

# Delaware Pedestrian Council | Meeting #10

January 22, 2026 - Meeting Notes

**Meeting Title:** Delaware Pedestrian Council | Meeting #10

**Date:** January 22, 2026

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

## Council Members Present

Name	Position	Email
Stephanie Johnson	Substitute for Maureen Kelly, Alternate for Shanté Hastings, DelDOT Secretary	<a href="mailto:Stephanie.Johnson@delaware.gov">Stephanie.Johnson@delaware.gov</a>
Sharon Bryson	Alternate for Joshua Bushweller, Office of Highway Safety Director	<a href="mailto:Sharon.Bryson@delaware.gov">Sharon.Bryson@delaware.gov</a>
Thomas Nickel	DelDOT ADA Title II Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Thomas.Nickel@delaware.gov">Thomas.Nickel@delaware.gov</a>
Jamie Whitehouse	Sussex County Planning & Zoning	<a href="mailto:Jamie.Whitehouse@sussexcountype.gov">Jamie.Whitehouse@sussexcountype.gov</a>
Michael Smith	Governor Appointed Resident from New Castle County	<a href="mailto:MichaelSmithEcon@gmail.com">MichaelSmithEcon@gmail.com</a>
Brian Goff	Governor Appointed Resident from Kent County	<a href="mailto:BGoff@chpk.com">BGoff@chpk.com</a>
John Sisson	CEO of the Delaware Transit Corporation	<a href="mailto:John.Sisson@delaware.gov">John.Sisson@delaware.gov</a>
Janelle Cornwell	Executive Director of League of Local Governments	<a href="mailto:deleaguelocalgovs@gmail.com">deleaguelocalgovs@gmail.com</a>
Cooper Bowers	Alternate for David Culver, General Manager of the Department of Land Use of New Castle County	<a href="mailto:Cooper.Bowers@delaware.gov">Cooper.Bowers@delaware.gov</a>

## Members Absent

Name	Position	Email
Bill Payne	Governor Appointed Resident from Sussex County	<a href="mailto:Ublcreek@icloud.com">Ublcreek@icloud.com</a>
Kris Connelly	Alternate for Sarah Keifer, Kent County Director of Planning Services	<a href="mailto:Kris.Connelly@kentcountype.gov">Kris.Connelly@kentcountype.gov</a>
Elliott Larkin	Director of Land Use and Planning for the City of Wilmington	<a href="mailto:ETLarkin@wilmingtonde.gov">ETLarkin@wilmingtonde.gov</a>
Kara Colpo	DOS ADA Title II Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Kara.Colpo@delaware.gov">Kara.Colpo@delaware.gov</a>
Omar Noor	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Developmental Disability	<a href="mailto:OmarNoor0724@gmail.com">OmarNoor0724@gmail.com</a>
Susannah Eaton-Ryan	Director of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities	<a href="mailto:SCPDGeneralMailbox@delaware.gov">SCPDGeneralMailbox@delaware.gov</a>
William Jiron Jr.	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Physical Disability	<a href="mailto:Bigwillie1@msn.net">Bigwillie1@msn.net</a>

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Susannah Eaton-Ryan	Chair of the State Council for Persons with Disabilities	N/A
(Vacant)	Governor Appointed Resident Representative with a Visual Disability	N/A

## Support Staff

Name	Organization	Email
Kelly Valencik	DeIDOT	<a href="mailto:Kelly.Valencik@delaware.gov">Kelly.Valencik@delaware.gov</a>
Emily Hufnal	DeIDOT	<a href="mailto:Emily.Hufnal@delaware.gov">Emily.Hufnal@delaware.gov</a>
Darnell Gittens	DTI	<a href="mailto:Darnell.Gittens@delaware.gov">Darnell.Gittens@delaware.gov</a>
Angie Hernandez	JMT	<a href="mailto:AHernandez@jmt.com">AHernandez@jmt.com</a>
Anthony Nobile	JMT	<a href="mailto:ANobile@jmt.com">ANobile@jmt.com</a>
Sophie Thompson	JMT	<a href="mailto:SThompson2@jmt.com">SThompson2@jmt.com</a>

## Guests / Members of the Public

Name
Jared Kauffman (DTC) (Chair of Outreach and Education Subcommittee)
Matt Harris (University of Delaware, Living Labs)
Robin Martin (DeIDOT Office of Civil Rights) (Outreach and Education Subcommittee Member)
Meghan Niddrie (DeIDOT) (Outreach and Education Subcommittee Member)

## Meeting Purpose

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

### 1. Introduction

Kelly Valencik called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Kelly then provided an overview of the meeting agenda. Sophie Thompson then led the roll call. With nine Council members present, the Pedestrian Council had a quorum at this meeting.

### 2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Kelly Valencik asked the Council to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Michael Smith motioned to approve the minutes from Pedestrian Council Meeting #9. Multiple members seconded the motion simultaneously. No Council members opposed or abstained. The meeting minutes from the October 23, 2025 Council meeting were approved.

### **3. Pop-up Project Updates from University of Delaware Living Labs Research Group**

Matthew Harris (UD Associate Policy Scientist) provided a status update on the University of Delaware's Living Labs group's pop-up project materials in Middletown. Matthew shared updates regarding the Middletown project on East Cochran Street and S. Catherine Street, which focused on speed reduction, crossing safety, and placemaking. Matthew shared the background of the project, an overview of the outreach which was conducted for the project, and the data results of the pop-up materials so far. Before the project began, average vehicle speeds were around 26 mph, with top speeds of around 65 mph. After the pop-up materials were implemented, average vehicle speeds dropped to 17 mph, with a top speed of around 45 mph. These results highlight the effectiveness of pop-up materials for speed reduction. Matthew noted that in December 2025, Middletown made the temporary installation permanent. He also indicated that prospective projects for the research team are under consideration in Clayton, Dover, Milton, and Wilmington.

### **4. Public Comment**

Kelly Valencik provided an opportunity for members of the public to share questions or comments at 1:18 p.m. No questions or comments were stated by the public.

### **5. Fiscal Year 2026 Budget Allocation Vote**

Sophie Thompson provided an overview of the current budget spending plan for the 2026 Fiscal Year. The budget is allocated towards three uses totaling \$20,000: \$16,250 for Pop-Up Project Materials, \$3,000 for Safety Outreach Materials, and \$750 for the Everyone Gets Home Summit. Following the budget review, the Council voted to approve the FY2026 budget allocation.

### **6. 2025 Annual Report**

The 2025 draft of the Annual Report of the Council's activities and list of recommendations was shared with the council by email prior to the meeting for review. Sophie Thompson introduced the report, and shared it with the Council. The Council then proceeded to vote to approve the annual report to be submitted for the Governor, General Assembly, as well as the Director and the Librarian of the Division of Research of Legislative Council.

### **7. Review of Fatal Pedestrian Crashes in Previous Quarter**

Emily Hufnal from the Delaware Department of Transportation detailed fatal pedestrian crashes that occurred in Quarter 4 of 2025. Throughout the quarter, there were a total of six fatal crashes, with three fatalities occurring in New Castle County, two fatalities in Kent County, and one fatality in Sussex County. This number is significantly lower than Quarter 4 of the previous year (2024), which saw 12 pedestrian fatalities, indicating a 50% reduction in pedestrian fatalities year over year. Emily noted that while there is no confirmation of the motorists being impaired, blood-alcohol content levels and drug test data typically takes roughly a year to be released, impacting the ability to indicate whether these fatalities were because of drivers under the influence.

There was a consistent theme across crashes surrounding the timing, with many of these fatal crashes happening in the late night or early morning, where the pedestrian was walking along the shoulder, with one instance of a pedestrian appropriately utilizing a crosswalk. The Council indicated that an update on future fatal pedestrian crash reports to include additional information of lighting conditions and proximity to pedestrian facilities could be helpful to identify hot spots where additional pedestrian improvements may be needed.

## **8. Subcommittee Updates**

### **Land Use Subcommittee Update**

Michael Smith provided a brief update regarding the Land Use Subcommittee, which last met on January 12<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting will be held on February 16<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion items from the recent meeting include:

- Creation of yearly recommendations and review of draft 2025 Annual Report
- Improving pedestrian safety through modifications and improvements to land use planning, regulations, and processes in Delaware, such as the Pedestrian Priority Area program and the Complete Streets Design Guide.
- How state agencies and municipalities can better identify gaps in the system of pedestrian paths and sidewalks to create a system of sidewalks and pathways that is continuous and interconnected.

### **Outreach & Education Subcommittee Update**

Jared Kauffman also provided a brief update regarding the Outreach and Education Subcommittee, which last met on January 14<sup>th</sup>. The next subcommittee meeting is planned to be held on February 11<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion items from the recent meeting include:

- Creation of yearly recommendations and review of draft Annual Report
- Recap of Hope Center outreach and reflective/safety items distribution
- Discussion of outreach material ideas for FY 2026 budget
- Messages for effective outreach
- Education and outreach to decision-makers

## **9. Agency Updates**

Kelly Valencik provided an opportunity for Council members representing various agencies to provide updates applicable to the Pedestrian Council. The Council was not provided with any pertinent information from any Council members representing agencies.

## **10. Transportation Alternatives Program – Call for Projects**

Kelly Valencik offered an overview of the Delaware Department of Transportation's Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), a federally funded program supporting small-scale, community-driven transportation projects that improve walking, biking, safety, and connectivity. Kelly shared that DelDOT has put out a call for projects, seeking those projects to be sponsored or co-sponsored by

a governmental agency for maintenance purposes. The program supports projects up to \$1.5 million and requests that the sponsor provide 20% of the funding, with the remaining 80% covered by federal funding.

## **11. Next Meeting Dates**

Sophie Thompson presented the dates for the next three meetings of the Council for 2026, with the second meeting on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. After that, the next meeting will be on Thursday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. With the fourth and final meeting falling on Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Sophie indicated that the subcommittees will be meeting prior to the next Council meeting, while offering an opportunity for any interested Council members to join either of the subcommittees.

## **12. Closing Remarks**

Kelly Valencik brought the meeting to a close at 1:58 p.m. All Council members agreed.