



**Delaware Bicycle Council
February 5, 2025
Zoom Webinar
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present

Walt Bryan, Sussex County Representative
Lauren Butscher, Division of Public Health
Fran Cardaci, At-Large Representative
Tom Hartley, Kent County Representative
Scott Hoffman, At-Large Representative
Michael Krumrine, DNREC Representative
Marty Lessner, Council on Transportation
Wendy Polasko, DelDOT Representative
Michael Tyler, At-Large Representative
Michael Wagner, Department of Education
James Wilson, New Castle County Representative
Sgt. John Wheatly, Delaware State Police

Members Absent

Mack Cochran, Trails & Greenways Council
Jackie McDermott, Office of Highway Safety

DelDOT Support Staff

Pamela Steinebach, Director of Planning
John Fiori, Bicycle Coordinator, DelDOT

Guests

Bill Weller, Sussex Cyclists
Maureen Cassidy, Public
Karen Zakarian, Public
Jaque Lukawski, Public
Aarti Arora, Public
Peter Haag, DelDOT

I. Welcome/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Scott Hoffman. Scott Hoffman took a roll call of the Council members present, and quorum was met.

Minutes/Agenda Review:

The Council reviewed the meeting minutes from December 4th. Walt Bryan made the motion to accept the meeting minutes. Tom Hartley seconded the meeting minutes. All agreed. No one opposed.

II. Public Comment

Bill Weller requested to address the Council, which he asked if there was an update about Michael Tyler's request to add the SR1-Kings Highway reconfiguration project to the projects being tracked and reported on by the Five Points Working Group. Michael Tyler responded that this project will be added to the Five Points Working Group list.

Karen Zakarian requested to address the Council, which she asked with the improvements at SR1-Holland Glade Road, that will be installing a four-leg signalized intersection with a pedestrian crossing of SR 1, if it could be considered to relocate the HAWK signal south at Phillips Street and Church Street by Big Fish Grill? John Fiori responded that this type of request would have to go through our Traffic section to be studied and determine if that type of signal is warranted. Scott Hoffman asked if there any plans right now to install a HAWK signal. John responded that he is not aware any plans for improvements at that intersection at this time.

Jaquce Lukawski requested to address the Council, which she asked if the Council knew the status of the Wilmington Loop project. James Wilson responded that the Wilmington Loop has several phases where the most difficult of the phases is the Newport River Trail that the Council was involved with New Castle County receiving a Cycling Infrastructure Innovation Grant in 2018. New Castle County received a Federal RAISE grant in 2023 but unfortunately there are questions being raised whether the Federal Government will rescind that grant.

III. New Business

Vote for 2025 Chair & Vice-Chair

Fran Cardaci overseen the vote for the 2025 Chair and Vice Chair. Fran stated that at the December 2024, meeting Scott Hoffman was nominated for Chair and Walt Bryan was nominated for Vice-Chair and no other nominations were e-mailed to John Fiori. Fran asked if there were any other nominations by the Council, which there were none. Tom Hartley made the motion to close nominations and put to a vote for Chair and Vice-Chair. Michael Tyler seconded the motion. Fran put the nominations before the Council for vote. All members present voted yes, and no members opposed. Scott Hoffman was voted in as Chair and Walt Bryan was voted in as Vice-Chair for 2025.

Clayton to Marydel Rail to Trail

James Wilson introduced the next topic by stating that at the December 4th meeting the Council awarded the Town of Clayton a \$9,000 Cycling Infrastructure Innovation Grant to evaluate the

feasibility and cost of extending the Duck Creek Parkway path to the train station in downtown Clayton. At the train station is the beginning of an old Pennsylvania, Wilmington and Baltimore railroad right-of-way that has been abandoned for about half a century, where that right-of-way extends all the way that to Eastern Maryland. What was not known last year was that the Dover/Kent Metropolitan Planning Organization was already aware of this and working on a study, where this is an opportunity for the Council to make sure efforts are not being duplicated and look for opportunities to work together.

Malcolm Jacob with the Dover/Kent County MPO presented to the Council the Clayton to Marydel Rail Trail Study, where this is a study, and nothing is being built at this time but want to begin talking about the existing conditions, especially because Clayton doing some similar small-scale projects on their own. The corridor is between Clayton and Marydel is 13-miles and was completed after the Civil War. The railroad right-of-way is currently owned by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), even the portion in Delaware. The rail line is abandoned but there are many obstructions along the corridor, and it is not going to be easy to build this in its entirety but hoping we can look at some smaller sections now. The rail line has not been officially abandoned in the legal sense of order, because there is a process for abandonment, but the rail line has been railbanked. According to that contract, the right-of-way needs to be maintained and make sure that no permanent structures are built. The last time DelDOT and other organizations looked at this was in the 2006 report titled *Delaware Rail-to-Trail & Rail-with-Trail Facility Master Plan*. Since that was almost a couple of decades ago, the MPO wants to update and determine what are the existing conditions and what can be done potentially to get this implemented. The MPO has been working with DelDOT and the study outline recommended was Project Background; Project Scope; Alignment; Segment Analysis; Public Input and Appendices. James clarified the Cycling Infrastructure Innovation Grant awarded to the Town of Clayton was to study a shared-use path from the end of the existing shared-use path along Basset Street, then crossing Main Street and ending at the train station. Malcom responded their project is looking at the corridor and discussing these other projects happening, so they do not overlap. James indicated the Town is only preparing a feasibility study and cost estimate to the train station. In term of the next phase, is once at the train station, and going further south, is that MDOT property? Malcom responded he did not think that was MDOT property as that would be further south. James asked then would it be possible for a Phase 2, if that were to move forward. Malcolm's opinion is that could be looked at. James asked if someone from DelDOT could speak to the Council on any conversations with MDOT. Pamela Steinbach responded that is has been a while if anyone last spoke to MDOT, where there would be no objections if a member of the Council or MPO reached out to MDOT on if they have any plans. Malcom indicated the MPO will keep the Council in the loop as this study moves forward and want to hear from the Council on any ideas. James's impression is MDOT does not want to own abandoned railroad right-of-way in another state. Malcom responded based on what he heard MDOT does not want to own parcels of land in another state that they are not maintaining and have no use for. James asked if someone from Delaware offers one dollar, MDOT would probably say yes. Malcom responded MDOT may, but MDOT would need to clean it up first which would cost money. Malcolm then discussed a portion of land in Hartley, where the Town contacted the MPO about turning this land into a park. There are wetlands on the north side, but Town would like to do something with the southern side, which is adjacent to the corridor. This might be a good option to develop a park like what Clayton has next to the old railroad station. The study timeline

is to meet with each of the Towns; have more conversations with DelDOT and MDOT; this summer have public engagement, analysis of the corridor and continued stakeholder coordination; and late 2025 or early 2026, complete the study and have it adopted by MPO Council. The MPO is trying to look at existing conditions and map a path forward but are not building anything right now. Pamela asked if there was any data on the likelihood of people using the facility. Malcom responded that it is difficult to estimate that. Michael Krumrine stated that DNREC did an extensive investigation into the Clayton Easton rail line, back in the Governor Markel era, looking for all kinds of trails and pathway connections, and had done a lot of planning work on. The problem was the whole thing does come down to the ownership since MDOT owns the corridor, and at the time I do not believe they were willing to transfer that over and determining liability. Malcom asked for a copy what was done.

IV. Old Business

Junction-Breakwater Trail Connection to The Glade

Scott Hoffman indicated that after the December 4th meeting, there were multiple responses from residents within The Glade that the issue of an internal connection to the Junction-Breakwater Trail has been discussed previously, where most of the residents and the Homeowners Association have voted against the connection. Scott Hoffman indicated that due to responses from some residents in the Glade, the Council will not discuss any potential internal connection from The Glade to the Junction-Breakwater Trail. Michael Krumrine indicated that DNREC and DelDOT will be working on applying for Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding for a feasibility study that will look at connecting the Glade via Holland Glade Road. Maureen Cassidy (Glade representative and Michael Polovina, Glade Property Owner Association President, were at the zoom meeting) indicated that the comments/calls from the Glade owners to Scott were not representative of the Glade Board of Directors.

NOTE: After the December meeting concluded, a Glade Board of Director member or a resident of The Glade, not Maureen Cassidy had contacted Scott Hoffman and indicated the Bike Council needs to be informed that the Glade Community would need to vote on any type of action allowing a backdoor connection into our community. She also indicated that this connection was considered previously and met with great opposition by many Glade residents. On February 6th Scott Hoffman wrote to Maureen indicating, the discussion of the “backdoor” connection was initiated because although your project was not selected for the grant we [Bike Council] were trying to find another avenue to establish a connection between the Glade and the existing trail. There was no attempt to supersede or override the wishes of the residents there by forcing them to connect to the trail. We [Bike Council] were simply trying to be helpful and apologized for any confusion. Also, after the December 4th Council meeting, nine (9) property owners reviewed the meeting had contacted John Fiori the following day by phone or e-mail to express concerns about the conversation regarding alternative options to safely connect the Glade to the Junction & Breakwater Trail. While it was understood the intent may be to explore safe connectivity options to the Junction & Breakwater Trail, there is strong opposition within the Glade community to any changes in access beyond the current single entrance and exit. The discussion on routing through leased agricultural lands has understandably raised concerns, it may be distracting from the issue of making meaningful safety improvements to Holland Glade Road itself.

Bike Lane Signal Loop Detector

Scott Hoffman responded this topic will be deferred to the April Council meeting.

Update of Feasibility of Georgetown to Lewes Trail Crossing SR9 at Cool Spring

Walt Bryan indicated since the elections in November, there are three new members, where County Council is trying to get their bearings on things but there have been discussions on the issue. Michael Tyler stated that the bridge is the missing link that is important, and it is a safety issue. Michael Tyler spoke with Todd Lawson of Sussex County who appears to be in favor of a structure across the road. Walt stated he will give County Council a couple of months to settle in before contacting them again.

Priority Bikeway Projects Update

John Fiori provided bikeway project updates to the Council. To view the updates: <https://deldot.gov/Programs/bike> under What's New; DelDOT Bike Program Project Updates. Two projects of interest were the Georgetown to Lewes Trail: Fisher Road to Airport Road and the MLK Boulevard/South Little Creek Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Connector. Both projects received RAISE grants from the FHWA but on January 20, 2025, an executive order was signed that placed a temporary freeze of all federal grants. Construction of the Georgetown to Lewes Trail is on hold until further notified and the MLK Boulevard/South Street has previously obligated federal funding that should get the project through preliminary design.

Walt Bryan made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Michael Wagner seconded the motion at 6:45 p.m. All agreed, no one opposed. Motion passed.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 2, 2025, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to be held as a hybrid of in-person and virtually.

To view the Delaware Bicycle Council video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/F6LsBMIFpUU>