

**Silver Spring
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
October 9, 2014**

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Item 1 & 2 -Introduction/Minutes:

Item 3-Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Areas –BPPA’s: Tommy Heyboer from Councilmember Riemer office reported on a new initiative to improve pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure. The initial phase will focus on cosmetic and low cost improvements for cyclist and pedestrians in the 1st year such as ADA improvements fixing ramps and sidewalks. BPPA is one of many CIP projects dealing with biking infrastructure; others include building the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) along the Purple Line and the Bethesda Trolley Trail improvements. In response to questions regarding State funding BPPA’s **Mr. Heyboer** said all funding is from the County. Other discussion topics included:

- Working with SHA to coordinate ped improvements- as long as the County funds improvements SHA will allow changes within their guidelines, it’s only a matter of resources and right-of-way
- SHA looks to the County for direction for improvements since the County knows best what the community wants unfortunately this often leads to a political see-saw
- BPPA program improvements prioritized based on safety vs. place making-improvements will be a logical outgrowth of community feedback
- Web and Social Media outreach promotion-MCDOT-Bicycle and Pedestrian section will handle the web and Col. Rimer’s Office will advertise heavily using their large email list and Facebook following
 - **Andy Wexler** discussed the lack of Social Media from MCDOT and encouraged it’s usage
- Since the Bikeways Master Plan was last updated in 2007 information from the BPPA initiative will be added as a start to the updating process

Mr. Heyboer discussed the downtown Silver Spring Placemaking initiative which is a collaborative effort between Col. Reimer’s office and Montgomery Planning. Although the program is not a mp process, mp tools will be used to obtain community input to envision Silver Spring as an urban destination. There will be 3 workshops focusing on the following:

- 10/15th-Focus on land next to the Transit Center
- 10/29th –Ripley District
- 11/5th –Metro Plaza and the Purple Line
- All information is on the website www.SilverSpringPlacemaking.com
- Saturday, 10/11th -Coalition for Smarter Growth conducting a walk around
- Discussion regarding how placemaking efforts will be integrated to replace the perception by some that the downtown Silver Spring areas have desolate areas

Mr. Heyboer also announced Vango improvements to headway and hours of operation starting in January now M-Th 7am-12am, F-Sat. 7am-2am.

Item 4-Metro Plaza Project: **Bill Kominers** from Lerch Early & Brewer presented to the Committee the Metro Plaza Redevelopment project which is located at the corner of East-West Hwy and Colesville Road currently containing Rite Aid, Fed Ex Kinko's and other properties. **Harvey Maisel** of Maisel Development Co. which is part owner of the project was not able to attend the meeting. **Mr. Kominers** explained that when Metro Plaza was first developed 20+ years ago it was intended as an interim use property to accommodate the changing economics of the downtown Silver Spring area to trigger surrounding properties to upgrade. Now 20 years later, the time has come to upgrade to the next level.

There are 2 constraining impacts regarding construction of the site-

1. Requesting Purple Line right-of-way for the site-PL high elevation placement causes view problems for residents and need to determine what PL facilities are needed
2. Providing access to the WMATA substation-working with WMATA and MTA regarding placement

Mr. Kominers said that the worst case scenario is everything stays as is however design will address these issues.

He reported that they have submitted a preliminary plan for Subdivision and an Optional Method project plan.

David Banta of WGD Architects said in addition to substation the 67,000 sq ft site has the Red Line Metro running behind it also surface parking with 2 curb cuts for access. Truck access to the substation will require the width of the station and a height of 38 ft. In addition to the 2 large towers divided by a courtyard other features of the project were:

- The ground floor level will contain retail
- Plaza in front of the substation will be public use space except when trucks need access-once a month
- In ground water feature
- New road constructed to serve as main loading for the building
- 6 levels of screened in parking, retail on street level-residential level above retail on Colesville Road side
- 645 parking spaces for both retail and residential-no public parking
- The two towers of the building start on the 7th level divided by an elevated courtyard and a proposed bridge linking the towers to access the pool-Purple Line tracks are at this level as well
- Streetscape along Colesville and East-West will meet tree replacement requirements

Mr. Banta said all deductions granted under the zoning code for being near Metro were taken-not yet paying into the Silver Spring Parking Lot District PLD.

Residential and public retail access of the property was discussed such as:

- Managing the grade on the site for handicap access
- All access to Metro is street level-due to competing structures PL, WMATA substation and retail-No residential access
- Wide 15 ft sidewalk-working with county to allow restaurant seating

- 14,000 to 15,000 sq ft of retail space
- Bike storage in building and bike rack available
- There will be a traffic signal for the new road which will run along the rear of Falkland development which is adjacent to Metro Plaza
- Traffic circulation will consist of access on to the new road and exiting left or right on to East-West Highway
- Some of the balconies will be recessed due to zoning restrictions
- Building will be Silver LEED certified

Other areas of Committee discussion included:

- Having barriers placed preventing vehicular access to 100 ft substation easement area
- Installing bikeshare station on the property
- Improving access to Metro and pedestrian safety at East-West Hwy and Colesville Rd intersection-preserving sidewalk width for access and landscaping in median preventing midblock crossing

Mr. Kominers reported that the Preliminary and Project plans have been filed however Park & Planning has yet to respond as they are approaching the October 30th deadline date for CBD filing. Once the process is complete community hearings will begin early 2015 followed by the Site Plan process which will determine refined construction details such as bike racks and street placement. He will let the AC know when letters of recommendation can be submitted.

Construction will begin after the leases of the business currently on the property have been worked out which is about a 4 year process. Construction can begin before the Purple Line is built, **Mr. Kominers** remarked, due to its high elevation.

Item 5-Updates: Police/TMD/DOT/Other County Updates: **Sgt. Ruane** reported that he supervises traffic officers in the 3rd district and oversees traffic enforcement issues from the CBD to Burtonsville. **Captain Didone** wants his team to assemble information to address enforcement options for a major meeting next week regarding pedestrian safety. **Sgt. Ruane** also reported:

- Meeting with Metro Group about ped safety
- Walk to school campaign
- Jazz Fest
- No information on accident and fatalities due to next week's meeting with **Capt. Didone**
- IOS meeting reported crossing guards will be posted through September 2015

Reemberto Rodriguez reported:

- Worsening Homeless situation-working with new Community Division Commander **Marcus Jones** to remedy
- 2 fires –Major fire on Thayer Avenue and on Georgia Avenue at Urban Butcher

Other issues discussed were:

- Working to address the issue of Jaywalking and pedestrians not aware of surroundings-looking at cell phones-working with **Jeff Dunckel**

- Pedestrian problem at parking garage on Bonifant Street due to lack of crossing guards in the area and busses blocking intersections

Sandra Brecher announced:

- Walk and Ride event was a success with 200 teams and 1000 participants-Some of the winners were Team Concrete, United Walkers and Atoms family
- Car Free Day was September 22nd –Outreach at 5 metro stations and van traveled to other transit areas all over the County
- Bike to College Day at the Rockville campus with a hope to extend to Takoma Park campus

Other announcements:

- BRT corridor advisory committee is forming-there were questions of conflict of interest Mr. Carlson will check with the County Executive office
- Ride On public forum for service additions
- Silver Spring Library is selling its book collections
- The Silver Spring TRiPS Store is closed due to environmental issues

Item 6-Around the Room: Mr. Latty's issue regarding Colesville, Spring Street and Georgia Avenue street circulation will be revisited as an agenda item at December's meeting.

Item 7-Adjourn: Next meeting December 11, 2014. No meeting in November.