Appendix A

Correspondence from M-NCPPC and County Council Transportation and Environment Committee

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

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DPWT
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

NANCY FLOREEN
COUNCILMEMBER AT-LARGE

MEMORANDUM

June 29, 2006

TO: Arthur Holmes, Jr., Director
Department of Public Works and Transportation

FROM: Nancy Floreen, Chair
Transportation and Environment Committee

SUBJECT: Metropolitan Branch Trail project

On June 26, 2006 the T&E Committee reviewed the results of Phase I facility planning for the Metropolitan Branch Trail project. The Committee concurs with the Planning Board's recommendation that Option 1 in the Project Planning Prospectus—the master-plan option—should proceed to Phase II of facility planning (see the attached May 25, 2006 letter to you from the Board). We recognize that the alignment of the planned hiker-biker bridge over Georgia Avenue may need to be altered somewhat to allow for sufficient visibility of the traffic signals at the Georgia Avenue/Sligo Avenue intersection.

The Committee appreciates the work the Department of Public Works and Transportation has completed to date on this project. We look forward to the completion of Phase II facility planning for the Metropolitan Branch Trail project by the winter of 2007/2008 so that we can consider the project for funding as part of the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program.

attachment

cc: Councilmembers
Derick Berlage, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board

100 MARYLAND AVENUE, 6TH FLOOR • ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850
240/777-7959 • TTY 240/777-7914 • FAX 240/777-7989 • COUNCILMEMBER.FLOREEN@MONTGOMERYCOUNTYMD.GOV
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THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Office of the Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board

023353

May 25, 2006

Arthur Holmes, Jr., Director
Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation
101 Monroe Street, 10th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear ~~Mr. Holmes~~ Art:

At its May 18, 2006 meeting, the Planning Board held a public hearing on the Metropolitan Branch Trail Phase I Facility Planning Project Prospectus. After hearing the planning staff recommendation for a modified Option 5 (see attached staff report) and receiving oral and written testimony from more than a dozen people, *the Board unanimously recommended that Option 1 be carried into Phase II Facility Planning.* Option 1 is the Sector/Master Plan alignment that provides for a new trail bridge over Georgia Avenue and a new tunnel under Burlington Avenue (MD 410). It was the construction alternative recommended in the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Facility Planning study that was approved by the Planning Board in early 2001 and subsequently transmitted to Department of Public Works and Transportation.

The Board views a fully grade-separated trail as integral to and consistent with the County's multimillion-dollar investment to revitalize downtown Silver Spring. The alignment and design proposed under Option 5, and recommended by your staff, is wholly inadequate for a regional trail that is expected to generate nearly as many trail users as the Capital Crescent Trail in Bethesda after the Silver Spring Transit Center (SSTC) opens: 150-300 trail users per hour on weekends and 50-150 trail users on weekdays. The trail will serve as the principal non-motorized connection to the SSTC from Montgomery College and east Silver Spring neighborhoods. This 0.6-mile segment of the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) is also a critical link in the regional trail system that connects Silver Spring with Union Station in the District, and with Bethesda and points west via the future Georgetown Branch Trail and BiCounty Transitway.

The Board is aware of and sensitive to the projected high cost of implementing Option 1. It believes that the planning staff recommendation for a modified Option 5 could save some money in the short term and that the alignment may be suitable as the interim trail. However, we believe that *interim* trails, particularly those like the MBT with complex alignments and issues, often become facilities that last 20-years or longer. As a result, the Board strongly recommends that the County make the proper investment now and not delay further the implementation of the Sector/Master Plan alignment.

Montgomery County Planning Board, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
Phone: (301) 495-4605, Fax: (301) 495-1320, E-mail: mcp-chairman@mncppc-mc.org, www.mncppc-mc.org

Should you have any questions about the Board's decision or about planning staff recommendations, please call Chuck Kines in Transportation Planning at 301-495-2184.

Sincerely,

Derick P. Berlage
Chairman

DPB:CK:gw
Enclosure

cc: George Leventhal, Montgomery County Council President
Gary Stith, Director, Silver Spring Regional Service Center
Gwen Wright, Acting Chief, Countywide Planning
Rick Hawthorne, Chief, Transportation Planning
Glenn Kreger, Community Based Planning
Dan Hardy, Transportation Planning
Charles Kines, Transportation Planning
Larry Cole, Transportation Planning

ltr to holmes re MBT

Appendix B

Project Team Meeting Notes

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: June 15, 2004

Date of Meeting: June 9, 2004

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building
9th Floor Conference Room

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Initiation Meeting
Meeting No.1

Attendees:

Sogand Seirafi	Chief of Planning Section
Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Fran Marcus	MCDPWT
Aruna Miller	MCDPWT
Pat Bradley	MCDPWT-Traffic
Chris Garnier	MCDPWT-Transit
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Chuck Kines	MNCPPC
Joe Makar	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Gary Bush	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

Introductions
Uzair Asadullah, the Metropolitan Branch Trail project manager, explained this is the kick-off meeting for the project and will involve completion of Phase I planning and Phase II facility planning.

Project Overview
Christine Wells, WRA Project Manager – Planning, provided a brief overview of the Facility Plan that had been completed by MNCPPC in December 2000. She noted that the purpose of the Facility Plan was to select the alignment and to prepare preliminary design plans. Ms. Wells indicated that the Trail is to be planned for a range of users from children to avid cyclists and commuters, and that as many as 500 persons/hour were anticipated as users of the completed Metropolitan Branch Trail. A Project Advisory Committee provided input on key issues, options and phasing for the MNCPPC's Facility Plan. Two public workshops were also held.

The Facility Plan recommends the following trail widths

- 10' typical

- reduction to 8' where limited by ROW or to save trees
- widen to 12' along Fenton near Montgomery College (where higher use is anticipated).

The Facility Plan recommends that the permanent trail be built of concrete/pavers from Silver Spring Station to Montgomery College. South of the College the Plan recommended asphalt pavement.

The Facility Plan design can be compared to the design characteristics for shared use paths in the May 2004 "Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan" Public Hearing Draft.

- Concrete or asphalt pavement
- 8'-12' width
- 3' wide graded horizontal clear zone where possible
- 10' high vertical clearance
- 6' wide buffer between path and edge of curb

Project Goals

The Metropolitan Branch Trail is not funded for construction. The Phase II (35%) plans are needed by next summer to prepare the Project Development Form needed to make the request for its funding as a stand alone project. WRA provided a copy of the project schedule to attendees.

Key Issues

There are a number of key issues for the project which were reviewed by Joe Makar. He started from the western terminus of the project at the Silver Spring Transit Center to the eastern terminus at Montgomery College.

- Silver Spring Transit Center – The Trail will connect into and through the Transit Center. WRA needs to obtain plans for the Transit Center from ZGF. DPWT has authorized the release of the plans to WRA. Ms. Wells has contacted David Esch. The base topo data for this site is needed

- Fire Station # 1 - The Facility Plan identified two alternatives for the Trail to go around the historic B & O Station that is adjacent to the fire station. WRA has a set of plans for the Fire Station that designate the Trail along the edge of the site and adjacent to the CSXT railroad. If instead, the Trail alignment goes around the east side of the B & O Station then the trail would vary from the designated area shown on the Fire Station plans. Mr. Bush asked if WRA can obtain the plat for the site showing the designated easement. Ms. Seirafi said the Fire Station project is designed within DPW (Jim Stiles is PM) and the ROW is designated although it may not be a formal easement. Mr. Bush was referred to Mr. Michael Lowe (DPWT - Construction) to find out the status of the easement.

- B&O Station - The Facility Plan shows alternatives to the north and south of the station building. The building has been renovated and is occupied.

  There is also an existing underpass between the restored historic station and the station on the opposite side of tracks. Mr. Bush noted that he would like to know about whether that underpass could be closed. The new bridge or bridge modifications over Georgia Ave may impact the stairwell for the underpass. Ms. Tait-Nouri did not know whether MNCPPC would have concerns about its closure. It was suggested that CSXT be contacted since they control the underpass. It was noted that there may be a desire to maintain the underpass because it provides access between developments.

- CSX Bridge crossing over Georgia Ave- The Facility Plan recommended a separate bridge parallel to the existing bridge. The existing bridge appears old and was thought to be historic.

Ms. Wells said that preliminary inquiry with County records indicates that the bridge is a not listed on the National Register or as a County designated historic site. There was discussion about the need to verify its historic status and to determine whether it can be modified or not. Ms. Seirafi noted that if it is in need of structural rehab that there may be some flexibility to modify and incorporate the trail with the rehab. She suggested obtaining the results of the recent bridge inspection. WRA will request the plans for the CSX bridge and the latest inspection report. The existing plans may also include soil boring data.

There was considerable discussion on the importance of the bridge – since it is a visible entrance into Silver Spring and its historic status. Mr. Kines will check with Gwen Wright (Historic Preservation Commission) about the status of the bridge. MCDPWT will want to have a graphic designer to prepare a rendering of the proposed modifications to the existing bridge or for new parallel Trail bridge.

- Selim Road- Selim Road is a one-way road with parallel parking on both sides and could be narrowed to accommodate the trail. All of the businesses are automobile repair/body shops. Parking meters will be affected and there will need to be coordination with the Silver Spring Parking Authority. Utility poles and guy wires will be impacted. A retaining wall along the CSXT right of way line will likely need to be extended if the trail is located adjacent to the ROW line. The Burlington Avenue/Selim Road intersection has sight distance problems. An alternative is to construct the trail along the north side of Burlington between Fenton and Selim and to cross Burlington at the signalized intersection.

- Burlington Ave- The facility plan recommended a tunnel under Burlington Avenue near CSXT. MCDPWT desires to consider other alternatives to a tunnel. WRA has looked the intersection of Selim and Burlington and there are sight distance and trail grade issues along both roadways. An at-grade crossing of Burlington Avenue @ Selim Road will not be acceptable to SHA for safety reasons. Mr. Bradley said there are maintenance issues with the tunnel alternative. Ms. Seirafi said a tunnel alternative will still have to be studied since it was part of the Facility Plan.

  Mr. Makar noted WRA is looking at an alternative with a trail continuing on Fenton Street until it reaches Philadelphia Ave and continue Philadelphia Ave to Selim Road. However, in order to cross at the CSX bridge over Georgia Avenue, it would require that the trail turn back slightly. Ms. Wells noted that bicyclists would feel as though they were back tracking along this option. This alignment would require the trail to be longer, travel through automobile related business area and would require widening of the existing sidewalks. Ms. Seirafi and Mr. Asadullah said that they will perform a field visit and advise WRA further about whether this alternative should be pursued.

- Fenton Street- The re-alignment of Fenton Street has been completed. Montgomery College has built a bike/ped overpass from Fenton Street to the new and expanding portion of their campus off Jessup Blair Drive. Mr. Makar said that some narrowing of Fenton Street will be studied to fit the trail in with as little impact to the existing properties as possible. One issue is that the mini-storage business uses a portion of the public sidewalk as a parking pad for their trucks.

The preliminary concepts were shown on a display map to facilitate discussion.

Task Updates

Surveys - Mr. Makar showed a map of the survey data that has been provided. It was agreed that the survey work for this project should be initiated immediately.

Trail Facility- Reviewed earlier

Geo-technical- WRA requested the typical pavement sections for the trail.

Traffic- WRA has already requested SHA traffic and accident data for the Fenton Street/Burlington Ave area. WRA has collected AM/PM and mid-day bike/ped and automobile counts for Burlington Avenue/Fenton Street intersection.

Mapping- A large aerial display map with the Metropolitan Branch Trail alignment on it was provided to WRA. MCDPWT requested WRA to prepare a similar map with existing and planned bicycle routes in the area as well as the Metropolitan Branch Trail.

Action Items:

1.01 Mr. Kines will provide the local bike plans to WRA and will look into historic status of bridge.

1.02 WRA will advise Mr. Asadullah on what project data is available and still needed. Mr. Asadullah will follow up with ZGH on the Silver Spring Transit Center plan and seek any survey data.

1.03 WRA will proceed with survey work in order to verify DCI's earlier work and to confirm conditions.

1.04 WRA will determine how frequently to have progress meetings with the MCDPWT.

1.05 MCDPWT will determine if a Fall 2004 public meeting should occur on this project.

1.06 MCDPWT will advise WRA if a Philadelphia Avenue alignment be further studied.

1.07 WRA will contact Mike Lowe on obtaining Fire Station #1 property plat and base topo data.
WRA talked to Mike Lowe and Mike gave WRA contact person at Adteck Engineers. With discussion with Adteck, Adteck requires a request from MCDPWT before releasing the drawings.

1.08 WRA will contact CSXT on status of existing underpass.

1.09 WRA to obtain as-built plans of CSXT bridge over Georgia Avenue and latest inspection report.

1.10 MCDPWT to provide typical pavement section of proposed trail.

The above is a memorandum of understanding between the parties regarding the topics discussed and the decisions reached. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the minutes, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the minutes will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: September 13, 2004

Date of Meeting: August 31, 2004

Time: 2:00 pm

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building
9th Floor Conference Room

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Status Meeting
Meeting No.2

Attendees:

Sogand Seirafi	Chief of Planning Section
Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Fran Marcus	MCDPWT
Aruna Miller	MCDPWT
Pat Bradley	MCDPWT-Traffic
Chris Garnier	MCDPWT-Transit
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Chick Kines	MNCPPC
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Gary Bush	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Jim Guinther	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Steve Chamberlain	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

Introductions
All present introduced themselves. Ms. Wells distributed an agenda, concept plans (11"x 17"), a Traffic Analysis, and a 11" x 17" copy of the draft Trail Map.

Status /Review of Work to date

All background information needed to date has been obtained. Ms. Wells noted that there may be a need for information on Progress Place and the Ripley District plans as WRA develops concepts for the next segment of the trail between B&O rail station and Silver Spring Transit Center.

Status of Survey Work
Mr. Bush reported that the property mosaic was nearly complete. (A draft working copy of the property mosaic map was provided to Mr. Asadullah.) Still outstanding are the SHA Right-of-Way plat information and WMATA property plat information. Essentially, all property mosaic work is up to date, except for Right-of-Way.

Topographic surveys have been completed up to the railroad Right-of-Way area. We are awaiting the go ahead to enter railroad property in order to finish the topo. survey. The work map cannot be completed until the property mosaic is complete and all property evidence has been obtained through a metes and bounds survey. A completed final work map will be available in late October or early November.

Ms. Seirafi informed Mr. Bush that the County has a set of plat standards that can be provided to WRA by Henry Emery.

Coordination with CSX

Mr. Bush reported that WRA has submitted the right of entry agreement for topographic survey work along the CSX right-of-way. Work can proceed when the agreement is signed and WRA is assigned flagman protection from the railroad.

Update of Trail Map

Ms. Wells requested that the team review the handout of the draft trail map that showed the Metro Branch Trail with county and local bikeways. It was explained that this map in larger scale would be used for the public meeting. There was brief discussion on the map and the following changes should be made:

- The existing portion of the Metro Branch Trail should be distinguished from the project underway.
- An arrow should be added to show the continuation of the trail southbound.
- Show the Capital Crescent Trail.
- The pedestrian crossing over the CSX /WMATA line at Montgomery College should be shown.
- The green lines be changed to another color since they are difficult to see.
- Trail names (where existing) and street names should be added. Mr. Kines was asked to provide applicable trail names.

Ms.Tait-Nouri and Mr. Kines were asked to provide any additional comments on the map to Ms. Wells.

Burlington Avenue Crossing Concepts

Ms. Wells reviewed that WRA had submitted five options for the Burlington Ave crossing to Mr. Asadullah in July. WRA was advised to drop Options 2 and 3 and to conduct traffic analysis on the others. The team referred to Options 1, 4 and 5 included in the handout materials, and the advantages and disadvantages of each Option were reviewed. Traffic volumes for Gist, Philadelphia and Burlington were shown on the handouts Color photos of selected locations were shown.

Option 1

Advantages

- consistent with Facility Plan
- provides high quality facility
- safer with reduced cyclist/auto conflicts

Disadvantages

- cost of tunnel
- potential for security concerns and vandalism in tunnel
- disruption to traffic on Burlington during construction

Option 4

Advantages
- lower cost than Option 1
- connects to Fenton St Park
- minimal ROW needed

Disadvantages
- A one-way (outbound), to minimize potential for wrong-way traffic (destined for auto repair shops)at-grade trail crossings of King, Burlington, Old Philadelphia, Selim and 7 driveways along Philadelphia
- On and off-street parking impacts along Philadelphia
- Traffic implications at intersection of Fenton and Burlington the same as Option 5 as described in separate handout. Signal controller would need to be relocated.

Discussion
- Mr. Bush said it has been determined that the parking lot at Philadelphia and Selim is owned by MNCPPC rather than by the County. The lot will be impacted by Options 4 and 5.
- Mr. Kines informed the team that right-on-red is illegal within the Central Business District. This affects the traffic analysis shown for Options 4 and 5 as it was not taken into account.
- As shown on this Option, Fenton St. south of Burlington would be narrowed to avoid impacts to transformer.
- Avoidance of Fenton Street Park impacts is important along Old Philadelphia.
- The illegal parking that occurs along Philadelphia is a concern with a new 10' wide paved trail directly abutting the front of the many auto repairs shops since additional enforcement cannot be assumed.

<u>Option 5</u>

Advantages
- Reduced number of driveway and street crossings
- Connects to Fenton St Park
- Less impact to parking than Option 4

Disadvantages
- At-grade trail crossings at King, Burlington, Philadelphia
- Additional property acquisition
- Parking implications along Philadelphia
- Traffic implications on intersection of Fenton and Burlington the same as Option 4 as described in separate handout.

Discussion

- The potential need for emergency vehicle access between Gist and Philadelphia was discussed. Providing a curb cut for emergency services would allow other access as well.
- Does the portion of Philadelphia shown as two–way need to be two-way or would it make more sense for it all to be one way (outbound), to minimize potential for wrong-way traffic (destined for auto repair shops)?
- Access needs for the business on north side of Philadelphia need to be clarified. Access needs for dumpster may affect parking spaces.
- Mr. Kines noted that the redevelopment plan for the Silver Spring CBD should be checked. North of Philadelphia the overlay zone designates for redevelopment which means the auto related businesses would likely change to other uses.(He will check to see if redevelopment is

imminent in which case some dedication of land for the trail might be obtained. South of Philadelphia is designated as an industrial zone (I-4) which means that the current auto related businesses would likely continue. This makes Option 5 more desirable since the trail and the redevelopment could be made compatible.

- Mr. Chamberlain noted that with no right turn on red at Burlington permitted the traffic on Fenton would back up past Gist. Mr. Bradley did not think this area would likely qualify for an exception to the policy.

Georgia Avenue Crossing Concepts

It was noted that the bridge is owned by WMATA, with leasing rights provided to CSX. The bridge is more than 50 years old and is therefore potentially historic. Coordination with MHT has not yet begun, until a preferred concept is identified. Mr. Guinther described the bridge construction and why it would be extremely expensive to modify the existing bridge. Rail traffic would have to be maintained and the historic integrity of the bridge could likely not be changed. A new beam would be needed to expand the bridge. In addition, the stairwells from the bridge to Georgia Ave may also be considered historic.

Mr. Guinther referred to the handouts showing Options A, B, and C. Each concept plan showed The options for tie in to Burlington Ave crossings as discussed earlier.

Discussion

- 15' clearance on existing bridge; 17.75' clearance needed for new bridge. The possibility of a design exception from SHA was noted by Ms. Seirafi.
- 5% grade maximum sought to meet ADA guidelines
- Underpass at B&O rail station would have to be maintained for inspection if the structure is not filled in.
- The advantages and disadvantages of each Option were reviewed. All Options have impacts on the B&O Station.
- The need to design the bridge to be compatible with the B&O station was noted.
- Ms Tait-Nouri is to meet with B&O museum to determine which Option is preferred. Ms. Seirafi said that MCDPWT will show the museum the preferred Option at the public meeting.
- It was noted that the towers of a suspension bridge would be a concern.
- WRA prefers Option A.
- Option C is shortest but most likely to affect sight distance of signal.
- The cost estimate for each Option was requested.
- Bridge would be enclosed.

{After internal consultation, MCDPWT subsequently advised WRA to pursue Option A which is slightly shorter than Option B. A black truss bridge was recommended as an alternative for esthetic reasons. WRA notes that several structural options will need to be carried through the pre-ts&l stage to show that alternatives were investigated}

Next steps:

Ms Wells said that WRA will proceed with development of concepts for the potion of the trail from Georgia Ave to the Silver Spring Transit Center. This would include the interim and

ultimate alignments as per the Scope of Work. Ms Wells noted that WRA seeks two areas of clarification:

- WRA would like MCDPWT to confirm the trail design assumptions for the interim section. (e.g. how long should it be assumed that the trail would be in use?) Ms Wells assumed there should be coordination with the plans in development for the Ripley District. The status of plans impacting Progress Place were noted specifically. Ms Seirafi clarified that WRA should not do any interim trail design at all. She said that the consultant working on the Ripley District will be totally responsible for the interim trail. Ms. Wells noted that this is a change from the approved Scope of Work.
- Ms Wells noted that since the final design of the Silver Spring Transit Center is not available and no usable survey data has been provided to WRA there is uncertainty as to what data to reference for this segment. WRA was advised to design the trail to tie in at the existing grade at the Bonifant Street cul-de-sac WRA plans for the Trail will be submitted to the consultant working on the Transit Center for review and comment. It was noted by Ms. Tait-Nouri that a safe crossing must be incorporated into the concept since this area is busy with bus, pedestrian and automobile traffic.

Initiate Discussion with MHT

Once a preferred concept is identified the coordination with MHT should proceed.

General Discussion

- MCDPWT has been contacted by property owner near Fire Station. It is not clear yet if parcel is impacted.
- Discussion on when it best to go to public meeting- whether to do that before all detailed survey work is complete or not. It was agreed to wait until all survey work is complete before going to public since cost estimates will be affected.
- It was agreed to take 3 Options for Burlington to the public meeting.

Action Items:

1.01 MCDPWT to get back to WRA on bridge preferences.
1.02 WRA to develop conservative cost estimates for bridge and tunnel options with ROW costs included. (Each metered parking space is assumed to have an assigned value. Such information will be needed from Montgomery County)
1.03 Options to be re-numbered as 1, 2, and 3 for public meeting.
1.04 WRA to revise traffic analysis for Fenton @ Burlington assuming no turn on red.
1.05 WRA to look at these recent pedestrian and bicyclist counts to compare to pedestrian and bicyclist counts from Bethesda sample sent by Uzair to determine if comparable.
1.03 WRA to do a photo simulation of the new bridge with the existing bridge.
1.04 Mr. Hines and Ms. Tait- Nouri to provide comments to WRA on trail names and other map revisions.
1.05 Mr. Kines to advise on status of any imminent redevelopment plans for Philadelphia Ave.

The above is a memorandum of understanding between the parties regarding the topics discussed and the decisions reached. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the minutes, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the minutes will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: December 14 , 2004

Meeting Date: December 1, 2004

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building
10th Floor Conference Room

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Status Meeting
Meeting No.3

Attendees:

Sogand Seirafi	Chief of Planning Section
Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Fran Marcus	MCDPWT
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Larry White	MCDPWT
Gary Stith	Silver Spring Regional Center
Miguel Iraola	MNCPPC
Augustine Rebish	SHA-District 3
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Jim Guinther	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

Introductions

All present introduced themselves. Ms. Wells distributed an agenda, 11" x 17" concept plans showing trail Options 1, 2 and 3 and a more detailed plan of the trail alignment from Silver Spring Transit Center to the B&O Railroad Station.

Update Items

Map

The trail map for the project has been updated based on input from MCDPWT. A large sized color map was provided to Mr. Asadullah.

Status of survey work/coordination with CSX

Surveys have been completed except for the portion of work for which access to the CSX ROW is needed. WRA is waiting for CSX to provide dates when flagman can be provided for the survey work. It is expected that the work will be completed on a weekend.

Wetland Delineation

Wetland delineations have been completed. Draft reports for MCDPWT review are forthcoming.

Need for historical subconsultant

WRA has indicated a desire to obtain a scope of work from R. Christopher Goodwin, who is a subconsultant on this contract. The services of an architectural historian are desired to clarify the historic status of the Georgia Ave Bridge and related structures and to advise the team in the consultation process necessary for the B&O station. It was agreed to discuss this matter after the progress meeting.

Presentation of the proposed trail concept from the B&O Station to Silver Spring Transit Center

There was a review of the alignment shown and its impacts.

Impacts on Progress Place

Progress Place is a county owned structure housing social services that would be impacted by the trail. The side of the building adjacent to the railroad (with the loading dock) and parking for the building will be impacted. In preparing the initial cost estimate for the project, WRA needed more information on the building.

On November 23rd WRA and MCDPWT staff held a meeting at Progress Place with: Alex Wertheim (Health and Human Services Department); Jackie Coyle (Shepherd's Table) Mary Jane Smith (Community Vision) and staff from Wilson T. Ballard (the consultant working on the Ripley District Plan.) The purpose of the meeting was to have WRA's architects and engineers view the interior of the building and its uses so that a conceptual cost estimate could be prepared and a concept for mitigating the building could be prepared. In the course of the Nov.23rd meeting it was also noted that the implementation of the Ripley District plan would result in additional impacts to Progress Place on the opposite side of the building.

WRA has prepared a very preliminary concept for replacing the building area that will be impacted by the project. The cost of modifications to Progress Place has been included in the conceptual cost estimate for the project. It was noted that WRA has not shared the modification concept with Progress Place.

There was some discussion about the feasibility of modifying the building and the need to meet ingress and egress codes. Mr. Asadullah requested improved drawings for the Progress Place concepts. Since no detailed plans for Progress Place have been provided to WRA, the concept has been drawn on the floor plan provided by MCDPWT.

There was discussion on the project schedule and whether the current services provided in Progress Place would still be in place when the Metropolitan Branch Trail is actually built. Ms. Seirafi said that she expects the Trail project to be in construction in approximately 5 years. Mr. Stith said that it is likely that Progress Place services will be relocated from its current location in five years. However, no funding is in place for that.

Given this situation, WRA was advised that as the project moves ahead it will still be necessary to propose mitigation for the impacts to the Progress Place building as part of the Metropolitan Branch Trail project. It will be necessary to have further consultation with the agencies in the building on the proposed modifications. However, the proposed modifications would only need to be developed to a conceptual level of a viable option for discussion and for inclusion in project information at public meetings. It is assumed that other County agencies will move ahead with plans for relocation of Progress Place services.

In order to provide improved concept plan for the modification, Mr. Guinther requested that WRA be provided with detailed plans (including structural, mechanical, electrical, and foundation plans) for Progress Place. Mr. Asadullah was asked to obtain the plans for WRA. It was noted that Mr. Wertheim (HHS) had indicated he could provide the plans.

EHB Property

Mr. Asadullah reported that a letter has been sent to EHB advising that the property (Covington Buick Body Shop) will be impacted by the project. He has spoken to the property owner as well.

It was noted by Mr. Iraola that in the development approval process MNCPPC had KSI Development set aside an easement for the Metro Branch trail consistent with plans for the Ripley District. The concept for the trail shown today by WRA was not based on that information since WRA staff was not aware that an easement had been created. Mr. Iraola was requested to have the consultant provide digital files showing the easement set aside for the trail to Mr. Asadullah.

There was further discussion of the Ripley District plan to extend Ripley Street parallel to the railroad and to connect with Confidant. WRA was advised by that the existing cul-de-sac at Bonifant would be eliminated and Bonifant would then intersect with the extension of Ripley Street.

Bi-County Transitway

An Alternative under study for the Bi-County Transitway will cross through the Trail project areas. Mr. Asadullah said that Mike Madden of MTA was invited to attend this meeting to discuss the project. Ms. Wells was advised to contact Mr. Madden.

Silver Spring Transit Center

The alignment plan for Metro Branch Trail will be provided to the consultants for the Silver Spring Transit Center (ZGF) for their review.

Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station

Ms. Wells noted that there was a meeting at the Railroad station on October 19th and she provided copies of the meeting notes. At that meeting the trail concept plans were shared with Ms. Nancy Urban (Manager of the Station and Montgomery Preservation Board member.) Ms. Urban was asked to provide a letter indicating the Board's preference for the trail being placed in front of or behind the station.

There have been questions posed by Ms Urban since the meeting regarding the impacts of the project on parking (daily and special event) and the need for the ramp coming from the bridge onto the Railroad Station parcel. The alignment going behind the station will allow for provision

of 12 parking spaces. The station tenant currently has a need for 8 to 10 parking spaces on a daily basis for its on-site employees. Mr. Asadullah advised WRA not to worry about replacement parking beyond the spaces needed for daily tenants. The proposed height of the bridge results in the need for the ramp. Ms. Urban has concerns about the impact of the ramp on the station property. It was noted by Mr. Guinther that for the trail to be ADA compliant, access has been assumed to occur via the pedestrian access on the existing railroad bridge.

Ms Urban would like a rendering of the proposed bridge to present to the Board members. WRA has begun work on bridge renderings and expects to have them completed by Dec 15th. The renderings will assume that the trail goes behind the building. The renderings will be provided to Mr. Asadullah for comment by MCDPWT, at which time the meeting with the Board will be set for further discussions.

There was discussion on the impacts of the trail on the CSX underpass/vault. The current concept assumes filling of the existing tunnel since it is no longer used for access. Mr. Stith indicated that he thinks the underpass was transferred from CSX to Montgomery County as part of the UBG property development approval. He also believes that the tunnel has an historic designation and as such could not be closed permanently, but any treatment would have to be reversible. WRA was not aware that the tunnel had been transferred or that the tunnel had historic designation. Further investigation and historic coordination will be necessary.

Fire Station

It was noted that a 35' easement has been established on the fire station property for the trail. There is no formal park proposed on the fire station site adjacent to the railroad station, but rather, an open space area. The location of the 35-ft. easement is not defined and can be defined by WRA during the planning/design process.

Initial Cost Estimates

Mr. Guinther distributed conceptual cost estimates for the three trail options. He began to review the assumptions made in developing the estimates. Mr. Asadullah said that he did not want too much detail presented and that he preferred that only the differences between the costs be pointed out.

Option 1 along Selim with Tunnel under Burlington

Total cost $13,205,000

Major Cost Distinctions

- Burlington Ave Tunnel
- Retaining walls along Selim and south of Burlington Avenue to King Street
- Utility costs higher
- CSX coordination costs higher

Parking: 22 Parking Spaces removed

Option 2 along south side of Philadelphia

Total Cost $7,360,000

Major Cost Distinctions

- More properties impacted
- Less Structural costs and CSX/WMATA Coordination

Parking: 38 Parking Spaces removed

Option 3 along north side of Philadelphia
- Total cost $7,900,000
- Major Cost Distinctions
  - Increased cost for ROW needed (strip)
  - Less Structural costs and CSX/WMATA Coordination
- Parking: 21 Parking Spaces removed

There were comments made by Mr. Rebish on the type of tunnel estimated for Burlington Ave and the costs associated with the construction. Mr. Guinther explained that a cut and cover tunnel was estimated due to the difficulties associated with tunnel jacking operations. Plans for maintenance of traffic were briefly discussed.

Initial recommended Option.

Mr. Asadullah asked those present to indicate which Option they preferred based on the information known.

Mr. Iraola said that he did not like Option 3.

Ms Tait-Nouri prefers Option 1.

Ms Marcus prefers Option 1 due to safety and fewer property impacts.

Discussion:

It would be difficult for the trail to extend along the north side of Philadelphia and then cross over at Fenton. Mr. Iraola also mentioned that streetscape requirements have been developed for Philadelphia Ave. Mr. Guinther requested that the requirements be forwarded to WRA for use. He thinks that the plan for the area requires a 70' wide ROW and recommended that we plan the trail within that ultimate ROW which would exist when the north side of Philadelphia is ultimately redeveloped. Mr. Guinther was not sure of the current ROW limits shown. *Post Meeting Comment: Majority of Philadelphia Avenue is a 25-ft. roadway on a 50-ft. right-of-way.*

Mr. Iraola stated that the MNCPPC property at the corner of Philadelphia Avenue and Selim Road may not need to be reconfigured for parking since it is parkland property. This would need to be followed up further depending on the alignment option chosen. Mr. Iraola noted that MNCPPC has already begun to acquire land for the Fenton Street Park to be converted and expanded into a skateboarding park. He showed a copy of the concept plan for the park with a parking lot added. He pointed out the property to the south of the current park that had already been acquired and that the area that is now a stub street will be used as part of the park.

Ms Marcus noted that she has concerns about the ROW impacts of Options 2 and 3.
It was noted that the cost estimates would have to include costs for damages where portions of property are taken and use is affected, such as removal of property access from Philadelphia Road for Options 2 and 3. Mr. Guinther agreed that those costs would have to be included in final estimates.

The potential to consolidate driveways along Philadelphia Avenue was discussed. Mr. Iraola thought Philadelphia Avenue was wide enough, 40-ft. +/-, to accommodate this consolidation. Mr. Guinther stated he did not believe the roadway to be that wide, but would follow-up. *Post Meeting Comment:*

Majority of Philadelphia Avenue is a 25-ft. roadway on a 50-ft. right-of-way. Philadelphia Avenue is 40-ft. wide +/- along the park at the intersection with Fenton Street.

There was discussion about the impacts of Option 2 and 3 on parking and whether angled parking could be provided along Selim to replace parking lost on Philadelphia.

It was noted by Mr. Iraola that some property owners may give easements for the trail rather than sell strips of land in order to retain higher density potential.

Meeting Wrap up
A considerable amount of new information was presented to WRA on properties and plans affecting the trail alignment. In order to revise the alignment and the cost estimates WRA will need to obtain:

- available information on the plans for the extension of Ripley Street and the re-alignment of Bonifant Street in order to revise the alignment
- information on the KSI property easement for the trail
- More information on the Fenton Street Park limits
- Clarification on the Plan requirements for Philadelphia Road ROW under the redevelopment of the CBD and whether WRA is to take that into account as part of this project
- Existing Progress Place plans

Action Items:

3.1 WRA to provide bridge /station renderings to MCDPWT (Dec 15)
3.2 MCDPWT to schedule meeting with the Board of Directors for Montgomery Preservation Inc. to present the renderings and discuss their concerns.
3.3 WRA to contact MTA (Mike Madden) re: Bi County Transit Way
3.4 MCDPWT to provide WRA with recent building plan for Progress Place so that bldg modifications can be drawn for additional consultation with Progress Place tenants
3.5 MCDPWT to provide WRA with digital files for KSI development showing easement set aside for trail.
3.6 WRA to contact Gwen Wright (MNCPPC) regarding historic status of bridge, underpass and stairs.

The above is a memorandum of understanding between the parties regarding the topics discussed and the decisions reached. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the minutes, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the minutes will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: February 23, 2005

Meeting Date: February 16, 2005

Time: 10:00 am

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building
10th Floor Conference Room

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Status Meeting
Meeting No.4

Attendees:

Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Fran Marcus	MCDPWT
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Pat Bradley	MCDPWT-Traffic
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Jim Guinther	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

Introductions

All present introduced themselves. An agenda and an Option Comparison matrix were distributed. Mr. Asadullah said that MNCPPC staff has advised him that they could not attend. Their comments on the Options were distributed by Mr. Asadullah. Addtionally a February 10th letter sent to Mr. Asadullah by Montgomery Preservation was distributed.

Discussion & Recommendation of Preferred Alignment Option

Ms. Wells reviewed the factors presented in the Matrix. (see attached) She noted that the Options are the same west of Georgia Ave and highlighted the differences between the Options on the east side of Georgia Ave. Option 1 is the alternative recommended in the Facility Study that includes a tunnel under Burlington Ave. Option 2 is the alternative that follows the south side of Philadelphia Ave. Option 3 is the alternative that follows the north side of Philadelphia Ave.

The impact of the project on public parking has been discussed previously. "No net loss of parking" was stated as a goal in the comments sent by MNCPPC today. Ms. Wells noted that a distinguishing design factor included in Option 3 is the angled parking along the north side of Philadelphia Ave. The net loss

of parking with Option 3 is estimated to be 11 spaces. This Option has the lowest impact on parking of all the Options. **Mr. Bradley stated that angled parking is not permitted in Montgomery County;** therefore the angled parking design would not be permitted on Philadelphia. Mr. Guinther noted that WRA would need to revise design to eliminate the angled parking. Updated information on the estimates of impacted parking will need to be provided. (Updated estimates of parking impacts have been incorporated into the matrix attached to these meeting notes.)

Mr. Bradley said that the County seeks to have a better balance between vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. This project provides an opportunity to create a trail that people will use. A goal for this project should be to minimize the conflicts between bikes and cars. He therefore prefers Option 1 since it will minimize such conflicts.

There was a review of the conceptual cost estimates that were provided at the Dec. 1st Project Status meeting.
Estimated Cost of Option 1 = $13 million
Estimate Cost of Option 2 = $ 7.3 million
Estimated Cost Option 3 = $ 7.9 million

Mr. Guinther noted the following:

- All Options were assumed to have similar impacts to Progress Place. If those impacts are eliminated, the adjustment to costs for all Options would be the same.
- The costs include right of way but do not include estimates of cost for impacts to use of property.

There was some discussion on the number of impacted private properties. The letter from Montgomery Preservation seeks compensation for the loss of parking spaces caused by the trail crossing through the parking area for the historic Silver Spring Railroad Station. Ms. Marcus said that the method of compensation for easements will have to be determined later. Mr. Guinther sought clarification on the easement for the trail through the Fire Station property. Ms. Marcus noted that from a real estate point of view, Option # 1 is preferred due to fewer private property impacts (11 properties in Option 1 vs. 17 properties for Option 2 and 21 properties for Option 3)

There was discussion about how Options 2 and 3 relate to the proposed Fenton Street skateboarding park. Mr. Guinther showed the concept map for the park that was provided to WRA earlier. As currently shown, Options 2 and 3 would follow the Old Philadelphia Ave roadway and would therefore bisect the proposed park. According to input from MNCPPC staff, the plans and details for the park will not be resolved before this project moves ahead. MNCPPC staff advised Ms. Wells that they would assume that the Metro Branch Trail alignment in the area of Philadelphia and Fenton would have to be modified with the implementation of the park. Mr. Guinther noted however that there had already been concerns noted about having the Metro Branch Trail intersect with Fenton Street at a right angle.

Mr. Asadullah asked those present whether all Options should be taken to the public meeting anticipated to occur in March. He prefers to show all three with Option # 1 shown as the preferred Option.

Update Items /Coordination

A meeting was held on Jan 26th between WRA staff and the **MTA** and consultants for the BiCounty Transitway. Ms. Wells shared meeting notes from that meeting. She noted two points from the meeting:

- there is an assumption by MTA that there is a separate easement for the transitway through the fire station property
- consultants for MTA recommended showing the Metro Branch Trail alignment in the vicinity of Silver Spring Transit Center as interim since the trail would be modified when the Transitway is built. (Concepts show the trail could be moved above grade or below grade when the transitway is built.)

Mr. Asadullah said that the trail alignment will not be labeled as interim.

Silver Spring B&O Station Meeting
Meeting notes from the Dec 29th meeting with the Montgomery Preservation Board members were available. The additional renderings requested by the Board at that meeting were provided by WRA. MPI's letter indicating preference for the rear alignment has been received. The letter outlines several conditions under which they will grant an easement for the trail project.

A **meeting was held on Dec 29th with Gwenn Wright** MNCPPC's Historic Preservation Supervisor. Mr. Asadullah has also followed up with Ms. Wright. WRA has sent a draft letter, maps and renderings proposed to be included with the letter MCDPWT intends to send to the Maryland Historic Trust. There has been some discussion about how much detail to include with the letter. Mr. Asadullah said that he would follow up on the letter next week.

Philadelphia Ave Property Owners meeting
Only a few property owners came to the January 27th meeting. Mr. Asadullah said that he had received comments from one of the property owners.

Next Steps
Mr. Guinther recommends initiating coordination with CSX and WMATA. He and Mr. Asadullah will follow up to initiate such meetings.

A public meeting for the project is proposed to occur in late March at the board Room of the MNCPPC's Silver Spring Office (8787 Georgia Ave.) A mailing will be sent out and a meeting handout will be prepared. Ms. Wells will coordinate with Mr. Asadullah on the project materials.

Action Items:

4.1 WRA to revise Option 3 to eliminate angled parking and re-asses parking impacts.
4.2 Mr. Asadullah to follow up with WRA (Mr. Guinther) regarding coordination with CSX , WMATA.
4.3 WRA to provide text description of Options and concept plans in digital format for inclusion in public meeting materials.
4.4 MCDPWT to identify dates for potential public meeting and to confirm availability of Board Room for Public meeting dates
4.5 WRA to prepare list of materials proposed for display at public meeting.

The above is a memorandum of understanding between the parties regarding the topics discussed and the decisions reached. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the minutes, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the minutes will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WR&A
WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

Engineers, Architects and Planners
Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: 3/16/05

Date of Meeting: 3/15/05

Time: 10:30 am

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building – 9th Floor

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Status Meeting No. 5

Attendees:

Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Chuck Kines	MNCPPC
Rusty Wallace	Silver Spring Regional Center
Christine Wells	WRA, consultant
Jim Guinther	WRA, consultant

The purpose of this meeting was to review the proposed displays and handouts for the March 22nd Public Workshop. An outline of the proposed displays was used as the basis for discussion. Ms. Wells and Mr. Guinther provided 11" x17" handouts of the proposed displays and a mock up version of the proposed public workshop handout. There was discussion on the displays, the handout and on staffing. The outcome of those discussions is noted below.

Meeting displays:

- There will not be a display on the Project Development process. Instead a flow chart showing the process should be included in the handout.
- Location Map- verify that the line colors show well on the final display. Adjust the size of the leader line labeling the limit of the existing portion of the Metro Branch trail.
- Another display entitled "Existing and Proposed Regional Bike Routes" will be prepared. Labels for Silver Spring Transit Center, Montgomery College and B&O station to be included.
- One board will show 3 conceptual renderings for the new bridge over Georgia Ave with existing bridge photo.
- One board will show conceptual renderings that provide context of the trail with the historic rail station.

- One board for each alignment Option east of Georgia Ave will be prepared.
- The full alignment and an enlargement of the Option will be included. Key landmarks to be added to full alignment map. **Option 1 will not be labeled as preferred**.
- An enhanced cross section will also be shown on each board.
- A separate board with Proposed Cross Sections will be shown. Labels will be added to indicate location of cross section on previous displays.
- A note will be added to explain asterisk on cross sections to be added.
- 11"x 17" copies of the display boards will be prepared for Uzair and Gail.
- Jim asked if boards will be kept by MCDPWT and re-used? He wondered whether heavier paper should be used for durability. Uzair requested that select boards be made more durable for his use- specifically the location map, regional map, and both renderings boards.
- A footnote will be added to all renderings to say" these are artistic renderings and may not represent final design."

Discussion of Handout:

- Revise text to indicate work started for Phase II Facility Planning. (Survey work.)
- Add list of other team members from each agency as shown in mail out.
- Add flow chart on project development process
- Add photo of B&O station
- Edit/modify comparison chart per discussion
- Add text regarding trail through the Silver spring Transit Center and project manager name.

Chris will revise the handout and was requested to send it out to Uzair, Gail and Chuck for final review. MCDPWT will make final edits and print handouts for meeting.

Discussion of Staffing:

- Name tags will be prepared by WRA for the following :
  Uzair, Gail, Fran Marcus, Chuck Kines, Gary Stith, Miguel Iraola, Pat Bradley, Bruce Johnston, Glen Kreger.
- Uzair asked WRA to provide a third staff person in addition to Chris and Jim. (Bryan Townsend from WRA will also attend.)
- There will be a sign in table that Gail will cover.

Other:

- There was discussion about the meeting times. The mail out indicates 6:30 -8:30 but Rusty thinks that something was sent out indicating a 6:00 pm start time. Staff should be there early in case there is confusion about the start time.

- Rusty requested a brief paragraph on the project to send out to his list serve. Uzair will send him the press release information.

- There was discussion about meeting for dinner in advance of the March 22nd meeting.

Meeting Notes Prepared by: Christine Wells

WR&A
WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

Engineers, Architects and Planners
Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: April 25, 2005
Date of Meeting: April 21, 2005

Time: 1:30 pm

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building – 6th Floor

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Status Meeting No. 6

Attendees:

Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Pat Bradley	MCDPWT-Traffic
Fran Marcus	MCDPWT
Rusty Wallace	Silver Spring Regional Center
Miguel Iraola	MNCPPC
Carl Starkey	MCDPWT
Christine Wells	WRA, consultant
Jim Guinther	WRA, consultant

An agenda was distributed.

Review of Public Comments from March 22nd Public Meeting

Ms. Wells handed out a draft matrix of public comments received verbally by WR& A staff at the meeting, and in writing since the meeting. She also provided copies of the March 25th memo she had sent to Mr. Asadullah which summarized the comments received by WR&A staff. Mr. Asadullah gave Ms. Wells two more comment cards that had been sent in. Ms. Wells sought clarification from Mr. Asadullah on the intended use of the matrix. He said the matrix would become part of the project prospectus but would not be sent out or posted on line.

She provided a brief overview of the comments received and noted that County staff who attended the meeting may want to provide her with additional comments, or replies given at the meeting. Comments favored Option 1 because it has fewer at-grade crossings.

Project Schedule

Mr. Guinther distributed copies of the Project Schedule that had been sent to Mr. Asadullah on April 6th. Mr. Guinther noted that this is a tight schedule with tasks overlapped. It was noted that if there was any ability to expedite the county's review time then the schedule might be shortened.

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Some of the key milestones were discussed as follows:

Coordination with CSX/WMATA

A coordination meeting with CSXT & WMATA had been targeted for April 26th. The actual meeting has not yet been scheduled by Mr. Asadullah. Mr. Guinther noted that he had identified the contact people to arrange the meeting. There was discussion about the importance of this meeting and the challenges of coordinating projects with CSX and WMATA. The WMATA liaison within M CDPWT may be helpful on this matter. Mr. Bradley and Ms Marcus noted that the coordination meeting should occur as soon as possible since the outcome could affect on the project.

(At the end of this Status Meeting Mr. Asadullah asked Mr. Guinther to initiate contact with CSX and WMATA about potential meeting dates. He wanted for MCDPWT to confirm the meeting in writing to CSX and WMATA once a date had been selected)

Public Hearing

Mr. Asadullah said that a hearing may or may not be held at the discretion of the Director.

Mandatory Referral to MNCPPC

Mr. Iraola noted that this submittal should occur after the 30% submittal rather than before hand as shown on the schedule. That would put it in October 2005 rather than July or August.

He also mentioned that the Planning Board is in summer recess in August.

Cost Estimate

The schedule shows preliminary cost estimate to be submitted by Sept 6th with the preliminary 30% submittal. Mr. Guinther provided copies of the revised conceptual cost estimates for Options 1-3 dates April 15, 2005. He and Fran Marcus have conferred to come up with estimates of property impacts. He referred to a matrix that showed analysis of property impacts for Options 1-3.

A comment was made by Mr. Starkey that signal modification costs of $10,000 shown is too low.

There was discussion about the security measures proposed for the tunnel under Burlington Ave. Mr. Wallace said the Silver Spring Urban District may have the staff available to supplement additional security in the area. Mr. Guinther said that since Montgomery College has security cameras in the area, he thought it made sense to check whether they could monitor an additional camera in the tunnel if it was installed? People thought that idea made sense, and suggested that a call be made to Montgomery College to initiate an inquiry on this.

Mr. Asadullah asked whether a cost estimate could be prepared sooner than Sept 6th? Ms. Wells asked if the amount of detail in the Conceptual Cost Estimate was adequate then it is available now as a place holder for capital budget purposes. Ms. Tait-Nouri said that she thought the conceptual cost estimate should be fine for that. Mr. Asadullah will advise WR&A if that is not the case.

There was discussion on the construction management and engineering fee of 20% shown in the conceptual cost estimate. Mr. Guinther sought clarification on where that fee should be shown on the cost estimate. Mr. Bradley asked the same question about the 25% contingency.

Staff was asked to provide any further comments on the Conceptual Cost estimates to WR&A.

Project Coordination

- Mr. Asadullah is in the lead for coordination with MHT and Montgomery Preservation.
- There are no changes to the assumptions to be made about Progress Place.
- KSI property
  There was some discussion about coordination between KSI /the Silver Spring Transit Center and this Project. The KSI property actually links this project to the Transit Center site. WR&A has received files from KSI and our project is intended to tie in to the existing grade. Mr. Iraola noted that there are issues to be addressed where the KSI property links to the Silver Spring Transit Center. He expects there to be a meeting with KSI/Ripley District Planners/Silver Spring Transit Center and Metro Branch staff to coordinate these projects.

Meeting Notes Prepared by: Christine Wells

WR&A
WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

Engineers, Architects and Planners
Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: June 8, 2005

Date /Time Of Meeting: May 24, 2005 1:30 pm

Location: Montgomery County
Executive Office Building – 10th Floor

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Status Meeting No. 7

Attendees:

Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Pat Bradley	MCDPWT-Traffic
Fran Marcus	MCDPWT
Rusty Wallace	Silver Spring Regional Center
Gary Stith	Silver Spring Regional Center
Glenn Kreger	MNCPPC
Chuck Kines	MNCPPC
Chris Garnier	MCDPWT Transit
Christine Wells	WRA, consultant
Jim Guinther	WRA, consultant

An agenda, copies of an alignment map for a new alignment Option 4 and photos of Selim Road were distributed.

It was explained that since the last meeting, WRA had been advised to develop a new Selim Road option without a tunnel under Burlington Ave. Mr. Asadullah explained that this new direction was given to WRA after he consulted with the Silver Spring Regional Center regarding the Burlington Ave tunnel proposed as part of the preferred Option.

The Silver Spring Center finds potential problems associated with a tunnel under Burlington. Among their concerns were crime, a perception of crime, vagrants and maintenance issues. Their concerns and inability to commit to providing security for the tunnel lead MCDPWT to seek an option without a tunnel. WRA was also advised to avoid impacts to the CSXT/WMATA Right-of-Way if possible.

Mr. Guinther reviewed Option 4 which follows Selim Road from Georgia to Burlington with an at-grade crossing of Burlington at Fenton. He noted key design factors:

- The trail along Selim has 6 driveway crossings.

- A stop condition for the trail for the mid block trail crossing of Selim is assumed.
- A 6' offset for the trail from face-of-curb to allow for safer trail crossing of the 6 driveways along Selim Road and driveway entrance constructability.
- Along Selim, the roadway shown is 16' feet wide and the trail width shown from the mid-block crossing on Selim to Burlington is 8'.
- Efforts were made to minimize impacts to the metered on-street parking along Selim especially west of the mid block crossing. If parking here is eliminated and the offset from trail to roadway is reduced to 4', it is possible to avoid CSXT/WMATA Right-of-Way impacts.
- The corner of Burlington and Selim has slopes that exceed ADA compliance. With this Option, the property entrance may need to be relocated and adjustments to the retaining wall may be needed to meet ADA requirements.
- Additional investigation would be needed to proceed with this Option.

There was discussion about this Option.

Mr. Kines explained MNCPPC's comments on Option 4:

- From a user safety point of view, there are too many driveway crossings on the trail, making it flawed.
- This trail is intended to be a regional trail and will serve as the main southern bike access to Silver Spring. The proximity of Option 4 to commercial buildings and the number of driveway crossings makes it unacceptable.
- The Planning Board will *likely* continue to support Option 1 with the tunnel, *which is the master plan alignment.*
- Mr. Kines proposed an alternative alignment for the trail to cross mid-block on Selim and continue through the Culp properties along Selim. The idea is to take the trail through the parking lot behind the building to the intersection of Fenton and Burlington. This would eliminate the safety concerns for trail users at the intersection of Selim and Burlington and would link the trail to the proposed Fenton Gateway park site which makes sense.

It was noted that WRA had developed an initial concept similar to this whereby Selim Road was modified to go through the Culp owned building connecting with Philadelphia and the trail continued along Selim. Due to anticipated property costs the concept was not developed any further.

There was discussion about the status of the Fenton Park Plan.

There was discussion about the ramp along the west-side of Selim next to the RR tracks (and the associated 20-foot high retaining wall) up to Burlington Avenue. The discussion led to agreement that it would be difficult to do and likely as expensive as the tunnel,

Another different option was described that would eliminate the traffic conflicts with the trail. This new option would require the reversal of traffic on Selim to one-way northbound only. This may eliminate the sight distance and turning movement safety issues near the intersection with Burlington. The trail would then cross Selim closer to Burlington and follow the north side of Selim thereby eliminating the driveway crossing conflicts.

- Ms. Wells asked if elimination of all metered parking is feasible to consider. She noted that earlier WRA had been advised of a MNCPPC concern about the loss of parking.
- Mr. Bradley wants to see traffic data before he comments on the traffic safety issues along Selim Road. However, he did note that a goal of his group is to improve the conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists and that increased bike/pad/auto conflicts does not do this.

- SHA's district office would need to be consulted to determine whether changing the direction of Selim would work and be approved by them. Mr. Asadullah concurred that WRA should initiate contact with SHA on this question before doing further design on the new Option.

- An additional Option was suggested that would take the trail from Selim through the triangular building @ 903 Selim Road (owned by Arden Baker et al) to reach the proposed Fenton Park area and the intersection of Burlington and Fenton. Such an option would eliminate the steep grade and sight distance issues at the intersection of Selim and Burlington.

WRA was advised to do the following:

Analyze the traffic issues associated with newly described Option that would reverse the direction of auto traffic on Selim.

Talk with SHA District staff to assess their receptivity to this Option. Only, if viable from a traffic perspective should this Option be developed through engineering.

If reversal of traffic is not feasible, then WRA should look into other Options that would go through the Arden Baker et al building or the Culp Building. Mr. Guinther noted that because the buildings share common walls, an engineer would need to get inside the building to assess the feasibility of removing the building to put the trail through.

There was some discussion about whether the trail is considered a new facility and the need for it to comply with ADA requirements. It was noted that planning staff regard this trail to be a new facility that would need to meet ADA standards. WRA will confirm/clarify the ADA requirements for this trail facility which is a new facility following existing road grades.

WRA will not develop cost estimates for Option 4 or the new Options yet.

Ms. Wells noted that the project schedule distributed at the last team meeting will not be met since there is not yet consensus on a preferred Option.

Ms. Wells noted that it may be wise to inform the public about new Options that are now under study. The majority of commenter supported Option 1 due to the grade separation of the Burlington crossing.

It was noted that the Study Team should have a preferred Option to identify to the County Council. However, it may be that MCDPWT will identify one preference and MNCPPC another. Mr. Asadullah said it is possible that the three previous Options and others will be taken to the County Council for consideration.

The above is a memorandum of the meeting. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the memorandum, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the memorandum will stand as written.

Meeting Notes Prepared by: Christine Wells

Update:

On May 25th after making a site visit, Mr. Asadullah contacted WRA and revised the follow up instructions to WR&A. He thinks that the two-story building on the Henry L.Culp property would be very difficult to modify and at this time, it does not appear as feasible as going through the 903 Selim Road building. He told WR&A to investigate only the crossing of Selim Road at the 903 Selim Road building taking the trail to Old Philadelphia Road and connecting to the Fenton/Burlington Avenue intersection.

Mr. Asadullah said he would like to have a stop sign on Selim Road without reversing the traffic direction to allow free flow of the trail users. WR&A's traffic engineers will look at this alignment option and let Mr. Asadullah know whether or not the condition is feasible before proceeding with preliminary development of the alignment as an option. Mr. Guinther noted that traffic may still need to be reversed to provide a safe crossing of the trail at this location provided the reversal of traffic meets all appropriate criteria.

Appendix C
Coordination Meeting Notes

October and December 2004 Meetings with B&O Railroad Station

December 2004 Meeting with Montgomery County Historic Preservation Supervisor

January 2005 Meeting on Bi-County Transitway

January 2005 Summary of Philadelphia Avenue Property Owner's Meeting Summary

February 2005 Letter from Montgomery Preservation, Inc.

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: October 26, 2004

Date /Time of Meeting: October 19, 2004 10:00 am

Location: Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Coordination with B&O Station Manager

Attendees:

Nancy Urban	Board Member Montgomery Preservation and Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station Property Manager
Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Chuck Kines	MNCPPC
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Jim Guinther	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the concept plan for the Metropolitan Branch Trail with Montgomery Preservation, owners of the Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station (the Station) property and to solicit feedback from them on trail preferences to the front or rear of the property.

All present were introduced.

Mr. Guinther reviewed the overall trail project concepts with Ms. Urban. She indicated she would not comment on the other sections of the trail but was interested mainly in the section within the vicinity of the Station.

Ms. Urban stated that Montgomery Preservation has been a supporter of the trail project and looks forward to it connecting to the Station. Ms. Urban explained that the baggage room of the station is leased to a tenant (Class Acts Arts). The Station has use of approximately 15 parking spaces currently, plus additional spaces which exist on property owned by the adjacent Montgomery County Fire Department property. The tenant has a need for 8 to 10 parking spaces on a daily basis for its on-site employees. Additionally, the Station is leased for special events (children's parties, meetings, etc…) with a maximum capacity of 50 people. Set-up for the parties sometimes extends out under the rear canopy. One of the attractions of the site for leasing is the ability of people to go out the back door under the canopy to watch as the trains pass by. Montgomery Preservation is dependent on the tenant and event leases as the main sources of revenue to maintain the property. Ms. Urban noted the National Register status of the property.

Mr. Guinther explained the options for the trail to pass around the station in front of the building or to the rear of the building and described the differences between them. He reviewed the potential impacts of both options on the existing parking and facility operations. More parking spaces would be impacted

with the trail going in front of the building than behind. The rear option would impact the area under the canopy, limiting its use for special events and requiring that the wagon, currently displayed under the canopy, be moved. The expectation is that the trail will have a high level of use by bicyclists and walkers, especially on weekends, when the Station building often is leased for special events. Ms Urban stated that the canopy area is not essential for leasing needs. She mentioned that it is important for people to be able to sit in a small area on the bench under the canopy to watch trains go by. It will be necessary to separate trail users from visitors at the Station who are watching trains as well as to provide signing to alert and manage the interaction of bicyclists and pedestrians, especially children.

The group walked outside to view the area where the Georgia Avenue bridge would enter the Station parking lot. Due to requirements for the vertical clearance of the bridge over Georgia Avenue and the need to preserve sight distance for northbound vehicles approaching the traffic signal on Georgia Ave. at Sligo Avenue, the elevation of the underside of the bridge will be above existing ground level when in enters the station property. This elevation increase also allows for the existing stairwells from Georgia Avenue, adjacent to the B&O Station, to remain. The proposed dimensions of the bridge were discussed and its potential height was estimated at approximately 4'± above ground level with a gradual decline (ramp like) until reaching ground level near the corner of the Station building.

A County Fire Station is currently under construction west of and adjacent to the Station property. The site plan for the fire station designates space for the Metropolitan Branch Trail to pass through. Ms. Urban has an understanding that there is to be a park on the property adjacent to the B&O station. Ms. Wells said that she was not aware of a park being designated at that location. Ms.Tait Nouri stated that the County could work to integrate this park with the Station area and the trail.

The Fire Station has allowed use of some of its existing property area for B&O parking needs in the past. Ms Urban noted the need for the parking impacted by the trail to be replaced, so that the tenant needs could be met and special events could be held. Mr. Asadullah noted that the B&O Station would need to make arrangements for use of additional parking for special events whether or not the Trail impacted the current parking capacity. All present agreed that there should be discussions with the County Fire Department about a formal arrangement for shared parking for the B&O station. Since more existing parking spaces are impacted by the trail option in front of the B&O station, there was a general sense that the rear option was preferable.

There were also brief discussions on:

- The potential use of the Station for a public meeting on the project
- The historic light fixtures that are in storage for eventual placement around the Station building.
- Possibilities to maintain access to the tunnel under the RR tracks with a manhole/vault rather than the railing that exists now.
- A decorative wrought iron fence to replaces the existing chain link fence behind the station.

There was a request that Ms.Urban submit a letter to the County with Montgomery Preservation's preferences for the trail to be in front of or behind the Station Building within 1 to 2 weeks of the meeting.

The above is a memorandum of the meeting between the parties regarding the topics discussed and the decisions reached. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the minutes, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the minutes will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: January 4, 2005 (*revised Jan 10. 2005*)

Date /Time of Meeting: December 29, 2004 10:00

Location: Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Coordination with Montgomery Preservation Board on
Silver Spring B&O Station

Attendees:

Nancy Urban	Montgomery Preservation & B&O Station Property Manager
Jerry A. McCoy	Silver Spring Historic Society
Wayne Goldstein	President, Montgomery Preservation
Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Jim Guinther	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the concept plan for the Metropolitan Branch Trail with Board members of Montgomery Preservation, Inc., (MPI) owners of the Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station. MCDPWT has requested that Montgomery Preservation indicate a preference for the trail to pass to the front or rear of the property. All present were introduced.

Ms. Tait-Nouri reviewed the background planning for the Metropolitan Branch Trail. It was noted that the 2001 Facility Plan had identified an alignment for the Trail based on studies completed at that time. Now, preliminary engineering has been started. Options to the front and rear of the Station were discussed in that study and were presented to Ms. Urban in an October meeting.

MPI had requested renderings of the proposed bridge. WRA distributed a set of renderings for review. The renderings showed both existing conditions and the proposed trail concept to the rear of the Station. A view at the rear of the station, a view of the station from the existing bridge and views of the bridge looking south along Georgia Ave were presented. Three bridge treatment options were shown. There were comments about the size of the bridge relative to the Station.

The bridge alignment shown avoids impacts to the existing bridge and the stairs from the bridge to Georgia Ave. The bridge proposed can work with the Philadelphia or Selim alternatives.

There were discussions on the pedestrian tunnel under the railroad tracks between the two station buildings. The underpass has been designated as historic and is owned by Montgomery County in the form of an easement. It is currently kept closed and locked on both sides. There was discussion about whether and how the tunnel and stairs had been modified over time by WMATA. It was noted that the East Bound Station building is to be demolished.

The proposed Trail to the rear of the Station is situated over the stairwell leading to the underpass, and would require that the access be permanently closed or covered with a grate or door of some sort. Mr. Guinther noted that it would be impossible to avoid impacts to the stairwell with a trail going to the rear of the Station. With regard to maintaining the tunnel with some kind of flat access door there are issues and potentially applicable regulations on ventilation for confined spaces.

Ms. Urban said that the Silver Spring Regional Center has noted a desire to close the underpass. The developer on the opposite side of the tracks has agreed to have a gate across the tunnel entrance to provide for a view of the tunnel but no access. Mr. Goldstein said that since the underpass is historic, ideally, MPI would like to maintain access to the underpass for scholars, but it is not absolutely necessary.

There was discussion about the trail surface and width. Brick, as shown in the rendering, may not be the preferred surface. Brick may not be suitable for a bike trail as it can be slippery. Stamped concrete may be an option. The desired trail width is 10'. The wall on the side of the ramp would likely be brick. Concerns were expressed about the speed of bicyclists coming down the ramp toward the station. Signage may be used to advise cyclists to slow when approaching the station.

There was comments made about the placement and type of railing behind the station, and the bench which Mr. Asadullah advised can be addressed later in project design.

There was discussion of the Fire Station and the potential for the open space adjacent to the railroad station to be utilized for a bike rack and picnic tables. (Sheet A01 of the Fire Station plans shows the trail easement that has been set aside.)

Ms. Urban did not like the look of Option B, the through truss option, for the bridge. She suggested looking at the Savage Railroad Bridge crossing as a good example. There is a preference for the bridge enclosure to blend in with the surroundings rather than to stand out.

Mr. Goldstein said that the trail option around the front of the Station does not seem viable since it would impact so much parking and would have more visual impact.

Additionally, renderings were requested showing:

- A view from East Side of Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station Looking East
- A view looking South on Georgia Avenue from North of Sligo Avenue (Including East Side of Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station)
- A view from B&O Railroad Station Parking Lot looking South

Mr. Asadullah said that the most important thing at this point in the study is for MCDPWT to identify the preferred alignment. A public meeting will be held as soon as possible to show the preferred alignment. He requested that MPI send a letter formally indicating the preference for the rear trail option. Mr. Goldstein said that after additional renderings are provided for their review, MPI will send a letter expressing their alignment preference. The additional requested renderings will be sent. Mr. Asadullah noted that this is the beginning of the coordination process and that many of the aesthetic details would be reviewed and discussed with MPI as the project moves along.

The above is a memorandum of the meeting between the parties regarding the topics discussed. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the minutes, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the summary will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, MD 21231

Engineers
Architects
and
Planners

Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: January 4, 2005 (*revised 1/10/05)*

Date /Time of Meeting: December 29, 2004 1:00 pm

Location: Silver Spring

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Re: Project Coordination with M-NCPPC

Attendees:

Gwen Wright	Historic Preservation Supervisor, Montgomery County Dept. of Park and Planning
Uzair Asadullah	MCDPWT-DCD- Project Manager
Gail Tait-Nouri	MCDPWT-DCD
Christine Wells	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)
Jim Guinther	Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (WRA)

The purpose of the meeting was for MCDPWT to provide Ms. Wright with project information and to discuss future coordination on historic preservation matters.

Ms. Tait-Nouri provided a project overview.

Mr. Guinther reviewed the issues associated with modifying the existing Georgia Ave. bridge to accommodate the trail. Ms. Wright said she has no information on the historic status of the bridge but recommended calling Tim Tamburino at MHT to inquire as to whether there is any documentation on the bridge.

Ms. Wright thinks that the stairs from the Georgia Ave bridge date from the time of the station. An assessment of the historic status of the bridge will be needed. The Section 106 process is not that big of a deal. She said the concept showing the new bridge demonstrated avoidance of the potentially historic bridge.

There was discussion on the status of the underpass between the station buildings. The County historic designation covers the station and the underpass. She advised that the negotiations with the developer on the east side have resulted in an agreement to have a locked gate at the entrance to the underpass. The Silver Spring Regional Center will hold the key. Montgomery Preservation has access rights to the underpass.

There was discussion on the potential to avoid closing the underpass. A man-hole type access has been considered but presents issues. Ms. Wright reminded the team that as always there is a need to avoid impacts if possible, mitigate any impacts that do occur and to mitigate for any unavoidable impacts.
Ms. Wright said that JBG, the developer on the east side of the underpass has developed a mitigation plan as a result of the impact of demolishing the station. A mural of the station building will be created.

A review of the issues associated with the underpass and efforts to avoid it will need to be submitted for review. She noted that the rear alignment does seem to make sense.

The project will need to be a preliminary consultation with the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month and Ms. Wright sets the agenda. She advised that when ready, MCDPWT should submit a package of information (the renderings and a narrative summary of the information discussed today) to her. She schedules the agendas three weeks ahead. Montgomery Preservation Inc will be invited to attend the Commission meeting.
The permit for work in an historic area would be issued closer to the time of construction. Preliminary consultation with MPI will be needed. She was advised that there had been discussions with MPI.

The above is a memorandum of the meeting between the parties regarding the topics discussed. Any participants desiring to add to, or otherwise amend the summary, are requested to put their comments in writing to the writer within seven (7) days; otherwise, the summary will stand as written.

Christine Wells

WR&A
WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

Engineers, Architects and Planners
Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: 2/4/05

Date of Meeting: 1/26/05

Time: 11:00 am

Location: MTA Offices

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Attendees: Mike Madden, MTA Project Manager, Bi-County Transitway (BCT)
David Esch, ZGF, consultant Silver Spring Transit Center and BCT
Joe Romanowski, RKK, consultant BCT
Christine Wells, WRA, consultant Metro Branch
Jim Guinther, WRA, consultant Metro Branch

This meeting was requested by Ms. Wells at the direction of Uzair Asadullah (MCDPWT- Project Manager.) The purpose of the meeting was for the staff to share information on the two projects: MCDPWT's Metropolitan Branch Trail project which is in Phase II Facility Planning and the MTA's Bi-County Transitway project.

Ms. Wells and Mr. Guinther provided a brief overview of the status of the Metro Branch Trail project using the concept map for the project with an aerial base. Then they focused specifically on the proposed alignment of the trail between the Silver Spring B&O Railroad Station and the proposed Silver Spring Transit Center site.

Mr. Madden and Mr. Romanowski provided a review of the status of the Bi-County Transitway project. It was clarified that the Transitway project schedule would not result in the identification of a preferred alternative until Spring 2007. According to Mr. Esch, the Silver Spring Transit Center project is moving ahead and the Center is now scheduled to open in Spring 2008. He said that the current transit center plan anticipates the Metro Branch Trail connection at-grade. Mr. Guinther advised that this is what the proposed Metro Branch Trail alignment assumes.

- Mr. Romanowski said that the conceptual BCT project alternatives include accommodation for the Metro Branch trail.

Alternatives for the Bi-County Transitway in the vicinity of Silver Spring include:

- Transitway at-grade at the SSTC transitioning into a tunnel at the he new fire station site in order to cross under Georgia Ave
- Transitway elevated at the SSTC (over the CSX line as much as 25-30 feet in air)
- Transitway at-grade through the Transit Center and then along Ripley Street and extending across Ga. Ave.
- Transitway at-grade through the Transit Center and then along Dixon Street (or opposite Silver Spring Ave. extended) extended across Ga. Ave.
- Transitway underground at the beginning of Dixon extended (or opposite Silver Spring Ave. extended) and continuing under Ga. Ave
- One alternative along 2nd Ave would not impact the Metro Branch project at all.

There was discussion about the easement available through the Fire Station property for the Metro Branch Trail and the transitway. The proposed Metro Branch Trail alignment lies within the 35'easement provided for the trail. The Bi-County consultant team assumes that there is a separate easement for the transitway. Mr. Romanowksi advised WRA to design Metro Branch trail as far as possible from CSX Right of way, to minimize complications with CSX review and approvals.

Discussion/Follow up:

- Gary Urrich is the MCDPWT project manager for the SSTC project. Mr. Esch suggested that we consider inviting him to the next Metro Branch Project Status meeting.
- Should MCDPWT's maps for this project show the Metro Branch Trail as an "interim trail" in the vicinity of Silver Spring Transit Center since the trail would be adjusted when the Bi-County transitway is built?
- Mr. Esch wondered whether MCDPWT should consider a different trail alignment that would take the Metro Branch Trail further north along Fenton to Wayne Ave and then into the SSTC? He thinks this might address some of the ROW and coordination issues and provide a good trail link to the station.
- Mr. Esch said that he would provide the newest plans for the Silver Spring Transit Center to Mr. Guinther.
- Mr. Romanowski requested an electronic copy of the concept map for Metro Branch Trail.
- It was suggested that Mr. Madden attend the next Metro Branch project status meeting to coordinate before the public meeting which is expected to occur in the next month or two.

Meeting Notes Prepared by: Christine Wells

Cc: Uzair Asadullah, MCDPWT

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WR&A
WHITMAN, REQUARDT AND ASSOCIATES, LLP
801 South Caroline Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

Engineers, Architects and Planners
Phone: (410) 235-3450
Fax: (410) 243-5716

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING

Date: 1/31/05

Date of Meeting: 1/2705

Time: 1:30 pm

Location: Bliss Room, Commons Building @ Montgomery College

Project: Metropolitan Branch Trail
WR&A W.O.: 31542-01

Staff Attendees:

UzairAsadullah, MCDPWT
Sogand Seirafi, MCDPWT
Gail Tait-Nouri, MCDPWT
Chuck Kines, MNCPPC
Miguel Iraola, MNCPPC
Glen Kreiger, MNCPPC
Christine Wells, WRA
Jim Guinther, WRA

Property Owner Attendees:

	Address	Phone #	E-mail
Murray S. Richman	999 Phila. Ave	(310)585-7557	MAutoCIZ@aol.com
Nancy L. Richman	999 Phila. Ave	same as above	
M. Moore (for estate of Rita Madden)	904 Phila. Ave	(301)656-2881	MSMoore@leggmason.com

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Background:
This was a focus group meeting for owners of property along Philadelphia Ave. Letters had been sent by MCDPWT to owners of properties along both sides of Philadelphia Ave to discuss the conceptual alternatives for Metropolitan Branch trail alignments. 21 property owners were invited.
(Mr. Asadullah advised Ms Wells that the letter to Lien K. Ngo was returned by the Post Office.)

WRA displayed boards showing Options 2 and 3 and a display sized copy of Option 1 was also available for reference as needed. Handouts that showed the Options with descriptive notes were provided to attendees. Attendees had informal conversation with staff.

Mr. Asadullah explained that this meeting gave property owners a chance to find out about the Options before the public meeting.

Ms. Tait-Nouri provided background information on the trail project and its context in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Guinther reviewed the Options and responded to questions.

The planned Fenton Street skateboard park at the intersection of Philadelphia Ave and Fenton Street was discussed. Staff from MNCPPC indicated that there is a concept plan for the park. For the implementation of the park concept, the stub end of Philadelphia Ave would be eliminated and properties would be acquired including the Madden property @ 904 Phila Ave. The timeframe for the park is beyond that of the Metro Branch Trail.

It was explained that Options 2 and 3 shown for the Metro Branch Trail were developed to work with the existing land uses and the planned road 70' ROW for Philadelphia Ave. If and when the park is funded for design, the trail would be modified to be compatible. Mr. Kreiger said that MNCPPC has an April 7th public meeting at which priority for this park and other proposed park projects will be discussed.

The following questions were posed or comments made:

How many parking spaces are impacted by the Options?
Mr. Guinther reviewed the impacts for each Option as:

Option 1 45 public parking spaces along Selim displaced; 29 spaces replaced
Option 2 40 public parking spaces displaced; approx. 14 replaced
Option 3 58 public parking spaces displaced; approx 47 replaced

In Options 2 & 3 is there an at-grade crossing of Burlington ? Yes

In Option 2 is the metered parking on south side of Philadelphia Ave impacted? Yes

It was confirmed that the existing free right turn from Fenton to Burlington would be eliminated with Options 2 & 3.

The proposed timeframe for implementation of the Trail is 5-6 years assuming that funding is obtained for next phases.

Mr. Asadullah thanked people for coming.

Meeting Notes prepared by: Christine Wells

MONTGOMERY
PRESERVATION

P.O. Box 4661 Rockville, Maryland 20850

February 10, 2005

RECEIVED
DPWT
FEB 14 2005
DIV OF CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING SECTION

Uzair A. Asadullah
Senior Planner – Planning Section
Division of Capital Development
Department of Public Works and Transportation
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 9th floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Asadullah:

Montgomery Preservation, Inc., owner of the historic Silver Spring Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Station, located at 8100 Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland, has a record of supporting the construction of the Metropolitan Branch Hiker-Biker Trail across our property. We have always believed that the proposed hiker-biker trail and the restored railroad station would complement each other very well.

You can imagine MPI's disappointment and dismay when we learned about plans to build a ramp on our property to access a new trail bridge to be constructed across Georgia Avenue. MPI had expected the hiker-biker trail to be at grade level, and we have serious concerns about how the proposed ramp will affect the environmental setting for the station. Perhaps you are not aware that the size of the station lot is only one-fourth acre. This small lot must accommodate an historic setting for the station, parking for the station tenant and for special events, an accessibility ramp, as well as the original raised platform which surrounds the station on three sides. And, of course, the station's relationship to both the railroad tracks and Georgia Avenue are long-standing and significant.

After two meetings with you and the designers for the trail, Whitman, Requardt and Associates (WR&A), and perusal of the drawings of the ramp provided to us by WR&A, we feel somewhat reassured that the ramp is something that we could live with if proper attention is given to the design, materials and size of the ramp. For that reason, we are

now expressing a preference for the alignment of the trail behind the station, parallel to the railroad tracks.

That said, MPI cannot grant an easement for the construction of the trail on the station property unless the following conditions are met:

1. The County assumes full responsibility for liability on the trail on MPI property.

2. The construction of the ramp does not jeopardize the listing of the station in the National Register of Historic Places, in the judgment of the Maryland Historical Trust.

3. The ramp is constructed away from the station, at the minimum distance shown in the drawings provided by WR&A.

4. Materials used for the construction of the trail and the ramp are of consistently high quality, including the use of brick, iron railings, etc. as shown in the drawings provided by WR&A. MPI will work closely with the designers on the segment of the trail that crosses our property and MPI must approve the final design plans.

5. The green bench with the dedication plaque to the longtime stationmaster remains underneath the canopy.

6. That serious consideration be given to building a narrower path and ramp on the station property. This would encourage bikers and hikers to slow down, enjoy the extraordinary historic site, stop for water, view the historical exhibits, and pick up information about Silver Spring. Also, and importantly, a narrower ramp would be less likely to overwhelm the small historic station and site.

7. That some form of compensation is provided to MPI for the loss of four parking spaces and the use of the canopy area near the tracks. This compensation could be a financial contribution towards the maintenance of the station, a donation of the small parcel of land adjacent to the north side of the station that was formerly reserved for use as a park, or the use of four parking spaces on the fire station property.

Thank you for the assistance you have provided to us regarding this matter. Please advise if you have any questions about any of the above.

Sincerely,

Wayne M. Goldstein

Wayne M. Goldstein
President

Appendix D

Traffic Data/Traffic Observations

Traffic Comparison Current vs. Proposed (Capital Crescent)

METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL TRAFFIC DATA /TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS

Location: Selim Road at Philadelphia Avenue Associated MBT Options: #2,#3,& # 5

Date /Time: July 22, 2004 AM/PM Peak, Midday, and Evening

- Southbound Selim Road is sign as a "Left Turn Only", but vehicles continue southbound towards the public parking or side street meter parking.
- "Do not Enter" signs are located along Selim Road, south of the intersection.
- A "No Left Turn" symbol is located along westbound Philadelphia Avenue, east of the intersection; however, vehicles were observed turning left.
- A 12-space public parking lot, located south east of this intersection, is mainly used by Eddy's Auto Shop for customers parking.
- Parking meters, typically occupied, were located all along the west side of Selim Road, and some on the east side.
- Pedestrians were observed safely (without conflict) crossing all legs of this intersection, especially during lunch time.
- There is no traffic control device at this intersection.

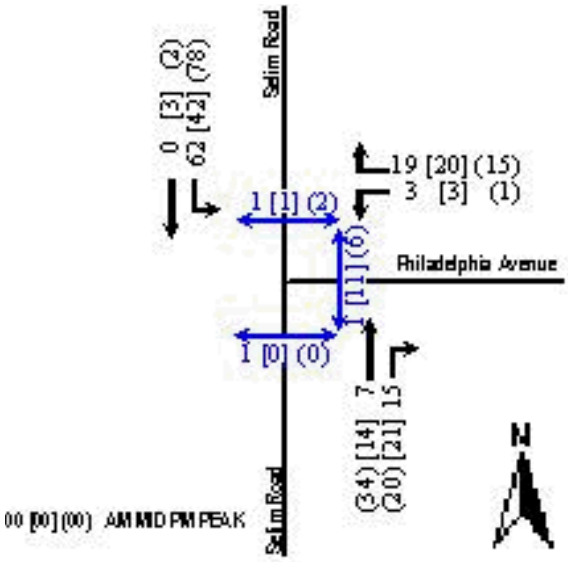
Pictures

Selim Road from North to South

Philadelphia Avenue from East to West

Count Data:

Key: 00 [00] (00) AM MID PM Peak Hour



METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAILTRAFFIC DATA/TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS

Location: Gist Avenue at Philadelphia Avenue Associated MBT Options: #2,#3 & #5

Date and Time: July 22, 2004 AM/PM Peak, Midday, and Evening

- There are two entrances to Murray's Auto Clinic and one entrance to Eddy's Auto Shop. There is also a public parking lot entrance at the southern end of this intersection.
- The majority of the movements observed at this intersection are due to Murray's Auto Clinic. Vehicles are brought into either one of the two garages from each approach. Vehicles are constantly transferred from one garage to the other.
- A passenger van collects and drops off customers throughout the day. This van parks mainly on the northwest corner of this intersection.
- Westbound Philadelphia Avenue appears to be controlled by a stop sign located on the south side of this roadway; however, vehicles do not obey this sign (perhaps because is not easy to find).
- The public parking lot has only 12 metered parking spaces. This lot is mainly used by Eddy's Auto Shop as their car storage area.
- Pedestrians crossed this intersection, mainly to/from Murray's Auto Clinic.
- There is a stop sign on southbound Gist Avenue. This sign is located far south, perhaps due to the location of one of Murray's Auto Clinic garage entrances.
- There is on-street parking and driveways/parking.

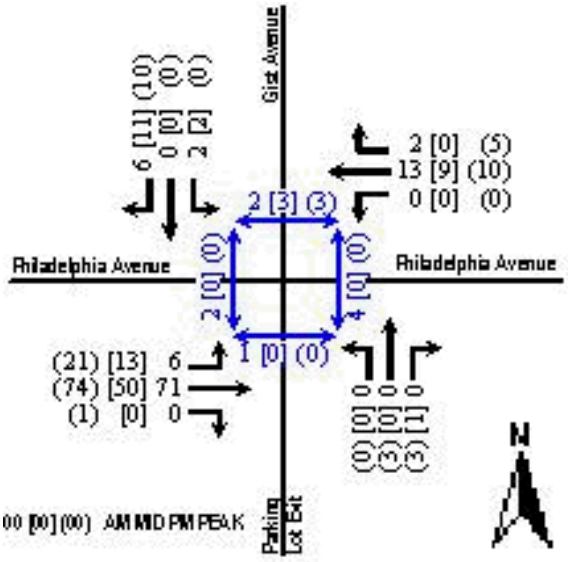
Pictures

Philadelphia Avenue from West to East

Philadelphia Avenue from East to West

Count Data

Key: 00 [00] (00) AM MID PM Peak Hour



METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL TRAFFIC DATA/TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS

Location: Gist Avenue at Fenton Street Associated MBT Options: #2 & #3 nearby

Date and Time: July 22, 2004 AM/PM Peak, Midday, and Evening

Observations:

- At approximately 7:18 AM traffic momentarily backs-up due to the signal at Sligo Avenue through this intersection.
- Vehicles traveling northbound use the southbound left-turn lane to bypass the standing traffic congestion from Gist Avenue to Sligo Avenue. This movement took place approximately 4-5 times during the morning peak period.
- Vehicles were observed using the adjacent roadways (Woodbury Street) to avoid the signal at the Fenton Street/Sligo Avenue intersection.
- A large parking lot is located on the northeast leg of this intersection. Entrance to the lot is via Gist Avenue.
- This intersection is controlled by a stop sign.

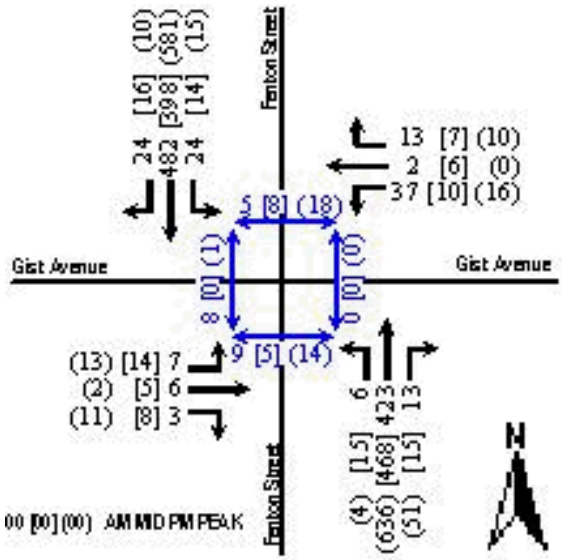
Pictures

EB Gist Avenue approaching Fenton St.

WB Gist Avenue from Fenton St. to West

Count Data

Key: 00 [00] (00) AM MID PM Peak Hour



METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL TRAFFIC DATA/TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS

Location: Philadelphia Avenue at Fenton Street Associated MBT Options: #2,#3 & #5
Date and Time: July 22, 2004 AM/PM Peak, Midday, and Evening

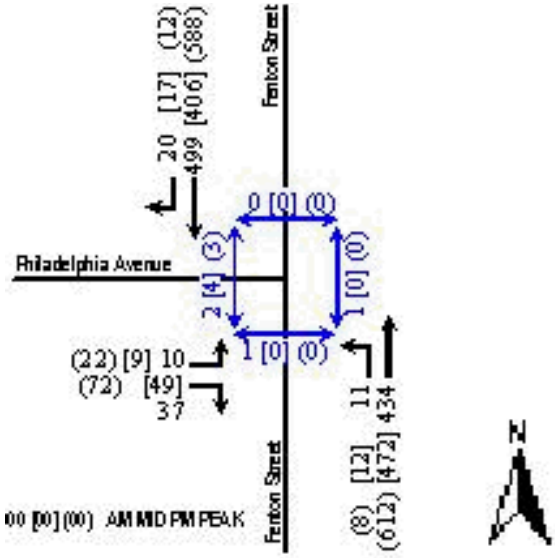
- Queues from the nearby traffic signals (Fenton at MD 410 to the south and Fenton at Sligo Ave to the north) would sometime extend into intersection.
- A bus stop is located at the southwest corner of this intersection for SB Fenton Street.
- Queues also occurred on southbound Fenton Street when buses were stopped at the bus stop just south of the intersection. These queues sometimes delayed buses.
- Motorists making left-turns from Philadelphia Ave onto northbound Fenton Street would sometimes turn into the center dual left-turn lane, and then merge into Fenton Street traffic when a sufficient gap was found.
- Several motorists made u-turns from northbound Fenton St. to southbound Fenton St.
- The center dual left-turn lane at the Fenton Street and Philadelphia intersection becomes a left-only lane at the Fenton Street at MD 410 intersection (just south of the study intersection).
- Some southbound through motorists who wanted to make lefts onto eastbound MD 410 would clear the intersection in the center dual left-turn lane.
  This intersection is controlled by a stop sign.

Pictures

Philadelphia Avenue from West to East

NB Fenton St. approaching Philadelphia Ave.

Count Data
Key: 00 [00] (00) AM MID PM Peak Hour



METROPOLITAN BRANCH TRAIL TRAFFIC DATA/TRAFFIC OBSERVATIONS

Location: Philadelphia Ave/Burlington Ave.@ Fenton St. Associated MBT Options: #2,#3,#4, #5
Date and Time: July 22, 2004 AM/PM Peak, Midday, and Evening

- During the morning peak, westbound queues from the traffic signal at MD 97 would sometime extend into intersection.
- Vehicles traveling southbound on Fenton Street were observed making a right on Burlington Avenue, then immediately making a u-turn, ending up on eastbound Burlington Avenue.
- At approximately 7:45 AM a large truck parked on the eastbound right-turn lane for approximately 5 minutes. Traffic was forced to circle around the truck in order to make a right turn onto Fenton Street.
- The eastbound right-turn lane was sometimes used as a shared thru-right lane and/or a bypass lane, mainly during the PM peak period.
- Eastbound queues were observed east of the intersection. The queues were due to the vehicles misusing the right-turn only lane as a bypass/thru lane. There is only one receiving lane on the east leg. This intersection is controlled by a traffic signal.

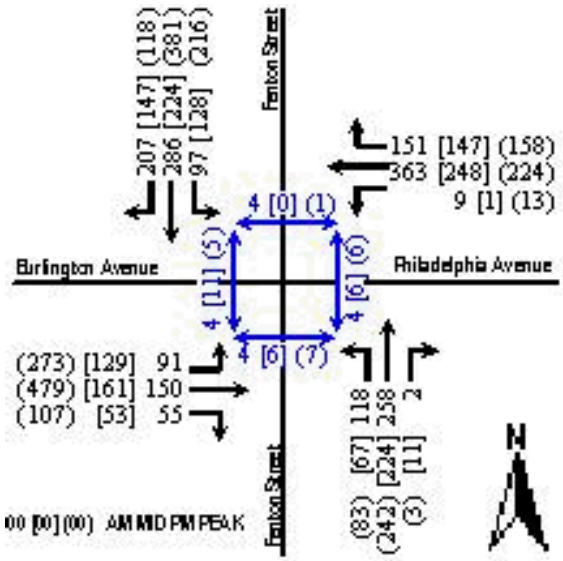
Pictures

SB Fenton St. approaching Burlington Ave.

EB Burlington Ave. approaching Fenton St.

Count Data

Key: 00 [00] (00) AM MID PM Peak Hour



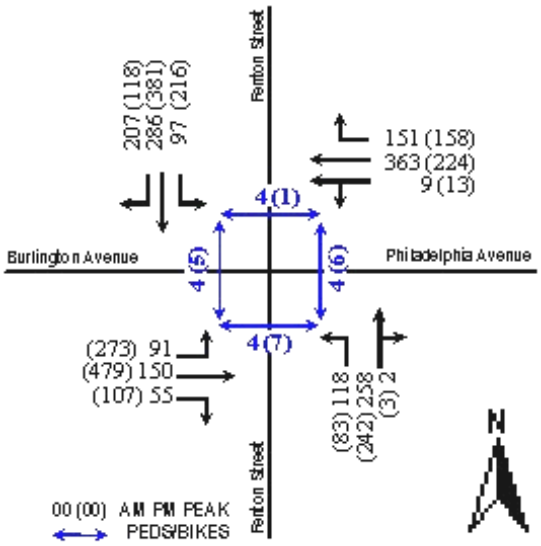
Metropolitan Branch Trail Facility Planning Study

Traffic Comparison of Current vs. Proposed Intersections with Bike Trails
September 29, 2004

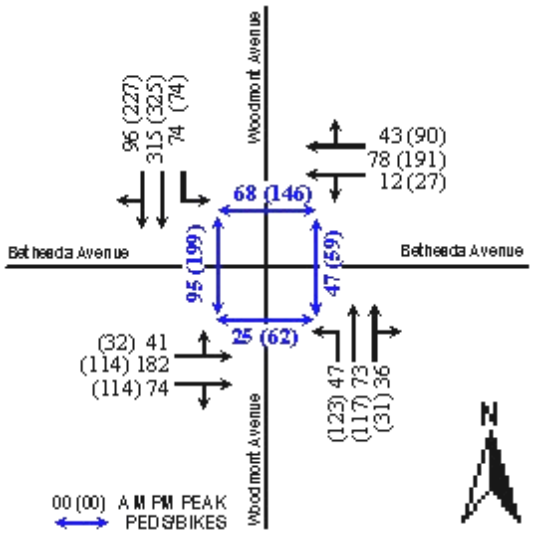
Hiker/Biker Trail Locations:

- ***Current:*** Woodmont Avenue @ Bethesda Avenue – Bethesda (Capital Crescent Trail)
- ***Proposed:*** Philadelphia Ave./Burlington Ave. (MD 410) @ Fenton Street – Silver Spring (Proposed Metropolitan Branch Trail Options 4 and 5)

1. **Traffic Volume Data –** Intersection turning movement volumes counted in 2004, along with current lane configurations, are shown below for each location.



Philadelphia Ave./Burlington Ave. (MD 410) @ Fenton St.
Silver Spring Intersection



Woodmont Avenue @ Bethesda Avenue
Bethesda Intersection

2. **Critical Lane Volume Analyses** – Traffic operations were evaluated at each location based on MSHA's Critical Lane Volume (CLV) methodology. Analysis results are summarized in the table below.

Weekday Peak Hour	Philadelphia Ave./ Burlington Ave. (MD 410) @ Fenton Street			Woodmont Avenue @ Bethesda Avenue		
	CLV	LOS	V/C Ratio	CLV	LOS	V/C Ratio
AM	705	A	0.44	451	A	0.28
PM	956	A	0.60	643	A	0.40

3. Study Findings

Study findings are presented below:

- ***Traffic Volumes:*** Vehicular traffic volumes at the Silver Spring intersection are slightly higher, as indicated in the Critical Lane Volume Analyses table.
- ***Vehicle Capacity:*** While more (6 of 8) turning movements are shared with through traffic at the Bethesda intersection than at the Silver Spring intersection (2 of 8), the Bethesda intersection includes two through lanes per direction on each approach; only one of the Silver Spring intersection approaches (WB Philadelphia Ave.) has two through lanes.
- ***Traffic Operations:*** Although each location operates at Level of Service (LOS) 'A' during AM and PM peak periods, CLV analyses indicate that the Bethesda intersection has lower volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratios, hence, more available capacity than the Silver Spring intersection.

Therefore, the Silver Spring intersection has a lower potential to adequately accommodate higher (than counted) traffic volumes (caused by sporadic surges in traffic and/or future traffic volume growth/increases), than the Bethesda intersection. However, traffic analyses (dated 9/29/04) conducted for the Metropolitan Branch Trail project indicates that the trail crossing of Burlington Avenue (MD 410) at Fenton Street will be feasible (provide safe and adequate traffic operations) with the following proposed improvements:

- Reconstruct northwest intersection corner to provide larger turning radius for SB Fenton Street rights; pavement widening in existing channelization island to provide short (80'+) SB right-turn bay;
- Relocation of existing traffic signal controller and mast-arm signal pole;
- Installation of pedestrian push buttons to actuate pedestrian signal intervals at trail crosswalk of MD 410; and,
- SB rights controlled by signal including right-turn overlap (SB right green arrow during concurrent EB MD 410 left green arrow interval), and prohibited to turn right during red signal interval (No Turn On Red per City Ordinance).

Appendix E

Option Development

Option Development

Georgia Avenue Crossing Analysis

The existing bridge over Georgia Avenue is more than 50 years old and is owned by WMATA. CSX has an agreement with WMATA for the operation of freight trains. The Brunswick Line of the MARC service also operates along the CSX line. There is an existing walkway on the bridge.

The existing 5'10" wide walkway does not meet the design criteria for an 8-10' wide path needed for two bicyclists to pass. Initial studies indicate that, due to the existing bridge design, a new support beam would be required to widen the walkway to meet the design criteria. Factors were considered such as the estimated cost to widen the bridge and the complexity of maintaining rail service during construction. Additionally there is a potential of impacting the historic character of the bridge. All of this information led the Project Team to conclude that a separate bridge crossing of Georgia Avenue should be investigated as an alternative.

Due to the problems identified with widening the existing bridge, a concept for a new bridge crossing of Georgia Ave was developed. Such a bridge would be located north of the existing bridge and would meet minimal clearances for SHA and would be intended to minimize impacts to the existing bridge structure as well as the historic rail station building. The new bridge alignment was developed to be compatible with trail Options 1 thru 4. The Project Team assumed that there would be aesthetic features incorporated into a new bridge which would be determined in final design. Appendix F provides photo renderings of new bridge designs that were presented at coordination meetings with the B&O Rail station.

The Study Team verified that two persons walking bicycles could pass on the existing pedestrian walkway. As an alternative to a new bridge crossing over Georgia Ave, Option # 5 was proposed. This Option would require that bicyclists dismount and walk their bikes across the 158 foot long existing bridge.

Burlington Avenue Crossing Analysis

A tunnel and an at-grade crossing of Burlington Avenue (MD Route 410) considered. An option for a tunnel under Burlington Avenue adjacent to the WMATA/CSX right-of-way has been developed. At-grade crossings of Burlington Avenue were also considered at both Selim Road and at Fenton Street. Due to traffic volumes, steep grades and sight distance concerns, an at-grade crossing of Burlington Avenue at Selim Road was eliminated from further consideration. By incorporating intersection modifications, an at-grade trail crossing of Burlington Avenue at the signalized intersection with Fenton Street has been included in Options 2 thru 5. The modification at Burlington will include elimination of the channelized right turn lane. This modification was proposed to occur anyway with the future improvements to the Fenton Street Park.

Review and Refinement of Options

Between June 2004 and May 2005, the Project Team held several meetings to review the status of the project and to present analysis of the Options. In response to questions, data was collected on traffic volumes and turning movements at Burlington Avenue and Philadelphia Avenue. A number of traffic issues were discussed by the team:

- As a strategy to minimize loss of parking, concepts for angled parking along Philadelphia Avenue were developed but later rejected as not permitted by DPWT policy.
- The impacts of the project on traffic circulation were discussed including the closing of the Gist Avenue connection to Selim Road, the consolidation of driveways on Philadelphia Avenue, the narrowing of travel lanes on Selim Road and Fenton Street and the removal of the channelized right-turn lane from Fenton Street to Burlington Avenue. No fatal flaws were identified with these traffic modifications.
- The impact of the trail alignments on public and private parking has been assessed. Public metered parking spaces are affected in all options that follow Selim Road and Philadelphia Avenue. Private parking spaces are affected where the trail alignment requires additional right-of-way.
- Metered parking spaces are impacted on all options along Philadelphia Avenue or Selim Road as shown below. The impacts to public parking were quantified and the estimated loss of revenue has been calculated.

Option	# of Metered Parking Spaces Lost
#1	18
#2	32
#3	24
#4	26
#5	39

- Other parking considerations: Field observations have confirmed that along Philadelphia Avenue near the automobile repair garages, there are frequently illegally parked cars blocking sidewalks. Implementation of Options 2, 3, and 5 should include increased effort at enforcement of parking regulations to assure that the trail is not blocked by illegally parked cars.
- To the extent possible at this level of design, the public parking lot at Philadelphia Avenue and Selim Road has been reconfigured to offset the loss of public parking in the project area.
- All options have impacts to the off street parking lot at the historic rail station. Options 1 thru 4, with the new bridge would impact 5-7 existing parking spaces at the railroad station. These spaces would be lost due to the alignment of the trail as it leaves the CSX/WMATA right-of-way and approaches the new Georgia Avenue bridge crossing. In Option 5, fewer than 7 parking spaces are impacted at the station since the alignment would use the existing bridge over Georgia Avenue.
- Discussions occurred on the potential impacts to properties and businesses and right-of-way costs were estimated based on input from the Real Estate department.
- M-NCPPC staff shared the conceptual plan for the expansion of the Fenton Gateway Park into a Skateboard Park. They indicated that the Old Philadelphia Avenue right-of-way and properties along that street would be used for the park. The opportunities for the MBT to be coordinated with the plans for Fenton Street Park expansion were discussed. Since the Park plans were not yet final, it was assumed that the trail alignment may need to be adjusted if it is built before the park plan is finalized.
- M-NCPPC staff advised that the MBT entire project falls within the Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan area. The area east of Georgia Avenue and north of Philadelphia Ave is also within the Fenton Village Overlay Zone, an identified revitalization

area that is planned for rezoning from CBD 0.5 to CBD 1. The overlay zone is intended to encourage redevelopment of existing businesses and ensure compatibility with surrounding residential areas. The north side of Philadelphia Avenue has already had some redevelopment activity. Both sides of Philadelphia Avenue in this area are intended for commercial services.

- M-NCPPC staff prefers Option 1 with the tunnel under Burlington Avenue since it is the Master Plan alignment, and was affirmed by their Facility Planning Study. From a user safety point of view, M-NCPPC staff expressed concerns about the trail crossing too many driveways.
- For the Philadelphia Avenue Options, M-NCPPC advised that the streetscape and landscape design standards for this area should be applied. Options 2 and 3 were therefore revised to provide for the planned 70' right-of-way, landscape buffers and roadway setbacks. Later, in an effort to minimize right-of-way costs, Option 5 was developed to fit within the existing street right of way by reducing vehicle lane widths, and not seeking the ultimate 70' right of way.
- Since the alignments along Philadelphia Avenue had not been considered in the M-NCPPC Facility Plan, property owners along Philadelphia Avenue were invited to a meeting to provide input on them to the Team
- The project team also consulted with Montgomery Preservation Inc., (MPI) to ascertain their preference for the alignment near the historic rail station. After some discussions, MPI expressed a preference for the alignment to go to the rear of the station and under the existing canopy. Additional comments were provided by MPI regarding impacts of the project on the waiting platform, on their parking and on the underpass.
- The Silver Spring Regional Center provided input to the Project Team on the proposed tunnel under Burlington Avenue. The Silver Spring Center staff expressed concerns about a tunnel under Burlington Avenue. Among their concerns were maintenance issues and the potential for crime and vagrants. Their concerns and an inability to commit to providing security for the tunnel led MCDPWT to seek a MBT option without a tunnel.
- The opportunity to incorporate streetscaping improvements along Philadelphia Ave was discussed by the Project Team. The county plans for a 70' right-of-way on Philadelphia Ave. Options # 2 and #3 assume that occurs. As a way to reduce costs for the MBT right of way, Option # 5 assumes narrowed travel lanes and a reduced right-of-way, therefore property impacts are lessened.

Section II of the Prospectus provides a description of the 5 Options that were developed and compares their features.

Appendix F
Agency Correspondence

August 2005 Letter from MD. Department of Housing and Community Development – MD. Historical Trust

December 2004 Letter from MD. Dept of Natural Resources

December 2004 Letter from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
GOVERNOR

Michael S. Steele
LT. GOVERNOR

Victor L. Hoskins
SECRETARY

Shawn S. Karimian
DEPUTY SECRETARY

DHCD
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

RECEIVED
DPWT
AUG 17 2005
DIV OF CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING SECTION

August 15, 2005

Mr. Uzair A. Asadullah
Montgomery County
Department of Public Works and Transportation
Division of Capital Development
101 Monroe Street, Ninth Floor
Rockville, MD 20850-2540

RE: Metropolitan Branch Trail Study
Facility Planning Phase I and Phase II
Montgomery County DPWT CIP Project No. 509337

Dear Mr. Asadullah:

Thank you for your letter concerning the above-referenced undertaking. We are writing in response to your request for information on archeological resources and historic standing structures within the project area for the above-referenced project. Our comments are presented below.

Archeology: Based on a review of our files and your submitted materials, we believe that the project is unlikely to affect significant archeological resources. Therefore, no additional archeological investigations are warranted for this project.

Historic Built Environment: Using the documentation included with your inquiry, we have reviewed our files to determine the presence of historic structures in the vicinity of your proposed project. According to our records, the following resources are located in the project area:

- *Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad* (MIHP No. M: 37-16): The Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. The National Register boundary of the property includes the entire right-of-way for the rail line, which totals 405.74 acres within Montgomery County. Historic station buildings and engineering structures contribute to the significance of the rail line.

- *Silver Spring Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Station* (MIHP No. M: 36-15): The Silver Spring Railroad Station was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. In addition, the Maryland Historical Trust obtained a preservation easement on the station property in 2001.

DIVISION OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS

100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032

PHONE 410-514-7600
TOLL FREE 1-800-756-0119
FAX 410-987-4071
TTY/RELAY 711 or 1-800-735-2258
WEB www.mdhousing.org

General Comments: Based upon a review of the materials included in your submittal, we have a few comments regarding the construction of the pedestrian bridge over Georgia Avenue. Access to the pedestrian bridge will require the construction of a ramp within the National Register and MHT easement boundaries for the Silver Spring Station. While we believe that the trail will enhance the visitor center/museum function of the station, we are concerned about the physical and visual impact of the pedestrian bridge ramp in the currently proposed configuration. The Trust would prefer that the trail follow the alignment and grade of the railroad line across Georgia Avenue and would support the alteration of the existing railroad bridge to accommodate the trail. Although the railroad bridge appears to be a historic component of the railroad line, it currently supports pedestrian use and its modification would lessen impacts on the Silver Spring Station. We would appreciate additional investigations by the County into alternatives that limit the impact on the Silver Spring Station within the MHT easement boundary.

Section 106 Review: If your proposed project entails federal and state agency involvement, the undertaking will be subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and Sections 5-617 & 5-618 of Article 83B of the Annotated Code of Maryland. These historic preservation laws require the involved federal/state agency to consider the effects of the proposed project on significant historic properties, including architectural and archeological resources. Part of the review process involves consultation between the agency (or its designee) and our office to identify and evaluate historic properties that may be affected by the project. If the project is determined to have an adverse effect, we will recommend measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any of the adverse effects on significant historic properties. To continue the Section 106 consultation for this undertaking, please submit the following information:

- An analysis of alternatives for the trail crossing over Georgia Avenue; and
- A justification for the selection of the County's preferred trail crossing over Georgia Avenue; and
- More detailed plans in the vicinity of the Silver Spring Railroad Station, when available.

Maryland Historical Trust Easement Committee Review: According to your project description, the proposed undertaking may result in the alteration of the Silver Spring Railroad Station property within the MHT preservation easement boundary. Any activities proposed within the MHT easement must be reviewed and approved by the MHT Easement Committee. When the County has sufficiently explored all alternatives for the trail crossing over Georgia Avenue and has a final proposal for alterations within the Easement boundary, the County should request the Easement Committee review of the project. To initiate this review, the County must submit a package of project information that includes:

- A through description of the project; and
- Detailed project plans of work to be completed within the Easement boundary-; and
- Description and illustration of the materials to be used, if applicable.

For additional information on the MHT Easement Committee meeting dates and review process please contact Elizabeth Schminke at schminke@dhcd.state.md.us or (410) 514-7632.

Once we have received the additional information requested in this letter, the Trust will continue its review of the undertaking and provide appropriate comments and recommendations.

We look forward to working with you to complete your historic preservation requirements for this undertaking as project planning proceeds. If you have questions or require further assistance, please contact Tim Tamburrino (for Section 106 Review) at 410-514-7637 / tamburrino@dhcd.state.md.us or Elizabeth Schminke (for Easement Review) at 410-514-7632 / schminke@dhcd.state.md.us. Thank you for providing us this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J. Cole
Administrator, Project Review & Compliance

EJC/TJT
200501864

cc: Elizabeth Schminke (MHT)

MARYLAND
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., *Governor*
Michael S. Steele, *Lt. Governor*
C. Ronald Franks, *Secretary*

December 7, 2004

Ms. Jennifer Bird
Environmental Scientist
Straughan Environmental Services, Inc.
9135 Guilford Road, Suite 100
Columbia, MD 21046-2579

RE: Environmental Review for Proposed Metropolitan Branch Trail, Silver Spring, Montgomery Co., MD.

Dear Ms. Bird:

The Wildlife and Heritage Service has determined that there are no State or Federal records for rare, threatened or endangered species within the boundaries of the project site as delineated. As a result, we have no specific comments or requirements pertaining to protection measures at this time. This statement should not be interpreted however as meaning that rare, threatened or endangered species are not in fact present. If appropriate habitat is available, certain species could be present without documentation because adequate surveys have not been conducted. It is also important to note that the utilization of state funds, or the need to obtain a state authorized permit may warrant additional evaluations that could lead to protection or survey recommendations by the Wildlife and Heritage Service. If this project falls into one of these categories, please contact us for further coordination.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to review this project. If you should have any further questions regarding this information, please contact me at (410) 260-8573.

Sincerely,

Lori A. Byrne

Lori A. Byrne,
Environmental Review Coordinator
Wildlife and Heritage Service
MD Dept. of Natural Resources

ER #2004.2418.mo

RECEIVED DEC 0 9 2004

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Chesapeake Bay Field Office
177 Admiral Cochrane Drive
Annapolis, MD 21401

December 13, 2004

Ms. Jennifer Bird
Straughan Environmental Services, Inc.
9135 Guilford Rd., Suite 100
Columbia, MD 21046-2579

RE: Metropolitan Branch Trail, Silver Spring, Montgomery County, MD

Dear Ms. Bird:

This responds to your letter, received November 1, 2004, requesting information on the presence of species which are federally listed or proposed for listing as endangered or threatened within the vicinity of the above reference project area. We have reviewed the information you enclosed and are providing comments in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Except for occasional transient individuals, no federally proposed or listed endangered or threatened species are known to exist within the project impact area. Therefore, no Biological Assessment or further section 7 Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is required. Should project plans change, or if additional information on the distribution of listed or proposed species becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered.

This response relates only to federally protected threatened or endangered species under our jurisdiction. For information on the presence of other rare species, you should contact Lori Byrne of the Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Division at (410) 260-8573.

An additional concern of the Service is wetlands protection. Federal and state partners of the Chesapeake Bay Program have adopted an interim goal of no overall net loss of the Basin's remaining wetlands, and the long term goal of increasing the quality and quantity of the Basin's wetlands resource base. Because of this policy and the functions and values wetlands perform, the Service recommends avoiding wetland impacts. All wetlands within the project area should be identified, and if construction in wetlands is proposed, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, should be contacted for permit requirements. They can be reached at (410) 962-3670.

RECEIVED DEC 13 2004

We appreciate the opportunity to provide information relative to fish and wildlife issues, and thank you for your interests in these resources. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact Maricela Constantino at (410) 573-4542.

Sincerely,

G. A. Moser

G. Andrew Moser
Acting Program Supervisor, Threatened and Endangered Species

Appendix G

Georgia Avenue Bridge - Conceptual Renderings

METROPOLITAN BRANCH HIKER/BIKER TRAIL

View looking South on Georgia Avenue from Sligo Avenue

Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation

WR&A

March 22, 2005

These are Artistic Renderings, May Not Represent Final Design

Appendix H

Matrix of Public Comments

March 22, 2005 Public Meeting

November 22, 2005 Public Meeting

Metropolitan Branch Trail Facility Planning Study

Comments Received

March 22, 2005 Public Meeting

Received By	Topic	Comment/Question	Response
Verbal	Alignment	Option 1 is the preferred alignment	
Verbal	Safety	Concerned with at-grade crossing of Burlington Avenue	Option 1 does not include this at grade crossing.
Verbal	Safety	Trail needs to be considered safe enough for adults to bring groups of children on the trail (e.g. girl scouts). Does not feel an at-grade crossing at Burlington would be safe enough	Option 1 eliminates the at-grade crossing.
Verbal	Safety	Feels that Option 2 alignment along Philadelphia Avenue would not be safe due to poor sight distances, driveways, traffic. They would feel safer on the street	Option 1 provides an alternative to Philadelphia Ave.
Verbal	Safety	Eliminate as many impedances as possible to make the trail more useful.	Option 1 does not include this at grade crossing.
Verbal	Safety	Sections of the Capital Crescent Trail with high vehicular crossings are underutilized. It was noted that there was a marked increase in usage when an at grade crossing was converted to grade separated.	
Verbal	Project Impacts	Owner of the King Street Garage concerned about losing substantial part of parking lot. Not concerned about minor impacts and does support the project.	Preliminary estimates of impacts to public parking are included in the handout. Impacts to private parking are anticipated but have not yet been quantified.
Verbal	Project Impacts	Concern that a Philadelphia Avenue alignment would adversely impact the Sunday parking for Jesus House, DC.	Option 1 avoids those impacts.
Verbal	Project Impacts	Concern about impacts to the Linden trees along Selim Road	Landscaping will be incorporated into the project.
Verbal	Project Impacts	Pleased that the stairways along Georgia Avenue were not being removed. Questioned whether or not the ADA route along the existing bridge would not just be a cut through for cyclists.	It was explained that the switch back ramps on the east side of Georgia Avenue would prevent that bike traffic movement.
Verbal	Project Coordination	Questioned whether or not coordination with other agencies, primarily CSX and SHA, had taken place.	Informed that the coordination process is moving forward and comments from the meeting would be shared.
Verbal	Project Coordination	Silver Spring Transit Center CAC member was pleased that MBT and Capital Crescent Trail would connect directly with transit center. Concerned that Silver Spring Green Trail would not.	Referred commenter to map of Regional Bike Trails displayed at the meeting.

Metropolitan Branch Trail Facility Planning Study
Comments Received
March 22, 2005 Public Meeting

Received By	Topic	Comment/Question	Response
Verbal	Project Coordination	Questions on how the trail would be coordinated with the BiCounty Transitway and the proposed Fenton Gateway Park.	This project would likely occur before the others. The Project Team has met with other project teams for early coordination.
Verbal	Schedule	Numerous questions on project schedule	
Verbal	Cost	Concerns about the cost of the project and the ability to get funding from the county council budget cycle.	
Verbal	Other	Questions regarding the status of other bicycle projects in the area	
Verbal	Alignment	Asked if the team had explored routing the trail down Georgia Avenue to the Montgomery College campus and back over the tracks at the campus.	The alignment recommended in the M-NCPPC's Facility Plan was the starting point for MCDPWT's project. Alternatives were identified only to address conflicts or issues.
Verbal	Aesthetics	Inquiries about the bridge renderings, and how the trail would look in the vicinity of the historic rail station.	Commenter was referred to the 3 conceptual bridge renderings shown at the meeting.
Comment Card	Environments-Trees	Option 1 would destroy 14 to 15 mature Linden trees along Selim Avenue and remove most of the green space in the corridor. Would only work if placed in the parking lane along Selim.	Landscaping will be incorporated into the project.
Comment Card	Project Impacts	A more open design of the trail at the Georgia Avenue bridge is needed to protect views of the art deco train and metro bridge.	
Letter	Alignment	Coalition for the MBT comments: Option 2 & 3 are unacceptable. They do not provide real improvements. The church (Jesus House) has been ungracious towards neighbors regarding parking situation. Option 1 would provide a trail that would stimulate usage and reduce auto use. They support a tunnel option under Burlington Avenue.	
Letter	Cost	For taxpayers information, the workshop should have included projections on use of the trail to justify the capital expense for tunnels, retaining walls, bridges.	
		Is the proposed new bridge across Georgia Avenue a justifiable expense given a bridge already exists?	

Metropolitan Branch Trail Facility Planning Study
Comments Received
March 22, 2005 Public Meeting

Received By	Topic	Comment/Question	Response
Letter	Safety	Commenter concerned about the safety of the trail crossing in front of the Montgomery College parking facility entrance. Thinks students hurrying will not be as careful as necessary at this crossing. (Commenter thought this	
Letter	Alignment	Option #2 preferred since it has reduced costs and impacts. Option #1 is least desirable due to: increased costs; the loss of the Linden trees and the potential conflicts with auto traffic near Montgomery College. Linden trees are the only trees in the area and provide relief from surrounding pavement. Option #3 could have potential conflicts with driveways (especially church). Commenter felt that materials at workshop were misleading regarding tree impacts, driveway crossings	

Metropolitan Branch Trail Facility Planning Study
Comments Received
November 22, 2005 Public Meeting

Received By	Topic	Comment/Question	Response
Comment Card	Preference	Option #1 preferred- more direct	Thank you
Letter (e-mail)	Preference	Prefer Option #2, #3, or #5. Option # 4 is ludicrous.	Thank you
Comment Card	Preference	Option #1 preferred -more direct. Why is cost estimate so high?	Used accepted methods for development costs, based on 2002 SHA Construction Cost Estimating manual. Earlier study's cost estimates were based on less information.
Letter	Preference	Given funding constraints, prefer new Georgia Ave Bridge over Burlington Ave tunnel	Thank you
Letter	Preference	Option # 1 preferred since it avoids crossing MD 410 (Burlington Ave) Hazards exist for pedestrians and bicyclists. Safety should be primary consideration over cost.	Thank you
Comment Card	Preference	Option #1 preferred - less impact on neighborhoods, keeps right turn from Fenton to Burlington, does not cut through proposed Fenton Park.	Thank you
Comment Card	Preference	Eliminate Option # 4 it is too costly and has too much impact on business.	Thank you
Comment Card	Preference	Option #1 too costly and poses safety concern at entrance to Montgomery College garage; also would eliminate linden trees.	Yes, Option 1 affects the Linden trees.
Letter	Preference	Prefer Option #1 . Bicyclists should not be pitted against cars with at grade crossings at intersections in Silver Spring Business District.	At-grade crossings are less desirable but can be made safely at signalized crossings.
Comment Card	Preference	Option #2, #3,& #5 are fiscally responsible, preserve trees, have fewer property impacts. Select one of these.	Thank you
Comment Card	Preference	Prefer Option #1 since it has least impact on existing streets and traffic circulation. Roadways are congested and with anticipated development cannot accommodate the at-grade crossings shown in the other Options.	Thank you
Comment Card	Preference	East Silver Spring Citizen Association supports only Option #1. Why not use sidewalk on existing bridge?	Could be considered with Option 1.
Comment Card	Preference	If the trails to serve commuters, then only Option # 1 makes sense. Choosing any other Option tells bicyclists they are 2nd class. Suggest selling naming rights and advertising in the tunnel to raise money for the project. Others have had success doing so.	Thank you

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Received By	Topic	Comment/Question	Response
Letter	Preference	Option #1 preferred to eliminate at-grade crossing of Burlington which is too busy and dangerous for cyclists.	Thank you
Comment Card	B&O station	Area for Trail behind B&O seems to be too confined	Countywide Bikeways Master Plan calls for shared use paths to 8' - 12' wide. 10' wide path sought where possible.
Verbal	B&O station	Compatibility of proposed new bridge with B&O Station; new bridge truss option appears massive; concerned about the minimal space from rear of building to railing between trail and station building	Can be looked at in more detail later in design.
Verbal	B&O station	Can the trail be narrowed under the canopy to provide more room at the back entrance to the B&O Station ?	Can be looked at in more detail later in design.
Comment Card	Coordination	Be sure to accommodate the BiCounty Transitway	Right-of-Way for BiCounty Transitway has not been determined yet; since no alternative has been selected.
Verbal	Bridge	Appearance of new bridge in photo simulations is good especially the view from behind the B&O station	Thank you
Verbal	Bridge	Can't the existing bridge be widened to accommodate trail better?	CSXT/WMATA jointly own the bridge and the type of construction for the existing bridge was explained that it does not lend it self easily to modification. It was stated that in order to widen the existing structure, a new beam would most likely be required to support the additional trail width, which would block the view of the existing bridge, close the two stairwells on either side of the bridge and require modifications to the existing structure's pier and abutments. It was explained that this widening, when considering all the removal and associated work with the stairwells and retaining walls, would not be any cheaper than constructing a new structure that would be solely owned and maintained by the County.
Comment Card	Bridge	Option # 3 should use existing pedestrian walkway across Georgia Ave instead of new bridge	Thank you
Comment Card	Tunnel	Would rather have tunnel under Burlington than new bridge over Georgia; Existing walkway will work if costs are too high.	Thank you

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Letter (e-mail)	Trees	15 Linden Trees along Selim must be retained. Should not remove permeable green space since runoff is a major problem.	Thank you
Comment Card	Trees / Green space	Suggest putting trail along Selim in green space rather than impacting parking along Selim. If trees are lost then plant new trees in a nearby park.	Thank you
Comment Card	Design	Phila Ave segment should be designed as on-street path rather than side path to reduce ROW cost. This would be safer than crossing business driveways	The trail is intended to be an off-road shared use path.
Verbal	Design	Make Phila Ave portion of trail on-street rather than side path to reduce cost and conflicts with business entrances.	The trail is intended to be an off-road shared use path.
Verbal	Design	If cost is the determinant, would prefer an on-road shared use path and a new bridge over a separate shared use path for the entire length.	The trail is intended to be an off-road shared use path.
Letter (e-mail)	Design	Trail along Selim Rd. should be on-street in the parking lane. Could retain parking at corner of Selim and Philadelphia	The trail is intended to be an off-road shared use path.
Letter (e-mail)	Design	Retain underpass at B&O Station for access to the west side of tracks and the Silverton and Gateway projects	Not possible with any option.
Comment Card	Process	Want to be notified of steps in the review process. Would like to be notified when Planning Board & County Council Committee on Transportation review it.	Added to notification list.
Letter	Traffic	M-NCPPC Board of Appeals concerns about traffic problems in Silver Spring CBD still exist.	The trail creates an alternate mode of transportation to automobile travel.
Letter	Traffic	Concerned about traffic and parking capacity for all Options other than #1. (reference to M-NCPPC memorandum of 7/7/2000)	The trail creates an alternate mode of transportation to automobile travel.
Comment Card	Funding/Costs	Pursue project in phases according to available funding. Suggest 4 phases: Silver Spring Transit Center to B&O; Bridge over Georgia Ave; Selim and Phila to Fenton & Phila.; Phila to Montgomery College.	Thank you
Verbal	Cost Estimates	What is the basis for cost estimates? Would like to see cost information. Question whether they are valid.	Used accepted methods for development costs, based on 2002 SHA Construction Cost Estimating manual. Earlier study's cost estimates were based on less information.

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Verbal	Right of Way	People had the impression that Montgomery County owns the land between Selim Rd and the RR tracks.	WMATA property line is outside the fence, closer to Selim Road.
Verbal	Request for information	How can I get a copy of Options ?	On County web site