

Active Transportation Advisory Group Meeting Summary

Prince George's County Planning Department

Monday, June 2, 2025

7:00 to 8:30 PM

Attendees

Felix Adams

Sean Adkins, *Prince George's County Department of Parks & Recreation*

Maribel Donahue, *consultant*

Crystal Hancock, *Prince George's County Planning Department*

Steven Hartig, *Riverdale Park resident*

Michael Jackson, *Prince George's County Planning Department*

Ken McCaughey, *Bowie resident*

Kelsey Mizeur, *Fort Washington horse farm owner*

Daniel Paschall, *East Coast Greenway Alliance*

Chuck Renninger, *Largo Civic Association*

Steve Skolnik, *City of Greenbelt Green Team*

Evan Tenenbaum, *Prince George's County Planning Department*

Michael Jackson started the meeting at 7:02 pm with a round of introductions.

1. East Coast Greenway Alliance Presentation

Daniel Paschall, Mid-Atlantic manager with the East Coast Greenway Alliance, gave a detailed overview of his organization, including its purpose, strategy, past accomplishments and future plans. He is based in Philadelphia and covers Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. The ECGA's strategy is to work with government agencies, advocates, planners, and others to create a trail network from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida that connects communities and is accessible to persons of all ages and abilities. The Alliance identifies existing trails that are suitable for bicycle travel and the lowest stress roadways to connect these existing trails, while advocating for the construction of additional trails that will eventually form a seamless trail network. Daniel works with other ECGA managers including Elliott Caldwell who manages the DC and Virginia ECG segments. The portion of the September 11th Memorial Trail that connects the World Trade Center site to the Pentagon co-aligns with ECG designated trail segments in this corridor.

Daniel summarized ECG trail developments outside of Prince George's County, mentioning considerable work had been accomplished in the Boston area, Connecticut, New Jersey and the Philadelphia area as well as inland and coastal ECG routes south of DC. He specifically mentioned the Delaware and Raritan Canal Trail in New Jersey, a brand new trail along the Schuylkill Banks in Philadelphia, the Jack A. Markell Trail in Delaware, the Jones Fall Trail in Baltimore, the Baltimore and Annapolis Trail in Anne Arundel County, and the Mount Vernon Trail in Northern Virginia. These shared-use paths are designated as ECG segments.

Closer to home he noted the WB&A Trail and the anticipated opening of the bridge over the Patuxent that would connect the Prince George's and Anne Arundel County segments. Daniel noted that

Anne Arundel had started work on Phase 2 of the South Shore Trail that will extend between the WB&A Trail and Annapolis. The ECGA supports efforts to construct the Greenbelt East Trail that would connect the WB&A Trail to the Northeast Branch Trail along the MD 193/Greenbelt Road corridor, which in turn would provide shared-use path access into DC and close the east-west trail gap in northern Prince George's County. Daniel lamented that while it is possible to travel by shared-use path between Washington, DC and Pittsburgh, no similar facility connects DC and Baltimore. He noted there is a longstanding proposal to construct a shared-use path along MD 704/Martin Luther King Jr Highway which would extend the WB&A Trail from its southern terminus in Lanham to the District of Columbia line in Seat Pleasant.

ECG designated trails are mostly hard surfaced. One notable exception is the segment that passes through John Heinz Wildlife Refuge, just outside of Philadelphia, which has a natural surface. However, all ECG designated trails must be consistent with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. In response to Felix Adam's question on when the entire ECG would be completed, Daniel said there is a flexible timeline that partially depends on how the ECGA elevates proposed ECG as projects.

Ken McCaughey asked if a date had been set for the official opening of the WB&A Bridge over the Patuxent River. Daniel said he had not received any information, and Michael had not gotten news of a bridge grand opening date. Sean Adkins said the bridge was opened to traffic in mid-May and had personally ridden over it and confirmed no official grand opening has been set. Daniel said he is working with Peter Gray of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association and Jon Korin of Bike Annapolis & Anne Arundel (Bike AAA) to mobilize the public to attend once a grand opening date is scheduled.

Ken complained that Google Maps advises bicyclists seeking to reach the WB&A Trail to use MD 704, which is a high-speed arterial roadway that is not bicycle friendly. Daniel replied that unfortunately, the ECGA does not always have the best of luck in getting Google maps to change their routing algorithm to take folks away from really high stress roads.

2. Go Prince George's Preliminary Master Plan of Transportation

Evan Tenenbaum, a transportation planner with the Prince George's County Planning Department, briefed the attendees on Go Prince George's, the Department's preliminary master plan of transportation. Evan is the deputy project manager, Dharm Guruswamy as the project manager, and Crystal Hancock rounds out the three member core team members in her role as acting supervisor of the Transportation Planning Section. The plan, when approved by the Prince George's County Council will supersede the 2009 Master Plan of Transportation, and area and sector transportation plan amendments. Go Prince George's is the functional master plan of transportation, focusing on multimodal transport including bicycling and walking, and provides a road map for street classifications. It has a vision, goals, and recommends policies and strategies to implement its vision and goals.

Evan said Go Prince George's is divided into five sections. Section 1 introduces the project and discusses the existing transportation network. Section 2 is about policies, strategies, and the major plan elements, which will have the ability to shape local regulations and practices to implement project recommendations. Section 3 provides specific details of the roadway recommendations. Section 4 lists the roles that county municipalities, transportation partners and other stakeholders

will play to achieve project recommendations. Section 5 is the appendix that serves as a guide to the resources used in the plan's creation.

Evan provided a timeline of Go Prince George's. A preliminary plan review was held in November and December 2024 with transportation agencies and following revisions based on their input, presented the draft preliminary plan revisions at a January 2025 meeting of the Prince George's County Planning Board. In February Go Prince George's was officially launched and the Planning Department held two open houses at its Largo Headquarters in March to present the plan to the public and receive initial questions and comments. From March 2025 to early 2026 staff will be going to various locations throughout the county, including municipalities and elected officials, discussing the plan and receiving input. The next major step will occur when a joint public hearing period and public testimony will be scheduled. During this time any public comments will be considered to be officially placed into the record. Following the end of the joint public hearing period work sessions will be held with the Planning Board to make final adjustments and then presented to the County Council. The final plan adoption is anticipated to occur in 2026.

Crystal said the informal comments from the public are welcomed now. Informal comments are welcomed because it provides staff the opportunity to evaluate public thinking ahead of the official comment period. Steven Hartig asked Crystal if he has a lot of technical feedback, would it hurt to submit it before the official comment period. Crystal said it would not hurt. She also said staff is in the process of creating an errata sheet to organize public input.

Daniel asked how projects will be prioritized and how can advocates influence the project prioritization process. Evan responded that as the planning agency the Planning Department will be calling on our partner operating agencies that construct capital projects to collaborate on project prioritization. These operating agencies include the Department of Public Works and Planning, the Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Maryland State Highway Administration. Crystal said staff will be pleased to receive requests to present Go Prince George's to community groups in the upcoming months and that ATAG will schedule more detailed discussions about proposed bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure at the upcoming September and December meetings.

3. Northern Prince George's East West Bikeway Feasibility Study

Michael informed the attendees that a Transportation and Land Use Connections (TLC) grant application submitted by the Planning Department had been approved for \$80,000 worth of consultant services by the Transportation Planning Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, to conduct a feasibility study for a proposed Northern Prince George's East West Bikeway Feasibility (NPGEWB) Study. He described the study corridor which extends from Lanham to Lewisdale. This study is the idea of Councilmember Eric Olson, who wants an east west bikeway to connect the WB&A Trail and several Anacostia River tributary trails.

Steven thanked Michael for the presentation and said he loved the idea because if the bikeway is implemented it would improve his bike commute which is from Riverdale Park to Lanham. Steven noted that the proposed bikeway would connect various employment sites, residential neighborhoods, the University of Maryland and, transit stations including the MARC, Metrorail and the planned Purple Line.

4. Other Business

Sean Adkins introduced himself as a trail planner with the Department of Parks and Recreation. He said that DPR has a stake in the NPGEWB Feasibility Study. Sean noted that several people have been studying this corridor and there have been good discussions with lots of stakeholders in the past. He mentioned DPW&T's list of projects in their Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Project's top 15 projects included Good Luck Road and 94th Avenue which are located in the vicinity of the NPGEWB Feasibility Study. He said DPR fully supports this study.

Sean said that DPR will be closing some shared-use path bridges over the summer to perform maintenance including one along the Northeast Branch Trail near Riverdale Road and one along the Northwest Branch Trail near Adelphi Mill. As these bridges are used by school students, the closures are scheduled during summer vacation to avoid impacting student school commutes. He confirmed that the National Park Service had completed shared use path repairs along the Oxon Cove Trail near National Harbor which connects far southwestern DC to Oxon Hill, which involved two rebuilt path bridges and a new pavement surface. He encouraged attendees to visit the refurbished Oxon Cove Trail

5. Adjournment

Michael announced the next ATAG meeting would be held on Monday, September 8 from 7 to 8:30 PM. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM.