

**BRAC IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY – March 16, 2010**

- **John Carman called the BRAC Implementation Committee to order at 7:35 p.m.**

- **Phil provided his monthly BRAC Updates:**
 - **STATUS OF TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS:**
 - **UPDATED BRAC TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY PROJECT MATRIX, as of 3-10-10:**
http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/transpo_project_matrix-122809.pdf

 - **10-6-09 Bethesda BRAC Transportation Investment Priorities: A joint MDOT/MC-DOT memo listing phased implementation of projects and funding streams:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/bracprojects-tiers-100609.pdf>
 - **11-17-09 Description of “Tiers” and “Phases” of Intersections Improvement Program:**
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/intersections-tiersphases-summary-111709.pdf>

 - **PUBLIC MEETING ON BRAC BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES PROJECT: *WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24, 2010***
 - The Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation will hold a Public Meeting on Wednesday, March 24, 2010 on BRAC Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities project, 7:00 p.m. at North Chevy Chase Elementary School All Purpose Room, 3700 Jones Bridge Road, Chevy Chase MD 20815.

 - The Project includes:
 - Sidewalks along the east side of Rockville Pike (MD 355) from Jones Bridge Road to Cedar Lane;
 - Bike path along south side of West Cedar Lane from Old Georgetown Road to Rockville Pike;
 - Bike path connection along Cedar Lane to Rock Creek Trail at Beach Drive;
 - Bike path along north side of Jones Bridge Road from Rockville Pike to Connecticut Avenue; and

- Signage improvements along Battery Lane and Glenbrook Parkway.
 - (NOTE: A planned extension of the Bethesda Trolley Trail to NIH is part of a separate SHA project.)
- More information about the Public Meeting, the Project, and where to send written comments:
http://www.montgomerycountvmd.gov/content/exec/brac/pdf/bikepedfacilities-mcdot_publicmeeting-032410.pdf
- **TIGER GRANT REQUESTS UNSUCCESSFUL, BUT UNPRECEDENTED CONGRESSIONAL FUNDING MOVES FORWARD:**
 - On Feb. 17, 2010, the U.S. Dept. of Transportation announced its TIGER Grant awards. BRAC-related requests to fund a Multi Modal Metro Pedestrian Underpass project in Bethesda and the SHA state-wide BRAC Intersections Improvement project were not funded. To put this in perspective, note that 51 TIGER grants totaling \$1.5 billion (the total TIGER funding available) were awarded from over 1,400 applications requesting \$56.5 billion.
 - However, it is very important to note that last December Congress approved an extraordinary \$300 million appropriation for BRAC-related transportation projects around military hospitals at NNMC Bethesda and Fort Belvoir under the FY2010 Defense Appropriations bill. Thanks to the leadership of Congressman Chris Van Hollen and Senators Barbara Mikulski and Ben Cardin, the appropriation will fund a Metro pedestrian access project, intersections improvements, and new and renovated bike paths and sidewalks around Bethesda Naval Hospital.
 - Congressional and DOD officials are still working out the unique and complex logistics of redirecting \$300 million from the defense health care budget to state and local governments for public transportation projects, according to the DOD Appropriations for transportation projects around the military hospitals at Bethesda and Fort Belvoir that was approved last December.
- **NEPA PROCESS BEGUN FOR MD 355 CROSSING PROJECT:**
 - Montgomery County's Dept. of Transportation (MC-DOT) has initiated an environmental study process under the NEPA law that provides for public input to help define the Purpose & Need for the Metro pedestrian access project and an ultimate design concept. MC-DOT has received public comments based on its DRAFT Purpose & Need Summary and will

provide feedback in the near future. MC-DOT hopes to bring the project to the Park & Planning Commission for Mandatory Referral hearings in May or June. For further information, go to the MC-DOT/ NEPA Page on Montgomery County's BRAC web site:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/Content/EXEC/BRAC/nepa-pedaccess.asp>.

○ **SUBCONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BRAC-RELATED PROJECTS:**

- The BUSINESS AND WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES Page of the Web Site lists a number of subcontracting opportunities on BRAC-related projects at NNMC Bethesda, Fort Meade, Aberdeen, Fort Detrick, and elsewhere:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/brctmpl.asp?url=/content/EXEC/BRAC/opportunities.asp>

• **OTHER UPDATES:**

- Andy Scott of MDOT could not predict when the SHA Intersections Improvement project would be ready to go to the Park & Planning Commission for Mandatory Referral hearings.
- Ken Strickland reported that MC-DOT had initiated a study of potential impacts on the Chevy Chase Valley/Spring Valley Road neighborhood that may result from the SHA project at the Connecticut Avenue/Jones Bridge Road intersection, and evaluate potential mitigations.
- Ollie Oliveria was asked about the status of an NNMC Master Plan that was required under the FY2010 Defense Authorization bill approved by Congress. Ollie noted that this is being handled by the Joint Task Force, National Capital Region (JTF CapMed), and that he would refer to JTF CapMed the public's interest in seeing the Plan.

• **PARK & PLANNING STAFF DISCUSSION OF THE MANDATORY REFERRAL PROCESS:**

- Larry Cole led a discussion about the Mandatory Referral process; specifically, when projects can be brought to the Park & Planning Commission for public hearings and what opportunities the public has to comment on those projects. Projects cannot go to construction until at least 60 days after the hearings and the Commission has given its approval. John Carman made the point that Mandatory Referral hearings are the public's last and best opportunity to comment on a

project before it goes to construction. Andy Scott of MDOT noted that state projects do not require public hearings beyond the Mandatory Referral process but that the state's BRAC-related projects have been the subject of extensive public comment and discussion. Similarly, Gary Erenrich of MC-DOT noted that the County's BRAC-related projects have been publicly vetted. *Larry's notes will be added to the web site with this summary when they are available.*

- **NNMC PRESENTATION ON ITS INTERNAL TRAFFIC MITIGATION AND GATES IMPROVEMENT PROJECT:**

- Jeff Miller was congratulated on the birth of his new baby boy! Jeff and the Navy's consultant team gave a presentation on its plans to improve on-base traffic movement and upgrade its five gates along Rockville Pike and Jones Bridge Road. *The Navy's presentation will be added to the web site with this meeting summary when it becomes available.*
- Improvements will be made at these five gates:
 - **GATE 1 -- Rockville Pike at North Wood Drive;**
 - Lanes increased from 2 to 4, with reversible peak hour lane;
 - New Visitors' Center for passes and ID checks;
 - "Half signal" in the morning peak period to facilitate southbound traffic from the Beltway to enter the campus;
 - Improved bike lanes and sidewalks;
 - No outbound left turns onto southbound Rockville Pike.
 - **GATE 2 -- Rockville Pike at South Wood Drive/Medical Center Metro Station;**
 - Lanes increased from 2 to 3, with reversible peak hour lane;
 - Accommodation for potential pedestrian underpass;
 - Accommodation for potential Kiss and Ride pull-off.
 - **GATE 3 -- Jones Bridge Road at the Navy Exchange/Gunnell Road:**
 - Lanes increased from 2 to 4, with reversible peak hour lane;
 - This is the only entrance that cannot accommodate bike/pedestrian improvements;
 - **GATE 4 -- Jones Bridge Road at Grier Road:**
 - Lanes increased from 2 to 3, with reversible peak hour lane;
 - Improved bike lanes and sidewalks.
 - **GATE 5 -- Jones Bridge Road at USUHS.**
 - New truck entrance and inspection facility, with commercial traffic routed to Perimeter Road;
 - Regular vehicle entrance;
 - Improved bike lanes and sidewalks
- Other proposed improvements include locating a new traffic signal at Gate 5 (USUHS).

- NNMC is proposing that the morning peak period half-signal that would be placed at North Wood Drive (Gate 1) should also operate in the evening peak period to facilitate the flow of traffic exiting the campus to go northbound towards the Beltway. This proposal generated much discussion about the impacts of this evening signal on northbound Rockville Pike traffic, particularly vehicles coming from NIH or the Bethesda business district.

- **COUNCIL MEMBER MARC ELRICH'S PRESENTATION ON HIS PROPOSED COUNTY-WIDE BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) SYSTEM:**
 - Council Member Elrich gave a detailed presentation on his proposal to construct a County-wide BRT system, and its specific impact on BRAC-related traffic. *Elrich's presentation will be added to the web site with this meeting summary when it becomes available.*
 - Generally, the concept would connect the County's major residential and employment areas and include a series of fixed guideways along the County's main north-south arteries, such as Rockville Pike, Connecticut Avenue, Georgia Avenue, Colesville Road, and New Hampshire Avenue, and east-west arteries such as the ICC, Randolph/Montrose Road, and East-West Highway. The BRT system would complement MetroRail and would cause RideOn service to be routed to serve BRT stations. Where possible the guideways could be dual-lane, but in other areas there could be single-lane guideways, with the BRT vehicles traveling on surface roads in off-peak hours.
 - Peak hour lead time could be six minutes intervals, providing comprehensive transit service for BRT riders. For BRAC, for example, a BRT line could run along Jones Bridge Road connecting BRT lines running on Rockville Pike and Connecticut Avenue, providing BRT connectivity for all County BRT riders.
 - Concerns were raised about whether planned SHA intersection improvements might preclude eventual installation of BRT lanes. MC-DOT officials said the intersections project wouldn't be a factor.
 - Other concerns were raised about Council Member Elrich's assertion that the intersection improvements would not address long-term efforts to reduce Single Occupancy Vehicles, and therefore funds would be better spent on constructing County-wide BRT. Although Elrich was optimistic that BRT could move forward if all stakeholders pull together, there were concerns that planning and funding is lacking for the proposal, and that the region shouldn't wait an indefinite period of time and not implement the "Tiers and Phases" projects that are expected to be funded under the FY2010 Defense Appropriations earmark.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 20, 2010, 7:30 p.m., at the BCC Regional Services Center.**

Committee members in attendance, March 16, 2010:

Phil Alperson, County BRAC Coordinator
 John Carman, Committee Chairman
 Larry Cole, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
 Gary Erenrich for Edgar Gonzalez, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
 Leslie Weber for Brian Gragnolati, Suburban Hospital
 Ken Hartman, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center
 Ilaya Hopkins, East Bethesda Citizens Assn.
 Ginanne Italiano, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce
 Ed Krauze, Bethesda-Parkview Citizens Association
 Janet Maalouf, Maplewood Citizens Association
 Debbie Michaels, Glenbrook Village Home Owners Association
 Patrick O'Neill, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce
 Lulu Gonella for Michael Plantamura, Chevy Chase View
 Andy Seott, MDOT
 Paul Thaler, Locust Hill Citizens Association
 Sara Morningstar for Melanie Wenger, Montgomery County Office of Intergovt. Relations
 Susan Hinton for Dan Wheeland, NIH

Ex-officio:

Jahantab "J-Tab" Siddiqui (Sen. Barbara Mikulski)
 Ken Reichard (Sen. Ben Cardin)
 Joan Kleinman (Rep. Chris Van Hollen)
 Council Member Roger Berliner
 Susan Buffone (Council Member Roger Berliner)
 Jeff Miller, NNMC Transportation Program Manager
 David "Ollie" Oliveria, NNMC BRAC Program Manager
 Captain Daniel Zinder, NNMC Deputy Base Commander

Other Attendees

Nancy Abeles, Bethesda Crest Home Owners Association
 Ian Bricknell, Aecom
 Gerald Cichy, Maryland Transit Administration (MTA)
 Bailey Condrey, Parkwood Citizens Assn. / CMMCN
 Council Member Marc Elrich
 Nelson Galeano
 Richard Hoyer, ACT
 Karen Kuker-Kihl
 Tony Mahjoub
 Marilyn Mazuzan, Town of Oakmont
 Paul McComb, NNMC
 Lauri Spiliotes for Avic Meehan, Howard Hughes Medical Institute

Jeanette Musil, DOD Office of Economic Adjustment
Mal and Goldie Rivkin, Battery Park Citizens Assn.
Bob Simpson, Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation
Rebecca Smondrowski, Montgomery County Council of PTAs (MCCPTA)
Ken Strickland, Chevy Chase Valley Citizens Association
Harshit Thaker, Patton Harris Rust & Associates
Dale Tibbitts (Council Member Marc Elrich)
Andrew Ujjifusa, Gazette Newspapers
Julie Woepke, Maryland DBED, Office of Military and Federal Affairs