



DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION



HIGHLIGHTS OF MAY 20, 2008 MEETING

1. Welcome & Introductions

The meeting began with John Ward, Associate Director, Planning Division, welcoming everyone. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves and mentioned the organization they represented.

2. Summary of January 2008 Meeting

Mr. Ward asked for a motion to approve the Highlights from the January 29, 2008 Regional Safety Task Force meeting. The meeting highlights were approved.

3. Guest Speakers

Listed below are highlights from the three presentations presented at the Task Force Meeting. For more information, all presentations can be referenced on the DVRPC Safety website at www.dvrpc.org/transportation/safety/regionalsafety.htm

New Jersey Teen Driver Study Commission Report and Recommendations

Violet Marrero, Manager of Special Projects, New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety gave a presentation on the recommendations from the New Jersey Teen Driver Study Commission (TDSC) Report. Signed into law by Governor Corzine in March 2007, the mission of the TDSC was to conduct a comprehensive review of teen driving in New Jersey and make recommendations that would ultimately reduce crashes and save lives. Through a series of public hearings, expert panels and research the report consisted of 47 recommendations which were broken into seven key areas: Graduated Drivers License, Driver Education, Driver Training, Enforcement/Judicial, Insurance Industry, Schools and Technology. Listed below are the 14 key recommendations made by the TDSC:

1. Develop an event based GDL monitoring program that will effectively deter GDL and non-serious and serious motor vehicle violations.
2. Ban plea agreements for traffic violations committed by GDL holders.
3. Implement the programming changes necessary to ensure that MVC's current and pending computer system can accommodate all components of the GDL law.
4. Develop a GDL identifier that must be affixed to a vehicle when driven by a permit or probationary license holder.
5. Require a parent/guardian to attend a teen driver orientation program with his or her teen prior to applying for a permit.

6. Require teens to complete a minimum number of hours of certified practice driving during the permit phase.
7. Extend the permit phase from a minimum of six months to one year for all new drivers 16 to 20 years of age.
8. Limit the number of passengers in the probationary phase to one regardless of the passenger's relationship to the driver.
9. Sanction, in addition to the teen driver, all passengers 16 to 20 years of age on a permit, probationary or basic license, who violate the GDL passenger and safety belt restrictions.
10. Lower the nighttime driving hours restriction from 12 a.m. to 11p.m. for probationary license holders.
11. Close the loophole in the seat belt law to ensure all back seat passengers 18 years of age and older buckle up.
12. Appropriate funding for driver education through the GDL-mandated Driver Education Fund.
13. Develop and deliver to public and private schools a standardized traffic safety/driver education curriculum and incorporate it into New Jersey's Core Curriculum Consent Standards for students in grades K-12.
14. Amend the GDL law and the corresponding regulations to clearly define six hours of behind-the-wheel driver training.

Ms. Marrero explained updates made to improve the GDL including changes incorporated within the permit and probationary phases. Some of these changes are completing parent/guardian teen orientation, minimum requirement of 50 hours of certified practice driving (10 of those hours must be at night) and a minimum of 100 hours of certified practice driving (20 of those hours must be at night) without behind-the-wheel training. Certain restrictions of the GDL and event based and passenger sanctions were also mentioned. As a next step the TDSC is planning to reactivate the State Driver Education Committee to champion, enact, and monitor the recommendations.

Plan4Safety Tool

Sarah Weissman, Program Manager, Transportation Safety Resource Center (TSRC) gave a presentation on the Plan4Safety Tool. New Jersey averages about 320,000 crashes per year. In the past, methods for accessing this data have been time consuming and cumbersome. Spearheaded by Pat Ott, Director, Division of Traffic Engineering and Safety at NJDOT, the Plan4Safety Tool developed by TSRC is a web based crash analysis tool that allows users to quickly filter and analyze crash records. This program includes crash data tools for statistical and network screening analysis and is also incorporated with GIS. The primary goal of the Plan4Safety Tool is to decrease time for crash analysis. Ms. Weissman conducted a live demonstration showcasing the benefits and ease of use of the tool. With the exception of personal information, everyone (with permissive capability) has access to all of the data including crash severity, weather conditions, gender and age of the driver, surface condition, alcohol use, which is reflective of the information found on the NJTR1 crash data form. Currently, years 2003 to 2006 data is available in the system and 2007 data will be available shortly. When available, the database will be able to reflect crash data up to the previous week. Ms. Weissman also mentioned that NJDOT is working on an electronic data transfer system where police departments will be able to

electronically transfer crash records to the DOT, cutting all users' time and effort required currently to manually input the data. The tool is designed for all users, novice to the more advance. The output from this tool has been used for the Safe Routes to School Program and enforcement campaigns by the state police.

DVRPC Congestion Crash Site Analysis Program

Rosemarie Anderson, Manager of Safety and Security Planning; Kevin Murphy, Senior Transportation Planner and Ellis Kim, Transportation Engineer of DVRPC gave a presentation on the Congestion Crash Site Analysis Program (CCSAP). Ms. Anderson explained that unlike a typical corridor study which examines a larger geographic area, the intent of this program is to examine individual intersections or specific problem sites. She also mentioned the success of the program and the intersections that were studied during the previous fiscal year. This presentation focused on the study of the intersection of North Olden and Parkside Avenues in Ewing, New Jersey. An overview of the intersection, highlighting surrounding land use patterns, transit, and identified issues was given. Some of the issues included traffic congestion, limited capacity, poor pedestrian amenities, poor access management and safety. Pedestrian activity near the Shop Rite shopping center east of the intersection was also analyzed. During the morning and afternoon peak hours, there are over 2000 and 3000 vehicles traversing the intersection respectively. The dominant movement is northbound Olden Avenue.

Kevin Murphy described the crashes at the intersection. From 2005 to 2007, there were a total of 92 crashes (89 reportable and 3 non-reportable). Since 2005, crashes have dropped to 27 crashes in 2007. There were no fatalities, 23 injury crashes and 69 property damage crashes. Rear-end and angle crashes were the dominant crash type at the intersection which is above the state average for the three year period.

Several improvement strategies for the intersection were developed. Ellis Kim discussed several alternatives for improving the operation and safety of the intersection including signal timing and modification of the geometry. Using the SYNCHRO software, Mr. Kim showed simulations of the improvement alternatives and described the LOS and delay associated with each of the improvements. All of the improvements developed were low cost, requiring no physical expansion of the intersection, therefore requiring no ROW acquisition. A road diet application for Parkside Avenue was analyzed. A road diet is technique used to reduce the number lanes on a roadway from a 4 lane cross-section to 3 lanes, one travel lane in each direction and a two-way left turn center lane. Additional ROW may be used for bicycle lanes, sidewalks, or parking. Mr. Kim described the current cross section of Parkside Avenue and the road diet scenario. He showed a before and after simulation of the traffic on Parkside Avenue. Results showed that there was a slight increase in the travel time and a slight decrease in the average travel speeds. Alternatives for access management and pedestrian movements were also considered for improving the area. Some of those recommendations include adding pedestrian median refuge island and bus pullout along Olden Avenue near the Shop Rite Center, upgrading sidewalks, installing ADA compliant curb ramps, improving pedestrian signal heads with countdown timers and upgrade crosswalk to continental style at the intersection. The recommendations from the study were a balance between safety and operation for the study area.

4. Advisory Items

Safety Vest Compliance Program

Chris King, Senior Transportation Planner, DVRPC gave a brief overview of recent federal regulations that will require all workers on federal-aid highways to wear an ANSI –approved high-visibility safety garment. The National Traffic Incident Management Coalition comprised of many organizations and agencies including AASHTO, is promoting the national unified goal, which is personal visibility among responders reporting to the scene of an incident. In November 2006, Federal law 23 CFR Part 634, effective November 2008 states that *“all workers within the ROW of a federal aid highway who are exposed either to traffic (vehicles using the highway for purposes of travel) or to construction equipment within the work area shall wear high-visibility safety apparel.”* The term workers in the law denotes people in the highway such as highway construction, survey and utility crews, towers, law enforcement personnel. Mr. King went through several slides which displayed the scene of crashes where emergency personnel were not visible though they were wearing vests. As of November 24, 2008 wearing no vests will be against the law. The federal register regulates a class 2 American National Standard Institute (ANSI) vest. There are 3 classes of highway safety vests. A typical class 1 vest is typically worn by airline baggage handler. The shortcoming of this type of vest is the lack of side coverage which hinders visibility especially at nighttime. A typical class 2 vest is highly visibility which is what the regulation requires. This is a vest with green body with red trim, or orange body with green trim. There are other types of class 2 vests that were described including shorter length (to allow access to items on belt) and tear away. Class 3 vests are garments with sleeves, and typically include jacket, shirt and pants ensemble. These vests and other reflective gear can be designed to meet the specific needs of the particular emergency responder agency. The information contained in Mr. King’s presentation is found on the following website. www.respondersafety.com

RSTF Survey Results

Regina Moore, Transportation Engineer, DVRPC shared the results from the recent RSTF survey. The purpose of the survey was to solicit feedback from Task Force members to evaluate the current benefits of the RSTF meetings and solicit input for future meetings and activities. Twenty six persons responded to the survey, of which 19 completed the entire survey. Listed below are some of the highlights of the findings from the survey:

- 89% of respondents are satisfied with the current RSTF meeting schedule
- 54% of members attend all or the majority of RSTF meetings
- 21 members feel that the RSTF meetings have met their expectations
- 13 members do not participate in the subcommittees primarily due to schedule conflict and meeting location
- 7 members indicated that they are active in multiple subcommittees
- Some suggested topics for presentations include: Safety activities/programs in other states or abroad, photo speed enforcement, EMS safety, safety funding and safety update on the DVRPC region
- A respondent commented that information presented at the RSTF are weighted towards New Jersey and suggested a balance approach in developing items for

future meetings by presenting some national level topics along with examples of safety from Pennsylvania.

Legislative Safety Symposiums

John Ward, Associate Director Planning Division, DVRPC mentioned that DVRPC is planning to have two Transportation Legislative Symposium events, one in each state. There were numerous strategies identified in the Regional Safety Action Plan which require legislative actions therefore, the purpose of the symposium is to engage legislators to work collaboratively with other transportation safety professionals and stakeholders. The symposiums will be ½ day events consisting of safety presentations and a legislation panel. Mr. Ward invited members to participate in the steering committees for planning this event. The New Jersey and Pennsylvania symposiums are slated to take place in July and in the fall respectively.

5. Open Forum

An open forum was held for members to share and exchange information. Tim Chelius, Executive Director, South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) briefly shared information on some of their MPO's safety programs including the NHTSA funded Community Traffic Safety Program. This program focuses primarily on education, enforcement and EMS activities, seat belt surveys, training of child pass seat inspectors, state police teen driving programs are some of the activities. Mr. Chelius offered to make a presentation at a future RSTF meeting.

Bonnie Weiner, Executive Director, MADD – PA Chapter, mentioned that MADD will be having their Annual Walk on October 11th near the Art Museum. Ashwin Patel, PennDOT mentioned that Pennsylvania received a \$28 million grant from NHTSA, for seat belt compliance, with \$6 million allocated to the 5 counties in DVRPC Pennsylvania region to address the FHWA top 5% crashes. The State Police were conducting a Click It or Ticket Campaign from May 19th to June 20th. In lieu of recent crimes, SEPTA have increased their police force specifically along the Broad Street/Market Street lines. Violet Marrero shared with the group that the Safe Passage Symposium has been rescheduled until the fall. Given the success in Pennsylvania, New Jersey has adopted the Smooth Operator Program. Sarah Weisman announced that the 4th Annual New Jersey Safety Forum will be held on December 3rd at Brookdale College, Lincroft, NJ. In planning this year's event, there is a call for presentations and a call for safety booth participants. The safety booths will act as a form of peer exchange and are only open for agencies and organizations with safety programs. Although this is a New Jersey event, stakeholders from Pennsylvania are welcome to participate. Rosemarie Anderson announced that there were still spaces available for those interested in participating in the 2-day Alive at 25 Instructor Training Course being held at DVRPC on May 27th and 28th.

OLD BUSINESS

John Ward announced that Ray Reeve, Sr. Highway Safety Specialist, New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (NJDHTS) has accepted the position of vice-chair for the RSTF.

Attendees

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| Aiken, David | PA Senator Connie William's Office |
| Anderson, Matthew | Chester County Planning Commission |
| Anderson, Rosemarie | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Bartels, Stacy | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Brahler, Richard | Bucks County Planning Commission |
| Bickel, Rich | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Bucci, Larry | Pennsylvania Department of Transportation |
| Burke, Erin | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Chelius, Tim | South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization |
| Damelio, Ralph | South Jersey Transportation Authority |
| David, Jack | South Jersey Transportation Authority |
| Dula, Justin | Delaware County Planning Department |
| Feggans, Charles | New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety |
| Flemming, Alex | SEPTA |
| Fullerton, Dave | PATCO |
| Hacker, Joseph | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Hoffman, Bill | Federal Highway Administration – New Jersey |
| Holm, Karen | Center for Injury Research and Prevention – CHOP |
| King, Chris | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Klejst, Stephen | New Jersey Transit |
| Marrero, Violet | New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety |
| Mason, Wayne, Sgt. | Pennsylvania State Police |
| Merlin, Debbie | Philadelphia Mayor's Commission for Aging |
| Moore, Regina | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Moyo, Jabulani | Philadelphia Streets Department |
| Murphy, Kevin | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Neshatfar, Mitra | Transportation Safety Resource Center |
| Patel, Ashwin | Pennsylvania Department of Transportation |
| Puleo, Jillian | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Ragozine, William | Cross County Connection TMA |
| Rickett, Bill | Bucks County TMA |
| Sexton, Derrick | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Shakespeare, Warren | New Jersey State Police |
| Steele, Don | Pennsylvania Turnpike |
| Sullivan, James | South Jersey Transportation Authority |
| Thomas, Carol | Burlington County Engineering |
| Trimbell, Shayne | Greater Valley Forge TMA |
| Trueman, Caroline | Federal Highway Administration – New Jersey |
| Ward, John | Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission |
| Weiner, Bonnie | MADD Southeast PA |
| Weissman, Sarah | Transportation Safety Resource Center |
| Wolcott, Stephen, Capt. | New Jersey State Police |
| Ziemer, Karl | Delaware River Port Authority |