

## **BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY – FEBRUARY 19, 2008**

- John Carman called the Committee to order at 7:30 p.m.
- Phil Alperson provided the following updates:
  - Comments on the NNMC DEIS were submitted by numerous State and County agencies and community groups. All comments mentioned below are on the BRAC web site, on the Walter Reed/EIS Page.
    - Included in the County's official submission, signed by County Executive Leggett and Council President Knapp, were comments from:
      - DPWT
      - County Planning Board staff
      - Dept. of Environmental Protection
      - County Fire and Rescue Service
      - Dept. of Permitting Services
      - BRAC Committee
      - Councilmember Roger Berliner
    - The following comments on the Draft E.I.S. were submitted by Maryland State agencies:
      - Maryland Dept. of Planning Clearinghouse. This summarizes comments from Maryland state government agencies, including:
      - Maryland Dept. of Transportation (MDOT)
      - Maryland Historical Trust
      - MD Dept. of Business & Economic Development, Office of Military and Federal Affairs
      - MD Dept. of the Environment
      - MD Dept. of Natural Resources
      - Maryland State Police
    - The following comments were submitted by organizations in Montgomery County. They are included on the County's BRAC web site but do not represent the policies of Montgomery County Government:
      - National Institutes of Health (NIH)
      - Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce
      - Congressman Chris Van Hollen
      - Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad, Inc.
      - Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Chevy Chase MD
      - East Bethesda Citizens Association
      - Locust Hill Citizens Association, Bethesda MD
      - Maplewood Citizens Association, Bethesda MD
      - Parkwood Residents Association, Kensington MD

- Town of Chevy Chase
  - Comments Submitted by Individual BIC Members
- Rear Admiral Jeffries, NNMC Base Commander, has requested a meeting with County Executive Leggett, which may take place within the next week or so if they can coordinate their busy schedules. The intent of the meeting is to initiate ongoing dialogue between NNMC and County leaders.
  - The General Assembly is considering SB 206, the BRAC Community Enhancement Act. This bill sets forth a process to establish BRAC Revitalization Zones. Initially designed to encourage BRAC-related commercial and housing development in depressed areas of Baltimore City, the bill has been expanded to encourage BRAC-related transit-oriented development in communities throughout the state. BRAC Zones would be compact neighborhoods near MARC, Metro, or Baltimore Light Rail stations. While NNMC BRAC does not fit the intended growth model of this bill – no large influx of families or off-campus personnel – NNMC BRAC does have a different kind of growth issue that Montgomery County may try to address: affordable housing for NNMC outpatients and families. We will explore ways to encourage MD DBED to consider certain communities along the Red Line or MARC line for BRAC Zone designation.
  - OEA (DOD Office of Economic Adjustment) is coordinating with BRAC growth communities, to present their infrastructure needs to DOD’s Economic Adjustment Committee and to OMB to help them understand the funding needs faced by these communities.
  - DAR funding. Since the Navy is considering the many comments received on the Draft EIS, they cannot say much now about their reactions to the County’s case in favor of DAR funding for BRAC-impacted roadways near NNMC. However, the County’s arguments about qualifying NNMC BRAC for DAR funding have gotten the Navy’s attention and may be addressed in the Final EIS.
  - The annual Congressional begathon was held two weeks ago. About two dozen Montgomery County agency heads and other officials, led by CAO Tim Firestine, trekked to Capitol Hill to meet with key staffers from the offices of our Congressional delegation, including Sens. Mikulski and Cardin and Reps. Van Hollen, Wynn, Ruppertsberger, Hoyer and Bartlett. BRAC concerns were reasserted, with an emphasis to support our DAR request and future funding requests in other legislation.
  - Recent Congressional hearings on military and veterans’ health care have highlighted the need for greater coordination and a greater focus on mental health issues. This relates very much to Walter Reed/Bethesda because of the increased focus on TBI. Hearing testimony is on the web site’s Walter Reed/EIS Page.

- Phil finally moved into his actual office after eight months working out of cardboard boxes.
- Captain Malanoski and Ollie Oliveria reported that approximately 1200 comments on the Draft EIS have been received. The Navy is preparing a draft version of the Final EIS. The Navy expects to publish the Final EIS in early April, followed 30 days later by the Record of Decision (ROD). There will be no construction until the ROD is signed, but the Navy expects to announce the letting of a construction contract very soon so that the contractor can begin the permitting process. With the Draft EIS behind him and construction expected to begin later this spring, Admiral Jeffries has commenced a community outreach effort, which will include meetings with elected officials and members of the community. The DAR issue is under consideration by Navy and DOD officials, but the Navy is not able to comment on the County's position at this time.
- John solicited updates from other members of the BRAC Committee. None were offered.
- Robin McElhenny from WMATA gave an update on the study for potential BRAC-related enhancements to the Medical Center Metro station. Proposals include an entrance to the station on the east side of MD 355 or a pedestrian tunnel to gain access to the existing west side entrance. Also being considered are enhanced bus and kiss-and-ride access and other pedestrian improvements. The current study is funded but any long-term construction or physical improvements lack funding. Three years is the best-case scenario for completion of this project, assuming it is funded. Concerns were raised by the Committee about the distance of the Metro station from the medical center complex; Capt. Malanoski said that NNMC shares that concern and is already looking at ways to improve access from the Metro station to the complex. Other pedestrian safety matters were discussed, including concerns about the redundancy and cost of proposals for underground connections relating to homeland security or emergency preparedness.
- MDOT and SHA representatives gave an update on the \$45 million included in the State's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) and the \$1.97 million FY2008 Congressional earmark for a BRAC-related transportation study along MD 355. Representing MDOT were: Andy Scott (Special Asst. to the Secretary for Economic Development), Dennis Yoder from SHA, and Alan Straus, a consultant to SHA. MDOT intends to apply the combined \$47 million for design, engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of improvements to the four major intersections serving NNMC, with the goal of completing the project by the statutory September 2011 BRAC implementation deadline. The intersections are MD 355 @ Cedar Lane, MD 187 @ Cedar Lane, MD 355 @ Jones Bridge Road, and MD 185 @ Jones Bridge Road. The funds are for intersection improvements, including possible new turn or through lanes at the intersections but are not designated for road widening, but widening will be studied. Whether the \$47 million will be sufficient to fully fund this project through completion will become clearer as design and engineering progresses.

Questions were raised why the intersections at the two NNMC gates along MD 355 are

not included in this upgrade project; MDOT said the Navy may make changes at the gates that would determine whether it would be necessary for MDOT to make improvements on MD 355 at those points. They emphasized the need to complete this project by 2011, and that using the funds for long-term studies elsewhere would yield no positive outcome to prepare the community for the BRAC deadline when traffic will increase greatly.

On the matter of potential grade separated intersections, MDOT said that studies could show that the impacts of such projects could be too great and would not predict whether or where such construction would be used.

Concerns were raised by Committee members why the \$2 million Congressional earmark is not being used to study transportation impacts in a larger region of the MD 355 corridor. MDOT officials said that the earmarked funds were not specified for a particular region and are being used appropriately. They indicated that some regional transportation studies are under way but are not programmed as part of the BRAC process.

Committee members raised the issue of a Beltway off-ramp to the NNMC campus. MDOT said that the NEPA process in this case would be very lengthy and that this kind of project could not be completed – if it can be done at all – in the short-term. MDOT believes their primary focus should be on the intersections to deal with increased traffic that will impact the area in 2011. MDOT said they are addressing feasibility questions relating to the off-ramp and may have more to say about this in the future, but a feasibility study is not currently under way.

Committee members expressed a strong concern that the community is not being sufficiently consulted on the design and execution of the MD 355 project, and that the community should be consulted on the design of any project affecting traffic in the region, including potential intersection improvements or road widening.

- Mohammad Siddique of DPWT discussed the County's FY2009-2013 Capital Improvements Program, and the potential for including as a CIP priority the completion of bicycle and pedestrian paths in the area of NNMC. The State is working on a conceptual design for road and gates at NNMC that could affect the design of sidewalks and paths. The County Executive can determine CIP priorities and request supplemental Council funding at any time, once the placement of paths becomes clearer. The Committee should make its pathway preferences known to DPWT. John Carman suggested that M-NCPPC should brief the Committee at the March meeting about paths and sidewalks in the NNMC area.
- John Carman solicited comments from the audience. None were offered.
- The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 18, at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center, at 7:30 p.m.

**Committee members in attendance, February 19, 2008:**

Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator  
Jon Alterman, Bethesda Parkview Citizens Assn.  
John Carman, Committee Chairman  
Chuck Floyd  
Leslie Weber for Brian Gragnolati, Suburban Hospital  
Victoria Hall for Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Assn.  
Ginanne Italiano, GBCCC  
Janet Maalouf, Maplewood Citizens Assn.  
Bill McGlockton, Stone Ridge School  
Deborah Michaels, Glenbrook Village Homeowners Assn.  
Andy Scott, MDOT  
Mohammad Siddique, DPWT  
Paul Thaler, Locust Hill Citizens Assn.  
Dan Wheeland, NIH

**Ex-officio:**

Sue Tabach (Sen. Mikulski)  
Joan Kleinman (Rep. Van Hollen)  
David "Ollie" Oliveria, NNMC  
Capt. Mike Malanoski, NNMC

**Other attendees**

Matt Buhts  
Anita Centofanti, Grosvenor Park  
Gerald Cichy, MD Transit Administration  
Dennis Coleman, NIH  
Carmelina Evans  
Leslie Hamm, BCC Services Center  
Mary H. Johnson, Tetra Tech  
Debbi Lindenberg  
Marilyn Mazuzan, Oakmont  
Robin McElhenny, WMATA  
George Milne, Stone Ridge School  
Patricia Myler, Stone Ridge School  
Ginny Radersdorf, NNMC  
Mal Rivkin  
Amy Rohlfs, NNMC  
Alan Straus, Consultant to MD SHA  
Tom Street, Office of the Montgomery County Executive  
Anthony T. (sp?)  
Julie Woepke, MD DBED Military Affairs  
Louis Yanni  
Dennis Yoder, SHA