

Arlington's Families for Safe Streets ("Arl FSS")

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 - 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Zoom Conference Call

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Michelle Brydges, Cristina Burbach, Gillian Burgess, Mike Doyle, Mary Dallao, Lauren Hassel, Ed Hazelwood, Sofie Raiffa, Ruth Shearer, and others.

Discussion Points:

❖ **Arlington County & APS Budget**

- County budget process background provided by Gillian
 - APS school system funded by County
 - Budget staff monitor expected revenues and expenses (set vs. managed) year round
 - In February, the County Manager proposed a budget -- this year assuming no federal money -- but after the fact the federal stimulus passed.
 - It is understood that ~48% of the general fund will be allocated to APS -- APS also proposes a needs-based budget and the cuts required to match the allocation.
 - Transportation (Dept Environmental Svcs - DES) has a budget which covers Bike Arlington, Walk Arlington, Arlington Transportation Partners... but DES does not fund the trails
 - DPR (Parks and Rec) funds the trails.
 - **Safe Routes to School** (Lauren) is funded by APS (i.e. in the APS budget), but is a major intersection between school transportation and County.
 - Safe Routes to School budget, \$100K/yr funds $\frac{2}{3}$ salary and $\frac{1}{3}$ small projects/improvements. A VDOT grant has traditionally funded the program, but this year there are more coordinators around the state, and Arlington only expects to receive 30% of past funding. There is a match requirement.
 - American Rescue Plan will have funds that will flow to APS -- 4 years to spend it, don't yet know the amount for 2021/22.
 - The VDOT grant amounts will be announced in May/June for the 21-22 school year.
 - Arl FSS will advocate that Safe Routes to School is essential and

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be fully funded, in whatever manner possible. Gillian will draft a letter to share with HCAT (Melissa Merson), HCTC, BAC, PAC, for signatures, potentially connecting with other SRTS POCs, e.g. Alexandria. Share with County and School Board and VA elected representatives.

➤ Vision Zero

- County adopted Vision Zero in 2019 and has a draft action plan which goes to the County Board in May.
- There is a budget for Vision Zero -- an infrastructure pot of \$ -- but it appears that over the last decade the total funds for street infrastructure has been declining. Gillian will analyze and call out if true.
- The framework for the VZ plan is strong, yet there is no commitment in terms of # or \$ of improvements.
- Ruth noted that as the programs/terms have changed over the years, e.g. Complete Streets, there is a lot of enthusiasm but in the end demand vastly exceeded available funding, took a very long time to actually make things happen through the program.
- County is in the middle of a sidewalk audit using a commercial partner, so that they may shift from reactive mode and be able to plan ahead more methodically.

- Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) Shirlington Road bridge project -- Arl FSS should sign on to the letter to fast-track the study of the bridge. Very popular 16 mile loop that people use to prep for marathons, and many cyclists, and the bridge comes at a very mentally fatigued point. Needs more room for bikes and peds.

❖ Virginia General Assembly

- Wins: 15 mph min speed limit; Modified Bicycle Safety Act
 - Postcard campaign -- 400 cards sent to GA members
 - NoVA FSS / Arl FSS was part of a recent Fox5 DC news report where Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax FSS chapters' collective efforts of legislative advocacy for the 15 mph bill was spotlighted
- Deferred to GA 2021 - Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE/speed cameras)
 - Arl FSS needs to advocate for Arlington to implement ASEs (speed cameras) in school zones (authority granted in 2020)

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- Alexandria is working hard on it -- but at the moment Arlington is not really thinking about it, no permanent chief of police at the moment, Lieutenant Murphy, Arl FSS, liaison also retired. Albert Kim is now attending PAC meetings and may be the right contact.
 - Ruth suggests that perhaps they have not done any cost/benefit analysis of costs of speed camera vs. human patrols.
 - Police typical response is that enforcement is not a permanent solution to recurring problems -- but if the County doesn't respond either, nothing is done to help.
 - Alexandria isn't spending any money to conduct the tests around schools - the vendor is doing it to capture before and after data.
 - Data from other jurisdictions is not acceptable.
 - Gillian will reach out to Albert Kim and request a meeting.
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- ❖ April: National Walking Day - Hidden Gems
 - Mary explained that participants will need to register via Eventbrite to get access to the map. The goal is to get 400 new emails -- as of April 5th they had 990 registrants.
 - Lots of cool places, art, family run restaurants.
 - Arl FSS is promoting Hidden Gems on social media and volunteer, Sofie, created a graphic with a QR code linking to the Arl FSS email list registration. Laminated cards of the graphic/QR code placed at multiple Hidden Gem sites throughout the week to try and collect new emails and will be saved for future outreach purposes.
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- ❖ April meeting: Plan for Bike Month
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- Upcoming Events
 - Sister Ffx FSS Meeting – 1st Monday of the Month, April 5th
 - Sister Alx FSS Meeting – 3rd Tuesday of the Month, April 20th
 - Next Arl FSS Meeting – 4th Wednesday of the Month, April 28, 2021