

Fairfax FSS Meeting Notes

Monday, 3 April 2023: 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Advisory Committee Agenda on Zoom

Introductions 14 people in attendance

Guest Speaker

Second Lieutenant Jan Yost from FCPD provided April YTD 2023 crash report

- There were 2 pedestrian fatalities YTD 3 April 2023 in Fairfax County versus last year there were five pedestrian fatalities. That is a 23% reduction in fatalities but still horrible statistics
 - March 24th at 7:00 AM in the Mason district a woman was killed at Wilson Blvd. & John Marshall. The sun had not yet risen. The driver allegedly had a green light and was traveling straight through the light when the pedestrian was allegedly walking against the traffic light. This account is all according to the driver. There were no cameras at the intersection and no alcohol involved with the driver. No charges were made against the driver.
 - On March 30th at 9:00 PM in the evening in Mount Vernon on Richmond Highway South. The driver's vehicle was speeding and spun out of control just before Claiborne Ave. and crashed into a pedestrian who was walking on the sidewalk. Richmond Highway has a 45 miles an hour speed limit and that driver was speeding. The driver was given a citation (for reckless driving?)
- We asked Officer Yost about speed feedback signs. He said they were placed on poles temporarily for one to three weeks because they don't work after a period of time to slow drivers down. We asked why the FHWA suggests in their study a different conclusion? Why do other jurisdictions use permanent speed feedback signs and Fairfax County doesn't? Officer Yost did not feel comfortable in providing an answer to such questions.
- FCPD is going to conduct a "Road Shark" campaign soon. The dates they're going to have high visibility enforcement during these Road Shark campaigns will be June 5th, July 10th and August 1st

Old Business

- Baileys Crossroad / Culmore. As part of the \$100 mil street safety funding program from the Board of Supervisors, \$25 mil will be allocated towards sidewalk improvements, including some of the sidewalks in the Culmore area. For example, a sidewalk in front of Liberty gas station as well as Columbia(?) Pike and Tyler Ave, where a high school student was recently

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killed. VDOT recently announced a reduction of the speed limit on Route 7 from 40 mph to 35 mph. That's not exactly a major speed reduction but at least it's something.

- Katie Wilson reports that the Culmore petition now has over 1000 signatures on it. In addition, the members of the Mosque on Route 7 are also very interested in pedestrian safety
- Speed cameras on Blake Lane are not currently installed because VDOT has to approve the cameras and they need something in writing per engineering regulations to approve the installation.
- Update on the results of the press releases regarding the upgraded Near Miss Dashboard and Fairfax Safe Streets Pedestrian Fatality 2022 reports was provided by Chris French. Ffx FSS received several newspaper reports and social media coverage for one or both press releases. In particular, Karen McCluskey's Fairfax County 2023 Street Safety Report Card got most of the attention. Excellent job Karen! Thank you.
- Social media update - Phil Kemelor was not able to make the meeting at the last minute but reports that Colleen & Daniel are about to release a first set of TikTok safe street messages
- Speed feedback signs - We requested VDOT to consider installing speed feedback signs on Richmond Hwy. VDOT responded that permanently installed speed feedback signs are only appropriate for two lane roads (i.e. one lane going each way) and they referenced US DOT guidance on this issue. We are questioning VDOT's claim about US Department of Transportation guidance. There is a sense that the permanent speed back speed feedback signs work best on two-lane roads, because on four or six lane roads there can be distractions that affect the accuracy of the radar. The reading may not be as good at times, but they can work well on many other occasions.
 - Paul, a Ffx FSS member with a street engineering background, commented that there is no Virginia regulations on pole mounted speed feedback signs. However, to install permanent speed feedback signs requires an engineering study. Paul also mentioned that using mobile speed feedback trailers has another set of controversies because the trailer can become a (lethal) hazard o. he side of a roadway. Studies aside, poll mounted speed feedback signs are most prevalent in other communities that have placed these devices permanently.
- Update on Fairfax County speed camera pilot program. Chris French said that there are eight schools which already have speed cameras installed. The ninth school is Oakton High School - Blake Lane - which is about to be installed in the next week or two. This pilot program runs for 6 months. If the FCDOT decides to permanently place the speed cameras, we hope that pole mounted cameras are utilized because of the safety factor. We look forward to learning more about the results of the 30 day testing.

New Business

- Lake Braddock SRTS program. Lake Braddock is the largest public school in the state of Virginia. They've already had two walk audits conducted by VDOT and FCPS, with volunteers

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helping. The Lake Braddock SRTS committee, a joint effort between the administration and the PTSA, finished the walk audit in November 2022, and the final report will be available here soon: https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/srts_walkabout_mini-grants.asp

- They are preparing to apply for a VDOT infrastructure grant due in June. Part of what Lake Braddock SRTS volunteer group wants is a stoplight for crossing Burke Lake Drive because of the high risk nature of the 40 mph traffic on the road and the student drivers on the road as well. Students frequently cross leave school from 6 am to 8 pm due to student activities when the crossing guard isn't on duty. The audit also noted that the sidewalks, crosswalks and multiuse paths are too narrow and limited for the number of students who walk onto campus each day. They would like a bike lane inserted on Burke Lake Drive and possibly Lake Braddock Drive in the future to encourage more students to feel safe biking to school. The Kings Park association is writing letters of support for the Lake Braddock students regarding pedestrians and bikers safety improvements.
- Would it be helpful if Ffx FSS wrote a letter of support for awarding the \$500,000 of grant money to implement needed street safety improvement around the High School?
- King Park Association has invited Fairfax FSS to the National Night Out on August 1st where a lot of Lake Braddock students and parents will be present. This would be another way for Ffx FSS to connect in person to people in the community.
 - Volunteers to help staff a Ffx FSS table are most welcomed.
- Partnership between FCPS's Safe Routes To School (SRTS) program and Fairfax FSS. Andrew Sheldon is the new replacement for Sally Smallwood as the SRTS specialist for FCPS. Andrew joined us to introduce himself at the meeting. The SRTS program has now been moved to the facilities management department within FCPS. Andrew is the sole SRTS specialist. Andrew seems amenable to working with Fairfax FSS in preparation of a fall Pedestrian Education program throughout the school system or at least focus on a few pilot schools in the system for Ped Education.
 - Welcome Andrew! Ffx FSS looks forward to a constructive partnership in raising pedestrian street safety awareness among FCPS students (and parents).
- Kings Park Civic Association (KPCA) – representatives Eric Deturk and Susan Cappa joined the meeting to discuss road safety issues in their neighborhood. KPCA is a 1,100 home community in the Springfield area of Fairfax County. KPCA has a number of street safety concerns, including a section of Braddock Road that is an 8 lane highway in their area. From the preliminary VDOT plans recently shown publicly, pedestrian safety is not high on the list of priorities. Nor has multimodal transportation alternatives been given much thought. Perhaps introducing the Near Miss app via a community email / Newsletter as well as handing out the Near Miss QR code hand cards and posting the Near Miss flyers on polls at dangerous intersection can help provide sufficient crowd sourcing data to highlight the concerns of the community.
- Reston Polo Fields Community - Unfortunately, Rick Hamilton, the representative from the Polo Fields community, was not able to join us this evening, but the community has 392 homeowners, and they are dealing with VDOT\FCDOT issues which we can learn about at a subsequent meeting.

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- Questionnaire for County and State candidates - Fairfax FSS is developing a three or four bullet point list of questions to be sent to candidates for District Supervisors as well as State representatives. If anyone has some questions or proposals that should be part of this list, please forward that information to either Chris French
- We are looking for social media volunteers to help us with our various social media campaigns . Karen said that her sister-in-law, who is a professional social media person, suggested we look at a program called virtual assistant, where you can find people with professional skills who are willing to work for a discrete period of times are per job basis.

Upcoming Events:

- **Next Fairfax FSS meeting** – Monday, May 1, 2023