



Area Advisory Committee Two Meeting #8 Summary  
Wednesday, May 13, 2015, 6:30 p.m.  
Universities at Shady Grove  
9630 Gudelsky Drive, Building 3, Room 3230  
Rockville, MD 20850

### Attendees:

#### Members

Wayne Berman	Jefferson Jex
John Brandt	Rosalind MacLennan
Lisa Cline	Toby Lehman
Marilyn Fleetwood	David McDonough
Tim Henderson	Sims Zhou

#### Apologies

John Dunlop	Tami Mensh
Kara Guthro	Melanie Weerakoon

#### Staff

<b>Project Manager</b> -Rick Kiegel	<b>Urban Design</b> -Seth Garland, Lindsey DeHenzel
<b>Facilitator</b> -Cathy Smith	<b>Public Involvement Task Lead</b> -Crystal Saunders
<b>Station Architect</b> -John Bull	<b>Montgomery County DOT</b> -Joana Conklin, Rafael Olarte
<b>Traffic Engineer</b> -Jason Rashid	<b>M-NCPPC</b> - David Anspacher
<b>Segment Engineer</b> - Karen Kahl	<b>Logistics Staff</b> -Lineta Duren, Tori Leonard
<b>Engineering Staff</b> -Charles Kenny	

### Handouts:

Meeting packets included: Meeting #7 Summary; Meeting Agenda #8; Station Concept rendering; Final CCT Bicycle Parking Recommendations; Bicycle Master Plan presentation.

### Welcome and Introductions:

Facilitator **Cathy Smith** welcomed attendees to the last scheduled meeting of AAC Two, thanking the members for their time and input to the process. Cathy introduced Urban Designer **Seth Garland** and M-NCPPC Project Manager **David Anspacher**, both of whom would give presentations. **Tori Leonard** recorded the meeting for transcription purposes. Due to an accident on the ICC, some members and staff were late arriving to the meeting but the meeting proceeded by reordering the agenda.

### Value Engineering:

Lead Engineer **Karen Kahl** defined 'value engineering' as a pause in the design process to evaluate the engineering and solutions developed for the project. Value Engineering is done to identify best practices before moving forward to develop solutions that are cost-effective and meet the needs of the project. The week-long, formal engineering process took place at the end of February and evaluated every element of the 15 percent design. Ten engineers, architects and

construction managers (who do not work on the project) participated and recommended changes to the MTA and the engineering team. MTA looked at the findings to determine which changes should move forward. The project team is currently analyzing some of the recommendations in more detail. Today, we are presenting several recommendations that the team has decided to implement.

The CCT proposed two, 14-foot lanes for the transitway. As a result of the value engineering process, it will proceed with two 13-foot lanes for a total width of 26-feet. This reduces the cost, footprint and the amount of stormwater management needed. The primary justification is new guidelines of 26-foot width for BRT facilities on or adjacent to existing roadways. This width is the lower end of the recommended guidelines for separated, dedicated BRT facilities. The design will maintain some wider sections on the Great Seneca Highway bridge crossing, where it is needed for sharp curves.

**Rick Kiegel** clarified that all interstate lanes are 12-feet wide. Buses are generally wider than the average car and the width now matches the **AASHTO's Guide for Geometric Design of Transit Facilities on Highways and Streets**. Urban sections generally include a 12-foot lane and a one-foot gutter pan for a width of 13-feet.

A member asked if all of the recommendations would be made available to the public. Rick said no, but only because the team did not accept all of them. Karen emphasized that these were not major alignment changes but rather cost-saving measures and efficiencies.

Station Architect **John Bull** explained the changes to the stations. The project's new platform standard would now be 125-feet for a full length platform. Kentlands, Shady Grove, Metropolitan Grove, West Gaither and Crown Farm stations are termini stations or have higher ridership projections so they will have full length platforms. The length of the rest of the platforms would now be reduced to 65-feet and would be phased-in for expansion--built to 65-feet initially with room to accommodate an additional 60-feet of length in the future. Space is reserved in the station approach to build out the platforms. Walkways and entryways would remain as they were presented in earlier meetings. The same size buses would still be utilized on both the shorter and longer platforms. Multiple buses can still queue at all the stations but cannot load/unload at the shorter platforms at the same time. All the station amenities such as trash cans, fare vending machines, etc., would remain the same, just fewer in number. The shorter platforms would have one canopy instead of two.

### **Project Status:**

Rick thanked members of the committee for their service. The project submitted the Environmental Assessment (EA) to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in February—not all the comments are back yet, especially on two major chapters (Section 4(f) and Environmental Impacts). Because all the comments are not in from the FTA, the project team has not been able to schedule a public hearing as planned. The project had planned to hold the public hearing in January, then pushed it back until June, but now delayed it until the Fall.

A member asked what was the basis for concluding that there should be a FONSI. Rick explained that there are three different processes under NEPA: DEIS/FEIS (Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements) for projects with high levels of environmental impacts; EA/FONSI (Environmental Assessment and Findings of No Significant Impact) process (that the CCT is in) for projects with a limited number of impacts; and a categorical exclusion for projects

with very few impacts. Every project seeking federal funds has to go through one of those three processes. Any significant environmental impacts of the CCT would have been identified in the environmental assessment.

A member asked how the public would be notified of the public hearing. Rick responded that there would be newspaper ads (legal/public notice), notification to the mailing area (about 45,000 homes), and outreach in the community (shopping centers, summer activities, etc.)

A member asked what would be the impact of delaying the report. Rick explained that the project schedule is now pushed back two-and-a-half months. The project would like feedback from the public on the 15 percent design plans before going to 30 percent (now scheduled to be completed by the end of October). Rick indicated that the environmental document and any aspect of the project would be available for review and comment. Comments can be in the form of public testimony, private testimony and comment cards. In terms of any decisions that result--the comments will all be evaluated to determine if changes are warranted and then incorporated into the project as appropriate. Decision makers include Rick, the project team, Kevin Quinn--the MTA's Director of Planning, and Henry Kay, Executive Director of Transit Development and Delivery at MTA.

A member asked if Mr. Quinn and Mr. Kay would be at the public hearing. Rick replied that Mr. Quinn would likely be, but he was unsure if Mr. Kay would be. However, the testimony and comment cards are recorded verbatim and included in the document's appendix. The comment period will likely be open 30 days before the hearing and remain open for 15 days after the hearing.

A member asked how the MDOT Secretary was involved in the process and also what was the status of funding for the project. Rick replied that most of the work is done at the MTA level. The project is funded for preliminary engineering, final design and right-of-way acquisition. Currently, there is no money for construction in the six-year capital program.

There are several options for how the project could move into construction:

- Design-Bid-Build: the engineering team would complete the 100 percent final design plans. Those plans would be released for contractor bids. Then a contract would be awarded for construction.
- Public Private Partnership (P3) is being used for the Purple Line. With a P3, a private concessionaire funds and builds the project. The state is then required to pay back the contractor over a period of 30-40 years (similar to a mortgage). The contractor would be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the system and achieving a certain level of service.
- Design-Build: at the completion of 30 percent design, the project is advertised for a contractor to finish the design and build the project.
- Design-Build-Operate-Maintain is similar to Design-Build but adds the obligations of operating and maintaining the system over a certain timeframe.

Design Build and Design Build Operate and Maintain are different from a P3 in that the state and local jurisdictions have to come up with funding for the project.

A member asked if updated costs have been completed. Rick replied yes, but there was a new administrator at the MTA and the project team has not been given permission to release those numbers until the Administrator and MDOT Secretary have reviewed them. There is no timeline

for the release of this information. The value engineering identified roughly \$40 million in savings. A member asked if new project costs were pre- or post-value engineering. Rick explained that the figure does not include the \$40 million in savings, but will include year-of-expenditure dollars (with escalation due to inflation).

A member asked about the status of right-of-way acquisitions. Rick explained that the project cannot acquire right-of-way until it has completed the environmental process. All of the right-of-way that is in place for the CCT now (about 50 percent of the route) is either in private hands, reserved for the transitway or has been dedicated to the County through the development review process. A member asked if the ROW set aside at the Hopkins development was included in that 50 percent. Rick said no as it is still in private hands today.

A member asked, since the CCT was being built due to the density planned at Belward Farm, when would the public know what is happening at the Farm and shouldn't the two things be predicated on one another. Rick explained that the project is not directly linked with the Belward development. Belward is one station out of 14 and as such, it provides only a small portion of the ridership. The CCT in and of itself could be built without that station. The State has no control over whether that farm actually gets developed. The CCT is based on a future projection of ridership which assumes that by 2035 the Farm will be built, not by the year 2020.

A member asked if the funding scenarios (P3, etc.) required federal funding. Rick explained that the project does not require federal funding but pursues it as a means to reduce the State's obligation. The project goes through the NEPA process to remain eligible for federal funding, of which there is a limited amount. Even though the project applies for the funding, Congress can decide not to award it, which means the project would need to look for other funding sources (local jurisdictions, private interests, etc.). Even if the project were not seeking federal funds, there is a similar State environmental process that is required.

A member noted that the Montgomery County Transit Task Force, under the County Executive, was looking at a whole range of alternative funding sources for the CCT. **Joana Conklin** announced that the Task Force would hold a public forum on June 17<sup>th</sup> in Rockville on that topic.

A member asked if other BRT systems elsewhere in the country were built in isolation and then had development happen around them. Rick stated that he was aware of many BRT projects that have spurred development. But in many cases, the projects (including the Purple Line) were planned where the need already exists.

A member asked about the start date for construction. Rick responded that construction was scheduled to begin in the spring of 2018 and is contingent upon funding. A member asked, as a hypothetical, if the Transit Task Force came up with a funding plan and the design progressed beyond 30 percent, could construction start sooner. Rick explained that the project would still require the completion of final design and right-of-way acquisition, which can happen concurrently.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities:**

Karen introduced design engineer **Charles Kenny** who detailed the Muddy Branch Road section design elements. The sketch showed existing topography, environmental features and right-of-way. Muddy Branch Road is currently a four-lane divided highway with a grass median. The CCT will be built in the existing median; and the northbound lanes of the roadway would be reconstructed to make space for the transitway. The transitway design accommodates the future

planned expansion of the roadway. From Great Seneca Highway, the transitway comes off a side alignment into the median, comes down through the intersection at Midsummer Drive and Mission Drive, and continues in the median all the way down to Belward Campus Drive where the transitway goes into the Belward Farm.

Karen explained that the existing southbound lanes on Muddy Branch Road (up against Washingtonian Woods) would not be modified. Charles continued by noting that the roadway near Darnestown Road might require some slight widening. The northbound lanes (shaded gray) will be fully reconstructed, to accommodate the transitway and turn lanes. There will be a left turn lane at the Midsummer/Mission Drive intersection for northbound traffic. Past this intersection, a right turn lane is included for access onto eastbound Great Seneca Highway. At the Great Seneca Highway intersection, there will be two northbound thru lanes and a left-turn lane onto westbound Great Seneca Highway. The work shown on the north side of Great Seneca includes paving and redesigned striping to guide thru traffic through the intersection. Charles explained that the work on the northbound lanes required removing the existing pavement and replacing it with new pavement.

**Jason Rashid** explained there is an existing taper lane with a quick merge on the northbound lanes of Muddy Branch Road just north of the intersection with Great Seneca Highway, but the taper lane was taken out because the merge area was insufficient. The change allows for a better alignment for thru traffic. Charles described the proposed design of the northbound lanes of Muddy Branch Road which would include a standard 5' sidewalk and a two-way cycle track. Rick explained that bicycle accommodations through this area are part of the County's Master Plan. To put the cycle tracks in the roadway would force the construction of the roadway closer to the residences in the Mission Hills community and create problems in the transition to Muddy Branch Road after crossing Great Seneca Highway. In the drawing, a cycle track is shown behind the sidewalk, but that position could change. There is a proposed stormwater management area between the back of the curb and the sidewalk. The sidewalk would be built with the CCT project. The cycle track would be built when the cycle network is implemented, likely when the additional two lanes are built on Muddy Branch Road. **David Anspacher** clarified that M-NCPPC supports the design but would prefer one-way tracks to connect to bike lanes on Darnestown Road.

Karen noted that today there are two lanes northbound and southbound. The gap shown on the plan leaves space for a third lane in each direction on Muddy Branch, per the county's Master Plan.

Another member noted a major concern for him was that Great Seneca Highway was busy, complicated and treacherous for pedestrians and bicyclists--what are the safety measures (other than signals) and was there a mid-crossing refuge. Jason explained that the design changes provide pedestrians access across Great Seneca Highway in a more straight line. The signal timing will use the Americans with Disabilities Act allowance of four feet per second for crossing. Karen explained that the amount of time the traffic has a green light is the same amount of time the pedestrians have—more time than minimally required for pedestrians. A member asked about left-turning traffic not giving pedestrians the right-of-way. Jason noted that would become an enforcement issue, but there could be additional, more prominent signage at the intersection to alert motorists.

A member noted there was no pedestrian overpass in this difficult location. Karen pointed out that that an overpass had not been considered in this location for the CCT. Gaithersburg is considering one near MedImmune and Kentlands. MedImmune does not want a pedestrian bridge from the Kentlands Station to connect to its campus, but a bridge is being proposed at the Kentlands Boulevard intersection. Members expressed a desire for pedestrian and bicycle amenities, particularly for the Washingtonian Woods community, and design and signal timing that would better encourage access and ridership. Rick acknowledged that these issues could not be decided this evening but encouraged members to comment on the environmental assessment.

**Seth Garland** outlined the project's plan for bicycle parking at CCT stations. In the 15 percent design, the plans showed placeholder bike parking of 10 racks with 20 parking spots on direct service CCT (with five racks on the USG route). For 30 percent design, designers began by conducting a survey of existing systems and programs. WMATA has set a goal for 2020 of providing bike racks for 2.1 percent of A.M. peak boardings. This goal increases to 3.5 percent by 2030. Seth noted this is not a blanket number as various stations have different bicycle opportunities and access for bicycles. MTA's planned Purple and Red Lines have set a goal of 0.5 percent of daily boardings with a minimum of eight racks at each station. The Association of Pedestrian and Bike Professionals (APBP) has set an aggressive goal of 5 percent for long-term bike parking and 1.5 percent for short-term parking.

In response to questions, Seth pointed out that these plans and goals do not include Capital Bike Share. For people to use BikeShare to get to the CCT stations means there would have to be much larger BikeShare network, which would be the responsibility of the jurisdictions. Also, putting in BikeShare does not decrease bicycle parking needs at stations. BikeShare tends to accelerate bike parking needs rather than the opposite because of the 'gateway' effect that BikeShare has on bike riding in general. M-NCPPC conducted a bike shed study for each station to analyze station areas for potential bikeability based on employment and dwelling unit numbers and give recommendations on how to allocate numbers of spots at each station for bike parking. The design team will be using the overall 2020 WMATA goal of 2.1 percent for the first year of CCT operation. The design team applied M-NCPPC's methodology to determine the number of bike racks at each CCT station.

A member asked if the bike parking distribution took into account existing bike parking. Seth responded yes and noted that, especially for the USG stations, designers would need to consider where the overlapping of bike sheds would occur, particularly with the CCT direct service. David pointed out that his M-NCPPC analysis did not look at the two USG route stations due to proximity and headways on the direct service line, but assured that those stations would have some minimum number of bike parking spots.

Seth explained that the recommendations are a starting point, not an end point and it is assumed that the need for bike parking will grow over time. There is also a 2040 goal and the project will continue to identify areas to expand. A member commented that he assumed the Shady Grove Metro station must have a lot of existing bike parking. Seth agreed that Shady Grove would require a special approach since there is existing parking, but that the project would work with WMATA to negotiate the appropriate amount of spaces.

A member commended the design team on the analytics, but encouraged them to look at the experience of the Silver Line, keeping in mind two important variables: an existing bike path network and the accessibility of bikes to share or ride. The Reston station was forecasted to only

need 20 spots, but Reston has a good bike path infrastructure and, as a result, 180 bikes are parked there every day. He encouraged the designers to look beyond models and consider empirical data.

A member noted that currently automobile parking is free at USG, but next year there will be fees added for parking and he predicts that bike rack demand will increase. A member noted that it was his understanding there is not enough right-of-way set aside at stations for bike parking, but property owners, if asked, may be willing to grant easements.

A member asked if there was any analysis of the Washingtonian Woods community to see what percentage of residents would bike to the Belward Station. Seth responded that information would be in the bike shed analysis.

### **Bicycle Master Plan Overview**

Cathy introduced **David Anspacher**, transportation planner for the Montgomery County Planning Department (M-NCPPC) and project manager for the bicycle master plan update. David explained that the purpose of the data-driven bike master plan is to help make communities better places to live, to incorporate current best practices, to improve mobility and transportation choices and reduce vehicle use. His presentation showed examples of the bike networks available to various levels of riders and noted the growth in bike share programs and bike facilities, including examples of cycle tracks in the D.C. area and other parts of the country. David explained that this process, for the first time, consolidates all of the bikeways plans into a single master plan.

M-NCPPC hopes to have draft recommendations for the CCT area in the next few months. The goal is to have County Council's approval of the overall plan by September 2017. Montgomery County Planning was asked by the Implementation Advisory Committee of the Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan to review bicycle planning, facilities and connectivity to communities along the CCT (but only in those areas that are outside of the incorporated cities where each city's planning department has jurisdiction). The objective is to facilitate coordination among the CCT, the LSC loop (a shared use path planned for the Life Sciences Center area, including the DANAC, LSC West, LSC Central and Crown Farm stations) and development applications (as developments are approved the plan would ensure incorporation of bicycle planning best practices)—all to preserve the ability to create a high-quality bike network.

David explained 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 planning process focuses on accommodating riders in the moderate-stress category (about 60 percent of riders).

David gave examples of the current bike networks and their usage by the various categories of riders. Joana Conklin commented that Shady Grove Road has bike lanes on it. David explained that the shared use path was only in sections of the road and was not sufficient for people unable to tolerate a high-stress environment. Neighborhood roads, off-road shared use paths and cycle tracks tend to be low stress facilities.

A member asked how security for bike storage facilities worked, especially after it was noted that the College Park Metro station has a major problem with bike theft. Seth and Rick explained that bikes were stored in a secure room only accessible by members with a key card or key fob.

Early recommendations include a cycle track network with high-quality, separated bike facilities to support riders in a low-stress environment. The network includes a facility that will connect

Muddy Branch to the Millennium Trail, extending through Rockville, connecting to the Belward Campus and the DANAC station. A cycle track south of Key West Aveune would connect the LSC West and LSC Central stations and neighborhoods beyond. A north-south (Midway) cycle track would connect the LSC Central station up into Gaithersburg and the DANAC and Crown Farm stations. The lower loop cycle track extends down to USG. Further studies will be done to evaluate impacts to traffic and refinements will be made to the network.

A member asked where the track network follows the CCT alignment, will the CCT accommodate or build it into the alignment. Rick responded that it would not be built by the project but the cycle track is infrastructure that the county could build adjacent to the transitway on one side or the other or in the existing roadway if the lanes are repurposed. It is a separate element from the CCT design. David noted that M-NCPPC was working with the MTA, which helped to enable the master plan process. A member asked whether a high-quality bike network improves access to stations and what impact that has on ridership. David explained that he did not have data on that but he believed ridership would increase. A member asked M-NCPPC staff to work with the CCT project team to facilitate safe crossings and access to the bike network by the Washingtonian Woods community.

### **Station Naming:**

Cathy reiterated the principles for station names—they cannot be named after a person, but a street intersection or historic landmark would be acceptable. If members have any suggestions for station names, please send them to her. Rick noted that he is not a fan of the ‘LSC’ acronym and would prefer distinct names, such as King Farm, Crown Farm and Belward Farm. He also pointed out that there could be no sponsorship of stations by private entities. A member asked what has been learned from WMATA’s approach to station names. Seth said his preference would be for shorter names than those used by WMATA.

Rick again noted that this was the last AAC meeting for now, with an option to reconvene at construction. He thanked members for their participation and input, noting that some of the input has helped the project to change the design in the community’s favor.

**The meeting adjourned at 8:38pm.**

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