

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY / NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BETHESDA
BRAC INTEGRATION COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY – SEPTEMBER 16, 2014**

- **Ilaya Hopkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.**
 - Ilaya noted that the BIC is being used by the County as a model to gain community input on other matters, such as the design of the proposed county-wide BRT system and construction of the Purple Line. Phil described an ongoing EPA issue at the Fort Detrick/Forest Glen Army Annex in Silver Spring, where a committee similar in composition to the BIC, known as the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB), was established by the Annex and is co-chaired by an Army official and a local community leader. Nancy Abeles and Richard Levine recounted their discussions with MCDOT officials about the formation of citizen advisory groups similar to the BIC for the proposed BRT corridors.

- **Updates from Phil Alperson, Montgomery County Military Installations (BRAC) Coordinator:**
 - **Phil noted that matters discussed at the BIC meetings have chronological background material on the web site, listed under today’s meeting on the “Get Involved” Page:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/brac/get_involved.asp
 - **Printable Timeline: Anticipated Construction-Related Traffic Disruptions in Bethesda:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brac/resources/files/brac_projects_timeline.pdf
 - **BRAC Transportation Projects and Commuting Options:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/projects_glance.asp
 - **Phil reminded the Committee to get traffic and BRAC news and information first by following Montgomery County BRAC on Twitter @BracMoCoMD .**
 - **Cedar Lane:** Kudos to SHA for conducting the May 20 Public Informational Meeting on the impending summer closure of Cedar Lane, and on re-opening Cedar Lane more than two weeks ahead of schedule. Special thanks to the neighbors (particularly Locust Hill and Parkview) for their patience and cooperation during the closure and ongoing construction.
 - **RideOn Bus 34 continues to detour around Cedar Lane in the eastbound direction during current construction.** The regular route will be restored when SHA can re-open all eastbound lanes.

- **State Highway Administration Project web site.** SHA has established a web site that should be the go-to source to get information or relay questions or comments to SHA on the BRAC-related intersection projects:
 - www.roads.maryland.gov
 - Select “Projects and Studies” from left-column menu
 - Scroll Down and select “SHA Projects Page”
 - Scroll way down. Select “Montgomery County” from “Select a County” drop down menu
 - Currently, there is one BRAC Interaction Project: #4 – MD 355/Cedar Lane.
 - Select that project. There are several tabs to look at:
 - Project
 - Schedule
 - Documents
 - Contacts
 - Maps
 - Media
 - Feedback
 - FAQ
 - **It is highly recommended that you use the FEEDBACK tab to ask questions or relay concerns about the project.**
 - **SHA will add similar pages for the projects at Connecticut avenue/Jones Bridge Road and at West Cedar Lane/Old Georgetown Road when construction commences.**
- **Platt Ridge Drive Extension Project.** On July 10, the Planning Board held a second Mandatory Referral Hearing to complete consideration of the Platt Ridge Extended project. The Board voted to approved the Project
 - **Planning Board staff memo recommending approval Platt Ridge Drive Extension Project:**
<http://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2014/documents/item8aMRPlattRidgeDriveExtended-MR20140122ndhearing.pdf>
 - **Project Background:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brac/projects/platt_ridge.html
- **Update on the MD 355 Multimodal Crossing Project at Medical Center Metro Station:**
 - Phil reported that MCDOT is wrapping up work with the many project stakeholders and is very close to publishing the Request for Proposals

(RFP) and transmitting it to the two design-build contractor finalists. The teams that will be sent the RFP are Clark Construction Group, LLC and Corman-Bradshaw Joint Venture.

- The RFP is a lengthy, technical document that describes project parameters and provides guidance to the prospective contractors. A contractor will be selected at a date TBD.
 - Its foundation is in the six-party Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was signed in June, 2013. Parties were:
 - MCDOT
 - Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)
 - DOD/U.S. Navy
 - WMATA
 - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
 - National Institutes of Health (NIH)
 - The RFP also includes the Tier Two elements of the SHA Intersection Project at MD 355 and Jones Bridge Road/Woodmont Avenue/Center Drive. This project was joined with the Crossing Project to eliminate duplication of effort and to maximize efficiency of construction. The entire project will be managed by MCDOT under a single contract.
 - Until the RFP becomes official, the following information is unofficial and conditional: Construction is anticipated to begin summer 2015, with substantial completion in 2017 and final completion in 2018.
 - Start of construction has been delayed for a number of factors, primarily:
 - Lengthy negotiations over the MOA;
 - The decision to combine the County and State projects, which ultimately will benefit the community but added new administrative delays.
 - Greater than expected utilities relocation that needs to be completed.
 - More information on recent activities relating to the Crossing Project can be found on the “Get Involved” page and the Project Map. In addition, MCDOT has established a web site for the project at:
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dote/projects/355Underpass/index.html>
- **NIH Updates:**
 - **Phil Neuberg reported that publication of NIH’s response to comments received on the EIS for the Master Plan is “imminent” and will be posted on the NIH web site.** After a period of at least 30 days, NIH expects to publish its

Record of Decision (ROD). He noted that the EIS portends the addition of 3,000 personnel to the Bethesda campus and that the ROD may alter NIH's parking/personnel ratio from 1:2 to 1:3 for the additional personnel but not for the existing 20,000 personnel.

http://www.ncpc.gov/DocumentDepot/PublicNotices/MP02_NIH_Bethesda_Master_Plan.pdf (474 pp)

- **Phil announced an October 2 Scoping Meeting in advance of an Environmental Impact Statement for an NIH Assure/Expand Chilled Water Capacity Project:**

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brac/Resources/Files/NIH_ChilledWaterProject-Scoping-100214.pdf

- **Naval Support Activity-Bethesda (NSAB) Updates:**

- Captain Bitonti noted that there has been some construction activity on campus that can be detailed at future BIC meetings. He noted that NSAB is making a concerted effort to improve traffic flow around the base on the weekends, by configuring two entrances, rather than one, at the main gates. He is also looking at altering the operations of traffic signals at gates that are generally closed on weekends.
- Ron Inman was introduced as NSAB's new public information officer. Ryan Emery introduced himself as NSAB's transportation manager,
- Captain Bitonti reiterated his preference that the public refer to the Navy base as NSAB rather than "Walter Reed," since we are dealing with the entire base rather than an individual tenant of the base.
- In anticipation of the ultimate completion of the Crossing Project, the matter of safety for pedestrians currently crossing MD 355 at the Main gate was raised. Captain Bitonti said he has been working with State and County transportation officials on this very problem but could not arrive at a solution that could make pedestrians or drivers better obey traffic laws.

- **State Highway Administration Updates:** Christopher Bishop emphasized using the www.roads.maryland.gov website to gain information or transit comments on the SHA Intersection Improvement projects. He also notes that people can get the latest updates on road closures or other late breaking traffic events on Twitter @MDSHA. He provided status reports on the projects:

- **MD 355 (Rockville Pike)/Cedar Lane:** This project is approximately 30% complete. In the meantime, this continues to be an active construction zone and urges driver and pedestrian caution at all times. Over the next several months there will be a series of drainage projects relating to WSSC facilities at the intersection and SHA hopes to complete the bike path and bridge over the culvert west of Rockville Pike. SHA hopes to complete Phases 1-3 (the current construction) by late summer 2016 but reminds all that until then they can expect intermittent off-peak lane closures.

- **MD 187 (Old Georgetown Road)/West Cedar Lane:** Ardent Construction was selected as the contractor. Notice to Proceed (NTP) may go out by the end of September but preliminary work may occur sooner. The project should take approximately one year, weather permitting, and completion is anticipated by late fall 2015.
- **MD 355/Rockville Pike)/Jones Bridge Road:**
 - As Phil reported earlier, this project has been combined with the MD 355 Crossing Project and will be managed by MCDOT. The Request for Proposals (RFP) should be released soon to the two contracting finalists.
 - The traffic island at Woodmont Avenue is being reconfigured to enhance pedestrian safety. The “Welcome to Bethesda” sign should be able to remain but not the existing ornamental wall.
 - The equipment for the Tier One Dynamic Signaling at the intersection has been installed but the signaling has not been activated. SHA is inclined not to activate the new signaling only to see it disengaged when construction of the Crossing Project commences in about one year.
- **MD 185 (Connecticut Avenue)/Jones Bridge Road / Kensington Parkway:** Utilities relocation and reconstruction of the retaining wall at Howard Hughes Medical Institute may take up to three years. Tentatively, following utilities relocation, construction for Phase 3 projects may be bid in December 2017, with Notice to Proceed in February 2018. Completion anticipated early 2019.
- **Presentation on the Johns Hopkins/Suburban Hospital expansion plans in Bethesda (“2020 Campus Enhancement Plan”).** Leslie Weber presented a PowerPoint presentation explaining the construction that is about to commence at the Suburban Hospital campus on Old Georgetown Road. It will provide more parking, more private patient rooms, better access for emergency vehicles, and physician office space (Suburban is one of very few hospitals in the country that currently has no on-campus physician office space).
 - **PowerPoint presentation (10 pages):**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brac/Resources/Files/SuburbanHosp-CampusPlan-BIC-091614.pdf>
 - **“2020 Campus Enhancement Plan” web site:**
<http://www.suburbanhospital2020.com/>
- **Other community updates and issues:**
 - Phil reported that SHA is designing “missing links” of the Bethesda Trolley Trail between Charles Street and Cedar Lane, and extending the Trail south on Old

Georgetown Road to Lincoln Drive (south of NIH). SHA may have funding available and is working with MCDOT to prioritize these projects.

- There was discussion about frustration with the way SHA conveys information to the public about construction conditions and future scheduling. While earlier in the evening an SHA representative had discussed a new web site that promised efficient dialogue, there has been ongoing concern that questions to SHA have frequently not been answered sufficiently. Ilaya suggested that the BIC could send a letter to all relevant transportation agencies requesting a better flow of information and suggesting that the agencies bring on more PIO personnel. Ilaya solicited assistance from committee members to draft a letter.
- **Ilaya adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the BCC Regional Services Center.**

BRAC Committee members in attendance, September 16, 2014:

Nancy Abeles, Bethesda Crest Home Owners Association
Phil Alperson, Montgomery County Military Installations (BRAC) Coordinator
Christopher Bishop, State Highway Administration
Rose Krasnow for Larry Cole, Montgomery County Planning Board, MNCPPC
Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Assn. and Chair of the BRAC Integration Committee
Ed Krauze, Bethesda Parkview Citizens Association
Karen Kuker-Kihl, The Promenade Apartments
Richard Levine, Locust Hill Citizens Association
Janet Maalouf, Maplewood Citizens Association
Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont
Debbie Michaels, Glenbrook Village Homeowners Association
Sara Morningstar, Montgomery County Office of Intergovernmental Relations
Phil Neuberg, National Institutes of Health
Patrick O'Neil, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce
Leslie Weber, Suburban/Johns Hopkins Hospital

Ex-officio:

Capt. David Bitonti, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda
Ryan Emery, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda
Ron Inman, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda
Joan Kleinman, Office of Congressman Chris Van Hollen
Ken Reichard, Office of Senator Ben Cardin
Drew Morrison, Office of Council Member Roger Berliner

Other Attendees

Dawn Chaikin, Locust Hill
Jeanette Musil, DOD Office of Economic Adjustment