

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
May 13, 2013**

Voting Members

Tiffany Gee (Chair)	Chevy Chase Land Company
James Calderwood	Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers
Barbara Condos	Town of Somerset
Campbell Graeub	Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Cobey R. Kuff	WP Project Developer, LLC
Ann F. Lewis	Friendship Heights Village
John Mertens	Friendship Heights Village

Non-voting Members

Vacant	M-NCPPC
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TMD Staff

Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services
Jim Carlson	MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services
Sheila Wilson	MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services

Absent

Aurelio Baca-Asher	The JBG Companies
Sandra L. Brecher	MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services
-Representing DOT Director	
Joe Dixon	GEICO
Capt. David Falcinelli	Montgomery County Police
Kenneth Hartman	B-CC Services Center
Allison Lazare (Vice Chair)	United Educators Insurance
R. Mallory Starr	Somerset House Management Association

Guests

Phil Alperson	MC BRAC Coordinator
Bob Joiner	The Agenda News

Abbreviations:

BRAC = Base Realignment and Closure

M-NCPPC = Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

WRNMMC = Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

Items 1, 2 & 3 – Introductions/Minutes/Chair’s Comments: Chair **Tiffany Gee** called the meeting to order and members and guest introduced themselves. The minutes were tabled until the June meeting.

Ms. Gee reported that during the annual budget priorities meeting with **County Executive, Mr. Leggett** did ask some questions; however, he did not promise he could address the Committee’s concerns. **Jim Carlson** added that **Mr. Leggett** was not able to hear the Committee’s concerns in time for his annual budget submission to Council due to need to reschedule the meeting during inclement weather.

Item 4 – Update Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC): Montgomery County BRAC Coordinator, **Phil Alpers**, explained that in 2005 Congress passed the BRAC Base Realignment bill, which contained a series of actions to eliminate unnecessary and redundant military facilities. Part of the realignment bill was the relocation of the Walter Reed facility to Bethesda Naval Center and the name changed to Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). Patients have the option of going to medical centers in Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, or Bethesda; however, the Bethesda facility offers specialty care to severely injured military personnel.

Mr. Alpers cited areas of impact due to the increased numbers of employees and patients relocating from the old Walter Reed site:

- 8,000 employees before the move; increased to 11,000 after the move.
- 500,000 visits to Bethesda Medical Center have increased to 1 million.
- Pedestrians crossing Rockville Pike to the Medical center entrance increased from 3,000 to 7,000, causing pedestrian and traffic safety concerns.

Mr. Alpers said that, although the Bethesda relocation is smaller in scale than changes at Ft. Mead and Ft. Belvoir, the Walter Reed move has had a more significant economic and traffic impact. The Defense Department initially did not provide adequate funds for traffic mitigation due to the forecast of economic growth. However, the expected growth did not happen because, unlike other areas, Bethesda did not receive the benefits of growth from the influx of new employees – most already lived in the area. The argument was made to Congress that Walter Reed, because of its significance, deserved funding to properly manage the pending traffic crisis.

Montgomery County (MDOT) and the State came up with a three-pronged approach to mitigate traffic:

- Improve bike facilities in the area, building bike paths to create a network with the existing trails.
- Pedestrian safety improvements such as sidewalks.
- Road and transit projects are funded by Congress and the State; enhancements at four intersections to improve turns, pedestrian safety and traffic flow.

Mr. Alpers explained that the improvements won't eliminate traffic but will improve to better than failing. Other enhancements were:

- Intersection improvements & Rockville Pike and Cedar Lane, Rockville Pike & Jones Bridge, Old Georgetown Rd & West Cedar Lane.
- Enhancement at Connecticut & Jones Bridge – adding a dedicated lane southbound on Connecticut Avenue to Jones Bridge Road to ease traffic coming off the beltway.
- Widening Connecticut Avenue by narrowing the median and creating a new turn lane.

Mr. Alpers said that after the pedestrian and intersection improvements, the third prong of traffic management will be improvements to the Medical Center Metro station entrance; this will be done in conjunction with Rockville Pike & Jones Bridge Road intersection improvements. Medical Center improvements will help facilitate the pedestrian cross traffic across Rockville Pike. The project is fully funded by Congress and will consist of:

- An entrance on the Navy side – high speed elevators to the Metro will be operational by late 2016 or early 2017.
- Shallow pedestrian crossing tunnel with access to elevators and escalators.

A public meeting was held notifying construction contractors of the upcoming project and a “Request for Expression of Interest” was issued for ideas of how it would be constructed.

Mr. Alpers explained that it was due to the efforts of Maryland Congressional Delegation that funding was secured for all BRAC projects.

One quarter of the vacant property at the old Walter Reed site in the District will house an embassy complex.

Other areas of discussion were:

- A brief explanation of how the Department of Defense issued a list of recommendations to an independent Commission, which then presented a package to Congress for BRAC construction project without National-Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) input. However N-MCPPC standards are followed in establishing parking ratios.
- Parking ratios for the Bethesda campus are 1:3 for employees and 1:2 for NIH campus – ratios do not include patients or visitors. Although parking structures have been added, less parking is available due to ongoing BRAC construction.
- The military appropriated funds for transit projects via the Defense Access Road Program (DAR) – \$30 million for the Medical Center Metro project. The DAR Program provides the legal means for Defense to pay its fair share for public highway improvements that are made necessary by sudden or unusual defense-generated impacts.
- Description of BRAC bike paths – shared use paths separate from traffic.

Barbra Condos commented that the traffic has a significant adverse economic impact due to the fact that many people in the area do not travel after 3 pm because of the traffic on Wisconsin Avenue.

Mr. Alperson commented that the Navy is mandated by law to provide the appropriate facilities for personnel and the community. Information regarding BRAC and projects can be found on the website www.montgomerycountymd.gov/BRAC . The community group on BRAC meets quarterly.

Item 5 – Member Terms Update: **Mr. Carlson** reviewed the upcoming term expirations:

- **Ann Lewis:** Finishing term – replacement from Friendship Heights Village.
- **Barbra Condos:** Completed partial term; eligible for two additional full terms
- **Tiffany Gee:** First term ends 6/30; eligible for another term

Mr. Carlson said the new fiscal year starts July 1. Committee Chair and Vice Chair must be elected.

Item 6 – Commuter Services Update:

- Bike to Work Day May 17th –Wisconsin Place: food, music and prizes.
- Press release included in the meeting packet announcing the bikeshare contract with Alta Bicycle Share.
- Successful “Introduction to Telework” workshop on April 11th.

Adjourned

Next Meeting Date: June 11, 2013