

# SILVER SPRING REGIONAL AREA

Monthly Report    MARCH 2018    *Reemberto Rodriguez, Director*

## [1] COMMUNITY ISSUES

### **Purple Line Update**

As the Purple Line project gears up its construction schedule, the MTA's Community Advisory Teams (CATs) are beginning to meet more often. Each CAT is focusing on one or two station areas and the connecting paths. The meetings intend to provide MTA and the Purple Line Transit Partners an opportunity to update residents and businesses on the construction process and solicit feedback on specific situations. Key issues that have surfaced for the stations in the Silver Spring Regional Area include, among others:

- Lyttonsville Station: Managing the six month closure of Lyttonsville Way bridge and ensuring that the Talbot bridge history is appropriately honored
- 16<sup>th</sup> Street / Woodside Station: Managing the six month closure of Spring Street bridge (at 16<sup>th</sup> Street)
- Silver Spring Metro Station: Understanding the interface of the Purple Line station with the Metro Station
- Library Station: Ensuring business continuity – and seeking possible financial relief - for Bonifant businesses during construction and understanding how the intersection of Wayne and Fenton will operate – and how this work will interface with the pending work by PEPCO in the same area
- Dale Avenue Station\*: Slowing down traffic on Wayne Avenue and ensuring safety for pedestrians at Wayne and Dale
- Manchester Avenue\*: Availability of parking for apartment dwellers and construction disruption
- Piney Branch: Depleted parking for businesses during construction and enforcement of construction truck routes
- University Avenue\*: Considering alternative to the 'no left turn for east bound traffic on Piney Branch' into the Long Branch Rec Center and Understanding how the intersection of University and Piney Branch will function during construction and once the Purple Line is operational
- Takoma Langly: Understanding how the station will interface with the bus terminal and limiting disruption to shopping center businesses during construction

\*The Department of Transportation Parking Division recently held a public hearing regarding the operations of the Residential Parking Permit program and how it may help alleviate some residents concerns that Purple Line users will seek to park in residential streets near these stations. (The hearing also highlighted certain issues not necessarily related to the Purple Line, including the request for paper permits; the concern that the program may be excluding apartment residents; and, that some existing residents may find it hard to comply because of their immigration status.)

## [2] ADVISORY GROUPS

### **Citizens Advisory Board**

The February meeting focused on issues in the immigrant community, including challenges faced by the immigrant small business and merchant entrepreneurs. (This was followed by more dialogue later in the month at the Commercial Economic Development Committee with guest Judith Stephensen, Small Business Navigator for the County.) The Board also had an extended dialogue with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Police District.

The March meeting (Monday, March 12<sup>th</sup>) will be devoted to a conversation with elementary and middle school principals and parent leaders. The focus will be how nearby residents that do not have children in the schools can connect to school activities and volunteer opportunities.

The three SSCAB Committees will be having a joint meeting with the Department of Permitting Services to follow up on the letter of advice the Board recently sent to the County Executive regarding the construction disruptions in the area, and present a new tool the Department is developing to facilitate the permitting process. Diane Jones, DPS Director, will visit with the Committees. (The meeting is on Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup>.)

The SSCAB is proud to welcome five new members! Delia Aguilar, Mandisa Berry, Barbara Darko, Patricia Germann, and Lysette House.

### **Urban District Advisory Committee**

In February the meeting focused on the new streetscape standards being developed for downtown Silver Spring by the Planning Department. The Committee also discussed their letter of advice to the County Executive regarding the budget for the Urban District Operations.

In March (Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>) the Committee's agenda includes two major items: (1) a presentation by the Purple Line Transit Partnership and the Maryland Transit Authority regarding how the intersection of Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street will function once the Purple Line is operational; and, (2) a presentation by the proponents of a business improvement district for the area currently covered by the Silver Spring Urban District.

### **Arts & Entertainment Advisory Committee**

The Committee's next meeting (set for Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>.) The key agenda item will be the visual and art component of the Bus Rapid Transit system that will be built on US29 and intersect with the Silver Spring Transit Station. The Committee will also do its routine 'report out' by the various members' venues regarding their upcoming major events for the next quarter.

### **Transportation Management District**

In February the Committee heard a presentation from advocates of autonomous cars, the timing for their likely deployment, and how different agencies are working to ensure they function safely. In March (Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup>) the Committee will review their final draft letter of advice regarding the FY19 Budget, and hear an update on the Transit Management Plans (TMPs) submitted by the major employers in the TMD.

### **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 organization has yet to hire an Executive Director.
- Long Branch Business Partners – Recently held their quarterly meeting.
- Long Branch Business League – Their next meeting will focus on "business image". They recently released their spring newsletter with updates on many of their activities, including the new Salsa Networking.
- Silver Spring Town Center, Inc. – Have begun their aggressive Spring Programming schedule, many of which will be on the Plaza once the skating ice rink goes away mid-March.
- City of Takoma Park – The City of Takoma Park has joined the dockless bikes pilot project.