Delaware Pedestrian Council | Meeting #1

Meeting Notes

Meeting Title: Delaware Pedestrian Council | Meeting #1

Date: January 24, 2024

Time: 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Council Members Present

Name	Position	Email
Maureen Kelley	Alternate for Nicole Majeski, DelDOT Secretary	Maureen.Kelley@delaware.gov
Thomas Nickel	DelDOT ADA Title II Coordinator	Thomas.Nickel@delaware.gov
Kara Colpo	DOS ADA Title II Coordinator	Kara.Colpo@delaware.gov
John Sisson	CEO of the Delaware Transit Organization	John.Sisson@delaware.gov
Jeffrey Starkey	Director of Land Use and Planning for City of Wilmington	jstarkey@wilmingtonde.gov
Dr. Kevin Spence	Executive Director of League of Local Governments	deleaguelocalgovs@gmail.com
Lloyd Schmitz	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Visual Disability	lloydschmitz@gmail.com
Omar Noor	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Developmental Disability	Omar.Noor@delaware.gov
Michael Smith	Governor Appointed Resident from New Castle County	michaelsmithecon@gmail.com
Brian Goff	Governor Appointed Resident from Kent County	bgoff@chpk.com
Sharon Bryson	Alternate for Nathaniel McQueen, Office of Highway Safety Director	sharon.bryson@delaware.gov
Antoni Sekowski	Alternate for Charuni Patibanda, NCC Land Use General Manager	antoni.sekowski@newcastlede.gov

Members Absent

Name	Position	Email
Benjamin Shrader	Chair of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities	bshrader@risede.org
William Jiron Jr.	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Physical Disability	bigwillie1@msn.net
Jamie Whitehouse	Sussex County Planning and Zoning	jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov
Bill Payne	Governor Appointed Resident from Sussex County	ublcreek@icloud.com
Kris Connelly	Alternate for Sarah Keifer, Kent County Director of Planning Services	Kris.Connelly@kentcountyde.gov

DelDOT Support Staff

Name	Organization	Email
Kelly Valencik	DelDOT	kelly.valencik@delaware.gov
Pam Steinebach	DelDOT	pamela.steinebach@delaware.gov
Maria Andaya	DelDOT	maria@andaya@delaware.gov
Anthony Aglio	DelDOT	anthony.aglio@delaware.gov
Peter Haag	DelDOT	peter.haag@delaware.gov
Brad Eaby	DelDOT	brad.eaby@delaware.gov
Angie Hernandez	JMT	ahernandez@jmt.com
Sophie Thompson	JMT	sthompson2@jmt.com

Guests

Name	Organization	Email
Thomas “Chip” Kneavel	DelDOT	Thomas.Kneavel@delaware.gov
Paul Moser	DelDOT	Paul.Moser@delaware.gov
Anson Gock	DelDOT	Anson.Gock@delaware.gov
Mike Hahn	DelDOT	MichaelC.Hahn@delaware.gov
Linda Osiecki	DelDOT	Linda.Osiecki@delaware.gov
Sanyee Barjogar		

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to conduct the first Delaware Pedestrian Council meeting and review logistics for how the Council will function, review the purpose of the council, and to orient the Council members to their new role. The following items were discussed:

I. Welcome

Nicole Majeski called the meeting to order with an opening welcome at 3:19 p.m. Nicole shared a brief history from the previous Council and thanked the members for their willingness to participate in the Council.

II. Introductions

Council members shared their names and what they plan to achieve on the Council. Common themes included: improving pedestrian movement throughout cities and neighborhoods, working more collaboratively with DelDOT, and creating walkable communities.

III. Brief Presentation

a. Crash Statistics

Peter Haag provided an overview of pedestrian crash statistics. The statistics shared included data regarding where and when fatal pedestrian crashes occurred during 2023 as well as information on historical trends for number of pedestrian crashes in the state. John Sisson asked whether

bicyclists are considered pedestrians, to which Peter clarified that while bicyclists are vulnerable road users, they are not considered pedestrians.

b. Overview of DelDOT Pedestrian Activities Already Underway
Kelly Valencik provided an overview of the efforts which DelDOT is currently working on to improve pedestrian safety. Efforts include the Complete Streets Policy & Design Guide, the Trails and Pathways Program, ADA Self-Assessment & Transition Plan Updates, the Delaware Strategic Highway Safety Plan (Emphasis Area 5: Pedestrians), the Transportation Alternatives Program, the Pedestrian Access Routes Program, Pedestrian Safety Audits, and the promotion of land use and transportation facilities that improve pedestrian connectivity, accessibility, and safety.

c. Overview of Future Planned DelDOT Pedestrian Activities
Kelly Valencik provided an overview of the efforts which DelDOT plans to use to improve pedestrian safety. Efforts include implementing the Complete Streets Design Guide, updating Delaware's Safe Routes to School materials, increasing pilot projects, before and after studies, and pedestrian safety audits. Additional efforts include assisting local governments in identifying funding for pedestrian projects, enhancing outreach and public education for pedestrian safety awareness and pedestrian-centric design benefits, as well as exploring options for a consolidated pedestrian projects program in the Department.

d. Pedestrian Action Plan
Angie Hernandez presented an overview of the Delaware Pedestrian Action Plan, which is an updated version of the previous 2007 Delaware Pedestrian Action Plan. Angie shared that Phase 1 of the plan was finalized in 2023, with Phase 2 currently underway. Phase 3 is anticipated to be completed in Fall/Winter 2024.
Angie shared survey results from the Pedestrian Action Plan as follows: the survey received 134 total responses collected between April 3rd and August 8th. Of those who responded to the survey, approximately 80% walk to meet their daily needs or to access goods or services. Common discouraging factors to walking included that destinations are too far away to walk to, a lack of pedestrian infrastructure, poor conditions of pedestrian infrastructure, and having to cross roads where cars are driving too fast. Overall public priorities gathered from the Pedestrian Action Plan outreach include increasing overall sidewalk / pedestrian networks and increasing the connectivity of existing facilities, as well as improving crosswalks, slowing traffic / lowering speed limits, increasing the separation between roads and sidewalks, improving pedestrian access to parks, and adding more protected bike lanes.

e. Role of the Council
Kelly Valencik provided an overview of the Council's role and duties. Kelly shared that the Council will have the opportunity to provide insight and suggestions for improvements to existing pedestrian programs, as well as providing suggestions for future programs. This includes identifying gaps in the pedestrian system, suggesting ideas for improvements to design standards and policies, reviewing traffic rules to support pedestrian safety, developing strategies for pedestrian safety education and awareness, periodic reviews and recommendations to the Statewide Pedestrian Action Plan, assisting with annual pedestrian safety events and outreach initiatives, quarterly reviews of pedestrian fatalities to recommend safety improvement ideas, and submitting an annual report of the Council's activities and recommendations.

f. Logistics of Council
Kelly Valencik provided an overview of the Council logistics as follows: members serve a two-year term, after which they may be reelected. There will be four Pedestrian Council meetings per year at minimum, with more held if necessary. Meetings will be held both virtually via Zoom and in-person. Information will be shared by Kelly Valencik, who will serve as the coordinator and administrator to the Council. Kelly then introduced Brad Eaby from the Department of Justice. Brad explained that he will assist the council and ensure that the chair runs the meetings according to procedure and complies with the Freedom of Information Act. He explained that in the next meeting, the 17 Council members must elect a chair to run Council meetings. The chair will be elected based on the majority of votes and serves for a two-year term. Nominations and the vote for chair will be held at the next meeting in the spring, April 24th tentatively. Nominations will be accepted up until the spring meeting and should be sent to Kelly. Kelly shared that Council subcommittees may also be formed to assist with fulfilling Council duties. Subcommittee members are not required to be Council members. To satisfy the Council's quorum voting requirements, the majority of members must be in attendance (not including vacant positions).

IV. Council Questions

Kelly Valencik provided an opportunity for Council members to ask questions about the Council or presentation topics. No questions or comments were stated by the Council members.

V. Public Comments

Kelly Valencik provided an opportunity for members of the public to share questions or comments. No questions or comments were stated by the public.

VI. Closing Remarks

Kelly Valencik shared that the next Council meeting will be held between the 22nd and the 26th of April, in approximately three months. Since some Council members are unable to attend Wednesday meetings, the meeting date will be finalized based on a poll which will be sent to Council members to determine availability. The next meeting will include additional information from DelDOT based on Council member's priorities from the member survey, such as local government coordination and other Council priorities. In future meetings Council members will be asked to share their perspectives from the organizations and agencies which they serve with the group. Kelly stated that all materials from the meeting, including the PowerPoint presentation, the Agenda, and meeting minutes will be uploaded to the Council website and shared with the Council members.

Kelly Valencik made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:07 p.m. All agreed.