



Area Advisory Committee One Meeting #8 Summary
Wednesday, May 20, 2015, 6:30 p.m.
Lakelands Clubhouse
960 Main Street
Gaithersburg, MD

Attendees:

Members

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| Joseph Allen | Steve Scharf |
| Stuart Barr | Lynne Tucker |
| Brian Downie | Michael Watkins |
| Peter Henry | Ronald Welke |
| Michael Janus | Kam Yee |
| David Rosenbaum | |

Apologies

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| Girum Awoke | Anita Schweinfurth |
| Marilyn Balcombe | Francine Waters |
| Cherian Eapen | James Woods |
| Erik Morrison | |

Staff

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| Project Manager – Rick Kiegel | Urban Design – Seth Garland |
| Facilitator – Holly Storck | Public Involvement Task Lead – Crystal Saunders |
| Station Architect – Todd Connelly | City of Gaithersburg – Gregory Mann |
| Traffic Engineer – Elizabeth Andrew | M-NCPPC – David Anspacher |
| Segment Engineers – Denny Finnerin, Christine Sutkowski | Logistics Staff – Lineta Duren, Tori Leonard |

General Public

Richard Arkin

Handouts:

Meeting packets included: Meeting #8 Summary; Meeting Agenda; Station Concept rendering; Final CCT Bicycle Parking Recommendations; Bicycle Master Plan presentation.

Welcome and Introductions:

Facilitator **Holly Storck** welcomed attendees to the final scheduled meeting of AAC One. She thanked the members for their time and input to the process. She presented an overview of the meeting agenda: an update on the project status, an overview of value engineering findings, information on bicycle parking at CCT stations, and an introduction to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning's bicycle master plan. Attendees introduced themselves, and Holly reminded members of the policy regarding public participation at the meetings—the public was welcome to observe the meeting, but only members could participate in the discussion.

Project Status:

Project Manager **Rick Kiegel** provided members with updates on various aspects of the CCT project: the status and schedule of the environmental document and the associated public hearing, updated cost estimate and project delivery approach, and information on the Muddy Branch Road alignment.

Environmental Document and Public Hearing

The project team has submitted the Environmental Assessment (EA) to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and is awaiting comments. The FTA has commented on some chapters of the EA, but not the draft Section 4(f) evaluation and Public Involvement chapters. The draft EA cannot be finalized and made available for public review until the FTA has reviewed it and the project team responds to their comments. It also has to be submitted to additional state and federal agencies for review and comment. The project had planned to have a public hearing in January 2015, which was postponed until June 2015, and is now tentatively scheduled for mid-September.

Once a date for the public hearing has been set, the public will be notified in a variety of ways, including a postcard mailed to the more than 40,000 addresses in the project area. Once the EA is approved by the FTA, it will be posted online and in the community for comments. It will be available approximately 30 days before the public hearing and 15 to 30 days after the public hearing. People can make comments at the public hearing (either in public or in private) or in writing. All comment formats are weighted equally. The project team will not finalize the 30% plans until comments on the 15% design (which is the basis of the EA) are received and considered. The final environmental document is estimated to be complete by January 2016, and there are no plans to hold a public meeting/hearing when the final environmental document is released.

Between the 15% and 30% design deliverables, the level of detail is refined. It will involve working with Montgomery County to finalize typical sections for all of the impacted county roads. Stormwater management design, traffic analysis, and signal design will also be furthered. Thirty percent design marks the end of preliminary engineering. Once it moves beyond 30% design, the project enters final design, which is much more detailed and specific.

A member asked if contacting the congressional delegation would be helpful in expediting FTA review. Rick replied that it would not and pointed out that the EA is reviewed by the FTA Region III office in Philadelphia while FTA's headquarters in Washington, DC handles policy-related issues.

Capital Costs and Funding

The public construction cost of the CCT remains at \$545 million. This figure does not include any of the already budgeted costs, which includes preliminary engineering, final design, and right-of-way acquisition. The CCT construction cost has been updated, but will not be made public until the Governor, Secretary of Transportation, and MTA Administrator have reviewed them. The updated costs will be released as part of the Environmental Assessment.

The CCT's funding program has not changed since the AAC's first meeting. Funds are in place in the state's six-year capital program, which would take the project through final design and right-of-way acquisition. However, there is no funding for construction. \$145 million is included for years seven and later, but that money is not included in the six year budget. In addition, that level of funding is not enough to construct the CCT.

A member asked whether a decision on the Purple Line would have an impact on the CCT. Rick speculated that if the Red Line or Purple Line were to be cancelled or delayed, funds could be made available to the CCT. Rick told the AAC members that he has not had any questions about it from the Governor or Secretary Rahn. A decision on the Purple Line is expected in June.

Rick noted that the project team continues to evaluate different project and construction delivery methods. Options range from conventional design-bid-build to a public-private partnership (P3), where a concessionaire would take over after 30% plans are submitted, complete the design, and build the project to MTA's specifications. The concessionaire would then own, operate, and maintain the system for a predetermined period time, usually 30 or 50 years. The concessionaire essentially sells the state a mortgage that the state would then pay back over time. The concessionaire would have to meet specific performance, operation, and maintenance goals and honor any mitigation and/or community agreements. The intent is to give the concessionaire flexibility in design while meeting the project commitments and standards. The decision about which delivery method the project uses will depend on many factors, including whether the project receives federal funds and the degree of investment from local jurisdictions and private commercial property owners. A project constructed under the P3 process would likely be able to move more quickly than under a more traditional approach.

The Purple Line and Virginia's Beltway widening project are local examples of P3 projects. State funds would be used to pay the concessionaire. A concessionaire has not yet been selected for the Purple Line. Four shortlisted teams are preparing bids, but the process has been delayed until the Governor makes a decision on whether to advance the Purple Line project. Rick feels that since there was concessionaire interest in the Purple Line, there is likely to be concessionaire interest in the CCT.

A member asked whether the vehicles used for the CCT will be compatible with the vehicles proposed for use on the Montgomery County Rapid Transit study. Rick said that Montgomery County is studying bus rapid transit in three corridors MD 355, US 29, and Veirs Mill Road, but these corridors are further behind the CCT in planning and design. Rick agreed that the CCT vehicles should be compatible with the County plans and suggested that the CCT will set the standard.

Muddy Branch Road Plan View

As discussed at Meeting Six, the original alignment along Muddy Branch Road has been modified so that the CCT transitway runs in the median of the roadway while accommodating the Montgomery County master plan to accommodate six lanes in the future between Great Seneca Highway and Darnestown Road. The right curb line on the Washingtonian Woods side of the road will remain and any necessary widening will happen on the east side of Muddy Branch Road, towards the Hopkins property at Belward Farm. The configuration will include space for a

new third lane southbound, the transitway and a new third lane northbound. Because of the space needed in the median to accommodate both the transitway and the future third lanes in each direction, the project will have to rebuild the two northbound lanes. The design would also include stormwater management, a sidewalk, and space for a shared-use path to be constructed by others. The project is still working with the county on the design of the improvements along Muddy Branch Road. When those details are finalized drawings will be made available online and AAC members will be notified of the sheets' availability.

A member asked what the right-of-way width is. **Denny Finnerin** said she did not know for sure, but that it could be 150 feet since it was a county roadway or possibly 170 feet as it was an urban arterial. In addition, Johns Hopkins University is required to provide 50 feet of right-of-way along the Belward Farm for construction of the transitway.

Value Engineering:

Value Engineering (VE) is a process where a team of experts not affiliated with the project look for opportunities to save money without impacting the core mission of the project. The CCT recently completed a Value Engineering Workshop and Rick shared the results of some of the major findings with the AAC. The areas discussed were the Operations and Maintenance Facility, the transitway width, the Key West Avenue/Diamondback Drive intersection, and station platform lengths.

The total savings identified in the value engineering process are not known because the team is still evaluating and responding to the recommendations.

Operations and Maintenance Facility

The VE team recommended that CCT vehicles be stored outside on an uncovered surface lot rather than in a covered, enclosed area. The project team has decided to maintain an indoor facility because the operational costs associated with keeping diesel engine blocks warm in cold weather, clearing snow from vehicles, and cooling vehicles that have been sitting in the sun would likely offset any construction cost savings. However, Rick cautioned that should the Governor or MDOT Secretary be looking for ways to make the project more affordable, indoor vehicle storage could be removed. The Operations and Maintenance Facility would be constructed in such a way as to accommodate Phase II of the CCT project when necessary.

Transitway Width

Christine Sutkowski told the AAC that as part of the VE process, the project has reduced the width of the transitway from 14 feet per lane to 13 feet per lane. The transit lanes at the station areas would be reduced from 14 feet to 12 feet. Reducing lane width results in less concrete being used, which also reduces the amount of impervious surfaces requiring stormwater management. Both of these factors create cost savings.

The new 13-foot lane width is based on recent guidance from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) on separated, dedicated BRT facilities. Rick pointed out that 12 feet is acceptable at the stations since the approximately nine-foot wide buses will be going slowly and will pull up right against the platform. However, the lane width cannot

be smaller than 12 feet as that would preclude the lanes' use by fire and other emergency equipment.

A member wondered why the transitway lanes needed to be 13 feet wide when highway lanes are 12 feet wide. Denny explained the width includes a one-foot curb and gutter and one-foot shoulder so the actual travel lane would be 11 feet. In addition, the width is necessary for passing in case of a bus breakdown and clearance for the vehicles' extended side view mirrors as the vehicles are traveling in opposite directions.

The transitway surface will be concrete. While slightly more expensive than asphalt, it has a longer lifespan. The project team is still determining what materials will be used where the transitway crosses streets.

Training will be the primary method for ensuring vehicles do not scrape the platform. Rick noted that some systems use guidewheels or visually guided, hands-free systems. However, these are not currently being considered for the CCT.

Key West Avenue/Diamondback Drive intersection

The 15% design plans for the Key West Avenue/Diamondback Drive intersection included an underpass. However, based on the VE study, this intersection will now be an at-grade crossing. This will result in an approximately \$30 million cost reduction, partly due to utility relocation cost savings. However, making this intersection at-grade will result in an average travel time delay of 45 seconds throughout the system.

As discussed at Meeting Three, the traffic signals along the transitway will use signal priority, which would extend the current green phase to allow a CCT vehicle to pass through an intersection more quickly. The CCT will not be using signal preemption, which immediately ends a conflicting cross street green signal so that a green signal can be provided for the transit vehicle.

Station Platform Length

Through the VE process station lengths have been reduced. The 15% design included 150 foot long platforms with two canopies and two sets of amenities at all CCT Direct stations. The 30% design will include 125-foot long platforms at Metropolitan Grove, Kentlands, Crown Farm, and West Gaither stations. The Shady Grove Station boarding platform will be 200 feet long with a continuous canopy and associated amenities. The remaining CCT Direct stations will be 65 feet long and include one canopy and set of amenities. Stations along the CCT via USG route will go from 75 feet long to 65 feet long. Center platform width would remain 18 feet wide; side platforms at DANAC and USG will be 12 feet wide.

The station area designs will preserve space for 125 feet long platforms to be constructed as ridership grows.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities:

Seth Garland presented the project team's process for determining how much bicycle parking should be provided at each station. In the 15% design, each station along the CCT Direct route

had ten bicycle racks with space for 20 bicycles. Along the CCT via USG route, the 15% plans showed five bicycle racks with space for ten bicycles. However, these were placeholder figures. For the upcoming 30% design, the project team has refined the number of needed bicycle racks based on forecasted ridership and WMATA's 2020 goal of 2.1% of AM peak boardings arriving by bicycle. In addition, the project team's design show bicycle racks being installed in increments of five racks at CCT Direct stations.

BikeShare is not a part of the bicycle parking analysis. However, the project team recognizes that the presence of BikeShare can encourage more personal bike riders. BikeShare is implemented by individual jurisdictions. However, the CCT team has identified areas around the stations where they could accommodate BikeShare.

Bicycle Master Plan Overview:

David Anspacher, Planner Coordinator at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and project manager for The Bicycle Master Plan update, provided an overview of the planning process with a focus on the CCT area. David said that the purpose of the Bicycle Master Plan is to help make communities better places to live, to incorporate current best practices, to improve mobility and transportation choices, and consolidate bikeway recommendations. He showed examples of the bicycle networks and storage facilities available to various levels of riders and noted the growth in bike share programs and bike facilities, including examples of cycle tracks in the DC area and other parts of the country.

David said that bike riders generally fall into one of four categories, ranging from those who can tolerate high-stress environments to those who will not ride at all. The Bicycle Master Plan focuses on accommodating riders in the middle two categories: moderate stress/enthused and confident, and low stress/interested but concerned.

M-NCPPC hopes to have draft recommendations for the CCT area in the next few months with a longer term goal of having the County Council approval of the overall plan by September 2017. Early recommendations for the CCT area include the Northway cycle track connecting the Belward and DANAC stations to the existing Millennium Trail near Rockville; the Southway cycle track connecting neighborhoods to the LSC West and LSC Central stations; and the Midway cycle track going up to Gaithersburg connecting the DANAC and LSC Central stations.

The Great Seneca Science Corridor Implementation Advisory Committee was established in 2011 to facilitate coordination with the CCT, the LSC Loop, and development applications for properties within the area so that the County is able to preserve the ability to create a high-quality bicycle network that connects CCT stations to the surrounding community. While the Bicycle Master Plan only covers the areas outside of Gaithersburg and Rockville, David said the intent of this process is to create ongoing coordination with the various jurisdictions and major stakeholders.

Station Naming:

There was not time for a brainstorming session on potential station names at the meeting. However, Holly asked members to send her any station name suggestions they have. The ideas

do not have to be limited to the stations in AAC One. One member asked that if a station is not in Gaithersburg, that it not have 'Gaither' in the station name.

Closing:

Holly again thanked members for their participation. She said this is the end of the AAC process for the design phase, but the project team hopes to reconvene the AACs during the construction phase. Members should feel free to contact her with any questions and she will work with the rest of the project team to provide information and answers. The project will continue to make community presentations and if members would like the team to come to their meetings, please let Holly know. In addition, the project team will also be conducting outreach in the community as the public hearing date draws closer.

Rick thanked members for their participation and input and said that many of the changes in the CCT design were a result of the AAC's discussions and suggestions.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

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