

Vision Zero Council

9.19.23 Meeting Agenda

10:00a.m. - 12:00p.m.

This will be a virtual public meeting hosted on zoom. The registration link can be [found here](#)

Council Members Present: Garret Eucalitto, **John Acampora** , Jackie McMahon, Jonathon Slifka, Susan Logan, Benjamin Arsenault, Shaun Formica, Eileen McMurrer

Council Members Absent: State Department of Education (**Keith M. Norton**)?

Guest Speakers:

- a. Robert Strassburger
- b. Mark Carlino

Other Attendees: Aaron Swanson, Alex Slatky, Charles Harlow, Eileen McMurrer, Natasha Fatu, Jackie McMahon, Keith Norton, Amy Watkins, Katie Hedberg, Remi Fournier, Robert Strassurger, Terri Thompson,, Benjamin Arsenault, Cathy Fletcher, Andrea Merejo, Douglas Hausladen, Bryan Pavlik, Phyllis DiFiore, Flavia Pereira, Craig Yannes, Eytayo Olaleye, Laure McElwee, Kate Rozen, Gary Turco, Joe Balskus, Roger Krahn, Aimee Berge-Girvalo, Mitch Bolinsky, Jay Strange, Jennifer Carrier, Jack Dougherty, Mike Allen, Adam Weber, Tracy Noble, Howard Weissberg, Luke Buttenwieser, The Connecticut Network, Patrick Mellon, John Harkins, Matthew Blume, Kevin Ellis, Laura Baum, Kristen Levesque, Michael Zacchera, Erika Lindeberg, Pat Padlo, Aaron Goode.

I. Committee Chair Welcome and Introductions

- a. New Council Member: (**Benjamin Arsenault**) from Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

II. Adoption of 6/6/23 Meeting Minutes

- a. No abstentions

III. Driver Alcohol Detection System for Safety (DADSS) Presentation

- a. Robert Strassburger-Automotive Coalition for Traffic Safety, Inc. President & CEO
 - 1. DADSS Program Elements
 - 2. DADSS Technologies
 - 3. Development Timeline
 - 4. Deployment Timeline
 - 5. Technology Transfer
 - 6. U.S. Policy Driver
 - 7. Estimated Safety Benefits
 - 8. Driven to Protect Initiative

9. Safety Technology Deployment
10. Seat Belt Interlock
11. Implementation Checklist

b. Questions from Council

Question: Jackie McMahon: I'm curious about the touch technology and whether there's been any consideration in incorporating that into some chemical testing in the enforcement realm. So right now, we use breath test instruments at our police departments and things like that. Is there any effort in that in that realm to incorporate this into DUI enforcement actions and maybe getting that into the public sphere faster than the 2027 timetable?

Answer: Robert Strassburger: The answer is no because our focus is on completing development of the technology for vehicle integration. However, we do recognize that what we are developing has other applications as you point out and so I can see that happening after or and I don't think it would be that difficult to generate, a field device, for example. In fact, I would say that field device might not look that different from our own laboratory instruments that we're using on the bench at the moment. But no, our focus at the moment is on the completing the technology for vehicle integration. But we do understand it's likely there's a good possibility to be used in other in other ways. I might also say that in in our instance, the measurements that we're making ultimately are going to be linkable to the gold standard, which is the blood draw. Because we are doing that human subject testing both in a clinical setting and in the field.

Question: Commissioner Garret Eucalitto: So, tying on to what Jackie brought up, maybe this is taking it beyond where you're working right now. When I look at a lot of what's happening on the roadways, a narrow subset, when I look at wrong way drivers that kill people, nearly a hundred percent of them are impaired, and the vast majority of them are impaired by alcohol. And then probably 50% of them also have other substances in their system. So, the other substances, this is targeting alcohol, which is a huge driver of the impairment on our roadways, but we will also have drug impaired poly-use both alcohol and prescription drugs. So, do you foresee something once this technology advances for alcohol, is there that next step to be able to develop something that can detect drug impairment behind the wheel? Because essentially cars right now are essentially computers on wheels, right? So just wondering, and you may not be able to talk too much about it, but just wondering where you've seen the future.

Answer: Robert Strassburger: The short answer, Commissioner, is yes. As I mentioned, we're using a technique called infrared spectroscopy. In this case, we've chosen it to identify ethanol or ethanol-alcohol. But we can, and we've actually done a white paper on this, internal white paper, we could do the same thing, for example, for THC or any other substance of concern. We wouldn't be able to do it directly, additional research would be needed, for example. But what we have learned in terms of packaging the lasers, powering the lasers, managing the lasers, etc. would all port it over from alcohol to other substances. The research that we would have to do is looking at the recipe for the silicon wafer. Right now, we've got a recipe that we have for alcohol and it's probably as much art as science. So, we would have to develop a new recipe for THC, or a new recipe let's say fentanyl, for example. And that would be, an effort. I don't know, if I can say how long an effort would be, I would like to say that what we learned and how in the recipe development would also at least help and aid us in the recipe development for these other substances of concern. So, I am hopeful that once we're done with alcohol that we will be able to turn to THC, for example.

Question (38.50): Commissioner Garret Eucalitto: And then one final question I had was on your chart you showed I think, Jen? 3.3, which is a commercial use, is set up at 0.02 I think you showed Jen? 4.0 and beyond. It showed between 0.05 and 0.08. So, based on the advancement in the technology, you're able to scale or set the threshold sensitivity to whatever threshold that state is. So, UCONN's going to be playing Utah State, on this thirtieth, Utah is at point 0.05, Connecticut's at 0.08. Would the vehicles be able to be set at different VACs based on the state they're in?

Answer: Robert Strassburger: They will have to be and the answer to that is yes. How sophisticated that becomes, will ultimately be up to the vehicle manufacturer, but certainly vehicles delivered to Utah for sale would be set at point 0.05. Vehicles delivered to, Colorado's next door, would be point 0.08. But whether or not, the technology exists with geo-fencing or whatever, as you cross that state border, the system may be able to automatically adjust. But that's a level of complexity that, with the level of, also you introduce reliability concerns. So, I don't know what manufacturers will plan for in that case.

Question: Susan Logan: Good morning, I had a question about the technology itself, did you say that this is infrared radiation going to be used to detect ethanol-alcohol?

Answer: Robert Strassburger: Actually, infrared light. Take a flashlight and hold it up to your palm if you've ever done that I mean, we're shining light into your skin and the amount of light that is reflected back to our sensors is proportional to the amount of alcohol that's in your system. So, the infrared light is absorbed by the alcohol. So, if a certain amount is going in and we see a lesser amount coming back, then we know that that is proportional.

Question: Susan Logan: I was wondering, has there been any concern about any health impacts to having this technology very close to your face?

Answer: Robert Strassburger: Yeah. We are obviously using lasers, lasers are used to cut things, etc. So, we keep these at very, very low power where they won't do, less power than even the laser pointer, etc. So, we are mindful of that, and we will be keeping the power level such that it won't be harmful to anyone in terms of their eyes, burning of skin etc.

IV. DOT Update – Complete Streets Controlling Design Criteria

- a. Mark Carlino, Transportation Engineering Administrator, Office of Engineering
 - 1. Pedestrian Facilities
 - Applicability
 - Design Requirements
 - 2. Bicycle Facilities
 - Applicability
 - Design Criteria
 - 3. Transit Provisions
 - Requirements
 - Controlling Design Criteria
 - 4. Complete Streets Controlling Design Criteria (CSCDC) Justification Worksheets & Design Exceptions

b. Questions from Council

Question: Eileen McMurrer: A few questions came to my mind in terms of non-drivers. I have a friend who uses a significantly sized electric wheelchair, lots of parents with strollers, how would the specifications for either pedestrian lanes or cycling lanes affect those folks and how might, we, I'm on the education subcommittee as well, how might we share that message with others?

Answer: Mark Carlino: Yes, the provisions that we've come together are based upon some of the national standards that are out there for shared-use pass bicycle facilities and sidewalks. So, we think that we have accommodated all of the different non-driver types, vulnerable users that may be out there on the roadways. If you have anything specific, I would certainly be happy to talk with you offline, making sure that we do have a mechanism within the policy and the design criteria that we could accommodate all users. That's very much our goal here. And I can share my information offline so that we can talk.

Comment: Eileen McMurrer: Thank you, Mark. I've had an adult son who lives in Boston, and I see E-scooters and bicyclists and drivers sometimes meeting each other in unfortunate circumstances. So, it's a real concern.

Comment: Mark Carlino: And one of the things we've talked about, extensively with the commissioner, is the challenge of the speed at which people are driving our roadways and as in parallel, we are working on ways that we can start designing roadways that really kind of force drivers to drive slower speeds and more appropriate speeds through especially our areas where you're going to expect to see pedestrians and other users of the roadway. It's a big challenge out there.

V. P.A. 23-116 – Council Update

- a. Update on actions executive branch agencies are taking to meet newly legislated requirements set forth by Public Act 23-116:
“An Act Implementing the Recommendations of the Vision Zero Council”

VI. Sub-Committee Update:

- a. Sub-Committee Updates Presented to Council

Engineering:

- Roadway Departure Meeting held on July 19, 2023
- Whole Engineering Subcommittee Meeting held on August 22, 2023.

Enforcement:

- List of recommendations approved by Council and sent to Legislature but never made it thru the legislative session ending June 7, 2023
HB 5917 & SB 1082.

- New Proposals Discussed

- Aligning with Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Education:

- Coordination with Safe Routes to School Program

Equity:

- Automated Enforcement Guidelines
- Future Topics

- b. Council Guidance to Sub-Committees prior to next VZC meeting

VII. Next Meeting – dates and potential topics for future 2023/2024 VZC meetings

a. **December 5th, 2023, 10:00-12:00**

Questions from Council

Question: Susan Logan: I did have a question and it might relate more to, the health equity committee. I think there's an overlap between equity committee and education, with regard to, there's legislation in the vision, act, related to seat belt safety and using of seat belts, and I believe, DOT, it's going to be working with a number of different state agencies, DPH would be one of them to promote, seat belt safety, among vulnerable populations. I was wondering either among the health equity or the education committee if anybody has started to identify vulnerable populations because you know getting that work started using data to figure out where you should or where it's best to focus your efforts first.

Answer: Alec Slatky: I think this is the recommendation that came out of our subcommittee last year, so I think there were a few groups that we had identified at least in terms of seat belts in particular. Growing that the child passenger safety program, which I think is also important and I know there are separate efforts on that. I think generally we're looking at national data we have, we don't necessarily have Connecticut specific data, but generally we know black and Hispanic drivers tend to have lower rates of seat belt usage. That's from national data, we also know veterans are a group that often comes, lower rates of seat belt usage that some research has shown that and certainly a population that we want to support in everywhere possible and then pregnant women as well and I think that's also a good overlap from a health standpoint is there's a lot of potential issues in terms of understanding the appropriate way to wear a seat belt. So, there's some research that's out there that shows that they might be, less inclined to wear seat belts because of that. So, I'm happy to share all that information. With you in the whole council.

Comment: Susan Logan: Yeah, I was just curious, one of my colleagues who works for the office of Injury & Violence Prevention was mentioning that refugees may be a vulnerable population because they're coming from different countries. They're driving, they had different laws in their own countries, and you have people who either are not using seat belts or they're not using child safety seats. So, when they get stopped for, you know, traffic violation people are finding that they're not complying with seatbelt safety and so I think one of the things that, so we have two local health departments that are working with child car seat safety, but they are working with people who refugees and other people from countries who may or may not know our seatbelt safety laws and child car seat safety laws and the two local departments are New Haven and Meriden and they are providing translators to work with folks in the community around and the resettlement organizations too for people who are refugees who are being resettled into Connecticut. So, there is that going on, I am wondering too if that could be thought about or because there's those who come in and don't know the Connecticut laws.

Comment: Commissioner Garret Eucalitto: Good Point, I will ask our highway safety office (who) just got the approval of a triennial review from NHTSA, so now they are back to focusing on all the programs. So, I'll ask them to set up a meeting, invite folks from the equity and education subcommittee as well as DPH staff to attend to start to work on this. So, we'll get that kick started.

VIII. Public Comment Q & A

Question: On the complete streets criteria we will likely see many scenarios where a multi-lane road with no existing bike facilities is proposed to be resurfaced where the two options might then be to implement a road diet and add bike lanes or maintain the existing cross-section and request an exemption. Will these types of resurfacing projects now require a traffic analysis in these cases, or will the complete streets criteria supersede?

Answer: Commissioner Garret Eucalitto: So, we do have some exclusions in the design criteria for simple resurfacing, but when we go in with resurfacing, we generally will try to do things that don't require traffic analysis or any additional design such as widening the shoulders significantly and reducing the travel lanes. There are going to be things that we don't, this does not apply to the published version has some of the projects that it's not going to apply to, a simple resurfacing that's not going to require or we're not going to take any additional right-of-way. Those types of projects it may not necessarily apply to, but others the intent is to. We also have a large number of projects where we've conducted studies where we can do road diets. There's a large, vetted document with a lot of different portions of the state roadway system where engineering & construction has identified viable road diets that should be conducted and those will become projects. So, the goal is to advance this. How it rolls out, I think we're going to see in the next several months. It's going to be a learning curve for us as we go forward, since it just took effect. But that's the intent and Natasha our traffic safety engineer can probably weigh in, too.

Answer: Natasha Fatu: Thank you, Commissioner. Any roadway where we're making a change or revision, so road diet in this case, we would do a traffic analysis to ensure safety and efficiency of the roadway. So, we, outside of, a simple paving job where we're replacing what was existing, because there might be, a pothole or deteriorated roadway. Anything that we're making a lane revision, adding a bike lane, we would perform a traffic analysis for, and we do some of this during our corridor overlay projects as well. We do look at press requests from towns even for maintenance VIP projects, if there is an ability for us to make a revision to accommodate all roadway users, we do look at that and we also will perform a traffic analysis as necessary. So again, we're looking at that traffic analysis, we'll be pulling volume information and crash information as part of that review.

Comment: Commissioner Garret Eucalitto: I will add though onto that too. So, one thing that I've definitely been encouraging everyone, our department, is that municipalities should definitely be coming to us with requests for a safety improvements. Sometimes we have encountered situations where we wanted to install what we believe to be safety improvements; sidewalks, etc. and there's been objections at the municipal level to doing that, and so you know that's something that we want to try to a stem in the future.

IX. Adjourn

Closing remarks by Commissioner Garret Eucalitto