



MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

Traffic Safety Culture and the Law

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Presented Via Zoom; 73 attendees

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

www.dvrpc.org/Committees/RSTF

Welcome Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM by Patricia Ott, MBO Engineering. Ms. Ott reiterated the goal of the RSTF: to reduce roadway crashes and eliminate serious injuries and fatalities from crashes in the Delaware Valley. Ms. Ott then summarized the responses to the post-meeting survey for the previous RSTF meeting, *Traffic Safety Culture and the Media* (Wednesday, July 11, 2020), specifically in regards to soliciting feedback about a future RSTF meeting on enforcement. The survey yielded suggestions for data topics, discussion topics and potential speakers that will be incorporated into planning the meeting; tentatively scheduled for early 2021.

Introduction to Traffic Safety Culture and the Law

Two keynote speakers addressed the meeting on traffic safety culture and the law. Prior to these speakers, Kevin Murphy, DVRPC, introduced the topic. Mr. Murphy presented first on updated crash trends, including regional crash data for 2015-2019. Crash fatalities and severe injuries (KSI) have consistently increased in the DVRPC region during this time period, with a total of 371 fatalities and 1628 serious injuries in the year 2019. Mr. Murphy noted the potential influence of a terminology change on reported injury severity. In accordance with federal guidance, suburban Pennsylvania counties moved from the term 'severe' injury to 'suspected serious' injury between 2015 and 2016. The same transition was made by the City of Philadelphia and the region's New Jersey counties between 2018 and 2019. Mr. Murphy closed with a summary of the RSTF's 2020 Traffic Safety Culture series, which is comprised of the following individual meetings: Introduction to Traffic Safety Culture (March '20), Media (June '20), Law (October '20) and Health (Upcoming, December '20). In the introductory meeting of the series, 'Traffic Safety Culture' was defined as the shared belief system of a group of people that influences road user behaviors and stakeholder actions that impact traffic safety. Following this recap, Mr. Murphy introduced the first speaker: Gregory Shill, Associate Professor, University of Iowa College of Law.

Featured Presentations

Mr. Shill began his presentation, entitled *Secondhand Driving and the Law: How Compulsory Exposure to Cars Undermines Public Health*. The presentation explored the scale of the problem, the scope of traffic safety culture and the law and how we can do better. Mr. Shill described the scale of the problem as a 'twin crises', spanning public health and climate impacts. He noted that emissions kill more Americans every year than crashes, with transportation ranking as the highest source of US greenhouse gas emissions. He defines "secondhand driving" as mandatory driving exposure, noting that it is impossible to make oneself safe from the impact of motor vehicles and that these effects are not felt equally. The scope of traffic safety culture and the law included: laws that regulate driving directly ('level of service', speed limits, automated enforcement solutions such as red light cameras, etc.); land use regulation (parking quotas, ban on mixed uses, etc.); environmental laws (CAFE standards focusing only on tailpipe emissions, lack of particulate matter regulation); and others realms such as vehicle safety standards and insurance. Mr. Shill closed with an exploration of how we can do better, citing Amsterdam as an example of a city that does not promote car dominance in its design and policy. He also cites recent polling that shows voter support for removing traffic enforcement from police jurisdiction as one of many strategies to be explored moving forward.

More of Mr. Shill's work is available on the Social Science Research Network [website](#). Mr. Shill is a host of the upcoming Iowa Law Review symposium entitled *The Future of Law and Transportation* on Friday, November 6th from 9:30 AM to 5:45 PM (Register [here](#)).

Fiona Peach, New York City Mayor's Office of Operations, then began her presentation titled *Failure to Yield (19-190) Summons Analysis: An Examination of Summons Data for New York City Vision Zero Efforts*. Ms. Peach provided the background that Vision Zero was adopted in NYC in 2014 under the administration of Mayor Bill de Blasio, consisting of 63 separate initiatives. The passage of the Right of Way Law (LL 29 of 2041) was considered a major victory, creating section 19-190 of the Administrative Code of NYC. The legislation qualified a driver's failure to yield the right of way to a pedestrian or cyclist as a traffic infraction. Prior to 2014, police officers could only issue Traffic Violations Bureau (TVB) summonses to violators who failed to yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk. These summonses required officers to have witnessed the incident. Ms. Peach described the data analysis surrounding the 19-190 summons between 2015 and 2019, finding that 94% of summonses heard were dismissed and only 6% that went to hearing were considered a violation. 37% of procedural dismissals were due to defective summons, indicating that they either: weren't filed on time, were not completed or signed, or were not completed properly. After training was introduced to remedy these contributing issues, dismissals were still made under the pretense of 'No Prima Facie', indicating that the evidence was deemed insufficient to support the case.

Speaker Q&A

Kevin Murphy, DVRPC: Has there been a comparison of crash trends to determine the impact of each individual initiative in NYC's Vision Zero?

Ms. Peach: Our work has not included an investigation into whether or not crash trends were affected by the introduction of the right-of-way law, though we hope to do so eventually.

Andrew Ross: Please explain 'zoning forces you to drive'. Are you suggesting every block of a city/town must allow multi-family apartments?

Mr. Shill: People who are long since gone have created a system that controls the way we do things today, in this case in the mid-century every city enacted racist and classist zoning. Euclidean zoning

comes from the case *Euclid v Ambler*, which separates people by use of land. Negative consequences have arisen, such as having to drive everywhere because nothing is closeby. This is prevalent in areas developed post WWII. The separation of uses combined with parking requirements creates landscapes with oceans of parking and homes that are far from amenities, nobody has a choice but to drive.

Breakout Group Session

Following the presentation Q&A portion of the meeting Marco Gorini, DVRPC, sent attendees into zoom 'breakout rooms' to discuss the presentations and how changes to traffic safety culture in the region can be realized. Each breakout group was attended by a designated facilitator and followed the same facilitation guide.

After designating a note taker and exchanging brief introductions, groups shared initial reactions to the presentations. In response to Mr. Shill's presentation, many groups reflected on the extent of the environmental dangers of cars, what can be done about the connection between zoning and car-use and noted the ways in which COVID-19 has impacted the ways in which streets are utilized. Groups expressed that Ms. Peach's presentation was demonstrative of the difficulty in getting laws to stick, beyond getting them passed in the first place. This prompted discussion around ways to enforce traffic safety laws as well as how to avoid these incidents in the first place. Many expressed an interest in seeing data on the effectiveness of different traffic regulations.

Groups then shifted the discussion to reflect on the RSTF series on Traffic Safety Culture thus far and think about ways their own work in transportation safety influences regional traffic safety culture. Responses ranged from work in community organizations to supporting municipalities in active transportation options and messaging, among others.

The conversations concluded with a brainstorm on action items, tasks that one can take to support the shifting of traffic safety culture in the region. More prevalent than identifying discrete tasks in the conversations were the implied action items derived from expressed interest in data. In particular, assembling data comparing the effectiveness of traffic enforcement tactics emerged as a prominent goal. Several potential action items were discussed that the RSTF will revisit at the next meeting, including:

- Research data around traffic safety numbers in cities with different safety cultures (e.g. comparing Vision Zero cities and non-Vision Zero cities)
- Research data comparing the effectiveness of traffic enforcement tactics
- Identify groups for outreach, especially those that have interest in traffic safety but may not be exposed to traffic safety culture/Vision Zero concepts

Concluding Remarks

Kelley Yemen, City of Philadelphia, concluded the program with a thank you to all speakers and a reminder to complete the meeting evaluation. The next RSTF meeting (Traffic Safety Culture and Health) is scheduled for December, 2020. A current webinar series from the Ped & Bike Info Center (now through Oct. 28) covers relevant topics, following guidance from NCHRP Publication 932. Ms. Yemen also shared that October is National Pedestrian Safety Month and Distracted Driving Month.

Meeting Attendee List

Keith Hamas
Kate Russo
Patricia Ott
Frank Neary
John Doyle
Elise Bremer-Nei
Andrew Thompson
Ian Schwarzenberg
Patrick Farley
Corey Brown
Wayne Shelton
Joe Fiocco
James Weist
Christine A. Norris
Eva H.
Thomas Hastings
Kevin Murphy
Sean Meehan
Jon Ewald
Matthew Anderson
Ruqaya Alfaris
Miranda Adams
Andrew Besold
Claire Warner
Kelvin MacKavanagh
Joe Rapp
Tara Woody
Michael Clemmons
Matt Shinton
Laura Fredricks
Daniel Mcardle
Bill Houpt
Kate Norris
Chimai Ngo
Natalie Scott
David Kanthor
Gregory Shill

Bill Beans
Lily Reynolds
Joy Huertas
James Brady
Michael Boyer
Shoshana Akins
Rebecca Yurkovich
Cassidy Boulan
Cheryl Kastrenakes
Susan Quick
Kelley Yemen
Alyson Strigle
Nick Zuwiala-Rogers
Dana Dobson
Christian Regosch
Andrew Ross
Jerry Foster
Elizabeth Mastaglio
Paige Glassman
Keith Skilton
Will Fraser
Fiona Peach
Maridarlyn Gonzalez
Tracy Nerney
Arnold Anderson
Tracy Noble
Fiona Peach
Elise Turner
Katie Lample
Robert Clarke
Mark Washington
Frances Conwell
Amon Boucher
Matthew Edmond
William Yarzab
Matthew Popek

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

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