

Fairfax Families for Safe Streets (“Ffx FSS”)

4 October 2021: 6:30 pm to 8 pm

Location: Zoom

Meeting Notes

Introductions – 13 people in attendance including Mike Doyle, Gina Hoffman, Phillip Kemelor, Jason Long (FCPD), Les Jackson, Jamie Bluth, Susan Bowyer, Dymeah Casey, Colleen Cranna, Lauren Delmare (FCDOT), Sonya Breehey, Sally Smallwood (SRTS), and one caller who came in on a cell phone about 20 minutes after introductions.

Old Business

- FCPD – Jason Long
 - There have been no crashes involving pedestrians or cyclists since the last meeting.
 - Daylight savings ends in early November, and we expect to see an increase in crashes. FCPD is trying to increase safety messaging.
 - Walk to School Day is coming up. FCPD is increasing presence around schools to ensure safety for students walking to school.
 - 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.”
 - 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 pleaded guilty to a lesser offense, improper driving.
 - In May, there was a crash in Chantilly involving a cyclist. Driver was charged with the vulnerable road user statute but pleaded guilty to a lesser offense, failure to yield right of way.
 - 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.
 - FCPD is working with VT’s – CGIT to obtain TREDIS data and then crash data analytics
- Fordson Road Pedestrian Safety petition – Dymeah Casey
 - In September, Dymeah Casey launched a petition to the Fairfax County Department of Transportation to enhance pedestrian safety measures on Fordson Road which is in the Lee District. It is a busy road that connects to Richmond Highway and is about 1 mile long.
 - <https://www.change.org/p/fairfax-county-department-of-transportation-pedestrian-safety-on-fordson-road-lee-district-departamento-de-transporte-del-condado-de-fairfax-seguridad-peatonal-en-fordson-road-distrito-de-lee>
 - The petition received 75 signatures which is enough for it to be considered by FC DOT.
 - Ffx FSS helped post social media messages about the petition.
 - Would like to host a pedestrian safety event and potentially partner with Fairfax FSS, among other advocacy groups in the area.
 - Mike Doyle: It could be connected with a World Day of Remembrance event.

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- Emerging auto safety technology – Les Jackson
 - Les has driven every car that is on the roads in the US and is involved in testing the new technology that auto manufacturers are building to improve road safety.
 - It is unlikely that we will have self-driving cars until around 2030. GPS is currently only accurate to +/- 18 inches which is why cars cannot be autonomous yet.
 - By the end of next year, every car on the market will have automatic emergency braking with pedestrian detection. It can react faster than a human which makes a significant impact in stopping a moving vehicle. This technology will also work with backup cameras. Backup cameras and automatic emergency braking are now mandated.
 - Blind spot detection has been available for 10+ years. It was formerly an accessory but now it is standard.
 - Heads up display (virtual image right in front of your eyes so you don't need to look at the dashboard) is an available option on vehicles. Many dealers may not even be aware of this option.
 - Lane keeping/lane keeping assist/automatic steering is not standard yet but likely will become standard in the future. It is very effective.
 - The D.C. mobility auto show in January is a great place to see the latest auto technology
 - Any questions? Reach out to Les at ljcarguy@gmail.com
- Update on FFX FSS's Near Miss Survey data
 - Received about 440 reports in the Near Miss survey, 340 since June 2021. As we get more data, more patterns emerge.
 - Most incidents occur at crosswalks and traffic lights.
 - Most people have heard about the survey through NextDoor and social media.
 - Most reports are in Alexandria because that is where the survey initially launched. But now we are seeing more responses in Fairfax County.
 - Most incidents occurred around rush hours.
 - Most reports are from pedestrians.
 - We expect an increase of reports around the end of daylight savings.
 - This data is shared with Fairfax County Policy Department and FC DOT
 - Jason Long – they could share this with VDOT through their liaison.
 - Sally – In areas that we know are dangerous roads but do not have any reports on the survey, we could disseminate groups that are trained to observe intersections and report incidents.
 - Groups like a senior services organization or perhaps some Ffx FSS volunteers
- Ffx FSS's recent marketing plus public outreach plans – Phil Kemelor
 - Recent articles published about the Near Miss Survey in Annandale Blog, Tyson reporter and Fairfax Times. *Thanks to Phil's work.*
 - Recently updated the Stop Look and Wave handouts to translate them to Spanish. The Stop Look and Wave handouts are available on the website.
 - Sent an email to Supervisor Penny Gross' office about the Annandale Blog and the flyer.
 - Reached out to the Bailey's Crossroads/Route 7 group to help distribute flyers through merchants in that area.
 - We need to create distribution plans for 3x5 NM QR cards & 500 blinkers.
 - Sally will arrange to pick up ~200 blinkers for SRTS.

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- FSS groups have previously gone to farmers markets to do giveaways and spread the word about Ffx FSS.
- Fordson road event/World Day of Remembrance.
- Affordable housing communities could be a good place to distribute blinkers
- Neighborhood & Community Services of FC can also help with distribution
- Reston multi-modal advisory committee
- Reston association has weekly email – Jamie can help us make the connection
- **If you have any other ideas on how to spread the word, please reach out.**

New Business

- Traffic regulation advocacy priorities re: the 2022 General Assembly (GA)
 - 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 court. Most states have 50% contributory negligence, or the driver is at fault. NoVA FSS will advocate for change.
 - Support of 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.
 - 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.
 - **Should we push for greater level of commitment to Vision Zero more locally and compare the progress in Fairfax among the districts? If you are interested in this project, please contact Phil Kemelor at: philkemelor@gmail.com**
- Congressional National Zero Traffic Fatalities Resolution
 - NoVA FSS met with legislative aides from Warner and Kaine to support a national zero traffic fatalities resolution. We also met with Rep Don Beyer who is very familiar with the changes that FSS supports. Rep Beyer has agreed to co-sponsor the Resolution
- VDOT Update
 - Gum Springs Association – Richmond Highway
 - The Gum Springs Civic Association and other organizations in the area formed a coalition to protest the expansion of Richmond Highway Redevelopment.
- TPB Grant Update
 - NoVA FSS is applying for a grant to improve analytics on the Near Miss survey correlated to TREDs crash data. The grant would also support improved marketing efforts and translation of the NM and other parts of the website into Spanish and other languages
- Identification of Ffx FSS liaison with District Supervisors
 - **We would like to find volunteers to liaise with District Supervisors. If you are interested or know someone who might be interested, please let Phil know.**

Upcoming Events

- Coalition for Smarter Growth Happy Hour in Alexandria Oct 6th & Tysons on Oct 12th
- AFSS Meeting – the 3rd Tuesday of the Month, Oct 19, 2021
- Tyson Block Party – Saturday, October 23, 2021
- Arl FSS Meeting – 4th Tuesday of the Month, Oct 26, 2021
- **Fairfax FSS meeting – 1st Monday of the Month, Nov 1, 2021**