

# Delaware Pedestrian Council | Meeting #3

July 25, 2024 - Meeting Notes

**Meeting Title:** Delaware Pedestrian Council | Meeting #3

**Date:** July 25, 2024

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

## Council Members Present

Name	Position	Email
Maureen Kelley	Alternate for Nicole Majeski, DelDOT Secretary	<a href="mailto:Maureen.Kelley@delaware.gov">Maureen.Kelley@delaware.gov</a>
Sharon Bryson	Alternate for Nathaniel McQueen, Office of Highway Safety Director	<a href="mailto:sharon.bryson@delaware.gov">sharon.bryson@delaware.gov</a>
Robin Martin	Alternate for Thomas Nickel, DelDOT ADA Title II Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Robin.Martin@delaware.gov">Robin.Martin@delaware.gov</a>
Gwinneth Kaminsky	Alternate for Jeffrey Starkey, Director of Land Use and Planning for City of Wilmington	<a href="mailto:gkaminsky@wilmingtonde.gov">gkaminsky@wilmingtonde.gov</a>
John Sisson	CEO of the Delaware Transit Organization	<a href="mailto:John.Sisson@delaware.gov">John.Sisson@delaware.gov</a>
Michael Smith	Governor Appointed Resident from New Castle County	<a href="mailto:michaelsmithecon@gmail.com">michaelsmithecon@gmail.com</a>
Lloyd Schmitz	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Visual Disability	<a href="mailto:lloydschmitz@gmail.com">lloydschmitz@gmail.com</a>
Brian Goff	Governor Appointed Resident from Kent County	<a href="mailto:bgoff@chpk.com">bgoff@chpk.com</a>
William Jiron Jr.	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Physical Disability	<a href="mailto:bigwillie1@msn.net">bigwillie1@msn.net</a>
Bill Payne	Governor Appointed Resident from Sussex County	<a href="mailto:ublcreek@icloud.com">ublcreek@icloud.com</a>
Jamie Whitehouse	Sussex County Planning and Zoning	<a href="mailto:jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov">jamie.whitehouse@sussexcountyde.gov</a>
Kara Colpo	DOS ADA Title II Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Kara.Colpo@delaware.gov">Kara.Colpo@delaware.gov</a>
Antoni Sekowski	Alternate for Charuni Patibanda, NCC Land Use General Manager	<a href="mailto:antoni.sekowski@newcastlede.gov">antoni.sekowski@newcastlede.gov</a>

## Members Absent

Name	Position	Email
Ben Shrader	Chair of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities	<a href="mailto:bshrader@risede.org">bshrader@risede.org</a>
Kris Connelly	Alternate for Sarah Keifer, Kent County Director of Planning Services	<a href="mailto:Kris.Connelly@kentcountyde.gov">Kris.Connelly@kentcountyde.gov</a>
Dr. Kevin Spence	Executive Director of League of Local Governments	<a href="mailto:deleaguelocalgovs@gmail.com">deleaguelocalgovs@gmail.com</a>
Omar Noor	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Developmental Disability	<a href="mailto:Omar.Noor@delaware.gov">Omar.Noor@delaware.gov</a>

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## DeIDOT Support Staff

Name	Organization	Email
Kelly Valencik	DeIDOT	<a href="mailto:kelly.valencik@delaware.gov">kelly.valencik@delaware.gov</a>
Pamela Steinebach	DeIDOT	<a href="mailto:pamela.steinebach@delaware.gov">pamela.steinebach@delaware.gov</a>
Maria Andaya	DeIDOT	<a href="mailto:maria@andaya@delaware.gov">maria@andaya@delaware.gov</a>
Angie Hernandez	JMT	<a href="mailto:ahernandez@jmt.com">ahernandez@jmt.com</a>
Sophie Thompson	JMT	<a href="mailto:sthompson2@jmt.com">sthompson2@jmt.com</a>

## Guests

Name	Organization	Email
James Wilson	Bike Delaware	<a href="mailto:james@bikede.org">james@bikede.org</a>

## Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to conduct the third Delaware Pedestrian Council meeting. The following items were discussed:

### 1. Introductions

Kelly Valencik called the meeting to order with an opening welcome at 1:13 p.m. She provided an overview of the agenda. Kelly Valencik led the roll call from 1:15 pm – 1:17 pm.

### 2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Bill Payne mentioned a typographical error in Section 7b where the notes incorrectly stated “These funds must be spent by June 15, 2015” rather than 2025. Maureen Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting with this error corrected. [NOT AUDIBLE] motioned to approve the minutes from Pedestrian Council Meeting 2. Michael Smith seconded the motion.

### 3. Public Comment

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

### 4. Review Fatal Pedestrian Crashes in Previous Quarter

Kelly Valencik provided an overview of fatal pedestrian crashes by quarter. Quarter 3 of 2024 had four fatal pedestrian crashes in New Castle County, no fatal pedestrian crashes in Kent County, and two fatal pedestrian crashes in Sussex County.

### 5. Delaware Everyone Gets Home Act Presentation

Maureen Kelley introduced James Wilson, who presented an overview of the 2024 Everyone Gets Home Act. James began by introducing the concept of stroads: street-road hybrids that pose safety risks due to vehicles entering and exiting parking lots and driveways onto and off of high-speed, multi-lane roads. For more information on stroads, please see the following Bike Delaware YouTube video shared by James.

‘Introduction to Stroads’ Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhHem2tt8Ms>

James Wilson then discussed the Delaware Everyone Gets Home Act. This act focuses on enabling authority for the Delaware Department of Transportation to create interconnections between commercial properties along the road so that access to highway driveways can be prevented. For example, rather than having to pull off of Kirkwood Highway separately for each individual business, drivers could travel through interconnected parking lots and shared driveways to get to where they need to go. The Delaware Everyone Gets Home Act does not specifically lay out design guidance but is instead intended to grant authority to DelDOT to implement changes as they see fit. The bill was passed by both houses on June 26, 2024, but has yet to be signed by Governor Carney.

#### **Comments from the Council:**

- Bill Payne asked if this Act reduces speed limits. James Wilson shared that it does not have anything to do with speed limits. Maureen mentioned that she will ask Peter Haag to explain to the Council how DelDOT determines speed limits (speeds are typically set at the 85th percentile, sometimes set even lower than 85<sup>th</sup> percentile at times due to pedestrian activity, etc.)
- Michael Smith shared that he would love to see the Delaware Pedestrian Council take the 'destroaddification' process very seriously due to the number of fatalities caused by roads.
- Lloyd Schmitz asked James if there is an opportunity to partner together to create an Education and Advocacy program, to which James said that this legislation is focused on infrastructure relating to DelDOT, and that he believes that education is not very successful at reducing pedestrian fatalities. James shares the concept of the Safe Systems approach, which centers around the idea that humans are fallible and make mistakes, and that these mistakes should not cost pedestrians their lives.

#### **6. Other State Pedestrian Council Review**

Sophie Thompson shared an overview of pedestrian councils and committees from other US states, including Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington. She shared information about what tasks these councils do, and how they are run. In general, many statewide councils host guest speakers at their meetings, and have similar annual reporting requirements, subcommittees, and overlapping areas of interest. A common action item held by other statewide pedestrian councils is to reserve time during each of their monthly meetings for Council members as well as other representatives to provide updates from ongoing projects, legislation, and other relevant news.

#### **Comments from the Council:**

- Bill Payne made a motion at 2:02 PM requesting that the Delaware Pedestrian Council invite a guest speaker or representative from Smart Growth America to speak at an upcoming Council meeting. John Sisson seconded this motion.

#### **7. Subcommittees Discussion**

Maureen Kelley introduced the topic of subcommittees, prompting Council members to share their interest in a Land Use subcommittee, a Public Outreach and Education subcommittee, or another type of subcommittee.

Jamie Whitehouse volunteered to be a member of the Land Use Coordination Subcommittee. He would not like to chair the subcommittee, but he would like to be a member and provide technical assistance to the chair. Michael Smith agreed to serve as the chair of the Land Use Coordination

Subcommittee. Lloyd Schmitz then also volunteered to join the Land Use Coordination Subcommittee.

Angie Hernandez then brought up the Outreach and Education subcommittee, asking if anyone was interested in the subcommittee. Bill Payne volunteered to join the Outreach and Education subcommittee. John Sisson mentioned that his staff may be interested in joining the subcommittees. Sharon Bryson mentioned that while she cannot personally serve on a subcommittee, her staff from the Office of Highway Safety may be able to help the Council with their significant outreach and education effort experience. Robin Martin, (the alternate standing in for Tom Nickel) then signed up to be a member of the Outreach and Education subcommittee. The Council did not decide on a chair for the Outreach and Education subcommittee.

#### **Comments from the Council:**

- Bill Payne stated that the fatal pedestrian crash data does not give the Council enough information, and he would like to use the Council's funding to get crash data with more information, such as age, income, socioeconomic areas, and plotting crashes on a map of Delaware. Mr. Payne suggested that the Council create a subcommittee focusing on this data, looking at specific areas with a high number of crashes such as Dover.
  - Pamela Steinebach addressed this comment, mentioning that subject matter experts could come in and discuss this data, for example DelDOT's traffic group or experts from other state agencies. She cautions that the Council should not replace the Strategic Highway Safety Plan or duplicate the work being done by them.
  - Kelly Valencik reiterated that other statewide pedestrian councils reserve time during their monthly meetings for council member updates, which could be a good idea for the Delaware Pedestrian Council to implement in order to share ongoing news from agency members as well as other Council members.

#### **8. Pedestrian Action Plan Phase 2 Plan Review**

Angie Hernandez presented an overview of Phase 2 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.

Council members who attended in-person were provided with a printed copy of the Draft Phase 2 Plan to review, and virtual attendees were provided with a link to the plan. Angie shared a summary of the plan, as well as various action items that may involve the Council's assistance. These actions include improving data collection, supporting and recommending legislative action, establishing statewide pedestrian count program, educating the public on the pedestrian benefits of road diets, and increasing overall public education on pedestrian safety and awareness.

#### **9. Council Budget**

Kelly Valencik presented the 2025 Council budget to the group at \$20,100 for supplies and \$1,000 for travel. These funds must be spent by June 15, 2025. Suggestions on how to spend the funding includes taking pedestrian-related training, tours / field visits such as bus tours of pedestrian safety installation projects or areas of concern with the Council and DelDOT staff, pedestrian safety materials and supplies, and mileage reimbursements.

Kelly asked for other spending suggestions from the council.

- Michael Smith asked what the constraint on supplies is, and whether it must be a tangible thing. Kelly clarified that travel time for a speaker, the speaker's honorarium, and other things like that would count as supplies.
- Bill Payne suggested using some of the budget to get the Council access to data with more detail, as discussed in the previous meeting. He stated that the quarterly crash data alone does not give the Council enough information.
- Michael Smith suggested creating a study investigating reducing speeding activities and preventing distracted driving, potentially working with a consultant to implement this effort.
- Michael Smith mentioned that raised crosswalks are a good idea, and recommended that the Council may be able to use some of the budget to fund a small study to look at where raised crosswalks could happen, or look at smaller arterial roads where the Council could help turn small roads into streets using road diets or raised crosswalks.
- Michael reiterated that he does not want to go down the same path as last fiscal year where the Council spent its money on education and promotional items. He stated that he worries that these items will just sit in people's closets or desks and not make a real impact on the built environment. He asked the Council to come up with ideas for how to have a direct impact before the budget is due to be spent.

## **10. Topics of Interest for Next Meeting**

Angie Hernandez shared potential topics of interest for the next Council meeting in October. These topics were suggested by Council members in previous surveys. Topics included: intersection signal cycles, road diets and raised crosswalks; pedestrian safety; roads and other pending legislation; agency updates at each meeting; guest speakers; police reports and patterns of fatalities. Following this, Sophie Thompson provided an overview of potential guest speakers for the Council to host, including Smart Growth America (with an overview of the Smart Growth Network), and shared victims advocacy groups such as Families for Safe Streets and RoadPeace who may also provide guest speakers.

## **11. Next Meeting Date**

Kelly Valencik shared that the next Council meeting will be held in approximately 3 months on Wednesday, October 23rd from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM for the Fourth Council Meeting of 2024, and the options of Thursday, January 23 from 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM or Friday, January 24 from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM for the first meeting of 2025.

## **Closing Remarks**

Maureen Kelley made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:53 p.m. All agreed.