

28 February 2013
Minutes
APS Multi-Modal Transportation & Student Special Committee
Sequoia Education Center

Present:

Eric Goodman
Erik Maskelony
Kristin Haldeman
Jane S. Kim
Ellen Y Smith
Gillian Burgess
Penny Everline
Rob Hindman
Bob Laws
John Chadwick
Ronna Weber
Nancy Van Dorn
Henry Dunbar
Tim Rosato (Skype)

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The agenda dated 28 February 2013 was approved.

The minutes from the meeting 14 February 2013 were approved, subject to edits from the committee members. They will then be made available on the APS Website.

Public Comment Period – Donna Owens was allowed 3 minutes to speak.

Donna Owens: Two “walker” letters were received. Appeals were filed for safety concerns, all students now have passes. She conveyed the importance of this committee, noting it should have been established many years ago. She noted that 671 appeals were submitted and that half were successful. As a result, some families have started driving students to school. Safe walk maps are in process, and have been presented for feedback. She noted the problems thus caused, noting that children without bus passes are put at risk. She felt that little has been done with regards to safety. She applauded Arlington Public Schools for now forward thinking...but reiterated that we are talking about student’s safety, noting the need to address the safety issues of **all** students. She then passed out some suggestions to all members present for consideration:

1. Private school Model for Restricting Personal Vehicles on School Grounds:

2. Choice School/Career Center Transportation efficiencies gained from designating Centralized Choice School Bus Stops.

Responses from Committee:

Members echoed concern about the perception about judgment regarding what is considered to be safe versus non-safe, noting that the assessment presented is correct as far as public standpoint. Also noted the evaluation with regards to hazards resonates.

7:25 APS Transportation Staff Update

Mr. Laws gave a brief presentation on summer school dates, including dates of decisions about transportation to summer school.

He noted there will be no summer school at Wakefield due to construction work.

Registration date is March 7th – noting a need to encourage everyone to register before the deadline of April 5th.

Friday May 10th is the deadline for elementary school.

June 14th is the deadline for middle school and high schools.

Summer school book to come out for students, and it will also be made available online.

Two mailings were sent out. APS is looking at doing one mailing in the future, rather than two.

Transportation mailers will be mailed to parents June 25th informing them of their student's route for summer school.

July 8 is the first day of summer school.

APS is attempting to get out mailers as early as possible for the full school year.

Discussion on transportation for summer school – the schedule varies according to the schools that are used, and numbers of students. Estimate 5000 students will be attending summer school.

This summer, there will not be an afternoon session; buses will only make one loop. If a child only signs up for one session at school and if they require transportation services from APS, they will need to take the bus in the morning and wait for the second session.

Discussion focused on the need to provide a safe space for the child to wait and perhaps do homework if they arrive at the school before their scheduled class or

stay at the school later than their class in order to take the bus. It was agreed that a safe classroom should be provided for students arriving early for the later school sessions due to the transportation policy.

Note that there will be alternate transportation arrangements provided for special needs kids.

Discussion about summer school programming located at Williamsburg – concern as to why this decision was made, noting that the majority of students are from south of route 50 and most families do not have a car. There was concern this might impact a large number of students. Suggestion to locate summer school programs at centrally located schools so buses are not travelling as far, therefore reducing wear and tear.

Walk-Zone Maps –maps will show all walking routes, paths, etc. so that parents can work out what is the best route from their house and the best way for their child to walk to and from school.

APS calls the maps Walk-Zone maps rather than Safe-Zone. Suggestion that the maps be called something other than ‘walk’ or ‘safe’ maps – perhaps ‘no bus zone’ maps. School is providing parents with information so the parents can then in turn identify the best route for their student. Hazards will be noted on the map. Additional hazards will be identified and reviewed by Bob. School will do the very best they can to identify all potential hazards.

APS is in the process of providing draft maps for 2 schools – these will be brought along to the next meeting for the committee to review. Once developed, they will be sent to the PTAs and Arlington County and Police for review. The deadline to send out the maps is in August when APS notifies everyone. In addition they will be on-line. Once the map is on-line, it will be a living document that can be updated periodically. When they are ready to be circulated, they will be sent to all principals, who in turn will pass them to the PTA for final circulation.

Chadwick noted the process used in planning the maps, noting complications considered and the sophisticated approach to identify hazard areas that are reviewed. The final version of the maps will be presented for review, and comments are welcome.

It was noted that Arlington County has a lot of experience developing similar maps, and APS is encouraged to work with County staff.

Crowd-sourcing: Concern about identifying crowd sourcing. Arlington County has experience with crowd-sourcing these types of maps. Note that biking-maps identify crowd-sourcing areas.

The 2 schools that are currently being reviewed are Ashlawn and Long Branch.

The maps will show the feature of the neighborhood that will assist parents to provide their child with a safe route to and from school.

Further discussion on the maps will take place once the first 2 maps are available for review.

Short - vs. Long-term Committee priorities & Resource Needs

Discussion on immediate, short term and long term and longer term. Identify short, immediate, long and longer points.

See the attached document identifying the issues for further discussion.

Choice schools – Chadwick is working on the framework on recommendations and thoughts with regards to choice schools, noting that this will be complete by June/July. The report will note where the students come from.

Public Engagement (15 mins)

Input from the public is encouraged. The committee discussed a forum where we can get people to engage and tell us how they feel.

Would like to make a Yahoo site available...so people can see it and read it. Some parents are constrained from attending meetings. Expressed interest in getting the site up for parents to post comments. Discussion over the right method. Thought is that a List serve might get too wordy, noting that it should be formalized. Yahoo site is perhaps too open, and concern it might get out of control. Can we just accept emails?

A motion was presented to encourage those who are most interested in public input, to bring ideas to the meeting. This topic to be considered by all members and further discussed at the next meeting. A formal proposal will then be presented and considered.

The committee agreed that at the March 28 meeting Safe Route to School person should present to the committee. It was noted that that week is Spring Break. Gillian Burgess will coordinate with the SRTS representative and create a doodle poll to reschedule the committee meeting to either the week before (week of March 18) or the week after (week of April 1).

At the next meeting, walk maps, addressing the hazard zones, will be presented and discussed.

The committee agreed to invite the police to attend and present at the next meeting.

Members were asked to give a good look at philosophy/guiding principles as homework.

Kristin Haldeman – will ask Dennis to reach out to the local police to attend a committee meeting, including the woman who manages the crossing guards to attend a meeting and answer questions.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Immediate June 2013		Short (Fall 2013)	Long term (June 2014)	Longer Term
Coordination with county	Coordination with county	Coordination with county	Coordination with county	Coordination with county
Bike/walk to school day (May 2013)	Assess specific needs of student population and specifically families with special needs, economic constraints	Address 1/1.5 mile walk zone policy	Safe routes to school coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximize walking + biking to school safely • Maximize the use of the bus by those who are eligible to ride
Briefing on budget projection and planning units.	Process for appeals	Tool kit for parents re getting to school	Consolidation of bus stops	
Walk maps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting them into the community • What is the process for defining a safe versus unsafe route. 1) what we do 2) what we might do. 	Criteria for site selection for new schools	Have schools more engaged in bike /walk to school	School level coordination for transit, biking, walking, car-pooling.	Better utilize transit service of Arlington County
Ask PTAs to have a transportation person on each committee	Analysis/evaluation of choice schools to inform focus of new school	Effect of boundary changes on walking/riding		Education
Explain and clarify courtesy bus process	Police department	Budget considerations for next year		Consider policies – re choice schools.

Communication on summer and fall transportation plans				Special Education Bus Transportation and Program locations.
Transportation demand management per school by 9/2013 -policy - transportation demand coordinator for new schools.	Promote cost effective items to promote biking and walking.			
Communication infrastructure to community and feedback from them	Bike/Walk Arlington – look at what county can provide.			