

**Silver Spring  
Transportation Management District  
Advisory Committee  
November 9, 2023**

**Item 1 & 2- Introductions/Minute review:** **Jim Carlson** called meeting to order and members and guests introduced themselves. Minutes from July were submitted for review.

The Committee welcomed **Shinavia McKinney** and **Erik Donald**, prospective members waiting confirmation as Small Business Representatives.

**Item 3 – Purple line update presentation:** **Christina Contreras** updated the Committee on the Purple Line (PL) construction.

**Ms. Contreres** displayed construction progress video presented by **Ray Briggs** of Maryland Transit Administration. The storm water system is 50 percent complete with over 20,000 sf of sand storm drainage structures. The video also covered construction at various sites:

- The Bethesda Metro Station tunnel
- The Capital Crescent Trail bridge
- Elevated stations and station canopies
- University of Maryland and Veterans Parkway
- PL train cars will be delivered in early 2024

**Ms. Contreres** reported that out of the three stations in Silver Spring - Silver Spring Transit Center (SSTC), the library, and Dale Drive, the transit center has the brunt of the construction. Currently, that is about 58 percent complete. Much of the construction is unseen with work underground and the unknown issues of unforeseen obstacles. Also reported:

- Placement of pole foundations on Bonifant St
- Eleven PL stations are under active construction.
- Upcoming work at the SSTC includes laying concrete, stair access to mezzanine, and the MARC platform bridge.
- Discussion regarding the pedestrian detour at Ripley for platform construction – there is 5–8-minute delay for departing trips due to construction detour
- There is signage for low vision pedestrians (braille) at the SSTC
- Construction at the western portion of Bonifant Street is finishing up as there are utility relocations, a signal at Georgia Avenue and storm drain construction starting in a few weeks

**Ms. Contreres** discussed PL construction at the library and Wayne Avenue and the Silver Spring International School (SSINS) as the foundations for the traction power station are constructed. They are working with MC's public school system as they are updating SSINS as well. Further steps:

- Wall construction at SS Library
- Wayne Avenue bridge over Sligo Creek includes bank stabilization work
- Wayne Avenue traffic further reduced to one lane due to track installation - no left turn onto Sligo Creek Pkwy

- A community grant from PL Transit Partners is available for neighborhood support of businesses affected by construction - 12 grants given per year, closed end of October 2023
- Work along the Colesville Road bridge is done during evenings when there is less traffic flow.
- Work along the east side of the SS library platform
- Water proofing on Wayne Avenue
- Concrete pour at station tunnel at Manchester Place

Q & A / Discussion:

- Construction team trying to reduce disruptions at the SSTC with routine calls with WMATA, public notices stressing braille signage and sending notices via PL outreach email blasts
- Ongoing Community Advisory Team (CAT) meetings will start again next Spring.
- The Wayne Ave. shift change will be in place until the north side of bridge is constructed.
- Discussion stressing the importance of including ADA considerations in wayfinding signage, using photos to communicate for those with disabilities such as autism and low vision pedestrians – pilot studies for low vision ran in Silver Spring using audible notices
- Since the use of sand filter technology for storm water drainage began in around 2015-2018, it has not been updated for climate change; however, they are believed to be adequate due to Silver Spring not having drainage control devices in place before construction.
- Providing ambassadors at the SSTC during peak period to assist with mitigating pedestrian flow during construction
- Signage banners as a good indicator that the PL construction is progressing; however, maintaining a balance to not overwhelm pedestrians, such as naming the business covered by the banners is considered - black banners currently in place are also used for dust control
- Expecting 18 mos. for construction completion with cars delivered to late winter / early spring.

**Item 4 – Metro Update: Gary Erenrich** reported that ridership is still returning to precovid levels during the week and beyond precovid levels on the weekends. Bus service is outperforming rail service with shifts in ridership increasing during the mid-week.

Metro is still facing a pending fiscal cliff of \$750 million out of a \$2 billion budget that has prompted cost saving scenarios to be presented by the GM to the WMATA’s board and public comment. Since WMATA does not have the capacity to tax it can only raise fares, cut service, move capital funding or propose layoffs of up to 50 percent of the workforce (5,000 -6,000 employees), resulting in a domino effect and making it impossible to rebound back to adequate service for the region. **Mr. Erenrich** updates continued:

- The cost of increasing rail service to meet demand barely impacts WMATA’s deficit
- Bringing Federal workers back to the office full time will help save the system \$50 million in revenue as they make up 12 percent of system users; however, with telework it is now only at six percent.
- Metro’s Lift program offers 50 percent discount fares for low-income commuters - only 5,000 families have participated so far
- Discussion regarding Uber being preferred over Metro due to lack of sanitation – hand sanitizers are provided at stations but not available on buses.

- Metro Access is 10 percent of the budget and operates as a taxi system when it was really designed as shared rides – Prince Georges County uses Metro Access more than Maryland & DC combined.
- When is the Silver Spring Metro station going to receive the new fare gates to prevent fare jumping? Transit Police support is mostly in DC provided by MPD contractors
- The effect of the newly Democratic controlled Virginian legislature on Metro funding
- The \$500 million stream of dedicated funding from the jurisdictions will eventually run out as Metro is not able to utilize the bond market, enacting cost saving efforts such as moving capital funding to operational and preventive maintenance
- Discussion regarding increasing WMATA's budget by MD State Legislation action to keep pace with inflation – however, currently, any Maryland funding will come from other transportation projects

**Item 5 – Employer TDM Plans/Reports:** **Jim Carlson** presented employer TDM plans that meet requirements. The Committee recommended approval of the plans by MCDOT Director.

**Item 6 – Updates:**

- **Ms. Brecher** discussed assembling a virtual informational binder for the TDM Advisory Committee
- MTA meeting on tactical bus lanes tonight- lane construction on University Blvd almost completed.
- Bike classes this Saturday November 11<sup>th</sup>
- There is a new Climate Change Officer, **Sarah Kogel-Smucker**.

**Item 7 – Around the Room:** Items discussed were:

- **Mr. Price** discussed safety concerns raised by Discovery employees and having the Police attend AC meetings and the need to see a police presence in the area- encounter in the garage, safety concerns walking to garage.

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet  
November 9, 2023**

<b>Voting Members (12)</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>Chamber Members (3)</b>			
Chris Kabatt	Wells + Associates	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
<b>Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)</b>			
Harriet Quinn	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Vacant	North & West Sector Plan Area		
Chris Perry	CBD Resident	X	
<b>Employers less than 50 employees (3)</b>			
Vacant			
Vacant			
Vacant			
<b>Employers with 50 or more employees (3)</b>			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
<b>Non-Voting Members (3)</b>			
Sandra Brecher, DOT-Commuter Services	MCDOT Director or Designee	X	
Larissa Klevan	M-NCPPC	X	
Jacob Newman	Silver Spring Regional Center	X	
Vacant	Montgomery County Police		
<b>Staff</b>			
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
<b>Guests</b>			
Jennifer Bolick	TMD Outreach Team	X	
Christina Contreras	MCDOT	X	
Erik Donald	SS Small Business Rep	X	
Carson Henry	SS Urban District	X	
Jay Elvove	SS Citizens Advisory Board	X	
Gary Erenrich	MCDOT	X	
Shinavia McKinney	SS Small Business Rep	X	
Nahom Tekle	SS Community Engagement Cluster	X	
Laura Van Eperen	Van Eperen & Co.	X	