

Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Notes
Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
Virtual via ZOOM

Welcome & Introductions: Pete Sutton, ex-officio, called the meeting to order, called roll and welcomed new board member Charlie Ticotsky from MA Office of Travel and Tourism, who is replacing Phyllis Cahaly. Pete also welcomed three new MassDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinators that have recently been hired:

- Chris Sorensen, District 1 in Lenox
- Dawn Nims, District 2 in Northampton
- Carl Hultgren, District 3 in Worcester

Overview on MassDOT's *Direct Vision* partnership with the Volpe Center

MABPAB Chair Jaclyn Youngblood, Deputy Chief Possibility Officer, MassDOT Office of the Secretary - provided an overview (attached) on a new safety study being undertaken by MassDOT in partnership with USDOT's Volpe Center. Direct Vision is the ability of a driver to see firsthand outside their vehicle without the aid of an indirect vision device, such as mirrors or camera displays. Benefits include:

- Reduces cognitive delay
- Places drivers closer to others
- No distorted images
- No poorly adjusted mirrors

Drawing on existing studies in the London, and incorporating recent laws enacted within the Commonwealth, MassDOT hopes to accomplish the following:

- Produce evidence-based safety recommendations stipulating a minimum acceptable level of direct vision to be met by future applicable vehicles purchased and leased by the Commonwealth (per Legislature)
- Build awareness of Direct Vision among internal and external stakeholders
- Identify potential safety countermeasures for vehicles with low scores
- Uncover additional questions worthy of further research and related implementation
- Lead a national coalition of other states and industry partners to continue the conversation

Questions and comments included:

- Besides work being done in London, are there any similar safety initiatives being conducted here in the U.S?
 - New York City DOT has a similar program through Volpe as well. There's also a group called [Together for Safer Roads](#), which is an industry group that's very much involved in this topic right now, that brings together some waste haulers, (e.g. AB InBev) and a few other large companies. They're taking a slightly different approach, still working with Volpe on that as well
- Have the 10 municipalities or communities for the study been selected?
 - Not yet, however we are thinking about municipalities who have had fatal or serious injury crashes that involved trucks in the last 10 years or so - that may be one way of thinking about who to do outreach with - wanting to make sure that it's relevant and tied to their local context
- The 6-foot driver height is well above average for men, let alone women. Why was that height selected?
 - That happened to be the height of the researcher who was conducting those measurements. MassDOT will try to standardize that variant with a slightly lower seat type or perhaps even multiple seat heights. In keeping with the London model, a different height of driver gives you slightly different perspective, and making sure you catalog all those
- It would be great to have this presentation given for the Franklin County region transportation planning organization, helping to spread the word statewide on this important MassDOT initiative
- This would also be relevant at the annual Transportation Research Board meeting held every January in Washington DC
- Are there opportunities to heighten education awareness on the part of vulnerable users - perhaps setting what messaging is most effective in helping vulnerable users and avoiding risk?
 - I believe that was part of the City of Boston's related work, which MassDOT could build on: to do some outreach to communities, particularly more on the driver side. As well as through advocacy organizations. To do some of that awareness building: this is what the

direct vision is in this cab or the blind zone. Studying what messaging is effective is a really interesting question

- Can we consider older adults or people with disabilities as part of the community engagement?
 - Yes, I think that's one thing that we're really excited about: expanding the study beyond MassDOT, participating or collaborating with municipalities, hoping to do some really robust and contextual engagement through their networks as well to get down to a more grassroots engagement
- Can you expand upon the train the trainer aspect?
 - Volpe researchers will train MassDOT central staff so that we understand how to do the standardized measurement - using those measurement rigs so that we can then go out and train the municipalities. We found that to be the way to keep it cost effective and manageable enough that we could do it within the constraints that we have, but still include the municipalities, which was really important to us
- Any thoughts on bringing this to the RMV level that controls commercial drivers licensing?
 - Not yet. We're focused primarily on the study of the vehicle and vehicle design piece to begin with, and then in the future to include driver training
- The Ford F150 shows up in the database, showing six elementary school kids in a row in a blind zone, whereas a BMW 320, a smaller car, has zero children in the blind zone. We should be considering regulating larger vehicles in some way
 - There are some states doing weight-based vehicle registration fees: the heavier the vehicle gets, the registration fee increases, and then with credits for electric vehicles, because obviously the batteries weigh a lot
 - USDOT's Office of the Secretary is doing a study looking at vehicle standards that have changed what direct vision is - roof crest standards, battery changes to vehicles as well as the A pillar design - looking at all those things over a much longer time horizon, to see if that change in grill height and change visibility is connected to some of those other safety standards for the driver
- Is there an effort to connect or conduct outreach to operators in partnership with the recent MassDOT Freight Plan or providers?
 - Great suggestion. I think we're currently trying to construct a meaningful but manageable way of addressing the legislation's requirement to measure a sample of our contractor's fleet because that seems like a completely unbounded pool of vehicles. We're trying to come up with something that will not be duplicative of what we're already measuring with our own fleet
 - We'll add to the body of knowledge. But that also represents vehicles that are out on non limited-access roadways that have the potential to be interacting with vulnerable road users
- One of the action items in the 2019 Statewide Bicycle Plan included having side guards on all MassDOT trucks (and contracted out) - something that was discussed here right at MABPAB, when we were going through the whole list of what kind of action items and initiatives we wanted in both bike and pedestrian plans. Glad to see that it is coming to light in this way also
- Love the attention on MassDOT's own fleet to set an example. Has MassDOT considered taking part in the [America Walks](#) pilot for intelligent speed assist? WalkMassachusetts suggested to City of Boston to add to their fleet as part of their Vision Zero action plan
 - MassDOT will look into this and follow up

Input sought on improving and expanding the MBTA's bike parking systemwide Pete Robie, the MBTA's Deputy Director of Active Transportation and Station Access, provided a comprehensive update (attached) of the MBTA's current active transportation initiatives, including:

- Policy, Planning, Design, & Operation of infrastructure for active modes
- Bike Parking Management
- Pedestrian and Bicyclist connectivity on and to station sites
- Mobility Hubs/Transit Plazas

Pete also outlined a five-prong approach to achieving its goals to improved customer service, and sought input from MABPAB on achieving these through best practices and user experience:

- Design
- Operations
- Maintenance

- Funding & Deployment
- Policy

Questions and comments included:

- Unfortunately, bike parking is missing in and around North Station. MassBike would like the MBTA to prioritize that, if possible. It was a missed opportunity to add this infrastructure when the developer got the green light when the new Garden was being reconstructed
 - Agreed – it is a prime location/hub the MBTA is definitely looking for opportunities to improve and retrofit
- Accessibility also needs to be looked at for each facility - the MIT shelter near the BU Bridge has steps instead of a ramp. Automatic doors would also help
- The Natick Center MBTA commuter rail station usage will skyrocket once the Cochituate Rail Trail is extended onto the station property – need to plan ahead for extra bike parking
 - The MBTA owns very little land in the station footprint so we look forward to getting together with the Town of Natick to add bike parking
- What is your interaction with MBTA communities about their own plans for bike parking? In Worcester there have been bike cages at Union Station that have been publicly available at various times over the years
 - On the radar though the MBTA has not engaged with the property owner. It would be a great opportunity to improve amenities there, such as showers
- Bike parking at South Station has been closed for two years due to construction. What do future plans look like?
 - As part of mitigation, the developer is planning a sizable area within the parking garage for bicycles. Once open, the MBTA plans to closely monitor the capacity situation as demand could exceed supply
- Merrimack Valley Planning Commission would be happy to collaborate on improving bike parking and commuter rail stations in the Merrimack Valley
- Eastern MA has a higher overall MBTA ridership, but as the rail network grows, it would be great to expand these pedal and parks to Western MA for train and bus in the future
- Bike parking in San Francisco BART stations: a collaboration with private company with app enabled boxes - maybe an option where there is space
 - That's by a company called [bikekeep](#). They're one of the use cases the MBTA is paying attention to
- SRPEDD just completed its regional bike plan and included recommendations to collaborate with MBTA on bike parking and bikeway route prioritization. Do you know what the bike parking will look like at the new South Coast Rail stations, and whether bikes will be allowed on the trains as well?
 - Covered bike parking likely using the standard MBTA approach – six U-racks under a canopy. However, we may pilot additional bike parking by removing underutilized car parking at some stations

The Future of e-bikes on Public Lands: Literature Review and Field Study Seth English-Young, Environmental Protection Specialist, Federal Highway Administration-Western Federal Lands, joined the meeting from Vancouver, WA to provide initial findings to research in progress (attached) regarding the growing use and impact of e-bikes as they relate to public lands, such as national parks. Key findings were based on:

- Comprehensive literature review
- Summary of conversations with public lands managers and stakeholders
- Research gap analysis

Findings were then further broken down into the following analyses categories:

- Ecological, Cultural & Historical Resources
- Safety factors
- Social factors
- Processes for E-Bike Management

A pilot study was undertaken at Minuteman National Park in Lexington comparing data collected by riders of regular bicycles and e-bikes, measuring such factors as male/female behavior, passing and speed. Next steps include further field studies to collect additional data. Questions and comments included:

- Further study should include demographics of who is using e-bikes. I have many friends who are 65 and older that have purchased e-bikes to continue riding and remain active. Older adults tend to be able to afford e-bikes, but are also more risk-averse, particularly when cycling on fast, downhill stretches

- Demographics will definitely be considered when conducting future field studies
- Is there any plan to study paved roads and trails to understand if the 2-mile per hour speed differential on soft surface trails also applies to hard surface facilities?
 - Perhaps. At this point in the study, FHWA is focused on natural surface trails but could consider other surfaces in the future
- Older adults may be more cautious, and as a group they will have more limitations. Example: peripheral vision that could affect performances on e-bikes - something to consider as the study continues and we learn more about e-bikes

Other Announcements

Pete gave a recap of MassDOT trail opening events that took place over the summer in Brookline, Williamstown and Westfield and mentioned new separated bike lanes recently installed by the City of Cambridge along Hampshire St and through Inman Square. Pete also mentioned the following upcoming events:

- MassDOT Cape Cod Bridges Program Advisory Group Meeting – September 26 in Bourne
 - Pete will be representing MABPAB and providing comments on improving walking and cycling for the Bourne and Sagamore Bridges replacement project
- Moving Together 2023 - October 4 in Boston
- Mass Central Rail Trail – Golden Spike Conference – October 14 in Natick
- Next MAPBPAB meeting: Wednesday, November 29, 1-3 pm (hybrid) at Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Springfield
- List of board members in attendance (see below)
- Other attendees:
 - Ben Muller (MassDOT D6)
 - Jeanne Hathaway (DPH)
 - Jacob Stern (MassDOT OPMI)
 - Lorenzo Varone (MassDOT)
 - Cheryl Ann Senior (MassDOT D5)
 - Alexis Hosea-Abbott (MassBike)
 - Beth Giannini (FRCOG)
 - Anthony Vona (MassDOT D1)
 - Dawn Nims (MassDOT D2)
 - Ryan Griffis (BRPC)
 - Pedro Hernandez (MassDOT)
 - Josh Grzegorzewski (FHWA)
 - David Loutzenheiser (MAPC)
 - Steve Tupper (CCC)
 - Rick Plenge (VHB)
 - Kris Carter (MassDOT)
 - Chris Sorensen (MassDOT D1)
 - Christian Milneil (StreetsBlog Mass)
 - Francisco Lovera (MassDOT)
 - Carl Hultgren (MassDOT D3)
 - Jon Gray (SRPEDD)
 - Kyle Mowatt (OCPC)
 - Laura Hanson (MassDOT D2)
 - Karl Alexander (MyRWA)
 - Tony Collins (MVPC)
 - Joshua Barber (FHWA)
 - Max Rasbold-Gabbard (DPH)
 - Jay Patel (CMRPC)

Board Member Sign-In Sheet
September 20, 2023 – Virtual Meeting

Member Name	Attended	Notes
Tom DiPaolo MassDOT-Highway	no	
Peter Robie MBTA	yes	
Pete Sutton MassDOT-Planning	yes	
Kurt Gaertner EOEEA	yes	
Gerald Autler DCR	no	
Jaclyn Youngblood MassDOT	yes	
Alexandra Papademoulis DPH	yes	
Charlie Ticotsky MOTT	yes	
Andrea Papa EOPSS	no	
Jeff McCollough MARPA	yes	
Jessica Boulanger MARPA	yes	
Jackie Jones MARPA	yes	
Jeff Larason – public member	no	
Keith MacDonald – public member (South Coast Bikeway Alliance)	no	
Galen Mook – MassBike	yes	
Karin Goins – public member (Walk/Bike Worcester)	yes	
Seun Oluwole – public member	no	
James Fuccione - public member (Mass. Healthy Aging Collaborative)	yes	
Cheryl Casper – public member	no	
Sam Squalia – public member (Fitchburg City Council)	no	
Brendan Kearney - WalkBoston	yes	
Maureen White - public member	no	
Ed Sinofsky – public member (Cape Cod Cycling Club)	no	
Karen Foster – public member (All Out Adventures)	no	
Meg Robertson – public member	yes	
Alice Brown – public member (Boston Harbor Now)	no	