

SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report DECEMBER 2017 *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

[1] COMMUNITY ISSUES

{Please refer to previous month's report for some other major on-going issues}

Dockless Bikes

The Department of Transportation's pilot project introducing large number of dockless bikes in downtown Silver Spring and surrounding neighborhoods is being expanded to four vendors. We continue aggressively communicating to users the need to park the bikes in a way that they do not impede pedestrian flow or create hazards for vehicles.

Purple Line

The Bi-County agreement that focuses on 'beyond the tracks' was signed recently. Under the leadership of the University of Maryland's Smart Growth Center, and with the participation of both counties, MTA, the P3, Enterprise Corporation, and many others, this effort is addressing the Purple Line related issues of economic development, affordable housing, and placemaking along the Corridor.

Some of the specific issues coming before MTA's Community Advisory Teams – and the Purple Line Transit Partners – for specific station areas include: Monitoring the Arliss Street detour and ensuring SHA installs a left arrow signal at Piney Branch; Working with merchants and small businesses on Bonifant Street to ensure deliveries are not negatively impacted* and, finalizing how the Talbot bridge is incorporated in the art component of the Lyttonsville Station. (**State Delegate Jheannette Wilkins and Senator Will Smith are meeting with area merchants to explore possible remediation.*)

The Purple Line Transit Partners and MTA have aggressively advertised the most effective way for residents to get information on the project and contact them for issues. We have been listing these resources in our eNewsletter routinely. Still, we expect more and more inquires as the construction becomes more visible.

Living Under Construction

Living under construction remains a challenge for downtown businesses, residents, and visitors. Other than the Purple Line construction, there is also PEPCO's work on Fenton Street scheduled to begin early Spring; the on-going WSSC work on US29; and at least three construction projects at various stage of construction. We are in close contact with County agencies (DPS, DEP, and DOT), State agencies (MTA), and the utility companies to minimize disruption and ensure adjoining merchants and customers know what is going on in a timely manner. However, the level of activity makes it challenging to ensure everyone that needs to know knows; and that we don't communicate the advisories in a way that discourages people from coming downtown.

[2] ADVISORY GROUPS

Citizens Advisory Board

In November the Board heard from the Purple Line Corridor Coalition and the Purple Line Partners regarding the overall alignment and demographics of the Purple Line. With the Community Advisory Teams (CATs) underway, this unique presentation offered the opportunity to provide a more general framework to the many specific hyper-local issues being discussed. (Key issues identified are reference earlier in this report.)

In December the Board will have their annual meeting with the State Delegations from Districts 18 and 20. They will also continue hearing from different neighborhoods in the Area – this month it is Woodside Park.

In December, the SSCAB Interview Committee will interview candidates for the Board vacancies. It is expected that names will be submitted for the consideration of the County Executive later in the month and final names be presented to County Council early next year.

Urban District Advisory Committee

In November the Committee heard about an innovative marketing approach in Fenton Village intended to get the word out that the merchants and small businesses in the area are very much 'open for business' during the PEPCO, Studio Plaza, and Purple Line construction. They will also heard about the new dockless bicycles pilot program in downtown Silver Spring.

In December, the Committee will hear from the Purple Line Transit Partners, focusing on the two stations in downtown Silver Spring, the Transit Station and the Library Station.

The Urban District has installed new holiday banners on poles on Georgia Avenue as well as two across the street banners.

Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee

In December, the SSA&EC will meet to review the annual report from the Maryland Arts Council; and do a 'round table' conversation regarding what each member – and other arts organizations – are doing in downtown Silver Spring, particularly for the winter months.

Transportation Management District

In November, the Committee heard from Gary Erenrich, MCDOT regarding the dockless bicycle pilot project being undertaken in downtown Silver Spring.

In December, the Committee will hear from Darcy Buckley, with an update on the BRT on US29, including the proposed interface with the Transit Station.

Other Institutional Engagement

The RSC Director represents the County in a series of other initiatives, institutions, and government sector, some of the most active includes:

- Takoma Langley Commercial Development Authority – The Executive Director, Melanie Isis, has resigned.
- Long Branch Business Partners – Met in November to discuss the issue of gang violence and what/how the non-profit providers can help.
- Long Branch Business League – Meeting in December to discuss how the Arliss Street detour is working.
- Silver Spring Town Center, Inc. – Just released their aggressive Winter Programming schedule.
- City of Takoma Park – Considering connecting to the dockless bikes pilot project.

NOTE: Past reports highlighting additional issues are available at:
<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/silverspring/boardscommittees/cab/index.html>