



MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

How Going Green Can Improve Safety

Day, July 19, 2023

1 PM – 3 PM

Presented Via Zoom; 94 attendees

All presentations and related meeting materials are available on the [RSTF Website](#).

Welcome Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 1 PM by Kaylen Phillips, DVRPC. RSTF co-chair Sean Meehan, Senior Research Specialist at Voorhees Transportation Center, went over the agenda and reminded attendees of the RSTF's primary goal: to reduce roadway crashes and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities from crashes in the Delaware Valley. This goal was humanized by highlighting the fatality of a 14-year-old cyclist in Gloucester County, New Jersey. Sean then introduced the RSTF safety [action items tracking list](#), a spreadsheet for cataloging and tracking safety action items proposed in previous meetings. Volunteers can claim any unclaimed items and ask for more information by contacting Kaylen Phillips.

Kevin Murphy, DVRPC, transitioned to an overview of the Safe System Approach and presented crash data trends in the region. Although not final, in April 2023 the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released early estimates of crash fatalities in the US, projecting a small decrease of 0.3% in 2022 over the 2021 total. In our region, traffic fatalities have gone down 5% in PA counties and 34% in NJ counties between 2022 and 2023, according to preliminary year to date data.

Kaylen Phillips, DVRPC, then presented an introduction to Green Streets and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) as it overlapped with traffic safety. The presentation used examples from previous DVRPC publications: the [City of Chester Green Stormwater Infrastructure Plan](#), [Improving Safety and Stormwater along Cobbs Creek Parkway](#), and the [Trenton Complete Streets Design Handbook](#).

Kaylen then introduced guest speakers Cassandra Duffey and Ariel Ben-Amos.

Presentation 1: Cassandra Duffey, Borough of Collingswood, NJ

Cassandra began her presentation by outlining the history and existing conditions of Haddon Avenue, prior to the installation of the Collingswood fountain. The intention of the traffic calming island, where the fountain was installed, was to "pinch" traffic in order to slow drivers through the heart of downtown Collingswood. The fountain also serves as a landmark and provides a green space in the district. However, the greening element was decided further along in the process, which meant that a decision to use backfill as the soil type led to difficulties planting greenery later on. Cass advised considering green elements before such decisions are made. Additionally, Cass noted that maintenance of GSI takes more time and care than concrete.

Cass also shared lessons learned from other projects and temporary GSI installations through the Collingswood Complete Streets Lab. In one example, temporary GSI curb bump-outs were created using straw wattle and plants. These installations helped facilitate community conversations as well as stormwater runoff.

Presentation 2: Ariel Ben-Amos, Philadelphia Water Department

Ariel began his presentation by explaining stormwater management in the context of Philadelphia's greened acres, neighborhood assessments, and green street assessments. He then clarified that most of the Water Department's work is below the surface, due to the nature of most GSI systems having underground storage components. This brings conflicts when working with paving moratoriums and utilities. Additional conflicts come from efforts to reallocate street space from sidewalks, parking, and the roadway to allow for GSI. In this way, some streets make better candidates than others. Ariel then highlighted with an example in North Philadelphia the difficulties of conflicting priorities between partners, contractors, designers, and funding. He ended the presentation with additional examples that showed different ways that the City has used award-winning GSI project designs to accomplish safety goals.

A facilitated Q&A session was moderated by Kaylen Phillips before transitioning to breakout sessions.

Special Strategies Breakout Rooms

Each of the four breakout groups discussed their reactions to the presentations and potential "action items," with a focus on the Safe Systems Approach, that each person could take on to support the RSTF goal of eliminating KSI in the region. These action items were recorded and are being tracked by DVRPC, which will check in on progress before future meetings. Breakout group discussion lasted approximately 30 minutes and each began by discussing reactions to the presentations, following with discussion on potential action items.

In reaction to the presentations, breakout groups reiterated the importance of the following points:

- Increasingly important to address environmental issues as flash flooding events result in fatalities, like the [recent flooding in Bucks County, PA](#).
- Communication with internal and external partners is crucial to the project's success. Lots of coordination needed to ensure safety and environmental priorities do not clash, so all stakeholders should be brought to the table early on.
- For the public, it is crucial to communicate in plain language and in visuals. Perhaps allow the community to lead on identifying locations or potential quick-build demonstration projects.
- More research is needed to determine best practices when incorporating GSI into safety projects.

Some of the proposed action items included:

- Create a GSI mythbusting factsheet to demonstrate benefits for all road users.
- Draft talking points for Vision Zero ambassadors and others about the connection between greening/GSI and Vision Zero. Share with Vision Zero ambassador programs.
- Research GSI's effects on crash severity and frequency.
- Brainstorm ways to share information about the potential overlap of safety and GSI with community partners and planning/engineer partners.
- Create and share sample maintenance agreements, as GSI requires more ongoing maintenance than concrete, for example.
- Gather successfully implemented GSI/safety projects to spark inspiration.

After the breakout sessions finished, RSTF members left their groups and returned to the main session. One person from each group reported back on their discussion.

Closing Remarks

RSTF co-chair Christine Norris, Communications Manager for the Center for Injury Research and Prevention at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), concluded the meeting with gratitude to the attendees for participating in the program and asked attendees to complete the meeting survey.

Next, Christine invited RSTF members to share any announcements they may have. These included:

- [America Walks webinar](#) 7/19 (recording available)
- Regional Vision Zero [Landing Page](#) launch!
 - Sign up for our Regional Vision Zero [email list](#).
- This week is [Rural Road Safety Awareness Week](#).
- NHTSA's [New Car Assessment Program](#) (NCAP) has proposed adding pedestrian safety to the five star safety rating program advertised to consumers.

Christine reminded attendees that the next RSTF meeting is scheduled for October 2023.

Meeting Attendee List

Alexa Ringer, DVRPC
Alyson Dressman, DVRPC
Alyssa Driscoll, DVRPC
Amy Kaminski, FHWA New Jersey
Amy Verbofsky, DVRPC
Andre Bragg, City of Philadelphia
Andrew Thompson, Kittelson
Anne Heasly, Sustainable Jersey
Anne Mitchell, Thomas Jefferson University
Ariel Ben-Amos, Philadelphia Water Department
Ben Gruswitz, DVRPC
Brett Fusco, DVRPC
Carol Larson, Citizen
Cass Duffey, Collingswood Borough
Cathy Spahr, Delaware County
Chris Townley, Greater Mercer TMA
Christian Rios, NJ Dept of Health
Christine Norris, CHOP
Christopher Grossmick, Mount Laurel Police
Colin Taylor, NJ Dept of Health
Dale Foster, Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.
Darrell Merritt, PennDOT
Dylan Ponticel, Colliers Engineering
Elise Bremer-Nei, NJDOT
Ellen Miramontes, Montgomery County
Emily Gates, Avenues in Motion
Eric Hicken, NJ Dept of Health
Eva Hayes, City of Philadelphia
Frances Conwell, Citizen
George Thiel, SICK Inc.
Greg Woltman, Voorhees Transportation Center
Gus Scheerbaum, City of Philadelphia
Hailey Graf, NJ Transit
Hana Elum, City of Philadelphia
Harry Hua, City of Philadelphia
Ian Henderson, Princeton NJ
Janki Patel, Sam Schwartz
Jasmine Bailey, NHTSA
Jean Burock, Narberth Borough
Jeevanjot Singh, NJDOT
Jerrett Johnson, 5th Square
Joe Rapp, NJDOT
Jon Dugan, Voorhees Transportation Center
Jonathan Frederickson, Citizen
Justin Neff, DVRPC
Kaylen Phillips, DVRPC
Kelvin MacKavanagh, Consultant
Kendra Nelson, DVRPC
Kevin Murphy, DVRPC
Krys Johnson, PennDOT
Laureen Sendel-Grant, Montgomery County
Loresa Daniel, NJ Depart of Traffic Safety

Lucas Oshman, Partnership TMA Montgomery
Marco Gorini, City of Philadelphia
Mark Washington, City of Philadelphia
Marley Bice, Montgomery County
MaryAnn Sandone, Delaware County TMA
Matthew Lawson, Mercer County
Matthew Popek, Montgomery County
Michael Drumm, Delaware River Port Authority
Mike Christie, Delaware River Port Authority
Mindy Paul, Potted Perfection
Morgan Griffiths, DVRPC
Nathan Grace, City of Philadelphia
Noah Lustig, NJ TPA
Omar Al-Sheikh, Rowan University
Pat Kidd, PPTF
Peter Bilton, NJ TPA
Reba Oduro, NJDOT
Renee Wise, DVRPC
Richard Brahler, Bucks County
Richard Rabinowitz, NJDOT
Samantha Zrillo, Whitemarsh Township
Sara Freed, CHOP
Sara Shick, West Vincent Township
Sean Meehan, Voorhees Transportation Center
Sharang Malaviya, PennDOT
Stephanie Gregerman, Citizen
Steve Baron, Temple University
Steven DaCosta, Greater Mercer TMA
Tatiana Quiñones, Consultant
Tim Konetchy, Montgomery County
Tonyelle Cook-Artis, Delaware River Port Authority
Tracy Barusevicius, Delaware County TMA
Tracy Nerney, Jersey Shore Trauma Center
Vinh Ho, Philadelphia Dept of Commerce
Virgilio Tan, NJDOT
Wideleine Desir, DVRPC
William Riviere, NJDOT
Yuriy Assekritov, NJDOT
Zil Patel, NJDOT