

Attachment 1
Draft Meeting Notes
Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force

MEETING DATE: 12/11/08

MEETING LOCATION: CMAP Offices

CALLED TO ORDER: 1:00 pm

ATTENDANCE:

(Task Force Members)

Thomas Rickert, Kane County (Chair)

Keith Privett, Chicago Department of Transportation

Richard Bascomb, Village of Schaumburg

Deborah Fagan, DuPage County

Rae Keasler, City of Aurora

Allan Mellis, FPDCC

Dave Longo, IDNR

Jonathan Tremper, Metra

Randy Neufeld, Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

Ed Barsotti, LIB

Chalen Daigle, McHenry County Council of Mayors

(Staff)

Tom Murtha, CMAP

John O'Neal, CMAP

Bob Dean, CMAP

Lori Heringa, CMAP

(Others)

Mike Sullivan, Kane/Kendall Council of Mayors

Mike Walczak, Northwest Municipal Conference

Chris Staron, Northwest Municipal Conference

Chris DiPalma, FHWA

1.0 Introductions: Attendees introduced themselves

2.0 Approval of the Minutes: Staff noted the following corrections to the minutes:

- The second sentence of fourth paragraph in the discussion on the DuPage County Regional Bikeway Plan was revised to read: “[Ms. Fagan] stated that the County will be looking at ways to focus on the development of on-road facilities.”
- The second paragraph of the Project Update discussion was revised to read “Ms. Fagan announced that a section of the Illinois Prairie Path had been selected for the Rails-to-Trails Hall of Fame.”

Motion was made and seconded for approval of the revised meeting notes. The motion was unanimously approved.

3.0 Data and Information

3.1 GO TO 2040 Plan

Mr. Murtha introduced Bob Dean, project manager for the *GO TO 2040* Regional Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Dean gave the Task Force a brief overview and update on the development of the Plan, stressing that its transportation element would be multi-modal, with a focus on the importance of bicycle and pedestrian travel as an effective way of achieving a wide range of Plan goals and objectives.

Mr. Dean stated that currently GOTO 2040 staff was looking, very broadly, at overall benefits and costs of implementing Plan strategies – for the region, in order to quantify and compare the effects of various strategies on issues such as health, congestion, economic strength, and general welfare.

Mr. Dean said that staff was using the Strategic Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian System (SRBPS) Map and data as a starting point in the analysis of the costs and benefits of having and constructing bicycling facilities. Mr. Dean added that the costs and benefits of pedestrian improvements, or facilities, are very difficult to break out from broader issues of more comprehensive strategies for land use and urban design. However, he added that staff was attempting to be as rigorous and quantitative as possible. He stated that one basic question they would be looking at was, “How would the implementation of the entire SRBPS (as envisioned in the map) affect regional travel patterns?”

Mr. Mellis asked, “What precisely did *GOTO 2040* staff plan to measure?” Mr. Dean stated that one thing they would be looking at would be the approximate number of bicycle and pedestrian trips. Mr. Dean stated that staff was aware that “facilities” were not everything, that programs and policies were an important part of increasing bicycle and pedestrian travel and the benefits which may accrue from such travel. Mr. Mellis asked whether, when looking just at facilities alone, would staff be considering, for example, racks at transit stations?

Mr. Neufeld asked what they would be using for “land use”? Mr. Dean stated that the Pedestrian Environment Factor they would be using was based simply on density – higher density areas were considered to be environments more conducive to walking and biking. Mr. Neufeld asked whether CMAP would be, or had considered, using WalkScore (www.walkscore.com), adding

that he believed it would be a better indicator than density of walkability. Mr. Dean said he would look into it further and find out whether the database behind WalkScore were available. Mr. Dean added that staff has also been considering LEED standards for neighborhood development, as a way of ‘scoring’ areas in terms of walkability, bikeability, and general sustainability. Mr. Barsotti reported that LIB had developed a sidewalk scoring system – a sort of PLOS – which may prove useful to CMAP in its PEF work. He added that Mr. Dean could find more about it on the LIB website. Mr. Murtha added that ADA rules and regulations act as the base or starting point of any analysis of a pedestrian friendly environment.

3.2 Bicycle and Crash Maps

Mr. Murtha drew attention to the new pedestrian and bicycle crash maps on the walls. Mr. O’Neal pointed out that these maps included 2007 crash data, so that there were now four years of geocoded pedestrian crash data and three years of geocoded bicycle crash data. Mr. Murtha indicated that the maps were available on CMAP website. <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/bikeped/pedsafety.aspx>

Mr. Privett informed the Task Force that incidents in which bicyclists are “doored” do not get counted as a vehicle crash. Mr. Neufeld added that because the bicyclist is hit by a ‘stationary object’, they don’t get counted in moving vehicle crashes. Mr. LaPlante asked “how do we change this?” Mr. Richert asked whether the current system of counting crashes was grounded in legislation, and Mr. Neufeld responded, “Yes, it was.” Mr. Murtha asked whether the Task Force should make a formal motion that CMAP request changes be made to legislation in order that “dooring”-type crashes be counted as moving vehicle crashes, since bicycles are in fact ‘vehicles’ and in such situations they are in fact ‘moving’. Mr. Neufeld pointed out that cycle-ped crashes also do not count. Mr. LaPlante asked whether the Task Force needed to remind IDOT that bikes are vehicles. Mr. Neufeld stated that no resolution was necessary.

4.0 Regional Bikeway Planning

4.1 Northeastern Illinois Regional Greenways and Trails Plan

Ms. Heringa gave the Task Force an update on progress on the Greenways and Trails Plan. She informed the Task Force that since their last progress update on the Plan only a few, relatively minor tweaks had been made, mainly on the advice of implementing agencies. She then asked Task Force members for any help they could give with names of trails. Mr. Longo suggested that Ms. Heringa send the maps to subregional agencies to check for accuracy and completeness. Mr. Mellis stated that the Cook County Forest Preserve had just completed a new trail map and would send a copy to Ms. Heringa.

Mr. Longo asked for an update on the Greenways portion of the Plan. Ms. Heringa stated that work was proceeding, but that in the last Plan, no clear definition of trail or of greenway were offered, so staff was now having to develop and build consensus around these definitions. On the other hand, Ms. Heringa added, we now have a Green Infrastructure Vision to guide us and with which we must coordinate our efforts. She pointed out that some of the trails and some of the greenways were along roadways.

Mr. Mellis stated that the purpose and function of the Greenways and Trails map should, essentially, be a resource that we can turn to when new development is coming and we can look at and say, ‘you see, we must preserve this as a green space’.

4.2 South Suburban Bikeway Plan; I-355 Bikeway Plan

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that there was no news to report on the South Suburban Bikeway Plan. As regards the I-355 Bikeway Plan, Mr. Murtha stated that the planning group has begun a new effort to plan/identify corridors for the bikeway. Mr. Murtha stated that the Task Force would ask for an update at the next meeting on the Skokie Valley Trail.

Mr. Privett reported that the City of Chicago and the Village of Lincolnwood have both filed for rail banking of the Weber Spur.

Mr. LaPlante reported that the Village of Wilmette has filed for rail banking for the four (4) communities partnering on the feasibility study and planning of the Skokie Valley Trail in northern Cook County.

5.0 Pedestrian and Bicycle Project Programming

5.1 Rescissions and Lapses

Mr. Murtha stated that there was no new information on rescissions. He reported that, at this point, project funds do not appear to be in danger of lapsing. He stated that efforts to move projects along have, for the most part, been successful.

Mr. Mellis asked if anyone had any news or pertinent information on the “stimulus package” being discussed in Washington.

Mr. Privett and Mr. Rickert both confirmed that there was still, at this time, differing and conflicting information about the package, and that to the best of their knowledge, the stimulus package was still being discussed and details being worked out.

Mr. Rickert stated that we will try to pull together more information on this issue for the next meeting.

5.2 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program

Referencing the handout entitled “Memorandum: Re CMAQ Bicycle and Pedestrian Programming”, Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the methodology review subcommittee had not met since the last Task Force meeting. The handout outlines possible directions the CMAQ Project Selection Process Review Subcommittee could take in developing and finalizing its recommendations. As regards the handout, Mr. Murtha asked the Task Force members whether there was anything to add or to take away from consideration.

Mr. Privett informed the Task Force that there was a new requirement, or procedural step, in CMAQ applications: namely, that Planning Liaisons must be more involved in reviewing applications in order to ensure that all application requirements are being met.

Mr. Rickert stated that this new procedure requires applicants to coordinate early and intensively with the PLs.

Mr. Murtha discussed issues relative to some of the ideas, including evaluations of on-street alternatives to off-street routes. Mr. Mellis expressed concern that this would take funding from (off road) trails. Mr. Rickert stated that it would simply remove redundancy in routes.

5.4 Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP)

Mr. Privett asked if anyone knew whether IDOT staff had finished their review of applications. Mr. Barsotti said, “Yes”, he was under the impression that IDOT had finished reviewing the applications.

The Task Force discussed the issue of “sub-allocation” of ITEP programming to the MPO. Mr. Murtha asked Mr. DiPalma what the FHWA rules were on this matter. Mr. DiPalma informed the Task Force that the rules allowed state DOTs to establish regional program marks, since TE is a subprogram of STP. He stated that it is, essentially, up to the state to decide this. Mr. Neufeld agreed that there does indeed need to be a (state) decision to set a program mark, but that, in the absence of such a decision, it is certainly appropriate to request that such a decision be made.

5.5 Safe Routes to School Program

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that applications were due December 15. Mr. Rickert asked the PLs who were present whether they had been getting many requests for information on the SRTS program. They responded, “No, not many.” Mr. Barsotti stated that it seems at this point that demand appears to be about 3 or 4 to 1, rather than 10 to 1, as was the case last year. Mr. Privett said structural issues in the application and funding process are causing large municipalities to conclude that SRTS is simply not worth the effort of their applying. Mr. Barsotti stated that this year the maximum award for an infrastructure project is \$250K, not – as was the case last year – \$400K; but that the maximum amount for non-infrastructure projects was higher, yet demand remains lower than last year nonetheless.

5.6 Project Update

Mr. Privett informed the Task Force of the near completion of the extension of the Major Taylor Trail. In addition, he stated that the City’s RFP for the Bloomingdale Trail received 23 responses, which are currently under review.

Mr. Mellis stated that Phase 1 for the North Branch Trail extension, as well as the Thorn Creek Trail, are currently under way.

6.0 Policy Planning

The Task Force engaged in a lengthy discussion of the so-called (federal) “stimulus package”: what it is – or will be – and how the region can organize “ready to go” projects, in order to obtain maximum funding. The Task Force discussed the confusion around the meaning of “ready to go” and the lack of clear, objective criteria and definitions. Mr. Murtha stated that a list of projects, which are “ready to go”, is already available in CMAP’s TIP database.

Mr. Neufeld, who recently returned from meeting in Washington with Senator Durbin’s staff, stated that the “stimulus package” may in fact be a small first step in a “staged” transportation and infrastructure investment strategy. Alternatively, it would be additional monies simply given

to state DOTs; or it could be monies given as part of, or with the structure of, the STP program. He added that if the monies bypass state DOTs, then they could be essentially “block grants” to local governments.

Mr. Neufeld stated that he believed that CMAP could play a role in collecting and organizing data on ‘what projects implementing agencies have’ and which ones are at a phase which reasonably might be called ‘ready to go’? That way, our region would have a ‘list’ to take to legislators and civic groups which have influence with legislators.

The Metropolitan Mayor’s Caucus, it was pointed out, has solicited projects from locals, but Mr. Murtha stated that he did not recall seeing any bicycle-pedestrian projects on that list. Mr. Neufeld stated that he thought that if money were made available that could be used very quickly on relatively ‘small’ projects like sidewalks, ADA ramps, crosswalk and bikeways striping, etc. that a list of such projects would be useful if it were ready this summer.

6.1 Pedestrian Safety Initiative

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the projects resulting from the Pedestrian Safety Initiative were not successful in their grant applications. However, he added that CMAP would like to continue this work and in the future focus on better graphics, enhanced data collection, and overall stronger applications.

He added that CMAP and other stakeholders will be meeting in January with Secretary Sees about Complete Streets. In the meantime, CMAP’s recommendations for changes to IDOT’s BDM are posted on the website, at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/bikeped/pedsafety.aspx>.

6.2 Soles and Spokes Plan

Mr. Murtha stated that there was nothing specific to report but that work was continuing, in the form of data collection, analysis, and policy research.

7.0 Soles and Spokes Workshop

Mr. Murtha informed the Task Force that the workshop held early this morning, entitled “The Nuts and Bolts of Implementing a Local Bikeway Plan”, was very successful, with a full house and positive feedback from presenters and participants.

8.0 Public Comment

No public comments.

9.0 Next Meeting

Next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, 2008 at 2:00 pm.

10.0 Adjournment: 3:15 PM