

Meeting Minutes:

AASHTO Technical Committee on Non-Motorized Transportation

September 2, 2008

Seattle, Washington

Attendees

Tony Laird (Wyoming)

Eric Glick (Nevada)

Jim McDonnell (AASHTO DC)

Dwight Kingsbury (Florida)

Lois Thibault (US Access Board DC)

Melissa Anderson (Missouri)

Liz Walton (Minnesota)

Richard Moeur (Arizona)

Barb Solberg (Maryland)

Tom Huber (Wisconsin)

Richard Andrews (Oklahoma)

Megan Hall (FHWA Washington)

Gabe Rousseau (FHWA DC)

Ginny Sullivan (Adventure Cycling)

Tom Dodds (SC by phone)

Ray Derr (TRB by phone)

Dave Bachman (PA by phone)

Rulemaking or other activities regarding Public Rights of Way Accessibility Guidelines

- Lois gave an overview of the US Access Board—the Access Board works with DOT and Department of Justice on Americans with Disability Act issues.
- A notice of proposed rulemaking is expected in the not too distant future—anticipated final rule in late spring 2009.
- The Access Board currently uses the word ‘usability’ to refer to ADA compliance because official standards for public rights of way have not been approved. After the ADA rulemaking is finalized, it will refer to accessibility compliance.
- The Access Board is working with OMB to examine cost implications of some of the proposed new standards (e.g., signal costs at roundabouts, accessible pedestrian signals)
- The distinction between ‘alteration’ and ‘maintenance’ was discussed. Is it an alteration of a street if only a new seal is applied? The degree of resurfacing that becomes an “alteration” has not been spelled out in accessibility guidelines, but a criterion was described in the Yerusalem case (early 1990s).
- There was discussion of the consistency of the draft revision of the AASHTO Bike Guide with the Access Board’s draft public rights of way accessibility guidelines (“PROWAG”, <http://www.access-board.gov/prowac/index.htm>) and proposed guidelines for federal outdoor developed areas (<http://www.access-board.gov/outdoor/>). The current (1999 edition) Bike Guide contains recommended limits on shared-use path grades that would not satisfy the limits described in the proposed guidelines for federal outdoor developed areas. (Peggy Greenwell at the Access Board is the trails contact.)
- Transition Plans: states and locals are supposed to use transition plans to prioritize improvements. Keys to good transition planning include: 1) ensuring that you get local input for them; 2) when planning work try to include nearby accessibility projects in the scope of work for efficiency; 3) look at Title II and how it

prioritizes areas for improving existing facilities. (Note that there is no cost defense for noncompliance with ADA for new projects.)

- Several panel members cited concerns that some localities may choose not to install some pedestrian facilities to circumvent ADA requirements.
- The main issues with the draft ADA guidelines include: 1) tabling of intersections; 2) detectable warnings; 3) establishment of temporary routes; 4) accessible pedestrian signals. Additionally, roundabouts will continue to be an issue. Europe has more experience with roundabouts and has found that as roundabouts mature they often require signals. HAWK signals also offer some potential.
- Scott Windley at the Access Board is the accessibility liaison to this AASHTO committee.

NCHRP Project 15-37, Revision of the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

- The timeline for the AASHTO Bike Guide is to have a revised draft completed in October. The third draft will be completed in December and will be disseminated to a wider audience (including the state bicycle/pedestrian coordinators) for additional review.
- Key issues:
 - How to discuss emerging but not definitively researched bicycle facilities such as cycle tracks.
 - The draft guide proposes reducing the recommended design speed for shared paths from 20 mph to 14 mph. Would 14 mph become a de facto standard for many jurisdictions if this were done?
 - The 14 mph revision is based on the FHWA report *Characteristics of Emerging Road Users and Their Safety* and there are some questions about the representativeness of the shared-path users studied.
 - There are benefits of this reduced design speed for urban areas where right of way can be hard to acquire.
 - Will faster riders choose to get off a path that is designed for 14 mph?
 - AASHTO railing height—the minimum railing height is now set at 42 inches in the AASHTO bridge specifications publication.
 - Dwight mentioned that the team was looking at different options to get constructive input on the draft guide. The contractor team might put sections of the draft revision (protected with “DRAFT” watermarks, etc.) on their web site to get targeted feedback.
 - The project’s advisory panel is concerned that the Bike Guide draft revision not be perceived as being based on advocacy (rather than engineering/research) to make the document acceptable to the AASHTO committees who will vote on it.

Review of Activities and On-Going Research

- *NCHRP Project 17-37 Pedestrian Predictive Crash Methodology for Urban and Suburban Arterials*

- This NCHRP effort has been completed and is being incorporated into the Highway Safety Manual.
- However, the Highway Safety Manual lacks good crash predictors for pedestrians. There will be an add-on to the HSM effort to enhance methodology for estimating pedestrian crashes at intersections.
- More research is also needed for pedestrian crash prediction at non-intersection locations.
- *NCHRP 17-32 Rumble Strips - Balancing Trade-Offs*
 - This project will be completed in 2009.
 - Midwest Research Institute is conducting the study. It involves a survey of rumble strip practices in all states.
 - The study is not really looking at cyclist issues related to rumble strips. The study may not be able to address cyclist-rumble strip concerns.
- *NCHRP 15-35, Geometric Design of Driveways*
 - This project is updating the AASHTO informational guide from 1959.
 - The University of Arkansas was selected as the contractor.
 - They have completed about 75 percent of the research and the effort should be finished early in 2009.
 - Janet Barlow is involved in the effort to ensure that accessibility issues are addressed.
- *NCHRP 20-7 Task 263: consider what to update in next edition of AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities*
 - This NCHRP effort will be used to produce an outline for the next version of the AASHTO Pedestrian Guide.
 - Chris Hedges at TRB is the point of contact for the project.
 - A first conference call will be held September 8th to finalize the statement of work and discuss possible contractors.
 - We discussed issues related to timing this project to try to get it in the NCHRP pipeline for 2010 rather than waiting until 2011.
- *FHWA/AASHTO Domestic Scan*
 - There will be a solicitation very soon for domestic scans. These are typically eight to ten people with travel lasting between one and two weeks. They can occur in one block of time or can be spaced out over a series of short trips.
 - Canada is (probably) considered to be part of a domestic scan.
 - Scan topics can be submitted by AASHTO committees or FHWA.
- *AASHTO Reauthorization Update*
 - AASHTO has 10 topic oriented policy teams from state DOTs. These panels include: Highways, Transit, Freight, and Metro Mobility.
 - In the Metro Mobility document, AASHTO supports Complete Streets (with flexibility for implementation).
 - AASHTO also supports continuation of Transportation Enhancements.
 - An AASHTO authorization committee will look at the 10 policy reports that are generated to ensure consistency between efforts.
- *AASHTO and Context Sensitive Solutions*
 - The CSS task force has been mothballed.
 - However, Sandy Otto, FHWA's DA in Arkansas is still spearheading CSS efforts.

- There will be a report in October on how CSS should be considered in the future.
- *Subcommittee on Design (SCOD)*
 - SCOD passed resolutions at their July meeting. One pertained to consistency of dual English/metric units for AASHTO reports.
 - A SCOD region is interested in an international scan on accessibility issues.
 - US Bicycle Routes System:
 - Several states are concerned about the US bicycle routes plan. Concerns include liability and cost. The system however is a coordination plan and not a mandate. That is, there is no mandate to sign the route.
 - AASHTO has initiated an electronic ballot for the system.
 - A FAQs section about the national bike routes system will be placed on the Adventure Cycling web site soon.
 - Hopefully by the end of the year or beginning of 2009, an official, approved corridor plan will be in place.
 - A strategic plan developed by SCOD. Each technical committee will fill out a table on how they can accomplish certain goals. The deadline is October 31st.
- *2009 NCHRP Projects*
 - No NCHRP projects were funded that had been submitted by the Nonmotorized Technical Committee.
 - Highway Safety Manual:
 - The final draft for comment is due out in December 2008 or January 2009. The project will be completed in spring 2009.
 - The manual is limited in its discussion of bicycle and pedestrian information. It may be helpful to comment that the guide needs better safety predictors for walking and bicycling.
 - An NCHRP 20-7 task entitled Geometric Design for Transit Facilities on Highways and Streets has been completed. Jim McDonnell can forward copies to interested committee members.
- *FHWA current research activities*
 - FHWA is currently conducting its stakeholder input campaign for the STEP program. STEP stands for Surface Transportation Environment and Planning Cooperative Research Program. The last two years the bicycle, pedestrian, and health topic area has received \$70k. If you have research ideas you'd like to propose, please do so at: <http://knowledge.fhwa.dot.gov/cops/step.nsf/home/>.
 - FHWA will be launching a new effort to develop a strategic plan for research and outreach on pedestrian safety.
 - FHWA submitted an interim report to Congress on the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program.
- *FY09 FHWA international scan tour for Survey of Innovative Pedestrian and Bicyclist Infrastructure Improvements and Policies to Increase Safety and Mobility*
 - Sometime next spring there will be an AASHTO/FHWA international scan on walking and bicycling infrastructure improvements and policies.

- Scan team is expected to include some Tech Committee representation.
- The countries that will be visited have not yet been determined. A report facilitator will need to be selected and this person will conduct a desk scan to figure out what countries should be visited.
- The co-chairs will be Ed Fischer of Oregon DOT and David Nichol from FHWA's Office of Safety.
- *US Bike Routes Task Force*
 - Task force leaders met with several AASHTO committees this summer.
 - In Hartford in October, there will be a possible ballot.
 - Hoping for official approval of the corridor plan by end of this year or early next year.
- *TRB Pedestrian Committee (Kingsbury)*
 - Dwight attended the TRB Pedestrian Committee meeting.
- *TRB Bicycle Transportation Committee (Glick)*
 - Richard will serve as the committee liaison to the TRB Bicycle Committee.
- *NCHRP 3-70 Multimodal Level-of-Service Analysis for Urban Streets*
 - This NCHRP effort is in Phase 2.
 - The ultimate goal for the project is for its findings to be incorporated into the Highway Capacity Manual.
 - The bicycle LOS models being used in this project are based on those developed by Sprinkle Consulting for Florida DOT.
 - Phase 3 is likely to be completed in summer 2009.

New Research Ideas and Proposals

- *Review SCOR comments on 2008 NCHRP problem statements*
 - No SCOR comments were discussed.
- *Review and prioritize Research Problem Statements for next NCHRP cycle*
 - The committee reviewed and ranked the problem statements. They were ranked as follows with revisions being conducted by the person identified in parentheses:
 1. Bike Lane Guidance (Eric Glick)
 2. Design Options to Reduce Turning Motor Vehicle / Bicycle Conflicts at Intersections (with the addition of SPUIs) (Richard Moeur)
 3. Synthesis on Funding Small Projects (Tom Huber)
 4. Parallel shared use/side paths (Dwight Kingsbury and Tom Huber) (Note: a previous version was submitted 2 years ago.)
 5. Accommodating bikes and pedestrians at work zones (Barb Solberg)
 6. Pedestrian Signals: Visibility to Pedestrians with Varying Levels of Vision (Tony Laird)

Key Deadlines:

- International Scan proposals: 9/30/08 (*Note: Possible submittal of a scan on accessibility at request of a SCOD region.*)

- NCHRP problem statements: 9/15/08 (at committee's discretion this deadline may be extendable by a couple weeks)
- TRB synthesis study proposals are due in 1/30/09.
- NCHRP 20-7 tasks: 10/31/08.

Open discussion:

- Using parks for bicycle commuting after dark:
 - How do states handle policies for people to use shared use paths after dark? In many places the sun sets before people are commuting home. Can cyclists use these facilities if the grounds are closed after dark?
 - Missouri uses a complaint based system. If they receive complaints about problems in a park they investigate but otherwise do not limit use.
 - Suggestion: call the Mount Vernon Trail park police to find out their policy for commuters.

Membership and Next Meeting

- *Membership*
 - There are three vacancies on this committee. Jim will let SCOD know that new committee members are needed.
- *Next meeting*
 - The next meeting should be held in conjunction with the SCOD meeting next July in Indianapolis, or with an APBP professional development seminar or the state bicycle/pedestrian coordinators meeting (as was done in 2007 in Davis, California).