



DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



HIGHLIGHTS OF SEPTEMBER 27, 2005 MEETING

Attendees

Ela Alkalaj	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Rosemarie Anderson	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Debbie Barol	Office of Senator Connie Williams
Stacy Bartels	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Lugene Bastian	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
William Beans	New Jersey Department of Transportation
D. Beaver	New Jersey State Police
Louis Belmonte	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Mike Boyer	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Richard Brahler	Bucks County Planning Commission
Larry Bucci	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Erin Burke	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Mark Cassel	TMA of Chester County
Mike Castellano	Federal Highway Administration – PA
Michellene Conte	Delaware County Sheriff's Office
John Coscia, Jr	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Shane Creamer	AARP – Pennsylvania
Dennis Durbin	The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia-TraumaLink
Justin Dula	Delaware County Planning Department
Charles Feggans	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Carmine Fiscina	Federal Highway Administration – PA
Herb Guenther	Motorcycle Safety Program – PennDOT
Rick Guenther	Port Authority Transit Corporation
M. Hennessey-Herman	Delaware County Emergency Health Services
Suzanne Hill	The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
Barry Keppard	Greater Mercer TMA
Joung Lee	Federal Highway Administration – NJ
Sean Lawrence	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
James Madera	SE Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
Charles Mandracchia	Office of Senator John Rafferty
Wayne Mason	Pennsylvania State Police
John McEwan	Mercer County Sheriff's Office

Debbie Merlin	Philadelphia Mayors Commission on Aging
Jabulani Moyo	City of Philadelphia Planning Commission
Kevin Murphy	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Curt Noe	Camden County Engineering
Ashwin Patel	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Susan Quick	Brain Injury Association of New Jersey
William Ragozine	Cross County Connection TMA
Craig Reed	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Raymond Reeve	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Richard Retting	Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
William Rickett	Bucks County TMA
Catherine Rossi	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Roger Sager	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Jessica Savidge	Gloucester County Planning Department
Deborah Schaaf	City of Philadelphia Planning Commission
Joseph Schmider	Pennsylvania Emergency Medical Services
Clifford Sipes	Philadelphia County Sheriff's Office
Mark Smith	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Joe Stafford	Bicycle Access Council
Don Steele	Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
Mike Sullivan	Lower Merion Police Department
Josh Tamarin	Greater Valley Forge TMA
Carol Thomas	Burlington County Engineering
John Ward	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Josh Warner	Camden Redevelopment Agency
S. Wolcott	New Jersey State Police
Karen Yunk	Federal Highway Administration - NJ
Karl Ziemer	Delaware River Port Authority

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's (DVRPC) first Regional Safety Task Force meeting was held on Tuesday, September 27, 2005 in the commission's conference rooms. John Ward, Associate Director of Transportation Planning chaired the meeting. The meeting consisted of several informational items on the purpose of the task force, funding for safety projects and programs under the new transportation legislation, and DVRPC's proposed comprehensive safety actions. Richard Retting, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and Dr. Dennis Durbin, TraumaLink, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia spoke about their transportation related research from two different perspectives. The meeting concluded with next steps and attendees signing on to serve on sub-committees.

Welcome and Introduction

The meeting began with John Ward, Associate Director, Transportation Planning welcoming everyone. He noted that everyone in attendance was invited to serve on the task force due to their current work in safety at the engineering, emergency service, enforcement and education levels. Though DVRPC's traditional involvement in safety

has been on the capital improvement side, recently the agency has also been involved in the operations side as evidenced by the incident management task force. The hope is that the task force will generate partnership with non-traditional partners and strengthen traditional partnership which would afford the region a more comprehensive safety program.

Everyone in attendance introduced themselves and briefly mentioned their relationship to the transportation safety community.

Regional Safety Task Force

Rosemarie Anderson, Manager, Office of Corridor Planning and Project Manager for the commission's Safety Program talked about the purpose of the task force. She began by summarizing the results of the brainstorming sessions at the Local Safety Conscious Planning Forums held in New Jersey in November 2004 and June 2005 in Pennsylvania. A detailed list of issues raised was provided. Supplementing this outcome was DVRPC Board adoption of *Destination 2030 – Long Range Plan* which recognized the safety needs of the region by incorporating it in the visions for the transportation system and emphasizes this by stating improving safety as the first of six transportation policies. As a result the task force is in response to a consensus that safety professionals and stakeholders need to come together to pool, share and integrate resources to effectively make our regional transportation system safer. The purpose of the task force is to guide and direct the commission's safety conscious planning program through the identification, development, prioritization and implementation of regional safety strategies. The focus will be diverse concentrating on the customers/users; multi-discipline incorporating engineering, education, enforcement and emergency services (the 4Es of safety conscious planning); and multi-modal. It is expected to be an on-going task force with an elected chair and vice chairpersons. Other features of the task force are members will be added as deemed necessary; meeting of the full task force will be held 3-4 times per year but subcommittees will be formed which will meet more often depending on their work.

At the end of the presentation John Ward told the gathering that election of a chairperson would not be done immediately but gives everyone a chance to decide if they wanted to stay involved. DVRPC staff will provide support in terms of technical and administrative tasks. He added that the task force would also help to determine how DVRPC can enhance existing programs as well as guide ours.

Guest Speakers

The first of our two guest speakers Richard Retting, Senior Transportation Engineer, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) started his presentation by informing attendees that the IIHS mission was to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce property damage that result from motor vehicle crashes. IIHS is a non-profit research institute, funded by automobile insurers. The research program is broad based and looks at infrastructure and is well know for its crash testing. His focus is crash prevention and his presentation was of effective measures for reducing motor vehicle crashes.

Modern roundabouts were discussed as a strategy for safer intersections. Modern roundabouts are low maintenance and can be aesthetically pleasing. IIHS research has also shown that they reduce traffic delays and reduce injury crashes. On red light running

crashes, Mr. Retting pointed out the limitations of conventional enforcement and the effectiveness of red light camera enforcement in curbing the act in several areas of the country. He showed the results of IIHS research on the effect of driver behavior and the reduction in violations with the introduction of the cameras. He presented strategies to reduce crashes on urban arterials as documented in the Institute's publications (*Traffic Engineering Approaches to Reduce Crashes on Urban Arterial Roads*) and can be found on their website – www.iihs.org. Intersections that had patterns of particular crashes were identified and analyzed by looking at the police reports and low cost improvements identified. The institute identifies four ways to reduce pedestrian crashes – reduce vehicle speeds, separate vehicle and pedestrian by time, separate vehicle and pedestrian by space and increase pedestrian visibility and conspicuity at night. Some strategies mentioned are traffic calming, roundabouts, leading pedestrian intervals, refuge islands and increase illumination. Mr. Retting suggested centerline rumble strip as a low cost strategy to employ to reduce rural roads crashes. He concluded his presentation with an offer to work with the task force and/or individual agencies.

Our second guest speaker Dr Dennis Durbin, Director of Research at TraumaLink and Emergency Medicine Attending Physician at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) started his presentation by giving some back ground information on CHOP and its research projects. CHOP was the first children's trauma center and has been rated the number one children's hospital in the nation by many magazines over the past five years. It consists of several specialty care facilities and provides service to approximately one million children per year. He expressed hope that his being at the meeting and his presentation would stimulate some thinking on how TraumaLink can partner with DVRPC and the task force. TraumaLink's mission is to advance the safety of children through research - translate research into meaningful action that can reduce the impact of motor vehicle injuries to children. He said that their research has shown that traffic injuries were the leading cause of child deaths ages 1 to 14; in 2003 approximately 40% of unintentional injuries were motor vehicle related. Many of the injuries to children occur in urban areas as pedestrians. Research done by the TraumaLink characterizes the nature of pedestrian injuries in children in urban areas 4 to 8 years old. Research found that 28% were at play when struck by a motor vehicle. Children in urban areas tend to use the streets as playground. With many, play overflows into the street that started on the lawn. Injuries occurring during walking trips that are not school related make up a large percentage of all injury-related walking trips. Dr Durbin suggested that successful solutions that reduce the number of injuries related to school walking trip needs to be applied to non-school related walking trips. He went on to talk about Partners for Child Passenger Safety, a unique partnership with State Farm Insurance and University of Pennsylvania, the largest study of children in motor vehicle crashes in the world. This partnership has produced a number of research findings. One such finding relates to child safety seats in motor vehicles. He said poorly positioned lap and shoulder belts on children may lead to abdominal or spine injury in children in a motor vehicle crash and research shows that the use of a booster seat in four to seven year olds reduces that risk by 59%. In an attempt to translate research findings into action there are many outreach activities through legislative advocacy, professional education, downloadable advocates materials on website, parent-oriented website and public education through the media.

Another program Dr Durbin spoke of is the Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Philadelphia, founded by CHOP in 1998. The hospital operates as a base for a number of people who go into the community, work with them to identify their needs and develop solutions. CHOP has a number of programs that focuses on pedestrian safety, bike safety, and child restraint in West Philadelphia. They currently partner with agencies such as the fire, police and street departments on individual programs. But they have not yet found a successful or sustainable partnership or collaboration with governmental organization in the Delaware Valley. He concluded his presentation by saying he hoped that this group would provide that opportunity.

Open Forum

Next, John Ward lead the group in discussing some of the safety programs in the region, he reiterated that one function of the task force is to enhance existing programs and share resources and research not duplicate them.

Curt Noe, Transportation Planner, Camden County said the county was focusing on improving pavement markings and traffic control devices to improve safety.

Susan Quick, TBI Outreach Specialist, Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, Inc. told the group that the organization ran several injury prevention programs – automobile safety, pedestrian safety, bicycle rodeos for children through puppet shows. They also work with seniors with interactive jeopardy game. The association is funded through a series of grants, one of which is the brain injury fund.

Lugene Bastian, State Coordinator, Operation Lifesavers, PennDOT said through the program, children as young as 3 years old have been educated about the importance of not putting things on the rails, staying off the railroad equipment, not to trespass, yield at grade crossing. She said they are getting positive feedback; children go home and educate their parents. In their education program, they start with 3 year olds and go up to the mature driver. There is a program for school bus drivers, truck drivers, drivers of emergency medical service vehicles, police, there is a program for many occupations. The program is dedicated to saving lives at the railroad crossings and preventing deaths from trespassing. Ms Bastian said the Philadelphia area is one of the problem sites in the state due to its rail traffic; there are SEPTA and 5 other railroads serving Philadelphia. The big problem is getting the word out. The railroads do help but more help is needed to get to larger audiences.

Richard Brahler, Senior Transportation Planner, Buck County Planning said Route 13 is one of the most dangerous roads in Bucks County. The county is pursuing results of the *Route 13 Redevelopment Study* completed 2 years ago. It encompasses a 14-mile stretch of the corridor from Street Road in Bensalem to Levittown Pkwy in Tullytown. There is a coalition working with the county consisting of municipalities, PennDOT and others looking at how a safer environment can be created along Route 13. There are 3 motor vehicle fatalities already this year on Route 13. Some funding has been earmarked for the project.

John Ward told the gathering that anyone who had reports, brochure and anything that highlighted their projects or programs should send it to the commission, if it is known what is already in place, it makes bringing the right partners together easier.

Funding Transportation Safety Projects and Programs

Karen Yunk, Safety Engineer, Federal Highway Administration in New Jersey briefed the group on some of the provisions of SAFETEA-LU and what the new opportunities are in the new legislation. She said safety is prominently featured throughout the bill. There are key provisions for safety as a new core program and the funding is double the amount from the previous bill TEA 21. Strategic Highway Safety Plans are now a requirement.

Section 148 is a new program entitled the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The new HSIP becomes an FHWA “core” program as opposed to the former set aside funding program. The new program will become effective on October 1, 2005, the beginning of the federal fiscal 2006. Apportionments for the HSIP have increased in SAFETEA-LU. SAFETEA-LU requires states to develop and implement a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) that involves a comprehensive, collaborative, and data driven approach to highway safety. States must develop and implement a State Strategic Highway Safety Plan that identifies and analyzes highway safety problems and opportunities. The HSIP must produce a program of projects or strategies to reduce identified safety problems. In essence, a State’s HSIP is the projects and strategies in the SHSP that are included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). In addition to the overall eligibility of projects which corrects or improves a hazardous location or feature, or addresses a highway safety problem; the following specific items have been added as eligible highway safety improvement projects and can therefore be eligible for funding: the conduct of a model traffic enforcement activity at a railway-highway grade crossing; safety-conscious planning; improvement in the collection and analysis of crash data; planning, integrated interoperable emergency communications equipment, operational activities, or traffic enforcement activities (including police assistance) relating to work zone safety; the addition or retrofitting of structures or other measures to eliminate or reduce accidents involving vehicles and wildlife; construction and operational improvements on high-risk rural roads; improvements for safety of the disabled; installation and maintenance of signs at pedestrian-bicycle crossings and in school zones. Roundabouts are now eligible for 100 percent federal funding. States that adopt and implement an SHSP are provided additional flexibility to use HSIP funds for public awareness, education, and enforcement activities, consistent with the SHSP that would otherwise not have been eligible for funding. The new HSIP also includes set aside funds for High Risk Rural Roads and for Railway-Highway Crossings and Safe Routes to School Programs. Special grants are provided for work zone safety and road safety improvements for older drivers & pedestrians may fund at whatever level states feel addresses this requirement. NHTSA Managed Programs provided for in the bill are Highway Safety Programs 402 funding, Occupant Protection Incentive Grants, Safety Belt Performance Grants, State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements, Alcohol Impaired Driving Countermeasures Incentive Grant Program, Motorcyclist Safety, Child Safety and Child Booster Seat Safety Incentive Grants

In the discussion that followed, the group was told that both New Jersey and Pennsylvania SHSP should be completed by the end of 2005. Ms. Yunk advised the group to get involved in the development of the SHSP because unless it is included in the SHSP the dollars cannot be spent on it.

Regional Safety Action Plan

John Ward led the discussion on DVRPC proposed development of a Regional Safety Action Plan. The action plan will be comprehensive. It would take a coordinated effort of safety professionals and stakeholders to produce an effective multi-disciplinary plan. The approach is to set up sub-committees representing the 4 Es of safety conscious planning and funding. Sub-committees will determine problem areas, establish goals, develop objectives and strategies and determine funding sources and eligibility. DVRPC staff will provide support and meetings will be as needed. He said members are invited to join one of the sub-committees and pointed out that would be collaboration across sub-committees. DVRPC will look at other programs not only in our region but also in the nation. Technical data will be gathered as necessary.

Attendees were asked to commit to serving on sub-committees before leaving the meeting or do so as soon as possible.

Next Steps

Before wrapping up the meeting Mr. Ward suggested the group recommend other stakeholders that should be at the table.

Bill Beans, Manager, Safety Programs, NJDOT said this is a great group for collaboration with members from agencies in both states give the opportunity to expand the way of thinking, develop/share new strategies and to look at the same problems in different ways.

Mark Cassel, TMA said looking around the room it is the large organizations that are represented here because they are able to devote staff, he then asked if similar task forces will be set up on a county or sub-regional level to get more people involved in safety. In response he was told that sub-committees would get down to some detail and reach out to the local level when necessary but it is very difficult to deal with the large number of municipalities given current resources. Hopefully what is done at the regional level will be duplicated at the lower level in the future.

Craig Reed, Director, Bureau of Highway Traffic Safety and Engineering, PennDOT suggested a Committee to deal with communications. As DVRPC is involved in Pennsylvania Strategic Highway Safety Plan, it would be good for task force members to get involved through this group. He said there is a tremendous amount of interest exhibited here in improving safety, important to have as many mechanisms as possible to share information so people are aware of the activities.

The next meeting of the Regional Safety Task Force will be January 2006.