

ALEXANDRIA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2021
7:00 p.m.
VIRTUAL (Zoom)

Members Present

Danielle Beach
Lisl Brunner, Vice Chair
Janeka Cogdell
Michelle Cho
Kevin Edwards, Vice Chair
Lynette Foster
Matt Harris, Chair
Katherine Lloyd
Susan Kellom
Elizabeth "PJ" Palmer Johnson
David Rigsby

Staff Present

David Miller, Investigator
Miladis Martinez Gutierrez

Members Not Excused

Chris Harris

Members Excused

Scott Schwartz

Guests

Jen Slesinger, Principal Planner, T&ES
Transportation Draft Alexandria Mobility Plan

1. Call to Order/Introductions by Chair, Matt Harris

Chair Harris called the meeting to order at 7:04p.m. Introductions were made. Chair Harris welcomed s Jen Slesinger, Principal Planner, T&ES Transportation

2. Approval of July Minutes

Upon a motion by Commissioner Palmer Johnson, seconded by Vice Chair Edwards, the Commission approved the minutes of the July meeting. All Commissioners present voted aye with one abstention.

3. Jen Slesinger, Principal Planner, T&ES

Chair Harris welcomed and introduced T&ES Principal Planner Jen Slesinger. Chair Harris stated that Jen and he met virtually at their DASH meeting last month, where she spoke about the Alexandria Mobility Plan. Jen Slesinger thanked the Commission for the invitation and for having her here tonight. Ms. Slesinger played a video about the Alexandria Mobility Plan (AMP), which provided a high level overview of what the Master Plan is about. The video states that the core of the Alexandria mobility plan is about giving people better choices for how they get around; the plan's vision and guiding principles seek to expand people's choices by improving transportation access. The plan will make it easier to take transit by creating better connections and improving the riders experienced.

The Alexandria mobility plan will guide Alexandria's transportation investments supporting equitable data driven decision making. Promoting flexibility to adapt to new challenges, climate change and other societal changes encouraging regional partnerships and help to secure funding to advance existing and new projects. Ms. Slesinger stated that they have been working on this plan for about two years now and said that their last mobility plan was done in 2008. She mentioned six major chapters on the Alexandria Mobility Plan, which are: Transit, supporting travel options, smart mobility, streets, curb space and parkin, bicycle and pedestrians. She also stated that when they did their community outreach, there were

three main things that they heard a lot about. One was cutting through traffic and congestions on local streets, the second one was desire for more and better travel choices, particularly transit and the third one was the need for transportation equity.

Ms. Slesinger talked about their six guidance principles in access, which are: **Accessible, Connected, Convenient, Equitable** and **Safe**. She explained that each chapter has a policy and strategies but explained that they have the following four overarching policies: apply early and on going **equity** focus, incorporate **adaptability and flexibility**, be proactive **and data driven**, and develop **partnership** that advances share goals, which really shows that they are going to implement this plan. She also explained that the first policy on equity is consistent with the all Alexandria framework.

She explained that to improve **travel choices** the City will implement the Alexandria transit vision plan and transitway corridors. She said that they will also support the creation of mobility hubs in strategic locations, expand the ferry options for better access by water to different destinations and use technology and other measurements to make parking easier to find. She also mentioned incorporating charging stations at those mobility hubs. She stated that to **manage congestions** the City will expand adaptive signal technology to improve traffic flow. The City will develop targeted programs, incentives, and education to encourage people to travel by means other than driving alone; the City will add more frequent and efficient bus services to attract new ridership reducing the number of cars on the road; the City will improve regional connective of transit. She also added that with regards to **transportation equity** in addition to that overarching policy, they have a variety of strategies and said that they have updated the final version to include evaluation the transit fare policy; add more frequent, all day bus services, particularly in the WestEnd; create parking policies to support housing affordability and ensure greater access for persons with limited mobility, and to use data to ensure that resources are distributed equitably.

Ms. Slesinger also explained that they have added new metrics to the final plan related to ADA accessibility, transit travel times, minority/low income and senior break down. She stated that the Transportation and planning Commission will hold a hearing on the final mobility plan and then it will go before City Council for a hearing and adoption. Ms. Slesinger ended the presentation by saying that she is seeking endorsement from the Commission on the updated version of the Alexandria Mobility Plan for City Council.

Ms. Slesinger addressed questions from the Commission regarding the hospital that is being built at Landmark and a plan for pedestrian, so that people do not have to cross the highway and expose themselves to getting run over by a car. Ms. Slesinger stated that they have transportation planners and complete streets who are weighing in on the specific development transportation. She also addressed a question regarding how they came up with the metrics based on minority, low income and seniors and said that she took those from the City dashboard which came from the resident needs survey. She stated that the metrics came from the census data, but that she will have to get back to the commission on that.

Ms. Slesinger also addressed the question about the plan for electric cars charging station and said that the City is analyzing the need for charging stations and where they should be located. She also addressed the inquiry about charging stations being in compliant with some sort of ADA accessibility requirements.

Ms. Slesinger also addressed inquiries about how the city will measure the success in terms of equity improvements and said that they established a lot of targets. She said that they will be able to illustrate that there is a disparate impact, and they will need to be spending more resources here and having to show progress and said that they are planning to report out on these metrics. She said that they will have an official report of the metrics every three years and will be presenting to the different boards and commission and getting feedback. She also explained what mobility hubs are and said that it is basically putting a lot of different transportation options in one place. For example, at Braddock metro station having the buses there, but having a scooter corral a bike share station, maybe an electric car share.

Ms. Slesinger address about how much are ferries used for transportation in Alexandria and said that it is mostly used by tourist, but that it is an area worth of examining. She also addressed the issue of ferries being used with different demographics and said that one of the challenges is that it is waterfront so people that are closest to the waterfront tend to be wealthier and have better access so that is one of the challenges of ferries, but they want to promote regional connectivity and invest transit. Director Kelleher stated that it will be important to make the water transportation, affordable and maybe this can be done in conjunction with the District of Columbia. Ms. Slesinger stated that is a spearheading sort of any talk of ferries in the region, and right now there is a focused on a Woodbridge to DC connection and see if Alexandria will become one of the stops.

Director Kelleher suggested having a mobility hub at the old powerplant at the north end of old town to alleviate the congestion in old town, so people could go there and possibly park and then take free trolley or scooter or bikes or whatever and to cut down on the congestion. Ms. Slesinger stated that the plans are very preliminary but there is the old town north plan has a grid street pattern going through that development and then DASH service would go through that development as well, but said that, that would be an interesting area for mobility hub.

Chair Harris thanked Jen Slesinger for her presentation.

4. Executive Committee /Upcoming Meetings

Chair Harris stated that the Executive Committee met last Monday. Vice Chair Edwards reported that the main thing that they discussed was about inviting speakers for the upcoming year. Vice Chair Brunner reported that they briefly discussed the Legislative Package. Commissioner Palmer Johnson stated that they also talked about the Pre-trial risk assessment. Vice Chair Brunner stated that she had send an invitation via email to the Director of criminal services to come talk to the Commission.

Director Kelleher stated that there were two items that she was focusing on, which is removing the word “handicapped” everywhere, it appears in Virginia Code and said that this is one of the ACPD initiatives. She also stated that the other issue s to expand the authority of the Human Rights Commission and said that she wants to put that principle forward for Sarah Taylor.

5. Old and New Business - No old and new business report.

Rainbow Crosswalk letter

Director Kelleher stated that she does not have an update on the rainbow crosswalk letter and said that she just reached out the T&ES but will let the Commission know as soon as she finds out what is happening.

Annual Report

Chair Harris stated that the annual report looks fantastic and said that he was out breath thinking how much the Commission had cover last year with the consideration that they did not meet in person.

6. Liaison Reports

Commissioner Foster reported that their Commission met on September 7th, and they reviewed their annual report, they reviewed the bylaws and the electronic participation policy. She added that there was a lot of discussion about who can and cannot vote when participating in a meeting over the telephone. She also reported that they had Sergeant Torrance from the Police Department, who gave them an update on an accident that happened on Cameron street near the King metro station where a 72-year-old man was hit by a car and was in critical condition. She said that this prompted a discussion on how long lights should be synchronized at crosswalks to allow elderly people to get across the street safely. She also stated that Christine Mayeur from the complete street project is working in collaboration with Arlington County on a safe Road Project. She stated that their guest speaker was Natalie Talis from the Alexandria Health Department and also state that the transportation committee will review the scooter and mobility recommendations again. She said that they announced a rent relief program for seniors up to \$500 a month on a sliding scale for persons who earn less than \$25,000 per year.

Commissioner Palmer Johnson reported that the Commission for women was not able to meet in September.

Commissioner Cogdell reported that the Economic Opportunity Commission discussed the Community needs assessment for affordable housing, food security, healthcare and childcare. She also reported that they discussed the Virginia Rental Relief Program. She stated that their guest speaker was Sarah Taylor, the Assistant City Manager and the City Legislative Director.

Commissioner Lloyd reported that the Alexandria Commission on Person with Disabilities met on September 8 and that their guest speaker Jen Slesinger and the Commission approved the mobility plan. She also reported that they heard from Vicky Caudullo on the Dockless Mobility Program, so she gave her presentation and they are hoping to provide more scooters in the WestEnd of Alexandria. She also reported that they are increasing the numbers of corrals around the City will give people more places to put their scooters, but still no answers to enforcement of getting the scooters off the street and out of the way.

7. Announcements /Adjournment

Commissioner Palmer Johnson announced that the Alexandria electoral board did approve Sunday voting.

MOTION: adjourn the meeting.

Palmer Johnson /Kellom **PASSED** unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 8:24p.m.