

Arlington Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC)  
Wednesday August 12, 2015  
Courthouse Plaza, Dogwood & Cherry Rooms  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard

Minutes (approved October 14, 2015)

Present: Dennis Jaffe, Chair; Pamela Van Hine, Vice Chair; John Armstrong; Rosemary Ciotti; Jim Feaster; Dan Foster; Eric Goldstein; David Patton; Collin Weber

Public and Invited Speakers: Stephen Roberts, Save the Ballston Pedestrian Bridge Coalition, and Claudia O'Connor, DES

### **Items of Interest:**

Items of Interest is a new PAC meeting feature for sharing information about upcoming pedestrian events and activities. L Hassel, sharing her news items through an e-mail message to the committee, covered these three items:

A revised Walkabout brochure will be published soon!

<http://www.walkarlington.com/pages/walkabouts/>

The Mobility Lab: Walk Hack Night will be held August 20 6-8PM 1501 Wilson Boulevard, Ste 1100 <http://www.walkarlington.com/pages/news-events/event-details/?eventID=2554>

The National Walking Summit is coming to Washington DC, October 28-30:

<http://walkingsummit.org/>

She noted that on October 29 Arlington County staff, WalkArlington, and guest speakers will host a "Mobile Tour" of Shirlington to showcase Arlington's smart growth/walkability program. D Patton will inquire if discounted registration will be available because of Arlington's involvement with meeting.

### **Approval of Minutes from July 2015 PAC meeting:**

The committee agreed to include edited comments from T Korn's message into a revision of the July minutes. The minutes, with planned edits, were unanimously approved by those PAC members who were also present at the July meeting. R Ciotti and D Foster abstained.

### **Invited Speaker: Claudia O'Connor, DES, Report a Problem Plans:**

Our invited speaker displayed the current Report a Problem (RAP) website and some of the background displays and generated data sets that are available to staff. She appreciated the PAC written comments on RAP and noted that several of our recommendations have been implemented. She noted that many specific improvements would need to wait until the current contract is up, in one year, and further enhancements are made to the work order management

system that links the RAPs to staff who handle the requests. Currently most incoming new RAPs are roughly sorted by RAP category and directed to relevant staff within 24 hours.

Several PAC members asked specific questions and made specific comments:

The Chair encouraged staff engagement with advisory groups and citizens to create more relevant categories and hoped that existing RAPs could be incorporated into the new system. He also asked how staff decide to follow up on RAPs (e.g. which are too complex or directed to the wrong group or organization). He suggested that this process be open and published on the RAP website to help users understand what to expect. C Webber acknowledged that not all problems may be appropriately reported through RAP because of their complexity. J Feaster suggested a clickable map to note specific addresses that were not recognized by the system.

The Vice Chair presented several problematic RAP cases – one still listed as submitted after four months, one marked complete although the project was not completed, and one marked received more than two months ago. The Committee agreed that better internal tracking and follow-up was needed, including for requests marked completed that were forwarded to other staff or other organizations.

The Chair asked about making publicly available for each post a unique URL that can be shared with others. The Vice Chair discovered later during the meeting that it does exist – but only in the e-mail message auto-generated by the RAP system, sent to the poster, acknowledging receipt of the post. Adding this URL to the actual record is highly desirable. The Chair also asked about posting multiple photos in future versions.

C O'Connor will keep us informed about the development of RAP and welcome our further participation in its development.

### **Telephone Conversation with Dennis Jaffe and Mark Schwartz, Acting County Manager:**

The Chair summarized his late July conversation with M Schwartz, the Deputy County Manager. They discussed PAC membership appointments and committee appointment processes, and the Chair followed up with a letter with attached list of current PAC “members.” The meeting also covered the County budget process, the need to involve Committees as well as Commissions earlier in the budget process, and how the PAC could be more involved in County issues with pedestrian impacts. Finally, the Chair reviewed the history of PAC activities with news boxes and sent a followup letter to M Schwartz requesting that the County take initiative to establish new regulations and enforcement standards for news boxes.

In addition to the meeting with the Acting County Manager, the Chair and Vice Chair will meet with D Goodman, Ritch Viola, and Tom Bruccoleri of DES on Thursday, August 20 to discuss enhancing the involvement of the PAC on transportation projects and activities by engaging the PAC often enough with enough information. PAC members' suggestions are sought before the meeting.

**Public Speaker: Stephen Roberts, Save the Bridge Coalition:**

S. Roberts distributed a two-page handout that summarized the history of plans to redevelop the Ballston Mall, with possible demolition of the pedestrian bridge across Wilson Boulevard, and the efforts of the Save the Bridge Coalition to keep the bridge. He noted that the bridge connects thousands of pedestrians every work day to the Metro, the Ballston Mall, and the County parking garage and is essential for the safety of pedestrians with disabilities or aging frailties. In inclement weather the pedestrian bridge keeps all pedestrians safe and protected. Using the bridge also increases the flow of pedestrians to shopping in the Mall. He asked the Committee to support the Coalition with a letter that could be presented at the upcoming September 16 SPRC meeting. The Committee unanimously supported writing a letter of support, and the Vice Chair and E Goldstein will prepare a draft for review prior to the September 9 PAC meeting. Note: The Vice Chair consulted with key Arlington project staff before completing the draft letter.

**Accessibility of Bus Stops in Arlington (D Jaffe):**

The Chair distributed copies of a July 26 Washington Post Dr. Gridlock column titled “Two of every three bus stops in Arlington County need accessibility improvements.” He proposed writing a letter as PAC Chair to propose convening a meeting of relevant participants to address increasing accessibility to bus stops in Arlington. He feels the meeting is needed to identify next steps to help move Arlington’s effort forward at a pace and with a level of commitment reflective of Arlington community’s values. He further proposed that the letter would be sent to the following groups and make several of the following points:

Groups: 1) County staff: Planning, Transportation, Budget, Disability, Human Rights; 2) Advisory Bodies: Pedestrian, Transit/Disability Subcommittee, Disability, Aging; 3) WMATA staff.

Points in letter:

- Commend County on public release of data, acknowledging more work needed
- Articulate goal of Arlington being/becoming regional and national leader on accessibility
- Propose meeting to promote collaborative discussion that is necessary in order to bring to the fore the issues that need to be focused on – issues that likely are not receiving sufficient attention, otherwise, we’d be higher than 67%! For example, if it’s a matter of money, support by advocates is needed to push for allocation of more money.
- Note gap between Montgomery and Arlington
- Note legal out-of-compliance status
- Note examples of improvements needed
- Note Montgomery’s budget allocation and Arlington’s allocation and raise the merit of, as follow-up to meeting, there being effort to formulate budget, perhaps more than one.

Eric Goldstein asked how this project specifically fits into the PAC Charter's purpose and whether the Transportation Advisory Commission was already planning to address the issue. D Patton would inquire about current Transportation Commission plans. R Ciotti reminded the

committee that bus passengers are pedestrians going to and from the bus stop and that one of the accessibility problems is insufficient and missing sidewalks approaching the bus stops. She further noted that the PAC advocates for all pedestrians, including those with mobility challenges. After discussion, the Committee approved the Chair's proposal, with one abstention.

**South Walter Reed Drive Improvement Project – Followup from December 2014 and July 2015 PAC meetings (D Jaffe):**

The Chair briefly reviewed the history of PAC involvement with the WRD/AMD project, culminating with his letter to V Mosley, the Capital Projects Manager coordinating the project, on August 6. D Patton noted that V Mosley now has traffic data on slip lane use by bike/ped and by type of vehicle; he will provide after the meeting. He also noted that Larry Marcus, TE&O, might be able to discuss the specific requirements for large county vehicles at this intersection. D Foster noted that NHTSA regulations for slip lanes can include lights (include link). R Ciotti commented on the need to give public spaces back to pedestrians and cyclists and finding a better way to accommodate the conflict between them and the county vehicles. The Chair is following up with V Mosley. Post-meeting update: A meeting has been set for Tuesday, August 18.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20PM. The next PAC meeting will be September 9 in the Birch Room.

