Talbot County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Nov. 24, 2026, at 7:30 a.m.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Ms. Grant called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

Members Present: Howard Callahan, Steve Cohoon, Lt. James (J.R.) Dobson, Ava Ellett, Heather Grant, Ed Heikes Sr., Jessica Lister, Brian Naranjo, Phil Starkey

Members Absent: Bob Burgner, Bob DeGour, Mike Owens

County Council Liaison: Pete Lesher

Staff: Josh Elliott, Emily Gilmer, Kristen Goller, Sarah Kilmon, Stephanie Mervine, and Clay Stamp

Guests: Ted Bautz, Andrew Burnish, Mike Murtagh, Richie Stever

II. Approval of Minutes – July 28, 2026

Minutes from the previous meeting were distributed via hard copy. Mr. Naranjo made a motion to approve the minutes without edits, which was seconded by Ms. Lister. The minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Guest Speaker – Richie Stever, VP of Real Estate & Construction, University of Maryland Medical System

Mr. Stever provided a comprehensive update on the Shore Regional Medical Center, a 383,000 square foot replacement hospital for the existing facility in downtown Easton. The project is approximately halfway through construction in terms of cost and time, with a target grand opening in fall 2028. Mr. Stever provided details on the shared use path and connections to the Talbot County Community Center. The hospital site includes an eight-foot shared-use path designed to accommodate both pedestrians and bicyclists alongside the roadway.

Discussions occurred regarding the integration of campus walking paths with external trails to create better connectivity for long-distance users.

Members noted that while development on Longwoods Road falls under Easton's jurisdiction, State Highway can require developers to extend trails during permit processes. Mr. Stamp shared that the North Easton Master Plan, a joint planning effort between the county and town would address this as well, if the project proceeds.

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III. Talbot County Council Communication Discussion

Ms. Grant and Mr. Stamp opened a discussion on how this advisory body can and should communicate with the County Council regarding bicycle and pedestrian issues. There was a focus on clarifying the committee's role as an inward-facing advisory body rather than an external advocacy group.

Mr. Lesher serves as the direct liaison to the County Council. He will be cognizant of discussions that could be relevant to the committee and bring them before the group. Ms. Grant expressed interest in reviewing the upcoming annual list of transportation priorities developed for the state. Mr. Elliott recommended this as an agenda item for the next meeting. He suggested the committee send representation to the next Public Works Advisory Board meeting. He will also be reaching out to town managers to determine their priorities, and this may be a possible place to engage the commission, since towns are represented.

IV. Engage – Talbot County Website & Talbot SPOT

Mr. Burnish from Maryland Department of Transportation and a Talbot Thrive member presented the Talbot Spot dashboard, a tool designed to catalog Maryland State Police crash data specifically for Talbot County. The dashboard allows users to filter crashes by year, type, day of week, or specific non-motorist involvement such as pedestrians or bicyclists. Users can interact with digital maps showing road-separated bike routes and Maryland's Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) scoring for all roads in the state.

The dashboard includes an orange "place a hotspot" button that allows citizens to report dangerous intersections or problematic driving behaviors directly onto the map. Committee members raised concerns about potential anonymity issues or "graffiti" where individuals might submit multiple fake reports without accountability. To address these concerns, it was agreed that basic data would be added to the submission form to allow BPAC members to connect if questions arise. The data committee will also audit submissions monthly.

Ms. Kilmon, the Talbot County Public Information Officer, was on hand to discuss the roll-out. A new project page for Talbot Spot is currently in draft form on the Engage platform and will serve as a landing spot for public information and data dashboards. Ms. Kilmon noted that the county can support public rollouts through standard press releases and social media rather than requiring separate branding. Ms. Grant will share the link with the committee for review before it goes live. Mr. Stamp will include the initiative in his Dec. 8 administrative meeting with council. Ms. Grant noted that a larger presentation should be planned for council in January, which will meet the bylaws requirement of an annual presentation.

V. Safe Streets & Roads for All Grant

Ms. Goller reported that the grant agreement has been approved and signed by the County Manager. The county is awaiting a fully executed agreement, which should be

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arriving any day. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has not yet been drafted to ensure all spending remains eligible for grant funding. This is a long-term project expected to last 36 months from the date of execution.

Current volunteers on the grant committee include Heather Grant, Jessica Lister, Pete Lesher, Kristen Goller, Mike Murtagh, Jean Weisman, Steve Cohoon, Emily Gilmer. Anyone interested is welcome to join.

VI. Comments from the Board

Mr. Lesher briefed the group on his recent invitation to a state safety task force that encourages local jurisdictions to adopt plans aligned with Vision Zero goals. State funding is being made available to support these efforts.

On Dec. 15 from 5-7 p.m. the Maryland Department of Transportation is hosting an open house at the Talbot County Community Center. The public is invited to provide feedback on the proposed Frederick Douglass Rail Trail Project's 15% design.

A question was raised regarding the status of the county's new comprehensive plan. While the project has been paused until the new council is sworn in, members were encouraged to review and comment on the draft transportation chapter.

VII. Comments from the Public

N/A

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Naranjo made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Lt. Dobson and approved unanimously at 8:38 a.m.

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