

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
WALTER REED BRAC INTEGRATION COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY – September 17, 2013**

- Ilaya Hopkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- Updates from Phil Alperson, Montgomery County BRAC Coordinator:
  - 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/brctmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/brac/getinvolved.asp>
  - The “Get Involved” Page’s chronological report of BIC meetings includes the following resource materials:
    - **Printable Timeline: Anticipated Construction-Related Traffic Disruptions in Bethesda:**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brac/resources/files/brac\\_projects\\_timeline.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brac/resources/files/brac_projects_timeline.pdf)
    - **Summary of BRAC Transportation Projects and Commuting Options:**  
[http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/content/exec/brac/projects\\_glance.asp](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](#) .
  - Phil followed up on the MCDOT presentation to the BIC last June on the **Crossing Project**, reporting that MCDOT received nine responses to its **Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI)**. Officials from MCDOT and from the Procurement Office of the County’s Dept. of General Services (DGS) selected two Design-Build teams that will be sent Request for Proposals (RFP): Clark Construction Group, LLC and Corman-Bradshaw Joint Venture. Once the RFP has been drafted and transmitted, the two Design-Build teams will have several months to respond and the County will need several months to select a contractor for the Crossing Project. This process could take approximately 8 or 9 months.
    - 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>

- **Phil commented on media reports of potential closure of the Medical Center and Bethesda Metro Stations to mitigate water seepage.** Phil said that WMATA has made no decision on how to deal with the seepage, that closure of the stations is by no means assured, and that any action is a year or two away.
- **Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) proposal to eliminate three Commuter Bus Routes on the ICC.** Phil followed up on the MTA proposal and hearings held last June, reporting that MTA has decided to retain two commuter bus routes that utilize the InterCounty Connector (ICC) and provide service to Bethesda: Route 202 (Gaithersburg to Fort Meade) and Route 203 (Columbia to Bethesda). However, MTA has eliminated Route 205 (College Park to the Germantown Transit Center). MTA will enhance its public outreach effort to seek additional riders for the remaining ICC routes.
- **Christopher Bishop and Barb Solberg of SHA provided updates on the Intersection Improvement projects:**
  - **MD 185 (Connecticut Ave)/Jones Bridge Road:**
    - Construction of Phases 1 & 2 on Connecticut Avenue between the Beltway and Manor Road is practically finished. Although the site no longer resembles a construction zone, some signaling and landscape works remains. Of particular interest to some BIC members are the eventual activation of a green arrow signal from southbound Connecticut Avenue onto westbound Jones Bridge Road and the coordination of a pedestrian-activated walk signal. Christopher anticipates these signals will be fully activated by late fall. Barb Solberg noted that additional signage will be erected to enhance pedestrian safety and traffic operations through the intersection from Kensington Parkway and that lane striping on northbound Connecticut Avenue to the Beltway exits will be improved to better indicate exit-only and through lanes.
    - Christopher noted that utilities relocation in advance of Phase 3 of this intersection should commence in the spring of 2014.
    - Related issues: Barb said that SHA will meet with the North Chevy Chase Elementary School PTA on Sept, 24 to discuss pedestrian safety issues related to traffic and the construction of a storm water management pond in the area. Barb responded to concerns about the relocation of overhead utilities from the south side of Jones Bridge Road at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute to the north side of the road adjacent to the Chevy Chase Valley community, noting that SHA must relocate those lines to SHA ROW on the north because of the construction of a retaining wall at

HHMI to accommodate lane widening. She also said that the costs of one million dollars per utility to underground those lines made that concept cost-prohibitive.

○ **MD 355 (Rockville Pike)/Cedar Lane:**

- While most of the utilities relocation in advance of Phases 1-3 is complete, some underground work continues. Completion of the utilities relocation is expected by late fall, at which time the area will be resurfaced in a more satisfactory manner than it is now. Barb Solberg said that contracts for construction of Phases 1-3 will be advertised next month commence in the fall and that closure of Cedar Lane remains on schedule for the summer of 2014 – when schools are not in session. She said that the timing of the Cedar Lane closure could be thrown off if a contractor files a protest against the Contract Award; in such an event Barb could not commit whether the Cedar Lane closure would be postponed to the summer of 2015 or whether it would have to be closed during the school year.
- Related issues: Bus service for Metro and RideOn buses has been erratic at this intersection during ongoing construction. Some neighbors report that the bus stop sign and shelter have been removed and that some buses don't stop to pick up passengers. Phil reported these complaints to the MCDOT transit division. Concerns were also raised about inadequate nighttime lighting and pedestrian striping of the intersection which may have contributed to recent pedestrian injuries.

○ **MD 187 (Old Georgetown Road)/West Cedar Lane:**

- SHA is currently negotiating ROW acquisition, expects to begin advance utilities relocation this fall, and advertise for construction of the project in the spring of 2014.

○ **MD 355 (Rockville Pike)/Jones Bridge Road:**

- Utilities relocation is ongoing, and will include “dynamic signaling” changes to provide an additional PM peak hour turn lane onto westbound JBR from southbound Rockville Pike. SHA will meet soon with impacted communities, such as Glenbrook Village, East Bethesda, and NIH to discuss design changes, including the placement of crosswalks at all four crossings.

○ **General Concerns:**

- **Concerns were raised about parking in the residential neighborhoods by personnel from NSAB or NIH.** Joe Macri of NSAB said that their personnel are discouraged from parking in the neighborhoods but that

NSAB is unable to monitor or control such parking. He did note that contracts with construction companies include requirements not to park in the neighborhoods. He suggested that overburdened neighborhoods consider the County's residential parking permit program:

<http://www6.montgomerycountymd.gov/dpktmpl.asp?url=/content/dot/parking/FAQ/residential-parking-faq.asp>

- **Christopher offered his email address -- [CBishop@sha.state.md.us](mailto:CBishop@sha.state.md.us) – to BIC members seeking information from SHA. For information on County matters, he suggested people call 311 to be directed to the most appropriate County office,**
- **Phil advised the BIC that submitting questions to SHA prior to this evening's BIC meeting enabled SHA to provide more complete information, and that he would make this a regular practice for subsequent BIC meetings.**
  
- **Navy Update:**
  - **Captain David Bitonti formally introduced himself to the BIC as the new Commanding Officer for Naval Support Activity-Bethesda. Joe Macri also announced that he will be leaving NSAB and the Public Information Office. His replacement has not been named.**
  - **Capt. Bitonti gave a presentation on the Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) for new construction at NSAB. The ROD was signed on August 29 and published in the Federal Register on Sept. 10, 2013.**
  - **The project will commence this fall. Demolition and construction of Building C will begin in 2015. Highlights of the ROD include:**
    - Construction of temporary swing space
    - Demolition of five small buildings in the core of the medical center complex, to be replaced by a single "Building C" and construction of a related 500-space garage
    - Facilities renovation and power upgrades in the medical center complex.
    - Construction of a new USUHS research and teaching building and construction of a related 400-space garage.
    - Renovation of existing USUHS facilities.
  - **Capt. Bitonti's PowerPoint will be posted on the BRAC web site to accompany this meeting summary as soon as it is available.**
    - The Notice of the NSAB EIS Record of Decision was published in the Federal Register on Sept. 10: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2013-09-10/pdf/2013-22000.pdf>

- The Final EIS and ROD are available on the project website:  
<http://www.wrnmmc.capmed.mil/PatientVisitors/SitePages/EIS.aspx>

- **NIH Updates:**

- **Phil Neuberg reported the sad news that Tom Hayden, a long-time NIH transportation planner known by many, recently passed away**
- **The Draft EIS for the NIH Master Plan Revision, which has been discussed at previous BIC meetings, is almost ready to be published.** Generally, it will call for the consolidation of about 3,000 NIH personnel onto the main campus from locations throughout the area. NIH intends to maintain its 1:2 parking ratio as defined in an MOU between NIH, NCPC and the County.
- **Ilaya Hopkins solicited Neighborhood Updates and Public Comments.** None were offered, as there had been ample time during the course of the meeting.
- **Ilaya adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21, 2014, 7:00 p.m. at the BCC Regional Services Center.**

**BRAC Committee members in attendance, September 17, 2013:**

Nancy Abeles, Bethesda Crest Home Owners Association  
 Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator  
 Christopher Bishop, State Highway Administration  
 Lulu Gonella, Chevy Chase View  
 Neil Greene, Maplewood Citizens Association  
 Ken Hartman, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center  
 Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Association, and  
 Chair, Walter Reed BRAC Integration Committee  
 Ginanne Italiano, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce  
 Richard Levine, Locust Hill Citizens Association  
 Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont  
 Debbie Michaels, Glenbrook Village Homeowners Association  
 Freda Mitchem, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens 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 Hospital/Johns Hopkins

**Ex-officio:**

Ken Reichard (Senator Ben Cardin)  
 Joan Kleinman (Rep. Chris Van Hollen)

Cindy Gibson (Council Member Roger Berliner)  
Debbie Spielberg (Council Member Marc Elrich)  
Capt. David Bitonti, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda  
Joseph Macri, Naval Support Activity-Bethesda

**Other Attendees**

Parag Agrawal, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission  
Brigitte Akalovsky, Village of North Chevy Chase  
Girum Awoke, Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation  
Yuqiong Bai, State Highway Administration  
Hon. Al Carr, House of Delegates District 18  
Tom Eden, Starr Capital LLC  
Richard Hoyer  
Aaron Kraut, Bethesda Now.com  
Janet Maalouf, Maplewood Citizens Association  
Jeanette Musil, DOD Office of Economic Adjustment  
William Sadlon, NAVFAC Washington  
Daniel Schebler, DOD Office of Economic Adjustment  
Barb Solberg, State Highway Administration  
Carrie Witkop, North Chevy Chase PTA