

**Greater Shady Grove  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
March 1, 2017**

**Johns Hopkins University  
Montgomery County Campus  
9601 Medical Center Dr., Rockville MD 20850  
Academic & Research (A&R) Building / Room 107**

**Voting**

- Dr. Antoine Banks** / Westside Neighborhood
- John Brandt** / Universities at Shady Grove
- Steven Kelley** / NIH-National Cancer Institute
- Ellen Poltilove** / Johns Hopkins University
- Jordan Snow** / 1788 Holdings

**Non-Voting**

- Joseph Allen** / Neighborhood Representative – Gaithersburg

**Ex Officio**

- Sandra Brecher** / Representing Montgomery County Dept. of Transportation (MCDOT) Director

**Staff**

- Nakengi Byrd** / Montgomery County Commuter Services
- Jim Carlson** / Montgomery County Commuter Services

**Absent**

- Ed Axler** / M-NCPPC
- Capt. Thomas Didone** / Montgomery County Police
- Catherine Matthews** / Upcounty Regional Services Center
- McClellan Quinn** / EYA
- Randy Scritchfield** / Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber

**Guests**

- Darcy Buckley** / MCDOT
- Gary Erenrich** / MCDOT
- Gehmelle Johnson** / NIH – National Cancer Institute
- Caterina Ore** / Van Eperen & Company
- Charlie Scott** / WMATA
- Laura Van Eperen** / Van Eperen & Co.
- Angela Taylor** / FINRA

**Item 1 & 2 – Introductions/Minutes Review:** Members and guests introduced themselves.

February minutes approved.

**Item 3 – Metro Update:** Metro representative **Charlie Scott** discussed proposed changes due to SafeTrack and pending budget cuts. Metro General Manager **Paul Wiedefeld** has been working for 15

months to solve Metro's challenges, eliminating 500 positions, many of which were vacancies or poor performing. There were reductions in the Call Center staffing and closings of the sales office to 'right size' the organization. Other issues discussed:

- Using Metro's website to view the working status of the system's escalators
- Management is more closely monitoring employee leave and overtime to reduce staffing shortages and costs
- GSA electricity purchase will reduce deficit by \$1 million
- SafeTrack shutdowns and single tracking extended in places to allow time to replace rail ties that hold tracks in place
- A redo of the Red Line single tracking between Twinbrook and Shady Grove - to be completed by June 30<sup>th</sup>
- "Back to Good" handout explains less disruptive track maintenance beyond SafeTrack
- Metro's adjusted operation hours for Fri. & Sat. closing at 1am, and 11:30 weeknights
- The arrival of the new 7000 series rail cars to replace old cars from 1976 to provide better operation - 20 new cars a month, up from eight cars

**Mr. Scott** discussed the proposed fare increases due to take place July 1, citing lower gas prices, biking and Uber as reasons for the budget gap prompting the need to shrink Metro's system. Proposed are:

- Rail increase of .10, Bus .25 to \$2.00, and Parking .10 – bus fare increases of .25 makes payment easier
- Rail will see an average of 6-8 minute headway with turnbacks not reinstated due to addition of new cars
- Buses - \$17 million in cuts from less productive routes
- J7 & J9 service cuts that serve 200-300 riders a day; however, Ride On to compensate - since Ride On service is starting in October, requesting Metro continue service until then
- Discussion regarding Metro's budget cutting strategy to not cut routes where there are no viable alternatives or savings
- Discussion of how Metro's lack of dedicated funding contributes to budget cuts; however, there is optimism due to new businesses and continuing construction developments
- Discussion of how headway times affect decreasing ridership due to crowding
- **Angela Taylor**, FINRA, discussed the need for transit options for incoming employees and the need to stop shuttle service because of the expense
- Discussion of the issue of private shuttles being used by the public

**Item 4 – Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Darcy Buckley**, MCDOT, discussed the BRT system overview, station design and educational outreach. She commented that the system is a reliable, cost effective transit service that could replace as many as 90 cars along major corridors, reducing greenhouse gases. Other features of the system:

- Stations will be designed with real time information screens
- 7 1/2 minute headways and level boarding-payment before boarding
- Multiple entry points to speed boarding
- Dedicated lanes in segments of the system

**Ms. Buckley** reported that in 2013 County Council adopted the Countywide Transit Corridor Functional Master Plan which recommended the 11 corridor, 120-mile project, and outlined segmented running ways, station locations and right of way. Also discussed:

- The County with the State Highway Administration (SHA) conducted studies on four of 11 corridors with Route 29 being the first, to begin construction in 2020

- Family-friendly open houses on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> for the 355 corridor – alternatives by end of April
- Veirs Mill study completed – not currently funded

**Ms. Buckley** discussed the Station Design Project, which are prototypes for the BRT network. She also reported:

- The project received grant funding from Council of Governments (COG)
- The architectural firm ZGF is helping to design buses and the stations based on various environments-some with either center or side loading
- A discussion of the variety of stakeholders – MCDOT, Ride On, SHA, The cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg, Metro, Arlington and Alexandria
- Station design goals, such as ease of usage and adaptability and the elements included at stations – seating, wind screens, real time communication screens

BRT Outreach Campaign discussion:

- Kick off in November 2016, with the purpose of educating the public about the BRT system - survey to obtain feedback
- Advertising spots purchased on WTOP, commercials in movie theaters, social media ads and print collateral
- Message: BRT is a viable, comfortable, reliable alternative that is cost effective and reduces congestion and air pollution
- The system will incorporate sections of dedicated lanes in the median, mixed traffic and shoulder
- Information available at [www.getonboardbrt.com](http://www.getonboardbrt.com), Facebook and Twitter
- Because the project needs public support, outreach is done years in advance of the 2020 construction start date
- Discussion of the current non-funded status of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) and the impacts to residential and commercial development

**Item 5 – Updates: Ms. Brecher** announced:

- Spring bike safety training classes will be hosted by the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)
- Six new bikeshare stations coming to Wheaton - March press events
- New mobile commuter store coming later in the year. Friendship Heights TRiPS store to close. The store (a converted Winnebago) will be a walk-in, full service facility that can serve different employer sites and be used at events

**Item 5 – Marketing Outreach Update: Caterina** from Van Eperen announced:

- Bike TO Work Day –May 19<sup>th</sup> – marketing to get the word out
- Earth Day fairs coming up

**Item 7 – New Business/Around the Room:** The Committee discussed strategies to recruit new members from the residential and business communities

**Adjourn**

**Next meeting date: April 5, 2017**