



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee (TSB)

December 13, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Room 8, Fairfax County Government Center

12000 Government Center Pkwy

Fairfax, VA 22035

Website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/trails>

Notetaker: Erin Partlan, Franconia District

Members Present:

Bob Cosgriff (Braddock District/Vice-Chair), Jim Klein (Mount Vernon District), Jim Corcoran (Fairfax County Park Authority), Maria Lashinger (Northern Virginia Builders Industry Association), Karen Amphe (Sully District), James Albright (Mason District), Erin Partlan (Franconia District), Lydia Lawrence (Dranesville District), and Brooks Stephens (Providence District).

Members Absent:

Ken Comer (At Large/Chair), Shawn Newman (Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling), Howard Albers (Washington Area Bicyclists Association), Alex Rough (Hunter Mill District), Tyler Schiefelbein (Springfield), Diane Monnig (Fairfax Area Disability Services Board), Mike DePue (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority), Mark Tipton (Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Association), and Kathryn McDaniel (Clifton Horse Society).

Others in Attendance: Ryan-Paul Johnson (FCDOT) and Tommy Aly (Guest).

Call to Order: Bob Cosgriff, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the November 8, 2023, committee meeting were previously e-mailed to members for their review. Since there were no additions or corrections to be made, a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes. The motion was approved.

Presentations:

There were no presentations made at the December meeting.

Discussions:

Jim Corcoran kicked off a discussion on Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) signage, particularly for the Cross County Trail (CCT). Jim gave an update that FCPA plans to implement markers, which are similar to trail blazes. Previously used carsonite arrows are not being implemented anymore as they didn't work well. Currently FCPA is still using wooden signs, but are considering if color core signs for trail signs, which are longer lasting but more expensive, can be used instead. In some parts of the CCT, VDOT is responsible for road signs; in those cases,

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FCCA would mimic the sign style for adjacent hard surface trails. Additionally, DPW is responsible for maintenance of FCDOT trails, while FCCA maintains trails on park lands and CCT. Suggestion to have a DPW representative on the TSB committee.

The committee offered suggestions to FCCA for solutions on signage, such as fundraising through a foundation or seeking bond funding. Jim clarified that bond funding is tied to a specific project, but trail sign redesign can be considered a project. Lydia Lawrence raised the point that FCCA has a board that has requested budget increases, including specific requests to fund trails work. The committee discussed how TSB can support FCCA's asks for funding increases, such as committee members reaching out to their district supervisors as well as their district representatives on the FCCA board with information on specific needs in each district. James Albright suggested that budgets be discussed at future TSB meetings. Lydia followed up that asking for a line item breakdown of the budgets is helpful so that TSB can advocate for specific allocation requests.

Lydia suggested that the committee write a letter to the BOD in support of FCCA and FCDOT during budget season. Lydia will draft a letter to be presented to the committee during the January TSB meeting. The letter will cover top needs such as maintenance (e.g. signs, drainage), new signage, and improvement of crossings (e.g. fairweather crossings). Edits to the letter, especially in light of the February 20th budget presentations, can be approved during the March TSB meeting. The committee aims to send the letter to BOD ahead of budget voting in April.

James Albright suggested that the needs of the CCT will be a good first topic for the committee to trial a proactive approach. Karen Ampeh will support by sending in photos of signs in need of repair from the CCT. Jim Corcoran suggested that benchmarking the CCT with similar trails (e.g. Denver, Minneapolis) based on trail mileage can provide concrete support for increased trails budgets. Karen also suggested that benchmarking can be done with maintenance approaches for the Capital Trail. Lydia added that Fairfax County trails suffer from few destination trails that can garner higher funding.

Lydia shared that a public hearing on pre-session listening is taking place on January 6th at the Fairfax Government Center and may be of interest to committee members.

Staff Report:

Ryan-Paul Johnson reported that a draft of the bike parking guidelines is available for review. Committee members should submit comments to Nicole Wynands by January 5th.

Ryan-Paul also announced additional \$270,000 for Active Fairfax. Unfortunately, FCDOT did not receive additional money to implement Safe Streets for All, but received some supplemental funding for small projects such as guides.

Public Comments:

Tommy Aly provided comments on the style and presence of bike lanes in Fairfax County. As painted bike lanes aren't comfortable for many potential bike users, additional painted bike lanes do not help grow the bike network. Further, unused bike lanes lead to the public perception that bike lanes are a waste of infrastructure. Tommy would like to see protected bike lanes as the primary type of bike facility, maintenance for existing facilities (such as trimming overgrowth),

and connections between existing bike facilities. Tommy also asked why painted lanes exist alongside multi-use pathways in some cases, such as on Gallows Road. Ryan-Paul Johnson clarified that such facilities can exist for several reasons, including by community request, or as a transition segment to other on road or off road bike facilities. Ryan-Paul also shared that recent projects have included protected bike lanes, such as the grant-funded project on Prosperity and the cycle track on Sunrise. He also clarified that the code only allows painted bike lanes for some roads.

Upcoming Presentations:

The following topics were suggested for the next TSB committee meeting:

- Support letter for FCPA/FCDOT budget (Lydia Lawrence)
- Continued discussion on the committee's strategic vision, including a proposal for the number of letters the committee can expect to prepare within one year. Potential topics for letters include budget, safety, and the bike network.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes were approved by the TSB Committee on January 10, 2024.