

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: Safe Senior Mobility

Thursday, December 13, 2018

9:30 AM – Noon

DVRPC Offices

190 N. Independence Mall West, 8th Floor

Philadelphia, PA 19106

All presentations and related meeting handouts are located on the RSTF Website:

www.dvrpc.org/Committees/RSTF

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM by Kevin Murphy, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), who filled the role of co-chair of the meeting in place of Bill Ragozine, Cross County Connection TMA, who was unable to attend. Mr. Murphy introduced Kelley Yemen, City of Philadelphia, as the new RSTF co-chair from Pennsylvania. The two-year term of the former co-chair, Peggy Schmidt, Executive Director of Partnership TMA, ended at the September 2018 meeting. Next, participants introduced themselves to the group.

Ms. Yemen requested approval from the RSTF for the September 2018 meeting highlights, and they were approved without comment.

Safe Senior Mobility – Presentations

Two featured speakers addressed the meeting on safe senior mobility. Prior to the speakers Mr. Murphy introduced the topic. Mr. Murphy presented first on overall crash trends, including recently available regional crash data for 2017. Fatalities and severe injuries (KSI) from crashes reached a new seven-year high in the region, up slightly from 2016. This is a departure from national trends, which saw a slight decrease in fatalities from 2016 to 2017 even as vehicle miles traveled continue to increase. KSI from crashes involving older drivers in the region followed the overall KSI trend of maintaining near the five-year peak reached in 2016. The proportion of all KSI in the region that can be attributed to older driver crashes is highest in Mercer, Camden, and Montgomery counties. In addition to older driver crashes, Mr. Murphy also presented data on all senior KSI, broken down by county and travel mode of the senior (driving, riding in a vehicle as a passenger, walking, or biking). In more urban counties like Philadelphia, pedestrian senior KSI accounts for a much greater proportion of senior-related KSI. Mr. Murphy also showed data from the overlapping emphasis area analysis, which found intersection, distracted, and aggressive driving crashes all coincide more frequently with senior driver crashes than other emphasis areas. Mr. Murphy then introduced the first featured speaker: Tim Evans, New Jersey Future.

Mr. Evans presented on “Creating Places to Age,” a 2014 report on the age-friendliness of communities across New Jersey. The report seeks to address the pressing question of whether or not New Jersey’s built environment will be suitable for the projected increase in the senior population as the Baby Boomer generation ages over the coming years. Age-friendliness was measured using four key metrics: (1) density, (2) presence of a mixed-use center or “downtown,” (3) walkability, and (4) access to transit. Every municipality in New Jersey was scored

against these metrics. The report found that only one-third of New Jersey residents over the age of 55 live in age-friendly communities. Mr. Evans also identified a key difference between “age-friendly” and “age-ready” communities. While “age-friendly” communities generally have the necessary infrastructure to support residents of all ages, “age-ready” refers to how that infrastructure is deployed such as through a variety of housing options and costs, or ensuring transportation facilities suit all ages with appropriate maintenance and accessible design. Mr. Evans presented three case studies of “age-friendly” communities that communicate this point. Examples of downtown streets in Teaneck, Westwood, and Somerdale show how factors like street width, on-street parking, and building frontages can greatly impact walkability, especially for older pedestrians. Mr. Evans advocated for efforts to build new “downtowns” in communities that lack mixed-use centers and to retrofit existing “downtowns” to be more pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use.

Next, Dr. Anne Mitchell, Jefferson University, presented on transportation challenges for older adults from a clinician’s perspective. While there are many stereotypes concerning the process of aging, it’s important to remember that people lumped together in the senior age group can present a very wide range of abilities. Nevertheless, there are certain physiological changes that are simply a natural stage of aging and don’t constitute a pathology including decreased vision, hearing, and mobility, and slower reflexes and reaction times – all of which may impact a senior’s ability to operate a vehicle. In addition, seniors are more likely to experience a more catastrophic injury from a crash because of their susceptibility to more serious complications from injuries like muscular atrophy and pneumonia. It’s important that “age-friendly” policies focus on both the built environment as well as the social and service environments serving seniors; indeed, social isolation is now recognized as one of the greatest threats to the health of older adults.

Dr. Mitchell also presented on a case study of seniors in West Philadelphia. She was surprised to find that a high number of participants in the study were primarily drivers, despite the rich transit access in their neighborhoods. Focus groups with study participants found that these senior drivers considered driving to be a privilege and supported the idea of retesting, as long as it was applied to people of all ages. The study also highlighted many of the factors that are critical to encouraging safe senior walkability within communities. This may include added infrastructure like benches where seniors can rest, as well as helping to keep seniors in their communities – there is no replacement for local knowledge of walking conditions to ensure seniors remain active.

Questions/Comments:

- Gus Scheerbaum, City of Philadelphia, wondered if there are any local examples of successfully retrofitting improved connectivity into suburban development patterns through strategies like eminent domain to break up cul-de-sacs. Mr. Evans replied that most examples take more of a piecemeal approach waiting for land to become available, rather than using heavy-handed tactics like eminent domain.
- Will Fraser, Clean Air Council, asked Dr. Mitchell about statistics she had shown that indicate senior fatalities are underrepresented in crashes in Delaware, as opposed to their overrepresentation in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Dr. Mitchell admitted she had noted that as well, but hadn’t yet investigated the statistic further.
- Peter Bilton, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, asked about how developers and municipalities can be encouraged to build more housing characterized by age-friendly single-level units

accessed by elevators, rather than the vertical townhouse developments that are currently popular in “downtown” housing developments. Mr. Evans agreed that this poses a challenge since many municipalities disallow apartment complexes because of NIMBY concerns from existing residents. Education is needed to show towns and residents that diverse housing types will ensure everyone is able to stay in the community as they age out of the homes they currently are able to comfortably live in and maintain.

- Robyn Briggs, PennDOT, agreed with this point, noting that the same development pattern is found in the recent “downtown”-style developments in King of Prussia, PA. A major issue is also the cost of these developments, which tend to sell at the higher end of the market. Mr. Evans noted that there is pent-up demand for this type of housing which results in it selling at the top of the market.

Developing Action Items

The co-chairs then transitioned from the emphasis area discussion into the next agenda item, developing action items. RSTF members divided themselves into four groups to continue the discussion and work on ways to address safe senior mobility in the region.

Education Group: Ms. Yemen—lead

The education group also discussed the possibility of adding a reference library to the RSTF website so that information shared as a result of volunteer action items could be assembled in one place and more easily accessible, both to members of the RSTF and the public.

Engineering Group: Mr. Murphy—lead

The engineering group had a wide-ranging discussion on the engineering improvements that benefit all people but are especially necessary to make senior mobility practical and safe, regardless of mode, everywhere, though with the understanding that urban, suburban, and rural places each have unique challenges. To ensure that the best engineering practices are employed, standards need to evolve toward universal design principles, including: updated minimum sidewalk width standards to ensure adequate widths, adjusted intersection crossing distances and signal timings to accommodate slower walking speeds, and increased connectivity between non-network connected neighborhoods and common destinations (groceries, services) to enable safe and efficient access via walking and bicycling. Upon the recommendation by the group, Kevin Murphy, DVRPC, and Peter Bilton, NJTPA, agreed to identify municipal ordinances, policies and best practices designed to advance similar goals, from their respective regions. Their findings will be presented at the next RSTF meeting. In addition, Heather Strassberger, PCPC, volunteered to share information on research that examines the effects of driving on human health, especially for the driver.

Enforcement Group: Marco Gorini, DVRPC—lead

The enforcement group discussed enforcement issues around two key areas: impaired driving as a result of prescribed medications and ensuring safe environments for senior pedestrians. Group members noted the challenge of warning seniors about the potential impairment issues that result from many medications and the need for leniency in cases where seniors in crashes were unaware of the impairment that would result from their medication. Group members also discussed the need for better support for senior pedestrians from the

enforcement community, such as community crossing guards and other efforts to ease pedestrian access for seniors. Nick Zuwiala-Rogers, Clean Air Council, will research senior pedestrian safety zones in Philadelphia.

Policy Group: Heike Jacob, DVRPC—lead

The policy group focused on ways that policy can be used to encourage more age-friendly communities and universal design. Group members raised local examples like Vision Zero in Philadelphia and “activity corridors” in Delaware County. Rebecca DeMuth, Delaware County Planning Commission, will research precedents for how design guides for transit shelters can incorporate age-friendly design.

Member Updates and Open Forum

Paul Carafides, Office of Transportation Operations Management at DVRPC, gave an update on the Incident Management Task Forces’ (IMTF) activities – the full update was included in the meeting folder. November 11-17 was National Traffic Incident Response Awareness Week. DVRPC provided a Social Media Tool Kit to help promote awareness and educate the public about Move Over Laws.

At this point, RSTF members were invited to provide any updates that they wished to share with the group. Warren Strumpfer, member of the Camden County Highway Traffic Safety Task Force, noted the successful implementation of the Pureland Shuttle, which was made successful by CCCTMA.

Additional Updates and Conclusion

Ms. Yemen gave a brief update on Philadelphia’s Vision Zero efforts. Successfully implemented projects include protected bike lanes, improved lighting, and ADA-compliant curb ramps. These projects have all been mapped in an online web tool available to the public. In addition, Vision Zero Philadelphia rolled out an advertising campaign, “We Meet in the Street” and is currently accepting applications for its Neighborhood Slow Zones program, which will calm traffic on residential streets.

Ms. Jacob reported on DVRPC’s recent publication, “Speeding and Traffic Safety,” a municipal implementation tool informing the public on the dangers of speeding. Ms. Jacob presented key points from the booklet, including major contributing factors in speeding-related crashes and strategies municipalities and road owners can use to reduce speeding locally. This publication is Publication No. MIT032 and is [available online](#); paper copies are also available upon request.

Mr. Gorini presented on the new “Transportation Safety Analysis and Plan” (TSAP), a product produced by DVRPC on behalf of the RSTF. Mr. Gorini explained the history of the TSAP, of which this is the fifth edition. He also explained some of the new features of this edition, including mapping crash rates by municipality and the overlapping emphasis area analysis. This publication is Publication No. 18021 and is [available online](#); paper copies are also available upon request.

Mr. Gorini also reported on action item updates from the previous RSTF meeting.

The next RSTF meeting will be on Tuesday, March 19, 2019.

RSTF Goal: *To reduce roadway crashes and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities from crashes in the Delaware Valley*

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December 13, 2018 RSTF Meeting Attendees List

Aguilera	Lori	Chester County Highway Safety Project
Beans	Bill	MBO Engineering, LLC
Besold	Andrew	Montgomery County Planning Commission
Bilton	Peter	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Bonarek	Leonard	Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
Briggs	Robyn	PennDOT
Bruckno	Wes	Chester County Planning Commission
Carafides	Paul	DVRPC
Castle	Charlotte	City of Philadelphia
Chance	Marjorie	Academy
DeMuth	Rebecca	Delaware County Planning Department
Diamond	Jim	PPD
Donovan	Brian	Chester County Planning Commission
Elkis	Patty	DVRPC
Evans	Tim	New Jersey Future
Francisco	Rich	PennDOT
Fraser	Will	Clean Air Council
Gamel	John	SELF
Gorini	Marco	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Hastings	Thomas	Delaware County Planning Department
Hillengas	Amory	Philadelphia Department of Public Health
Hugo	Morgan	Liberty Resources, Inc.
Jacob	Heike	DVRPC
Jalayer	Mohammad	Rowan University
Kastrenakes	Cheryl	Greater Mercer TMA
Kuffner	Katie	Chester County Health Dept.
Leavitt-Gruberger	Anne	Montgomery County Planning Commission
MacKavanagh	Kelvin	DVRPC Goods Movement Task Force
Malaviya	Sharang	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Malik	Akshay	City of Philadelphia
Mayer	David	GMTMA
McIntyre	Kelli	Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Get Healthy Philly
Merritt	Darrell	PA Department of Transportation, Engineering District 6-0
Mitchell	Anne	Jefferson University
Murphy	Kevin	DVRPC
Neff	Justin	DVRPC
Omer	Marhaba	NJDOT
Ott	Patricia	MBO Engineering, LLC
Patel	Zilkumari	NJDOT
Perzen	Steve	
Regosch	Christian	Bucks County Planning Commission
Scheerbaum	Gus	City of Philadelphia
Simon	Richard	NHTSA Region 2
Strassberger	Heather	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Strumpfer	Warren	CamCo HTSTF and DVRPC RSTF
Swartley McArdle	Daniel	DVRPC Public Participation Task Force
Thompson	Andrew	Urban Engineers
Yemen	Kelley	City Of Philadelphia
Zimmerman	Bill	Philadelphia Police Department
Zuwiala-Rogers	Nick	Clean Air Council