

# GREAT FALLS | MCLEAN OPEN HOUSE

## DECEMBER 12, 2011

### MEETING SUMMARY

Approximately 30 people participated in the open house, held at the McLean Community Center from 6:30pm-8:30pm on December 12, 2011. Great Falls/McLean residents, local cycling advocates, and members of the Master Plan Bicycle Advisory Committee attended the meeting, as did Supervisor John Foust of the Drainsville District. FCDOT Bicycle Program staff, Charlie Strunk, McLean Trails and Sidewalk Committee Member, Dennis Frew, and project consultants from Toole Design Group, Dan Goodman and Nina Liggett, facilitated the meeting. The following narrative summarizes the discussion and includes the comments, questions and requests made by participants.

## OVERVIEW

At the outset of the meeting, attendees were given the opportunity to review maps and other material in an open house format. The project team then provided an overview of the project, recent work, and desired outcomes for the public comment period of the meeting. After the presentation, there were a series of small group discussions. Feedback was provided directly on the hard copy maps, which has been digitized in GIS and will be used in the planning/analysis process moving forward. A summary of additional information gathered at the meeting is provided below.

## GENERAL COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

- Implementation was discussed at length. It was noted that the Plan is meant to be a tool for the County to use when road and private development projects are planned and designed. Implementation elements of the Tysons Corner Bicycle Master Plan were highlighted.
- Question: Will the Plan include fiscal recommendations?  
Answer: High level cost estimates will be developed, and funding and implementation strategies will be discussed in detail in the Plan.
- Fairfax County competes with other cities, for example, Portland and Arlington. These towns and cities will be used as examples for the Plan.
- Better access to adjacent communities, counties and jurisdictions is desired. For example, the approach to the Chain Bridge needs better bicycle accommodations.
- The lack of lighting is a key deterrent to biking at night and during the winter. For example, lighting on the shoulder along Dolly Madison Boulevard was noted as a priority.
- Park & Ride lots for buses/Metro are being built around the County and should include bike accommodations for ingress and egress access as well as bike parking. This will likely be a policy recommendation in the Plan.

- More frequent street sweeping is needed, especially where striped shoulders are present, which cyclists depend upon.
- Virginia bike laws need to be clarified, specifically bike lane compliance and bicyclist right-of-way.
- Question: is there a maximum speed limit recommended where shared lane markings are present?  
Answer: Yes, 35 mph is the maximum recommended speed.  
Follow up: It was requested this be added to the Toolbox that was created for the Tysons Plan.
- Question: What is FCDOT currently working on bike projects in the McLean area?  
Charlie Strunk provided an overview of current efforts, for example, FCDOT is currently working on bike lanes on Gallows Road, and a signed bike route in downtown McLean.
- Connector trails between cul-de-sacs are desired, especially near elementary schools.
- There was discussion about the process for securing and then checking up on commitments from private developers. It was noted that the tracking and follow-up process needs to be improved.
- There was a desire for more public awareness campaigns.
- It was noted that improved access to the Tysons East station will be critical before the station opens.
- A general need was noted to narrow travel lanes for traffic calming purposes.
- There is a need to create better mechanisms for HOA's to approach and work with the County regarding trails and other transportation issues.

## GREAT FALLS WORK SESSION COMMENTS

- A sewage improvement project on Old Courthouse Road has created an unsafe crossing at Besley Road. A bridge is needed.
- There is a new Fire Station being built on Leesburg Pike near Beulah Road, a Park & Ride for buses may be built in proximity to it, which should include bike parking.
- A climbing lane on Beulah Road between Talisman Drive and Clarks Crossing is desired.
- Bike lanes on Beulah Road, North of the Dulles Access Road towards Leesburg Pike are desired.
- The bridge on Beulah Road over the Dulles Access Road needs upgraded bike facilities.
- A Park & Ride and shuttle location is proposed at Wolf Trapp Park, which could accommodate bicycle facilities. The development is opposed by some residents.
- The off-road trail at Meadowlark Park that is showing on the Bike Map has not yet been built and should be removed from the network. It is an ongoing NVRPA project, which has encountered legal hurdles.
- A new bike bridge is desired over the Dulles Access Road on Towlston Road.
- Bike lanes are suggested on Towlston Road from Trap Road to Leesburg Pike.
- A connection is need from the W&OD trail into adjacent neighborhoods near Kedger Drive.
- A trail in the median on Leesburg Pike from the new Tysons West Metro to Wolf Trapp Run Drive was suggested.
- Access to Metro is a significant concern. The new Tysons West Metrorail station should have bicycle routes easily accessible to Great Falls. The new Wheile Avenue Metro also needs

upgraded on-road facilities and access improvements, especially on Route 7, or alternates to Route 7.

- Avid bicycle racers and recreational riders use an on-road route from Old Dominion Drive, north to River Bend Drive, and west on Beach Mill Road, which takes them into either Loudoun County or up north to the Potomac River. It is a nice ride but not recommended for the novice cyclist. Road upgrades and signage to accommodate cyclists and serve as a connecting route into Loudoun County should be considered.
- Bike lanes are recommended for Clarks Crossing Road from Beulah Road to the W&OD trail. A crosswalk is needed at Percussion Way and Clarks Crossing Road.
- Bike lanes, a paved shoulder or a side path is desired on Georgetown Pike from Old Dominion Drive to Walker Road.
- Bike lanes or a paved shoulder on Old Dominion Drive from Balls Hill Road to Georgetown Pike should be considered.

## MCLEAN WORK SESSION COMMENTS

- A priority project for the Drainsville District is cycle tracks on Dolly Madison Boulevard from Old Chain Bridge Road South to the I-495 on-ramp.
- Improved connections east to Tysons Corner from Downtown McLean was noted as a priority. Chain Bridge Road was highlighted as a potential on-road route.
- There is a difficult intersection at Magarity Road and Olney Road.
- Bike facilities are desired on Lewinsville Road from Dolly Madison Boulevard to Spring Hill Road.
  - There are inconsistent shoulder widths, but some are wide enough to accommodate a striped shoulder for bikes.
  - A climbing lane was suggested on Lewinsville Road from Spring Hill Road south to I-495.
  - It was noted that there is a need for a stop sign or stop light and possible sidewalk improvements around the intersection of Lewinsville and Winter Hunt Road.
  - A gap in the sidewalk network was noted on Lewinsville between the bridge and the new bike path near Snow Meadow Drive.
- To help a heavily used bike commuting route, bike lanes or climbing lanes were suggested for Kirby Road. It is a straight connection to Dolly Madison Boulevard and Chain Bridge Road. There is a difficult stretch on Kirby Road just north of the Marie Butler Nature Reserve towards Chain Bridge Road.
- Chesterbrook Road could serve as a key route into Arlington, bike lanes are desired.
- Safe Routes to School (SRTS) was requested for the Spring Hill Elementary School area. Attendee's identified routes along Spring Hill Road and Lewinsville Road that are in need of sidewalks and bicycle facilities to accommodate school children.
- A climbing lane is requested on Chain Bridge Road on the approach to the bridge past the Dolly Madison Boulevard and GW Memorial Parkway intersection.
- Langley High School (LHS) has several challenges that could be addressed with a SRTS plan.
  - Students walk to LHS up Pine Hill Road; a cross walk is needed at Pine Hill Road and Georgetown Pike.

- A midblock crossing was suggested on Georgetown Pike between Pine Hill Road and Douglas Drive. Students park in a church parking lot midway down that block then attempt to cross Georgetown Pike towards LHS.
- A choke point was identified on Old Dominion Drive at the three-way intersection with Ingleside Avenue and Buena Vista Avenue.
- Crossing improvements are needed at Old Dominion Drive and Longfellow Street.
- There is an existing trail connecting Julia Avenue to Hampton Hill Circle which serves as a cut thru to Old Dominion Drive.
- The side path along Old Dominion Drive from Longfellow to Linway Terrace needs maintenance and should be resurfaced.
- There was a question about what is on the VDOT 6-year plan for Gallows Road to Tysons.
- Westmoreland and Idlewood were noted as an important connection.
- A connection is needed between the two neighborhoods separated by Bryan Branch Rd north of Linway Terrace.
- Beverly Road accommodates parking on both sides of the street between Elm Street and Old Dominion Drive, which makes it difficult for cyclist to traverse.
- A cut thru route to the W&OD trail from Chruchill Road and Raymond Avenue to Westmoreland was identified. It was suggested bike lanes be added to better accommodate cyclists.
  - Chain Bridge Road and Westmoreland Street is a difficult intersection for cyclists.
- Dolly Madison Boulevard and Elm Street needs intersection improvements.
  - Adjacent roads to Dolly Madison Boulevard, including Fleetwood Road and Chelsea Road are preferred bike routes for the downtown area. Bike facilities are recommended for both roads.
  - Westbound Dolly Madison Boulevard from Chain Bridge Road towards Kurtz Road has a shoulder wide enough to accommodate bike facilities, although the southbound lane would need a wider shoulder.

## BICYCLE PROGRAM IDEAS

- Education:
  - Parents Program – evaluate which roads and trails are appropriate for what ages.
  - Driver education regarding their “real” width when pulling trailers (e.g. boat trailers – wheel and fender width are wider than their cars and trucks).
  - Tie Safe Routes to School along Spring Hill and Lewinville Road to Spring Hill Elementary, which has environmental programs that encourages walking and riding bikes to school. The lead teacher is Mrs. Boven.
- Encouragement:
  - HOA – FC partnerships to leverage private trails.
- Enforcement:
  - Crosswalk to Spring Hill Elementary is hazardous and cars do not yield. Consider tying in with Park & Ride entrance light.

## INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS

The following comment forms were collected from open house participants:

Kirby Road is a major bike commuting route to access Chesterbrooke Rd – Glebe Rd – Chain Bridge Rd. Add on-street bike facility on narrow stretches. Also lane and sidewalk access to Chesterbrook Elementary School are non-existent. Consider connections to Arlington County Network.

---

Safe sidewalks and bike paths encourage kids to ride their bicycle to school. Please complete the sidewalk on Lewinsville Rd between Clover Leaf and Rt. 7, especially between Altamira and Woodside. Many more kids could ride their bikes to Spring Hill Elementary if the sidewalks were completed.