

Fairfax Families for Safe Streets (“Ffx FSS”)

13 September 2021: 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Location: Zoom

Meeting Notes

Introductions – 11 people in attendance including Mike Doyle, Sally Smallwood, Lauren Delmar, Chris French, Shyamali Hauth, Patricia Leslie, Lt Jason Long, Nathan Rickman, Susan Bowyer, Gina Hoffman, Supervisor Walter Alcorn

Old Business

- Lt Jason Long – FCPD
 - There have been no crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists recently.
 - Prosecution updates:
 - In 2020, a 12-year-old bicyclist was struck by a motorist on Blake lane. The driver was charged with the vulnerable road user statute which is a class one misdemeanor. The driver plead guilty to a less offense, improper driving.
 - Earlier in 2021, a crash involving a motorist and a cyclist occurred on Pleasant Valley Road. The driver was charged with a violation of the vulnerable road user statute. The driver plead guilty to failure to yield to right of way on a left turn.
 - What we are finding is that while this vulnerable road user law is on the books, it is hard to prove in court. It is hard to define what is “careless driving.”
 - NoVA FSS helped advocate for the vulnerable road user law that passed in 2020. Perhaps, NoVA FSS should advocate for strengthening the language of the law.
 - A few months ago, a pedestrian was killed by a motorist in an unmarked crosswalk on South Kings Highway. The driver was charged with failure to yield to a pedestrian. It is possible the driver was not charged with the vulnerable road user law because the pedestrian was intoxicated.
 - Year to date, there have been 10 or 11 pedestrian fatalities, 2 cyclist fatalities, and a total of around 19 traffic fatalities.
- Update on Ffx FSS working relationship with FCPD
 - Representatives from Ffx FSS met with FCPD leadership to present the Near Miss survey and share how it can be used to inform decision making to improve safety.
 - Jason Long will be using the data along with crash data to help identify dangerous locations.
- Ffx FSS has partnered with Street Simplified who won the Fairfax County innovation challenge. Street Simplified has a similar mission as the Near Miss survey to identify areas of potential crashes. They use data gathered from cameras at intersections to run analytics on near misses.
- Update on FFX FSS’s Near Miss Survey data
 - The survey is available on the Fairfax FSS website: <https://ffx.novasafestreeets.org/near-miss-and-dangerous-intersection-survey/>

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- The full view of the Near Miss dashboard is here:
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/5169e45e4b364614a0e1afeef8ea6c57>
- A direct link to the survey is here:
<https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/a6dfdc029269422fa0dcb37e61cdd76f>
- Most of the NM reports are in Alexandria because that is where the survey was first launched in 2018. We are seeing good traction and more NM reports in Fairfax recently.
- The home page of the Fairfax FSS website features charts and visuals to highlight the data collected from the survey.
 - The most common types of incidents are failure to yield to pedestrians, speeding, and poor visibility.
 - Most of the reported incidents are around rush hour.
 - Most people who used the survey found out about it through Nextdoor and other social media.
- Most people who use the survey are reporting specific incidents, but some people are reporting general concerns (i.e., “people speed on this road all the time” and “there isn’t enough time to cross the street here”).
 - Lt. Jason Long – Both types of feedback are helpful. But the FCPD responds to the feedback differently.
- NM outreach plans
 - Currently, the survey is only available in English, but we would like to translate it to make it more accessible.
 - We have 3x5 card handouts that feature the survey and have a QR code that links to the survey. We also need to translate these.
 - If you zoom into the NM map on our web site, you can see all the districts in Fairfax. We can identify the districts that we need to do more outreach as well as the districts where the crowd sourcing data is telling that there is danger on the roads.
- Ffx FSS’s recent marketing efforts plus public outreach plans
 - Marketing and Promotion
 - Phil Kemelor published articles about the Near Miss Survey in Annadale Blog, Tyson reporter and Fairfax Times.
 - Colleen Cranna revised the stop, look, wave flyer into a Spanish-language version. Jeremy posted the flyers on the website, under the education tab, pedestrian safety. The flyer is also very kid friendly.
 - Phil sent an email to Supervisor Penny Gross’ office about the Annandale Blog and the flyer.
 - Representatives from Ffx were interviewed by ABC Channel 7 about the Near Miss survey. It was aired Tuesday morning, September 14. The video link can be found on our website, under About US, in the News.
 - Planned Activities
 - Find additional publications to share the NM survey.
 - Write an article to promote stop, look, and wave.
 - Contact affordable neighborhood housing organizations and civic organizations to distribute stop, look, wave, the NM card hand out and 3-way blinkers

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- Please share your suggestions for where we can share this information and get the word out.

New Business

- Traffic regulation advocacy priorities re: the 2022 General Assembly
 - Contributory Negligence – In the state of VA and MS, contributory negligence provides that a plaintiff’s negligence, no matter how slight, that contributes in some way to their injuries bars the plaintiff from recovery for those injuries in civil cases. This makes it difficult for pedestrian victims of crashes to sue drivers for damages. Most states have 50% contributory negligence, or the driver is at fault. NoVA FSS has brought up this issue for the last 3 years and plans to do so again but the insurance lobbyists are formidable.
 - Broader ASE Usage – Automatic Speed Enforcement is permitted in school zones. We would like to advocate for more data collection from ASE in school zones through the Fairfax County, Alexandria, and Arlington police departments in order to collect data.
 - DUI Laws – Alcohol and speed are two of the biggest factors in crashes. Marijuana, now that it is legal, may contributed to more impaired driving. We should think about the issue as part of our 2022 legislative advocacy.
 - Virginia Statewide VZ plan – Vision Zero aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and injuries. It is primarily focused on engineering changes to improve road safety. Why not encourage the whole state to implement the program
 - Other Issues:
 - Encourage VDOT to become more urban-centric and focus on the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
 - We’ve been trying to reach out to gubernatorial candidates. We have talked to McAuliffe over the weekend in a brief conversation about how it would be helpful to change VDOT’s adopts to a more VMT approach in urban localities.
- Update TPB Grant application
 - NoVA FSS is applying for a grant with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The award could be up to \$60k to improve the Near Miss Survey, including translation on our web site and NM handouts. We would be sponsored by Alexandria and would like the support of Arlington and Fairfax.
- Request from Sally Smallwood
 - Sally is working on a campaign to educate middle schoolers on pedestrian safety. If you have any tips, videos, ideas, etc. to help middle schoolers try to be more visible in low-light situations, please let her know. The campaign will kickoff around Walk to School Day (first Wednesday in October). Ffx FSS will look into provided 3-way blinkers for the students.

Upcoming Events

- **ActiveFairfax Plan Session – Sept 15, 2021, at 6:30 pm**
 - ActiveFairfax meeting link: https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/news/t17_21
- AFSS Meeting – the 3rd Tuesday of the Month, Sept 21st
- Arl FSS Meeting – 4th Tuesday of the Month, Sept 28th
- **Fairfax FSS meeting – 1st Monday of the Month, Oct 4, 2021**