

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
February 11, 2014**

Voting Members

James Calderwood	Chevy Chase Village Board of Managers
Barbara Condos	Town of Somerset
Joe Dixon	GEICO
Tiffany Gee (Chair)	Chevy Chase Land Company
Campbell Graeub	Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Christopher Itteilag	Somerset House Management Association
Cobey R. Kuff	WP Project Developer, LLC
Allison Lazare (Vice Chair)	United Educators Insurance
John Mertens	Friendship Heights Village
Rachael Schacherer	Friendship Heights Village

Non-voting Members

Sandra L. Brecher	MCDOT/Transit Services Division-Commuter Services
-Representing DOT Director	
Matthew Folden	M-NCPPC

TMD Staff

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

Absent

Chief John Fitzgerald	Chevy Chase Village Police
Kenneth Hartman	B-CC Services Center

Guests

Bob Joiner	The Agenda News
Tom Quinn	ANC 3E
Rick Siebert	MCDOT-Parking Management
Jeremy Souders	MCDOT-Parking Management

Abbreviations:

DDOT = District Dept. of Transportation
SHA = State Highway Administration
TMD = Transportation Management District

Item 1, 2 & 3 – Introductions / Minutes Review/ Chair’s Comments: Tiffany Gee called the meeting to order. Members and guests introduced themselves. Ms. Gee welcomed new member **Christopher Itteilag**, representing Somerset House Management Association; and noted new non-voting member **Chief John Fitzgerald**, Chevy Chase Village Police, who could not attend the meeting due to a conflict.

VOTE: The Committee voted to approve the October and November 2013 minutes. January minutes to be available at the March meeting.

Item 4 – Friendship Heights Parking Management: Ms. Gee introduced Chief **Rick Siebert** and Senior Planner **Jeremy Souders** of the Montgomery County Parking Management Division to discuss Montgomery County parking regulations, and gain the Committee’s perspective regarding the possible placement of parking meters on selected streets in Friendship Heights. **Mr. Siebert** explained that parking meters in Friendship Heights should start at \$2 per hour to be consistent with other Transportation Management Districts (TMD) such as Bethesda.

Mr. Siebert asked the Committee for input so Parking Management can advise Council on issues such as rates and duration, which will be set by Council Resolution for the Friendship Heights area.

Funding for the TMD comes from the County’s Mass Transit Fund which is used to pay operating and meter installation expenses. Revenues generated from the meters will be returned to the Transit Fund. **Mr. Siebert** believes parking would work in Friendship Heights due to the lack of free spaces in the surrounding areas, forcing people to use metered parking.

In response to the issue of lack of enforcement on Friendship Boulevard and Willard Avenue, **Mr. Siebert** explained that there would be designated enforcement officers patrolling the area, not just for expired meters, but also other violations such as exceeding parking duration, parking in No Parking zones or blocking driveways. Parking meters will generate stricter enforcement, increasing space turnover that in turn will support retail in the area. **Mr. Siebert** noted that the availability of free parking causes more congestion because people will not use the paid garages, but circulate the area looking for a free space.

In response to Committee concerns regarding the drop-offs medical buildings at 5454 and 5530 Wisconsin Avenue, **Mr. Souders** he would work with the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to do a detailed analysis before implementing parking changes.

Mr. Siebert explained that the County will fund the meter installations and channel revenue into the Mass Transit Fund. He said that he would take Committee concerns to the State and come back with specific parking meter recommendations such as duration, location, payment type, etc. Other areas of discussion included:

- Parking duration times based on type of business: for example, most retail is two hrs; theaters and dining can be four hours or longer
- Using the District vendor for the Pay By Phone system after the Maryland vendor 18-month contract expires
- A projected mid-summer meter installation date
- A brief discussion on the process of deciding parking zones and meters based on the surrounding traffic and business in the area; traffic engineers are also consulted – underground retail parking to conserve surface development space
- An explanation of how the State determines hours and restrictions when deciding to extend rush hours
- Concerns regarding ensuring that parking changes do not interfere with the aesthetics of the area and maintaining walkability
- An explanation of parking restriction types:
 - No Stopping – most severe restriction done for safety reasons
 - No Standing – driver must be in vehicle at all times, no pick-ups
 - No Parking Anytime – inactivity over 15 minutes can be ticketed
- All parking changes will work around other projects, such as Bus Rapid Transit and Bikeshare

VOTE: The Committee voted to approve study of parking on Willard Avenue and Friendship Blvd. The Committee voted to study installing parking on Wisconsin Avenue, in coordination with SHA.

In response to a question, **Mr. Siebert** said that Sommerset House cannot be included in the parking study because it is a private access road.

Mr. Siebert explained that long-term parking is any time that exceeds four hours, while anything below that is considered short-term; and all day parking has a maximum of 15 hours, which is the meters' maximum capacity.

Joe Dixon announced that GEICO has raised the employee parking rates from \$7 to \$25 to promote commuting. Currently, there are 400 more employees than available parking spaces.

Other areas of discussion:

- History of parking construction and how lack of land has driven building cost of surface parking lots; new parking is constructed underground with air rights developed
- Zoning changes to parking minimum and maximum in central business districts
- Urban planners are seeing a decline in car ownership, although condo owners rarely drive their cars but still keep a vehicle on hand; car ownership expectations need to be modified to address trends
- Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation (MCDOT) is shopping for a new carshare vendor – current vendor contract expiring soon (Car2Go)

Item 5 – FY15 Budget Priorities Request (Continued): **Mr. Carlson** said that the Committee can vote to approve the budget priorities basic concept then reprioritize the list. The changes and suggestions discussed were:

- Redeveloping of Westbard Shopping Center – although outside of the TMD, it is expected to have an impact on traffic:
 - Park and Planning is monitoring the project and may propose increasing bus service to the area – some believe the current bus service is slow
- Increasing funding to Ride On bus routes, especially Rt 23 that serves Sibley Hospital
- Discussion of strobe lighting at crosswalks and adding language to find alternative technology that is inexpensive and easy to maintain
- Physical improvements such as signing and lighting, especially inside Friendship Heights Metro
- Utilizing 311 for crosswalk maintenance
- Improving bike safety by installing continuous bike lanes – some members expressed safety concerns of bike lanes that combine with traffic lanes

Mr. Carlson will circulate the budget priority list to members by email for further comment.

Item 6 – Updates:

- “Lunch and Learn” session with Metro – Thursday, February 13, 2014 at the Silver Spring Civic Center. Update on SmartBenefits changes and the Silver Line
- Ride On Youth Cruiser passes are now on SmarTrip – no longer using plastic cards

Item 7 – Around the Room – Campbell Graeb noted that the District Dept. of Transportation (DDOT) needs to make major improvements on Western Avenue. **Tom Quinn**, ANC 3E, explained that underground utility work (Pepco) is currently delaying the repaving project.

Meeting Adjourned