



## **Ulster County Traffic Safety Board**

### **January 9, 2023 Meeting Summary**

Approved February 6, 2023

<b><u>Members In Attendance:</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
Tom Polk, Bicycle Program Dir, Kingston/Ulster YMCA	David Corrigan (excused)
Lou Klepner, Town of Saugerties	Brendan Masterson, Ulster County DPW Commissioner(excused)
Eric Kight, Chair	<i>Ulster County Sherriff's Dept. (vacant)</i>
Joseph Sinagra, Town/Village of Saugerties Chief of Police	
Steven Rice, Trails Adv. Committee	t
Giovanna Russo, MHV School Transp, Supervisors Assoc.	
Egidio Tinti, City of Kingston Chief of Police	
Robert Lucchesi, Town/Village of New Paltz Chief of Police	
Rosemary Quinn, Upstate Regional Rep, Families for Safe Streets/City of Kingston resident	
<b><u>Advisory Members</u></b>	
Brian Slack, Coordinator	
David Staas, Ulster County Transportation Council	
Abe Uchitelle, Legislator, District No. 5 - City of Kingston, Chair, Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee	
<b><u>Guests</u></b>	
John Grosbohlín, City of Kingston resident, Kingston Complete Streets Adv. Council	Sara Wenk
Emily Flynn, Health and Wellness Coordinator, City of Kingston	Tanya Garment
Ella Ray Kondrat	Phil Earner, Legislator, District No. 6
Nick Mercurio	Ilona Ross

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

## **II. Approval of Minutes – November 1, 2022**

*Motion made by Sinagra, second by Polk. Carried*

## **III. Public Comments**

***Guests are welcome to address the Board; please limit comments to 5 minutes or less.***

*Ella Kondrat voiced her concern regarding two recent deaths in the City of Kingston; one was a cyclist and one was a pedestrian. She requested that this group develop an action plan to address the issue, improve safety and increase accessibility and overall recommendations to increase safety in the city and county.*

*Tanya Garment voiced her concern for the recent pedestrian fatality of her neighbor, Sarah Edwards, who was fatally hit by a school bus while walking in Kingston on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023. She believes that*



*this fatality is indicative of poor standards in street design as well as perhaps low standards for professional driver certification.*

*Nick Mercurio indicated that he was nearly killed by a school bus while on the street; the driver claimed that she “didn’t see him.” The design of the bus and driver competence may both have been to blame in this instance and perhaps other incidents, along with a combination of lack of awareness among drivers and pedestrians/cyclists.*

*Tanya Garment added that National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) is something to consider for guidance.*

*John Grossbohlin indicated that the City of Kingston has adopted NACTO standards as guidelines for street design.*

*General discussion ensued regarding whether it would be appropriate for Ulster County to adopt NACTO design standards for its roadways. Slack indicated that Brendan Masterson would be the best person to comment on the topic but nonetheless clarified that Ulster County is responsible for maintaining what is a largely rural road network and NACTO standards are not necessarily the most appropriate even in the cases where expanded shoulders or other bike/ped infrastructure is considered. Further, individual projects must meet NYS Highway Design Manual specifications or have a justifiable deviation from those standards. Rose Quinn inquired as to whether designs meet the Safe Systems Approach [which was a policy enacted by Transportation Secretary Buttigieg in 2022] which prioritizes the safety of the most vulnerable users of the road. Rose shifted focus of discussion and indicated that there is confusion as to who direct comment to regarding the design of new facilities. Slack indicated that the local project sponsor [owner of the road] is typically the best organization to direct comment to.*

*Legislator Uchitelle postulated that perhaps this dysfunction is indicative of a broken system, citing that some of the recent fatalities have occurred adjacent to or near some of the new facilities and there may be a need for better coordination to build infrastructure that meets the needs of all users.*

*Brief discussion ensued regarding the role of the MPO, NYSDOT, local governments and boards regarding respective oversight and roles in the design process as well as how the new NYS Complete Streets law may be implemented.*

*Tanya Garment inquired as to whether the county government could provide further guidance to municipalities regarding street design standards. Ulster County Planning Board created the [Community Design Manual](#) and has hosted training seminars.*

#### **IV. Member Updates**

*Eric Kight of the NYSDEP indicated ongoing problems with neighboring driveways that drain onto the public right of way. The DEP will be encouraging negative incline on new curb cuts where possible to decrease on the hazards that are being created.*

*Slack of the UCTC mentioned upcoming meeting on 1/24 to address the Unified Planning Work Program; two safety projects, including the Corridor Management Plan on Rte 9W in the Town of*



*Ulster; inventory of existing conditions will be available to the public in February, following which will be a public input process. Kingston Rail Road Safety Project contract with WSP is in place and this project will commence this calendar year, addressing all of the at-grade RR crossings in Kingston, examine trespass, and revisit the conclusions of the 2006 quiet zone study.*

*Chief Sinagra deferred to Lou Klepner. Klepner reported that UC DPW addressed sight lines on Glasgow Trnpg and 212; a speed reduction request on Sparling Rd has been responded to by NYSDOT but he was unaware of the conclusions of that report.*

*Chief Tinti indicated that his department is still awaiting crash reports from the Ulster County reconstruction team addressing two recent fatalities in Kingston.*

*Tom Polk indicated that Holy Cross Church on Pine Grove Ave offers every Wednesday an outreach event for the Ulster Immigrant Defense Network; Tom is able to offer free safety equipment and information to attendees at several recent events. In addition, the YMCA youth bike repair training program called Midtown Mechanics will be postponed to March for kids and young adults. Finally the Ulster County Friendly Driver program will be implemented this April; Tom will teach DPW drivers based on the national "Bike Friendly Driver" training program and Oregon State "Friendly Driver" program. Eventually he'd like to expand the program to address other operators of large vehicle fleets.*

*Chief Lucchesi of New Paltz indicated that the village and town are similarly exploring methods for reducing speed limits on local roads. NYSDOT has not updated all of the guidance related to the new laws at this time. His office does have a speed trailer that has aided in the monitoring of speeds on local roads. He inquired if there are other means to collect traffic data; Staas of UCTC indicated that the UCTC can order traffic counts and speed counts through the Traffic Monitoring Program. Crosswalk illumination is also an issue of concern in New Paltz. Other development project proposals are being considered in the town/village to keep aware of.*

*Giovanna Russo indicated that the School Bus Driver of the Year application has been distributed to school districts and bus contractors; event takes place 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the month of April. The TSB will be responsible for reviewing applications as soon as they're available. Giovanna is working with the local driving school in Lake Katrine and is looking for posters or flyers for distribution to their students.*

*Steve Rice declined comment*

*Rosemary Quinn recently attended a conference hosted by Senator Gillibrand on traffic safety; she feels that traffic in the City of Kingston has become a safety hazard, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists.*

*Lou Klepner followed-up Rosemary's comments by stating that he believes the TSB should give crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians extra attention. The TSB could take the time to review the reports to see if there may be actionable steps to mitigate an actionable or demonstrable issue. Rosemary Quinn voiced her concern regarding the language that official use during the aftermath of crashes. Abe Uchitelle and Tom Polk reiterated the need for law enforcement to choose language carefully when describing causes of traffic fatalities. The process under which fatalities are*



*investigated throughout Ulster County is being discussed and investigated by Leg. Uchitelle. R. Quinn suggested that an impairment test should be mandatory when a fatality occurs. Chiefs Sinagra and Lucchesi stressed that in order for a police officer to determine whether an impairment is present, probable cause must first be established.*

## **V. Old Business (Open Items)**

### **a. Status of Membership & Appointments**

*Eric Kight has volunteered to serve as Chair for another year; David Corrigan has volunteered to serve as Vice Chair. The position of Secretary is open. Slack suggested that members consider the openings and take up the appointments at the February meeting, including making nominations.*

*11 of 12 appointments to the TSB have been made; the current vacancy will be filled by the Ulster County Sheriff's Department; Sgt. R. Vedder has volunteered to serve and will be appointed by the County Executive.*

### **b. Website Content**

*Speed Resource Page is now live; members of the board are listed as well. Klepner inquired if the Secretary could perform web updates; Slack will see if this is a feasible approach.*

### **c. Ulster County Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy – Polk/Klepner**

*RE: Resolution 229 Ulster County Pedestrian and Bicycle Policy (sometimes referred to as the 'county complete streets policy') Tom Polk and Lou Klepner have prepared a draft letter for the TSB to review and submit to the Ulster County Executive; purpose of the letter is to request an evaluation of the effectiveness of the policy since enacted. Slack will forward that draft to members with the meeting minutes for comment and final approval. Leg. Earner did indicate that the Public Works Committee have been discussing this same subject recently as well, so the letter is timely.*

### **d. Crash Data Analysis – Lou Klepner**

*Lou Klepner requested that the item be postponed to the February meeting. Slack provided an update regarding receiving MV104 crash data; his predecessor, Diane Beitzl, has requested all public law enforcement agencies that do currently provide her with MV104s to forward them to B. Slack. To date, Slack indicated that he has been receiving them from the City of Kingston but no other departments at this time. He also stressed that the volume of the forms as well as their format (.pdf for Kingston but paper in other instances) makes their ability to be searched extremely difficult and time consuming; therefore his office will continue to rely on the NYSDMV "CLEAR" data system to review and analyze crash reports and crash trends.*

*Staas stressed that DMV has staff that evaluate and geocode the information and that it is superior. Klepner's request is to simply review the details of serious injury crashes so that the TSB can conduct an objective assessment when crashes occur. Chief Tinti indicated that his department typically submits the MV104 within 5-10 days of a crash unless a more additional investigation is required.*

## **VI. New Business**

### **a. Results of City of Kingston "Be a Road Hero" Public Safety Information Campaign – E. Flynn**



*Emily is the Director of Health and Wellness for the City of Kingston and is the liaison for the Live Well Kingston Health Commission and Kingston Complete Streets Advisory Committee. She presented the results of the Kingston Traffic Safety Education Campaign; \$45,000 was committed by the City Common Council and hired a consultant to conduct the campaign. A final report detailing the metrics. Pedestrians, cyclists and drivers were the three focus groups; a variety of marketing channels were used to get the various messages out. Broadway streetscape, new street designs, and general traffic safety were among the focus messages; road signs, short form videos using the infrastructure, social media posts, bus ads, and the 'citation flyer' in coordination with the Kingston Police Department were among the media selected to get the messages out to the public.*

*Tom Polk inquired as to whether there was any direct outreach to businesses on Broadway; there was no specific effort targeting individual business owners during this campaign. John Grossbohlind indicated that there was some limited outreach through parking enforcement to some individual business owners.*

*Slack indicated that the UCTC will be committing funds for future transportation safety outreach and awareness; the TSB can play a role in identifying what messages can continue to be publicized to effectively address traffic safety messaging going forward.*

*Rosemary Quinn indicated that the 'expect a bike' campaign would be a good, ready to use model for future publication. Targeted education needs to be specifically targeted to issues.*

*Visit <https://engagekingston.com/be-a-road-hero> for more information on the campaign*

## **VII. Other Business**

- a. UCTC will investigate history of school bus crashes – ongoing

*Dave Staas is investigating this issue and doing data analysis utilizing the new crash analysis system (CLEAR) with assistance from NYSDOT staff. General discussion of school bus safety and technology ensued.*

- b. UCTC ran the "Safer Streets Priority Finder" and produced a customized crash report for Ulster County; draft report provided for review. More info on the tool available at <https://www.saferstreetspriorityfinder.com/>

*Dave Staas has run the report and made initial draft results available for review; he can provide a more detailed overview of the results at a future meeting upon request.*

- c. 2023 School Bus Driver of the Year & Charlie Schaller Awards

*In addition to the ongoing 2023 SBDOTY award, TSB members should please keep in mind re-issuing the Charlie Schaller Award to a first responder. Slack will see if there's an application form that can be re-issued.*

*Finally, Slack updated the TSB on the NYSDOT Vulnerable Road User report requirements; that report will need to be completed by NYSDOT by November 2023. .*



#### **VIII. Adjourn**

*Next meeting will be held 2/6/23.*