

BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY – February 21, 2012

- **Ilaya Hopkins called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.**
 - **Ilaya outlined the goals and objectives of the “next generation” of the BIC.** As discussed at BIC meetings last year, the mission under which the BIC was established in 2007 has been completed now that BRAC-related transportation projects have been identified and funded. Consequently, the BIC is being reconstituted under the auspices of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center – which is the County Executive’s community presence – as an adjunct to the Western Montgomery Citizens Advisory Board (WMCAB). Ilaya Hopkins, a WMCAB member, has agreed to serve as BIC Chair for one year.
 - **BIC members in attendance and those in the audience introduced themselves.** Christopher Bishop announced he was a new SHA representative from the local District 3 office and encouraged BIC members to communicate any concerns to him about the state projects that are about to begin construction.
- **Phil Alperson, the County’s BRAC Coordinator, provided the following updates:**
 - **Phil noted that every item discussed at the BIC meetings has loads of background material on the web site, listed under today’s meeting on the “Get Involved” Page:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brcmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/brac/get_involved.asp
 - **Phil said that at every BIC meeting he reminds everyone that the “Get Involved” Page’s chronological report of BIC meetings includes the following resource materials:**
 - **The “Tiers and Phases” of BRAC Projects** based on funding is also posted on the web site. The Tiers and Phases were developed by MDOT and MCDOT with input from the BIC in October 2009, and the summary text has been revised through September 19, 2011.
 - **Matrix developed by MDOT-MCDOT, October 2009:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/bracp_rojects-tiers-100609.pdf
 - **Summary of Tiers & Phases, updated September 19, 2011:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/tiersp_hases-summary-revised-091911.pdf
 - **Printable Timeline: Anticipated Construction-Related Traffic Disruptions in Bethesda (as of 2-9-12):**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/disruptionstimeline-041111.pdf>

- **Summary of BRAC Transportation Projects and Commuting Options**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/projects_glance.asp
- **7-26-11 State Highway Administration update on the Intersections Improvement project, with the potential availability of OEA funding**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/mcdot-sha_intersectionsschedule-oea_fundingupdate-072611.pdf
- **The BRAC Mobility Projects Matrix.** It has been updated through November 2, 2011 and reflects the multi-modal approach the County, State and other stakeholders are taking to address the transportation impacts of BRAC in Bethesda – transit improvements, pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, intersection upgrades, transportation demand management, etc.
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/transpo_project_matrix-110211.pdf
- **2-16-12 Bethesda Patch: Rockville Pike Traffic Light To Operate 30 Extra Minutes -- The State Highway Administration is attempting to alleviate backups on Walter Reed Bethesda's campus**
<http://bethesda.patch.com/articles/rockville-pike-traffic-light-to-operate-30-extra-minutes>
- **1-31-12 SHA Update on operations of traffic signal on Rockville Pike at North Wood Gate (2 pp)**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/sha-bic_northwoodsignalmonitoringupdate-013112.pdf
- **2-28-12 NIH to hold Public Scoping Meeting for an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) of a Master Plan Update (4 pp).** Phil urged everyone to attend this meeting which will provide information about projected growth – and more traffic – at the NIH campus. Phil Neuberg of NIH noted that the 6:00-7:00 hour would be an Open House and that remarks and public comment would begin at 7:00: The Scoping Meeting will be at 6001 Executive Blvd, Conf. Room D in North Bethesda: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/nih-masterplanupdatescopingmeet-022812.pdf>
- **2-27-12 WMATA to hold Open Forum & Public Hearing at BCC Services Center, 6:00 pm.** This meeting will give the public an opportunity to air concerns about WMATA operations and service.

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/wmata_bethesdapublichearing-022712.pdf

- **Construction Update in Downtown Bethesda:** The closure of Woodmont Avenue between Bethesda Avenue and Leland Street will begin in the near future and last approximately 20 months to accommodate the construction of a new mixed use development. Construction should last about three years overall.
 - **10-24-11 Washington Post: Downtown Bethesda braces for 3 years of tighter parking and more traffic**
http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/commuting/downtown-bethesda-braces-for-3-years-of-tighter-parking-and-more-traffic/2011/10/18/gIQAohHeAM_story.html
- **2-16-12 Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation: Roadwork planned near Medical Center in Bethesda/North Chevy Chase in connection with BRAC.** Construction will begin soon at two of the four intersections that will be improved to mitigate BRAC-related traffic. There will be occasional off-peak lane closures
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/apps/dot/pressrelease/PR_details.asp?PrID=8261
- **2-2-12 Gazette.Net: Lawmakers seek road improvement delays near Walter Reed -- Representatives: Connecticut Avenue upgrade needs more studying**
<http://www.gazette.net/article/20120202/NEWS/702029770/1124/lawmakers-seek-road-improvement-delays-near-walter-reed&template=gazette>
 - **District 18 Delegate Al Carr, who made time from the ongoing legislative session in Annapolis, addressed the BIC about the following letter.** He said that the letter failed to convey its main intent, to await new Navy traffic studies to see if BRAC-related construction could be avoided which otherwise would highly impact some families on Connecticut Avenue. He noted that this “Tier One” project is state-funded, so the District 18 Delegation has a specific interest in its progress. He noted that transit ridership has increased substantially and single occupancy vehicle use has decreased sharply by Navy personnel. The Delegation believes it would be prudent to postpone construction until new post-BRAC traffic data is made available by the Navy in the near future. He said he had received no official response from MDOT or SHA on the request to postpone, but informally has been informed there would be no postponement. While Delegate Carr’s willingness to come to the BIC today was appreciated, members of the BIC questioned why a letter urging postponement of the project was sent without first consulting federal or local officials or the BIC who have collaborated on this project for five years. It was also noted that this project is just one of many road, transit, pedestrian, bike, and TDM projects that work in concert to relieve BRAC-related congestion, and that tinkering with one project could jeopardize the

overall plan. In particular, it was noted that postponing this particular project along southbound Connecticut Avenue would impact subsequent federally-funded projects at the intersection.

- **1-20-12 Letter from District 18 Delegation to MDOT requesting postponement of intersection project at Connecticut Ave (MD 185)/Jones Bridge Road (2 pp)**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/intersections-185jbr-dist18deldelay-012012.pdf>
 - **1-30-12 Response from County Executive Leggett to District 18 Delegation (2 pp)**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/intersections-185jbr-dist18deldelay-cex_response-013012.pdf
- **Updates from Naval Support Activity-Bethesda (NSAB).**
 - **Captain Kass, NSAB Commander, introduced Joseph Macri as NSAB's new Public Information Officer.**
 - **Jeff Miller gave an update on upgrades to the Navy Gates on Rockville Pike and Jones Bridge Road.** He reported that construction is complete at Gates 1, 2 and 5 (North Wood, South Wood, and University). Gate 4 (Grier/Lodge) is now closed for construction through June, at which time Gate 4 (Exchange) will close. All gates should be completely upgraded and open by December.
 - **Jeff gave a preliminary report on transportation patterns by Navy personnel since BRAC was implemented last September.** These figures will be updated in the forthcoming EIS, which may be available in approx. two months. He noted that these figures apply only to Navy personnel, but not to visits to the Navy campus which the BRAC EIS anticipated would double from 500,000 to one million per year. The figures compare pre-BRAC traffic (2007) versus post-BRAC traffic (late 2011):
 - Transit Use: 11% - 44%
 - Bus ridership: <1% - 18%
 - Rail ridership: 11% - 26%
 - SOV (Single Occupancy Vehicle): 72% - 40%
 - Walk/Bike/Drop-Off: 2% - 5%
 - Registered Carpools: 100 - 450
 - **Jeff Miller noted that the new Draft EIS is expected to be released in about two months, but that the "new post-BRAC normal" is about 90% in place.** He said the new perimeter road, which is visible from the Beltway, is in place and

working well to provide access to the University gate. He expected the traffic data to reflect less traffic than was anticipated in pre-BRAC analyses.

- **Captain Kass reported that Operation Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield will take place on campus Friday, March 23.** This is an Anti Terrorism Force Protection exercise simulating an emergency situation on campus that will have significant impacts on area traffic. Captain Kass requested that this information be widely shared so the public can know there is no actual emergency but to be prepared to traffic disruptions.
 - **2-23-12 Walter Reed NMMC Journal: Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield 2012: We Train To Protect --** The public also may see an increase in security service personnel and traffic around installations. While residents should remain vigilant for suspicious activity, they should not interpret the additional activity as more than a routine military exercise
<http://www.dcmilitary.com/article/20120216/NEWS11/702169961/solid-curtain-citadel-shield-2012-we-train-to-protect>
- **Captain Kass reported that some personnel with the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region (JTF CapMed) currently located at NSAB may locate to the Dalecarlia campus that was vacated under BRAC by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency on MacArthur Boulevard in the Glen Echo area of Bethesda.** Capt. Kass noted this is part of an overall effort to consolidate Military Health System offices in the Washington area and is still being developed, so it is not known now how many NSAB personnel might be affected.
- **Ken Strickland gave updates from the Chevy Chase Valley community.**
 - **Ken cited an unintended consequence of the BRAC intersections improvement projects, relating to the taking of property under eminent domain.** He said that when property owners receive compensation from the State for property that has been taken against their wishes under eminent domain, that compensation is considered income subject to federal and state tax. Essentially, these property owners are hit twice – first by the loss of their property and then by being taxed for it. State Senator Rich Madaleno is working with other members of the Maryland General Assembly to pass SB 807, “Income Tax - Subtraction Modification - Land Acquisition for Transportation-Related Projects.” Ken urged everyone to support this bill allowing a subtraction modification under the Maryland income tax for a payment made by the State Highway Administration to an individual for the acquisition of a portion of the individual's property for use in transportation-related projects; applying the Act to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2011. <http://mlis.state.md.us/2012rs/billfile/sb0807.htm>

- **Ken noted his community’s concern about Montgomery County Public School’s consideration of a new Middle School at North Chevy Chase Park, citing traffic and safety concerns.** He said a site selection committee was scheduled to make a recommendation the following evening, with NCCP and Rock Creek Hills Park in Kensington being the main sites under consideration.
- **Richard Levine gave updates from the Locust Hill community, which has significant concerns about Phase 4 of the MD 355/Cedar Lane intersection improvements.** This project would add a new northbound lane from Cedar Lane to Locust Hill Avenue, and could entail SHA claiming its Right-of-Way on the access road that parallels MD 355, and possibly as much as four feet of ROW adjacent to the access road. SHA has noted that the access road will remain, but might need to be shifted four feet onto the SHA ROW. Locust Hill is also concerned about the possible addition of a sidewalk at that site, which could infringe on the neighborhood. The community has formed a Transportation Committee and plans to meet with SHA once it reviews new post-BRAC traffic data being compiled by the Navy as part of its ongoing EIS for new campus construction.
 - **12-14-11 (scroll down) Washington Examiner: Rockville Pike merge lane needed to handle BRAC traffic -- Letter to the Editor from Phil Alperon, Montgomery County BRAC Coordinator**
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/2011/12/letters-editor-dec-14-2011/151101>
 - **12-8-11 Washington Examiner: Examiner Local Editorial -- "Road to Nowhere" planned for Montgomery County**
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/unknown/2011/12/examiner-local-editorial-road-nowhere-planned-montgomery-county/156715>
- **Ilaya Hopkins initiated a discussion about what the BRAC Implementation Committee had accomplished between 2007 and 2011 and what it wanted to accomplish going forward.**
 - **She presented a “BRAC in Bethesda Timeline” on Transportation Infrastructure and Funding Highlights for the WRNMMC Surrounding Area.** The Timeline highlighted the many steps that needed to be taken to identify BRAC impacts, projects to mitigate the impacts, and funding to implement the projects.
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/bic-brac_timeline_highlights-022112.pdf
 - **She asked the Committee to consider how the BIC should operate now, what it wanted to achieve and how it could measure its success.** The consensus was that the Committee should closely monitor the implementation of BRAC projects, as the County Executive has suggested, and meet on a regular basis to keep lines of communication going between government and community stakeholders. The Committee decided to meet every other month for the time being, with an eye

towards meeting quarterly. It was suggested that the BIC be used as a conduit to communities on upcoming traffic disruptions and other breaking news, and that the BIC members should be asked to provide agenda items for upcoming meetings. Phil Alperson noted that agency representatives may not attend every meeting but wanted very much to make presentations when appropriate information becomes available. Phil anticipated they would provide written updates when they could not attend BIC meetings. Phil reminded the BIC that the agencies are constantly working together on BRAC projects and that Phil would be able to share information between the BIC and the agencies.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 7:30 p.m., at the BCC Regional Services Center.**

Committee members in attendance, February 21, 2012:

Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator

Christopher Bishop, Maryland State Highway Administration

Kristen Blackmon for Dave Dabney, Bethesda Urban Partnership

Ilaya Hopkins, Western Montgomery Citizens Advisory Board and Chair, BRAC
Implementation Committee

Leslie Weber for Brian Gragnolati, Suburban Hospital

Neil Greene, Maplewood Citizens Association

Ginanne Italiano, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce

Rose Krasnow, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (MNCPPC)

Ed Krauze, Bethesda Parkview Citizens Association

Richard Levine, Locust Hill Citizens Association

Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont

Avice Meehan, Howard Hughes Medical Institute

Andrew Polott for Debbie Michaels, Glenbrook Village Homeowners Association

Patrick O'Neil, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce

Ken Strickland, Chevy Chase Valley

Richard Vogel, Stone Ridge School

Phil Neuberg for Dan Wheeland, National Institutes of Health

Ex-officio:

Ken Reichard (Senator Ben Cardin)

Joan Kleinman (Rep. Chris Van Hollen)

Susan Buffone (Council Member Roger Berliner)

Captain Fritz Kass, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda

Jeff Miller, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda

Joseph Macri, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda

Other Attendees

Jessica Ablamsky, Gazette Newspapers

Delegate Al Carr, District 18

Dawn Chaikin, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Carl Gentilcore, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Greg Humes, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association
Irene Kondolis, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Karen Kuker-Kihl, The Promenade
Susan Mathias
Jeanette Musil, DoD Office of Economic Adjustment
Tom Robertson, Bethesda Urban Partnership
Paul Seder
Dan & Linda Willard, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Julie Woepke, Maryland Dept. of Business & Economic Development