

Virginia Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Winter Meeting Notes  
January 27th, 2015  
10:00am to 2:30pm

**Attendees:**

Howard Albers, Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling (FABB)  
Andy Alden, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI)  
John Bolecek, VDOT Central Office  
Nick Britton, DRPT  
Champe Burnley, VBF  
Adam Campbell, VDOT Fredericksburg  
David Cook, VDOT Lynchburg  
Travis Davidson, TBA  
James Durham, Alexandria BPAC  
Cindy Engelhart, VDOT NOVA  
Mack Frost, FHWA Virginia Division  
Kelly Hitchcock, Central VA MPO  
Robert Hofrichter, VDOT Central Office  
David Patton, Arlington County  
George Rogerson, VDOT Central Office  
Eric Stringfield, VDOT Hampton Roads  
Bud Vye, VBF & RABA  
Vanessa Wigand, DOE  
Shawn Winter, VDOT transitioning to DRPT  
Rick Youngblood, VDOT Lynchburg  
Peter Ohlms, VDOT VCTIR

**Suggested changes to driving manual—Vanessa Wigand—Dept. of Education (DOE)**

- DOE and DMV are piloting a process for getting a learner’s permit online. There is a high rate of failure for the current in person test and the pass rate is less than 50%.
- DOE contributes suggestions to the DMV manual each year, the curriculum is available online and has been vetted in schools for two decades.
- DOE teaches children to walk their bikes across street even though the law allows bicycles to ride through crosswalks. DMV will not place this in Drivers Manual because they want to promote safety for all highway transportation users.
- Discussion on whether people recognize distances as numbers (i.e. what is 200 yards? And is that helpful including in a test?)
- If a pedestrian or bicyclist is in a crosswalk, and there is no traffic signal indicating stop or don’t cross, a motorist has to yield to the bicyclist or a pedestrian.
- Shared lane markings (sharrows) need to be added to the DMV manual—Vanessa thinks she will get those in there. Some motorists don’t understand what they mean.
- Language on opening the door (“Dooring”) in front of cyclists should be included in the manual—Vanessa is pushing for this language, as well as including the 3-foot passing law.
  - It is a general safety issue and “Dooring” should be approached as a safety issue for all modes so no one hits buses or cars either - not just cyclists.
  - During in-car education, DOE requires new drivers to check mirrors prior to opening doors.

- DOE uses zone control method when teaching kids. They are shown how wide a car is, and how wide a bike is.
- DMV is 100% responsible for Driver's Manual and Vanessa makes suggestions every year. Some tests will be administered through the public schools. This is sometimes taken by people without a learner's permit. People who get tickets or other sanctions take the test, but the majority of people taking the test are people who are learning to drive.
- Most students are issued a 6-month temporary license by the driver education teacher.
- Driver's exam consists of 20 questions. 10 are related to signs and signals. They must get all of these correct to proceed to the second part of the test. Of the second 10, only 1 bicycle-related question may or may not be chosen by a computer at random. We do not know how many bicycle-related questions are in the pool as that is sensitive information.
- **ACTION ITEM: VDOT and BPAC should request to be included on committee for review.**
- It has taken Vanessa 17 years to get some access to give input on the test. DMV is very concerned about security of test.
- Pam Goddard (sp?) from NHTSA suggested that if BPAC recommended questions to go into pool that she would try to get them in there. NHTSA said they would research what bicycle-related questions were asked in other states.
- **ACTION ITEM: Review Bruce's suggestions and provide suggestions**
- Anything that we would like added to Driver's Education curriculum, Vanessa would be happy to review.

#### **Legislative update on bills being tracked by the Virginia Bicycling Federation — Bud Vye**

- Please note the following statements were valid at the time of the meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- For current information see VBF's Bill tracking Google spreadsheet which is updated at the end of every weekday: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11\\_c5tEb8-2uY3N6AKBNc9pbSfb-fs\\_xivugUC7euxNk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11_c5tEb8-2uY3N6AKBNc9pbSfb-fs_xivugUC7euxNk/edit?usp=sharing)
- HB1402 regarding maintenance payments for bike or transit lanes—passed house full committee 18 to 1 (absorbed 1502)
- VBF opposes the mandatory side path bill—used to have in 14 jurisdictions until 2004. Were eliminated ten years ago.
- SB1175 - Localities may tax bicycle rentals—Virginia already has enabling legislation to tax at 1%. VBF opposes.
- HB1342 - cleared full transportation committee 18 to 2, came through house 74 to 22, waiting for crossover, will go into Senate transportation committee.
- Crossing double yellow lines, other two bills rolled into Senator Alexander's bill. State police is now supporting bill with changes that have been made, up for passage today on floor of Senate, will crossover to House Transportation subcommittee.
- Stop for pedestrians in crosswalk went down 4-3, 12<sup>th</sup> time in 12 years. Handheld personal communication devices killed by voice vote.
- HB1542 establishes a Statewide trails advisory committee and is in subcommittee.
- A comment was made that the mandatory side path bill was too far reaching and the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) already has the authority to prohibit.

## Top 5 Technical Concerns – John Bolecek

- **Sweeping bike lanes/sidewalks** — In CTB policy, VDOT will not clear snow from sidewalks.
- **Road design manual** — Last update, included [NACTO Urban Street Design Guide](#), which complements [NACTO Bikeway Design Guide](#). Good resources if you haven't read them, provides new treatments.
- **Limited access policy** - Report requested by CTB finalized at research council, VDOT has requested that it be published, at some point VDOT will be able to implement. Research reports from VDOT now have to say who is going to implement, how much it will cost, etc. according to new guidelines. CTB requested report because they wanted a consistent policy.

### Comments regarding U.S. Bike Routes:

- VDOT can put in application from Front Royal to Harpers Ferry (currently have letter of support from Warren County). Idea to connect from C&O canal to Mountains to Sea Trail in NC.
- US Bike Route 11 was established in Maryland.

## VDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program update and Business Plan Item – John Bolecek

- The [Pedestrian policy plan](#) is finalized.
- The [Beaches to Bluegrass Plan](#) is finalized.
- Finishing Tier 1 EIS on Southeast High Speed Rail, big outreach campaign with significant number of public comments on why greenway was not included. Hope greenway will be included in Tier 2 EIS.
- US Bike route 1 realignment was approved by AASHTO in October.
- The BPAC was asked to provide input on new six-year program projects.
  - This committee will review new projects that have not yet been scoped once a year, and provide input on missed opportunities and how to inform and improve design.
  - This will improve planning's involvement in project development support.
  - Suggestion to also engage with localities as VDOT has less control over revenue sharing projects and locally administered projects.
  - The I-66 project is not in this list because it likely has already been scoped. The best place to provide public comment is at the public hearings.
  - There is a new division named Infrastructure and Investment that now develops the six-year program, headed by Kimberly Pryor.
  - John demonstrated how the map worked.
  - **Action item: E-mail comments back to John by Feb. 20.**

## Accommodation of Bicyclists on Route 10 - Peter Ohlms

- Route 10 through the village of Chester was going to be repaved and VDOT was asked what can be done for bicyclists. There is a 63 feet cross-section. No additional crash risk for urban and suburban arterials if lane width reduced to 11 ft vs. 12 ft lanes.
- 11 ft lanes are permissible for 45 mph and lower streets. Going to 10 feet is acceptable if speeds are 35 mph or less.
- Over 20,000 ADT, road diets are not as feasible.
- VDOT does not have a process in place to consider changes like this as part of routine for re-paving projects. It would be ideal to do before and after bicycle counts.

- District has authority to sign design waivers for 10.5 ft lane widths.
- George Rogerson advised that field folks are now required to take photos of existing conditions during re-paving process and compare them to standards before restriping. He also expressed concerns about including a sloped gutter pan in the width of a bike lane and noted that it can be difficult to remove a substandard bike lane after it has been provided. An example of this occurred in James City County. VDOT has a signed agreement in Fairfax to the effect that when a multi-use path is built adjacent to a facility with narrow bike lanes, those bike lanes can be removed.

### **Innovative bicycle pavement markings project - Peter Ohlms**

- Bike boxes and two-stage left turn boxes were installed in Charlottesville at the Rugby Rd and University Ave / McCormick Rd intersection as part of an experiment.
- Education is important for both bicyclists and motorists to understand new pavement markings.
- Both treatments are classified as experimental under the MUTCD.
- Too early for a conclusion on this site.
- There was discussion of the need to get some of these markings into the driver's manual.
- Research needs: at VDOT's Transportation Planning Research Advisory Committee the Value engineering process ranked 4<sup>th</sup>, driver education ranked 5<sup>th</sup> out of 7. Assessment of bicycle infrastructure projects was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> out of 9 at the Traffic and Safety Research Advisory Committee. When they get their budget this spring, they will know what research topics will make the cut. John asked for VCTIR assistance with an assessment of the 2004 bike policy.

### **Closing - John Bolecek**

- **Action item: John will find out if VDOT/BPAC can review DMV driver's manual.**
- **Action item: John will invite Dana Schrad, Association of Chiefs of Police - BPAC interested in improving communication with established body of drivers on new road treatments that accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.**
  - What is Commonwealth Attorney's role for shifting the status quo for treatment of these cases?
  - Encourage police to send reps to meetings to try and get them involved.
- **Action item: Get list of revenue sharing projects.**
- **Action item: Distribute slides of Route 10 changes.**
- Has the group ever looked at a public service announcement/video statewide to introduce new state laws or pavement markings, perhaps insurance company would fund it?
- Lynchburg is doing a video, "Together we make Lynchburg Streets".
- **Action item: Share videos at next meeting.**
- Perhaps National Safety Council would fund this?
- Jennifer asked for feedback on the PHNST Graphic Identity and way finding guide, may adopt many of these concepts for the statewide trail network.
- FHWA separated bike facility guide coming out soon.
- Portland State "Rethinking Streets" looks at already completed street projects.
- **Action item: John will send out link to recorded Webinar "Rethinking Streets"**  
Linked here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48f3fq42O8M>
- Some discussion on role of Statewide BPAC committee, role of chairman.