific tasks from the scope that the RPC would work on in 2007.

Nancy mentioned what she said could be a potential new item. A 2005 conference held in San Francisco identified policies and actions to create more walkable communities, but there is nobody to carry them forward. The RPC is one possible group. Another would be the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Group (made of reps from various health departments) who are working with the Bay Area Planning Directors. Lisa Klein asked how MTC, with its more limited focus, could deal with many of those policies. Jason said that he saw the RPC's role as 1) advising MTC and 2) regional information sharing. He thought the walkable communities policies could be part of the latter role.

Jason suggested that the work program subcommittee could do its review via email. Lisa suggested that she and Sean could work over the tasks. Beth asked how training might fit into the work program. She also noted that some items in the State Bike Plan are stalled.

Info-sharing

- a) **FHWA Training.** Beth noted that FHWA will hold additional training sessions on developing pedestrian safety plans. They plan to expand the design training session to two days. Notice of the training sessions will be released in December. Nancy noted that the planning training could be especially useful if a number of staff from the same jurisdiction attended together. Then they could work together on an issue specific to their community.
- b) **MTC Training.** Sean said that MTC is looking for suggestions for training programs. Lisa said that they might consider subsidizing staff attendance at existing training sessions.
- c) **SRTS.** The Safe Routes to School in the federal transportation legislation (the acronym is SRTS as opposed to SR2S for the State program) is beginning. Jason noted that it was more open to training and outreach and to a broader range of groups than the State program.
- d) **FriendlyStreets.org.** Roger suggested that attendees visit the friendlystreets.org website. There are links there to the Autumn Workshop of the STAC (Holiday Inn (Hyatt) San Jose, California, October 24-26).