



**PETER C. SCHWARTZKOPF**  
*Speaker of the House*  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
14<sup>th</sup> District

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE OF DELAWARE  
LEGISLATIVE HALL  
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

COMMITTEES  
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**Route 1 Pedestrian Safety Task Force**  
**October 22, 2013**  
**Minutes**

Speaker Schwartzkopf called the meeting to order 7:06pm. Present members of the Route 1 Pedestrian Safety Task Force included Co-Chairs Speaker Pete Schwartzkopf and DelDOT Sec. Shailen Bhatt, Rep. Steve Smyk, Sen. Ernie Lopez, Sussex County Councilwoman Joan Deaver, Sussex County Councilman George Cole, Leonard Read, State Police Lt. Mike Nelson, Donald Mitchell, Bill Klemkowski, Roger Roy, Bob Frederick and Danya Quillen. Patrick Gossett, a member of the Rehoboth Beach Board of Commissioners, was present on behalf of Mayor Cooper. DelDOT representatives present included Bobbie Geier, Brett Taylor, Mark Luszc, George Spadafino, Geoff Sundstrom, and Shante Hastings.

Bob Frederick motioned to adopt the minutes from the August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The motion was seconded and unanimously agreed upon. Roger Roy motioned to adopt the minutes from the October 2 safety audit. Danya Quillen seconded and the motion was unanimously accepted.

The committee agreed that the safety audit was a productive venture. Members recognized the importance of maintaining sidewalks for the long term. Roger Roy reminded the committee of the problems they saw in Dewey with utility poles in the middle of sidewalks. Sec. Bhatt noted that improvements to Dewey's sidewalks would be separate from the Route 1 project that DelDOT has already developed.

Mable Granke asked if the committee experienced enough heavy traffic during the audit to understand the pedestrian and traffic problems. Speaker Schwartzkopf pointed out that they were looking closely at the engineering of the road and the crossings which would remain constant regardless of traffic volume. Sec. Bhatt recognized that the group would experience different traffic patterns if the group went out on a summer day, but it was still a worthy experience.

Mike Tyler asked if you are allowed to ride your bicycle on the sidewalk in Dewey. Speaker Schwartzkopf explained that you can ride on any sidewalk unless strictly prohibited. Mark Luszc reminded the committee that there is no easy answer to integrating vehicles, buses, bicycles and pedestrians. Speaker Schwartzkopf suggested reducing the speed limit before cars enter Dewey as well as adding a flashing warning light to alert drivers to pedestrians.

Jim Miller asked the committee to consider people with disabilities. He won't cross Route 1 at Pelican Square near Midway because it is too dangerous. He asked how long is given for a person to cross the street at a crosswalk. Mark Luszc said that people are given 3.5 feet per second per the national standard. George Spadafino reminded the members of the public that DelDOT takes the Americans with Disabilities Act very seriously.

Karen Zakarian asked for clarification on the parameters of the task force versus the DeIDOT Route 1 Corridor project. Speaker Schwartzkopf explained that DeIDOT has been developing a plan for improvements to the Route 1 Corridor before the task force was formed. Their plans are their own, though DeIDOT made modifications to their plan based on input from the Task Force. The task force is charged with looking at a larger portion of the corridor, the Nassau Bridge to the southern limits of Dewey, while the DeIDOT project just covers from the Nassau Bridge to the Lewes Rehoboth Canal.

The committee then watched a short video explaining the HAWK system or a pedestrian hybrid beacon, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x92c5SHc8yM>. The video was made by the City of Tempe, Arizona about their use of the HAWK system to deal with pedestrian safety. This is a signal that is placed between intersections, and it allows pedestrians to cross the road, but only stops traffic as needed. The light is activated by a pedestrian hitting a push-button. When activated, the beacon flashes yellow, then displays a solid yellow and then a solid red. Once the light is red, pedestrians get a walk signal. Once the pedestrian has crossed the beacon will then flash red and then it will stop.

The committee discussed the use of pedestrian bridges as well. Shante Hastings explained that the dimensions of the bridge would be substantial to accommodate Route 1 (16 ft high by 825 ft long.) In order to ramp up to the bridge, you need 3 tenths of a mile of graded pavement leading to the overpass. She explained that acquiring enough land for this would be difficult. Elevators could be used instead of the graded ramps, but maintenance costs and power outages are then factors. DeIDOT has found that people do not use pedestrian bridges, so they feel that this would be an ineffective option for the corridor.

Shelia Savaliski suggested using a zig-zag ramp to take up less land. She suggested putting up barriers or snow fencing to prevent people from darting across the road and to push them to the pedestrian bridges. Sec. Bhatt explained that DeIDOT has found that most people do not want to use the ramps and pedestrian bridges.

Speaker Schwartzkopf thought that the HAWK system could be used to allow crosswalks in places where there is no intersection with a light such as from one outlet to the other outlet. Mark Luszc mentioned compliance problems with the HAWK system in Newark. He concluded that people are just not used to these systems.

Dale Lomas, a business owner, stated that since these systems are uncommon they may be confusing to drivers especially to new visitors. Speaker Schwartzkopf explained that the beauty of the HAWK system is that they are only activated when a pedestrian wants to cross, so you do not have traffic backup due to signal cycles. Mark Luszc assured the Speaker that they can improve the current ADA signals at the traditional intersections to make them more efficient and limit cycle delays.

Shelia Savaliski suggested using land from the Tanger outlets to accommodate the ramps for a pedestrian bridge and stressed that safety should be the number one priority.

Sec. Bhatt described the DeIDOT project along the Route 1 corridor. The project calls for installing continuous sidewalks for 12 miles from the Nassau Bridge to the Lewes Rehoboth Canal. The plans have changed from the original design adding 12 new ADA crosswalks to adding 6 new ADA crosswalks. DeIDOT is making data driven decisions to make sure the crosswalks are going in strategic places. The plans call for lighting at all the intersections and in a few more locations which costs \$400,000. Lighting the entire corridor would cost \$1,000,000, so DeIDOT plans to add more lighting in phases.

The committee discussed placing a solid line with rumble strips between the through lanes and the shoulder in order to protect bikers and better delineate the lane functions.

Sec. Bhatt stressed monitoring the project once it is complete is essential to make adjustments. The Speaker's idea for a multi-use path is a longer term solution due to property acquisition and restructuring utilities.

Julie Wheatley asked where the remaining crosswalks at intersections are going to be placed. Speaker Schwartzkopf emphasized the need to put the crosswalks in strategic locations. He reiterated his support for the multi-use paths, but recognized as a realist it will take land and time to make it a reality. The DelDOT project has money available now to make improvements.

Mike Tyler pointed out that there are too many curb cuts along the corridor. He suggested making connections between shopping centers so drivers do not have to go out on Route 1. He also noted that the bus hubs and bus stops need to be more intuitive. Sec. Bhatt agreed and DART is working on relocating bus stops.

Shelia Savaliski shared concern for people who ride bikes to get to work not just for pleasure. She strongly advocated for funneling people with barriers.

Herman Metiker complimented the co-chairs on finding middle ground between the DelDOT plan and the task force's ideas. He appreciated that the task force listened to the public and noted that in this case the perfect is the enemy of the good. He agreed that adding six additional crosswalks is reasonable and monitoring this project is essential.

Garabed Zakarian asked about the forgotten mile. Mark Luszcz said lighting will be an important option there. He suggested using temporary barriers along this stretch. Dewey is also planning to use some temporary barriers next summer to see how it works. Karen Zacarian asked about a flashing light to slow traffic at the base of the bridge. Speaker Schwartzkopf strongly agreed that a flashing light warning drivers of pedestrians is essential, and he offered to secure the funding for it.

Bob Frederick suggested placing the flashing light speed limit sign at the canal bridge where trucks go 60 mph as an inexpensive solution. He suggested lowering the speed limit to 45 mph. The committee discussed the importance of enforcement of the rules to deter bad behavior. Mable Granke stressed that when the new sidewalks go in enforcement of the rules will be critical. Mable added that there is a need for more bus transportation year round.

Dale Lomas asked how you can make the crosswalks useful. Speaker Schwartzkopf responded that you need to put crosswalks where people are already crossing. Patty Mickey asked if the crosswalk at the entrance of Rehoboth was still in the plans. DelDOT confirmed that it is still in the plan.

Mike Tyler asked whether the rumble strips are bike friendly. Mark Luszcz confirmed that DelDOT uses bike friendly rumble strips for all new projects.

Tony Laterio asked the committee to consider more shuttle services to the resort areas to get money from those visitors. Sec. Bhatt agreed that there is incentive for the outlets to bring people in from the resort with more shuttle services. Janney O'Conner said residents would be happy to use regularly scheduled buses.

Roger Roy asked the committee about the drafting of the final task force report due January 31<sup>st</sup>. Sen. Lopez noted that the committee has come a long way with input from public. They are all aware that the intersections were originally made as community access intersections. Rolling Meadows is a prime example of an intersection that is no longer a neighborhood intersection. Sen. Lopez reminded the committee that there is a lot of future growth that will be coming so improvements need to accommodate the future as well.

Rep. Smyk felt that signage is a key problem noting that once drivers go over the Nassau Bridge they are inundated with signs. Councilwoman Deaver suggested that the brightness of the signs be addressed in the Sussex County code.

Shelia Savaliski asked the committee about road signs. She felt that with so many out-of-towners, it is difficult for them to find their way around. People don't know that there is an alternate route to get to Ocean City or Bethany. Mark Luszczyk agreed that DelDOT needs to put better information on message boards to direct people from Route 1 to Route 113 with real time travel times. Sec. Bhatt added that improvement to Route 113 and Route 26 will help pull people from Route 1.

Bill O'Connor noted that flyovers can be found all over of Europe and Asia with retailers on both sides. The flyover becomes key retail space. Jim Miller added that he did not think the elevator system was necessary for the flyovers.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.