

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
July 9, 2019**

Voting Members

Barbara Condos (Chair)	Town of Somerset
Charles Crerand	CBRE Asset Services/Wisconsin Place
Elizabeth Demetra Harris	Friendship Heights Village
John Mertens (Vice Chair)	Friendship Heights Village
Manuel Ochoa	Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Afua Ofori	Polinger Co./Large Employer
Ahkeeia Payne	GEICO

TMD Staff

Jim Carlson	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services

Absent

Sandra L. Brecher	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Chief John Fitzgerald	Chevy Chase Village Police
Derrick Harrigan	B-CC Services Center
Christopher Itteilag	Somerset House Management Association
Katie Mencarini	M-NCPPC

Guests

Bob Joiner	The Agenda News
Julian Mansfield	Friendship Heights Village
Mayor Jeffrey Slavin	Town of Somerset

Item 1 – Introductions/Agenda Review: Members and guests introduced themselves.

Item 2 – Approval of Meeting Minutes: April minutes were approved

Item 3 – Ride on “FLEX” Microtransit Pilot: Will Kenlaw, Program Manager for Marketing & Advertising – MCDOT Transit Services, briefed the Committee on the Ride On “FLEX” Microtransit Pilot program, launched June 26th, and is one of four main service lines operated by Ride On, three of which are in operation today:

- Ride On bus service in operation since 1975 – services the corridors and neighborhoods
- Ride On “Extra” service started in 2017, operating during rush hour along Rt. 355 as a supplemental service to the 46 & 55 bus lines
- The “Flex” pilot, a microtransit service started June 2019, operating as an on-demand bus service
- The “Flash” a BRT-like (no dedicated bus lanes) bus service operating from Burtonsville to the Silver Spring Transit Center along Rt. 29 coming May – June 2020, with additional dedicated bus service on Rt.355 and Veirs Mill Rd

Mr. Kenlaw presented microtransit as a mobile app-based system like Uber or Pool. Users book rides on the app no later than an hour before pickup time. Other features of the program included:

- 12-month pilot with two different zones Rockville (1 sq. mile) and Glenmont (3 sq. miles) – performance measures taken to see what will be successful
- The app uses Via Bridge software – downloading of app is encouraged to critique the functions of the software and send suggestions in the app or to:
RideOn.flexcustomerservice@montgomerycountymd.gov
- The system is designed to service the underserved communities in Montgomery County lacking transit access in an effort to improve ridership (due to Uber, telecommuting, low gas prices, Metro problems and safety) and connectivity by taking riders to where they want to go
- Microtransit is an option to remedy routes cut due to budgetary restraints
- Performance metrics used to measure success – as long as demand succeeds supply, an extension of the pilot is likely
- The service has no fixed stops with pick up at intersections inside the travel zones and curbside pickup provided for disabled users – space for one wheelchair on buses
- Standard fare is \$2.00 paid either by cash or SmarTrip (no on-board loading of SmarTrip card) same as Ride On and Metro buses – kids ride free all day starting July 1st and seniors free during midday
- Buses will wait one minute for riders – riders who miss up to three trips will be suspended for seven days – notices are given as the bus approach the stop.
- Can book only within the hour and no round trip bookings
- To register, provide first and last name, email, and phone number - no walk-ons; however, reservations can be made for up to six people and can be changed before bus arrives
- Wheaton & Glenmont Metro stations are located in the zones- trips are only within the zones and cannot go from one zone to the other during the pilot
- “Book & Go!” is the tagline branding for the bus, and the marketing budget has tripled to market via social media, Nextdoor.com and newspaper ads – businesses within the zones display signage in windows
- Marketing will be more youth focused in the beginning school year – Wheaton HS and Richard Montgomery HS are within the zones
- Currently one bus operating in the Rockville zone and two in Glenmont with a bus as a spare
- The app had 1300 downloads in the first 10 days of service – website: rideonflex.com
- Community groups were briefed and asked for their input

Item 4 – Dockless Vehicle Pilot Update: Jim Carlson provided an update on the Dockless Vehicle pilot addressing concerns with safety, accountability and improving response times of companies to vehicle issues. A sample Memorandum of Understanding was provided to the Committee detailing dockless vendor requirements. Also discussed:

- Geo-fenced test areas are shown east & west of the county, highlighting areas not currently participating in the pilot – Garret Park, Bethesda and Washington Grove
- Averaging 800 daily trips in the last two weeks – Friendship Heights not showing many trips
- No significant accident activity
- No e-scooter riding on sidewalks; users must ride in bike lanes on streets

- The Committee reported that Bird doesn't have visible number on scooters to call for service, and interjurisdictional communication is needed in marketing the project since vehicles can easily cross into other jurisdictions
- Helmets are recommended for all users however required for age 16 and under

Item 5 – Employer Outreach Update: Not available.

Item 6 – Updates:

- Bike to Work Day was a success – 124 attendees (65 in 2018; 88 in 2017)
- No TMPs or annual reports this month
- County Executive Elrich: on-line discussion this Thursday at 1:30pm

Item 7 – New Business/Around the Room:

- Both the community and SHA agree that the pedestrian crossing signal on Willard at Whole Foods is inadequate and are working with Highway services to put in a ped -activated HAWK signal with a flashing beacon – **Mr. Carlson** will update the Committee when the signal is active (waiting for Pepco to route power to the signal location)
- Loose and missing bricks on Wisconsin avenue in front of the Friendship Heights Metro Station will be repaired by Chevy Chase Land Company

Adjourn – Next meeting date: September 17, 2019