



**Area Advisory Committee Three
Meeting #5
Monday, November 3, 2014
Ingleside at King Farm
701 King Farm Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850**

Attendees:

Members

Alan Kaplan	Gail Sherman
Marilyn Leist	Mel Willis
Timothy McDonald	Kevin Johnson
Gerald Calderone	

Apologies

Martin Mankowski	C. Scott Maravilla
Marcia Bond	Arlene Robinson
Fred Samadani	

Staff

Facilitator – Traceé Strum-Gilliam	City of Rockville- Katie Mencarini, Craig Simoneau
Project Manager - Rick Kiegel	Montgomery County DOT – Joana Conklin
Station Architect – Kyle Kramer, John Bull, Todd Connelly, Jack Carroll	M-NCPPC- Nkosi Yearwood
Traffic Engineer – Kevin Permisohn	Project Staff – Kyle Nembhard
Segment Engineer – Allison Berkheimer	Logistics Staff – Jordan Vann
Public Involvement Task Lead – Crystal Saunders	

Handouts:

Meeting Packet included a meeting agenda, station architecture examples, concept comparison matrix and presentation concepts – Framework and Helix.

Introductions:

Traceé Strum-Gilliam welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked those in attendance to introduce themselves to the group. Traceé also acknowledged and explained the new table set-up for the meeting and shared how it would help facilitate the discussion on station design types which included large plan sets and renderings.

Meeting Purpose

Traceé explained that in order to answer the questions of several AAC members, a meeting purpose would be provided for each meeting in advance so that attendees could think about potential questions and responses. She then reviewed the purpose the meeting, which was to:

- Collect feedback on AAC members' previous experiences with transit
- Describe considerations that influence station design
- Collect feedback on comparative advantages and disadvantages of the two station design concepts

Follow-up Items from Last Meeting:

Traceé asked the group if there were any follow-up questions they would like to discuss with Seth Garland regarding the urban design presentation. Noting no requests, she confirmed that there were no additional urban design questions from the group.

AAC Three Meeting Schedule:

Traceé gave an overview of the revised AAC schedule and noted that the schedule would include an additional AAC meeting that was added to discuss additional topics.

She noted that the discussion for the subject meeting would not cover station naming and would only cover the stations. Traceé explained that Meeting #6 (January, 2015) would cover environmental updates and noise due to the upcoming public hearing. She also explained that Meeting #7 would cover station naming and operations.

Traceé discussed the importance of the group's feedback and explained that each comment is taken seriously. She cited a previous comment and how the team addressed it as an example of the process followed to address any questions or comments the group had.

Requests for Additional Topics for Discussion

Traceé asked the group what topics they would like to discuss at a future AAC meeting(s) and the following suggestions from members are listed below:

- Revisit the median crossing issues and another member agreed with the comment.
- Address access for emergency vehicles with regard to median crossings.

It was noted that the fire marshal indicated that he was not aware of the median closures that were proposed by the CCT project team. It was suggested by the group that the team brief the fire marshal as soon as possible. Rick Kiegel acknowledged the concerns and noted that the team is working to schedule meetings with the fire marshal.

Transit Travel Time and Median Closures

The issue was raised regarding the increase of transit travel time by 2.5 minutes along King Farm Boulevard if all medians were open. Kevin clarified that the CCT system already includes a 2.5 minute delay as a result of leaving more medians open than originally proposed (based on the most up to date alignment presented at the last few meetings). He also added that a scenario with all medians open was not modeled in VISSIM.

Rick explained that the CCT would not control signals - Montgomery County and the City of Rockville control the signals along the alignment. Based on the balancing of interests, this condition would cause delay to the CCT operations. It was noted that the CCT would run with a separate phase and Kevin explained that the CCT would stop and wait for a longer period than general purpose traffic along King

Farm Boulevard. Kevin also explained that based on feedback from the group, and in an effort to open more medians, the adjustments were made resulting in the 2.5 minute delay noted at the beginning of the discussion on the topic. Several members questioned whether a 2.5 minute delay was significant enough to be detrimental to the project. Rick cautioned that time delays have the potential to snowball thus creating additional delays elsewhere in the network. Rick also explained that the current proposal allows for vehicular movements on King Farm Boulevard to operate similar to today. Kevin also added his thoughts regarding the technical aspects of maintaining signal coordination at specific intersections such as Gaither Road and MD 355. Traceé suggested that the group be provided with updated version of Kevin's signal diagrams (from Meeting #3-Traffic) for review as well as providing a traffic update during Meeting #7 or #8.

East Gaither Station-Pleasant Drive

It was also suggested that the group revisit the discussion regarding the need for the East Gaither Station - Pleasant Drive. The AAC member, who raised the concern, also shared that the vision for the King Farm community was modeled after a similar project in Savannah, Georgia which included a village green design. Additional detail on the initial concept was provided which included a process by the King Farm board to amend the concept plan in order to create building facades with exaggerated canopies to accommodate potential transit riders. This action was taken with the intent of keeping riders out of the median. There was general concern expressed regarding the potential loss of greenery at the proposed stations. Traceé re-emphasized the reservation of the King Farm Boulevard median for future transit and added that the concern was also documented in Meeting #2. Rick noted that the CCT was planned with two stations in King Farm based upon demand forecast and anticipated growth.

Vehicles

The project team was asked when the group would discuss the type of vehicles that would be used for the CCT. Rick explained the difficulty of providing specifics, due to the evolving nature of vehicles – and went on to explain that any vehicles discussed today could be outdated when it's time to procure them for the CCT. The conversation concluded with a general understanding by attendees that bus fleets for BRT systems are custom made and are procured for each system.

Transit Experiences:

Traceé asked each member of the AAC group to express their previous experiences with transit both positive and negative in an effort to understand the various perspectives.

Shady Grove Metrorail Station

Several attendees described experiences when trying to exit the station. Attendees discussed issues with an out of service escalator, cramped platforms and limited capacity of the existing elevators. There was a lengthy discussion centered on the increased volume of passengers from the CCT contributing to the crowded conditions at the Shady Grove Station. Additional concerns about passengers coming from north of Metropolitan Grove in Phase II as opposed to people getting on in King Farm and travelling to the Shady Grove Station and the impact on the community were raised.

One of the meeting attendees explained that he was not a public transportation user but added that he had taken the King Farm shuttle twice and Metro once from the Shady Grove Station. He also noted that he experienced a waiting time of 30 to 45 minutes on the platform.

The question was raised concerning WMATA's ability to handle the capacity of passengers today and additional riders from the CCT at the Shady Grove Station. Traceé explained that the project team was having ongoing conversations with WMATA along with other agencies. She also explained that the WMATA AAC Three member assigned to the group had passed away. Traceé added that AAC Three was the only AAC that had been assigned a WMATA representative and that the team has requested that a replacement be assigned as soon as possible.

Traceé reviewed the facilities at the Shady Grove Station and suggested that Kyle Kramer, Station Architect Lead, discuss the footprint of the Shady Grove CCT station later in the meeting. Traceé also reminded the group that the CCT would be operational by 2021 if fully funded.

Silver Line

The Silver Line extension was noted that a good example of what the community didn't want to see in King Farm. The scale of the project and impact to Tyson's Corner and the lack of adequate pedestrian access or parking at the stations discussed. The attendees suggested that determining access to and from the station was essential. Participants in the discussion added that the open nature of the Silver Line stations and exposure to the weather were of concern. It was also noted that Silver Line aerial structures were of visual concern.

Cleveland Health Line

A pleasant experience on the Cleveland Health Line was noted during the conversation. The rider, expressed that the BRT was appropriate for the Euclid Avenue corridor. When asked about King Farm, it was noted that the Health Line could not be compared to King Farm Boulevard because it was believed that Euclid Avenue was busier because of the urban setting. Collectively, the committee members discussed if the required investment combined with the low number of anticipated riders in the area justifies a BRT station. Rick reminded the group that the system was not based on the current population statistics.

Chicago RTA

A positive experience was noted in Chicago, where an attendee commuted for six years. It was noted that the system was on-time and reliable.

VRE and Local Bus

Another member noted daily usage of transit as well as using local transit while on vacation. She added that educating passengers on service was key to successful experiences. She also noted her use of the VRE from Fredericksburg and expressed concern regarding the lack of a station manager at that location.

Intercity Bus Travel

In general most attendees didn't have experience on intercity buses. An experience was shared in the discussion regarding a negative experience on a bus that was slow and unpleasant. A positive experience was noted on Amtrak's Acela service that was based on the provision of passenger information.

Ride On

A member discussed her experience riding on various transit systems and how reliability and frequency are important. She cited an experience where next bus information indicated a wait time of 40 minutes and that she was able to use this information to make other arrangements as a result.

WMATA

Another member cited his daily use of WMATA services. While yet another member noted his use of the Red Line for many purposes specifically, the convenience of driving to the METRO station especially when the shuttle doesn't run i.e. evenings and weekends.

MARC

The groups discussed positive experiences on MARC due to reliability of the system from Frederick.

Portland LRT

The discussion of positive experiences also included Portland LRT. The system was given a "stamp of approval" based upon frequency.

Baltimore Transit Experiences

Kyle cited his high use of transit both in Baltimore and in and around Washington, DC. He noted the need to carefully consider station materials and used his experience at a local Maryland Transit Administration -Baltimore bus stop as an example. He noted that when it rains, the sidewalk concrete becomes slippery and creates a safety concern. This can be avoided with careful consideration. Kyle also commented on his experience riding the Charm City Circulator and explained that the service provides a phone app (application) that gives rides real-time service information. The app provides relevant information to the user so that they can then plan their time accordingly.

Summary of Transit Experiences

Traceé summarized what was discussed based on experiences shared by all of the members. Of specific note, was the need to address the integration of CCT service with WMATA's operations and improvement plans for the Shady Grove Station. Tracee cited one member's observation that the community was predominantly comprised of retirees and the fact that this perception had influenced the conversation. Traceé noted that there are a variety of household types that reside in King Farm and kindly reminded members to keep in mind that they represent many different types of households and not to just represent themselves.

Architecture Presentation/Discussion:

Kyle explained the handouts and how the topics would be discussed during the Architecture portion of the meeting.

Station Basics

Kyle discussed the overall CCT project map and station locations. He explained that the station corridor map is the result of numerous planning studies which indicate the general station locations based on the areas the system is designed to serve. The station architects job is to optimize the station location by considering the urban context such as surrounding building uses, density, and pedestrian movements. The station is then located within the existing street network based on considerations such as pedestrian access, engineering constraints, and traffic considerations.

Kyle addressed some of the comments and experiences raised earlier about transit experience. One of these issues was access and how it is one of the team's primary priorities. Kyle explained that the platform dimensions are 150' long by 18' wide and 14" high with transitions at either end of the platform.

The discussion opened with a question on the station ramps. It was asked if the ramps would act like speed bumps at the crosswalks? Kyle explained that the crosswalks would be flat and the ramps (which have minimal slopes) are only for patrons to transition from the transitway level to the 14” platform. Kyle also noted that while the platform length is 150’ long, the station size is a result of the existing length of the street network to avoid mid-block crossings. The station approach increases in length so patrons aren’t forced to cross the street at a mid-block crossing.

Another member asked what the height of the ramp at the highest point would be. Kyle stated that it was 14” and Traceé added that any ramp would be designed to be ADA compliant. Kyle also added that the slope of the ramp is minimal and therefore is not considered a ramp but instead is a gently sloped walkway.

Members also wanted to know if all of the greenery would be eliminated in the block where the stations are located. Kyle responded that the team has prepared concepts that address the potential for retaining some green space. These concepts will be presented in the next part of the presentation. Kyle also discussed the secondary entrance location and noted that the original location was at Grand Champion Drive. After hearing comments from the first few AAC meetings, the station team changed the entrance to Havencrest Street to preserve additional green space in the median between Grand Champion Drive and Havencrest Street.

The group also discussed the secondary entrance to the both stations and possible function as a midblock crossing. The group expressed concern for pedestrian protection. Kyle explained that the crosswalks were located to minimize interference with vehicular traffic and that bump outs are proposed at these locations to minimize the crosswalk length.

Traceé recalled the street crossing scenarios during the traffic meeting to help attendees understand the location and possible movements.

Station Architectural Concepts

Kyle echoed the capacity concerns at the Shady Grove Metrorail Station. He noted how the team designs a station based on several factors such as ridership projections, station amenities, ADA requirements, and code requirements. One member suggested that capacity of the vehicle as well as the cycle times have to be considered when determining station capacity.

Kyle explained that the length of the platforms is partially determined by the need to accommodate two buses due to the operational possibility of bunching. The additional 30 feet in the station area is for “entrance zones” for Ticket Vending Machines and preventing the overlap of ADA access and people waiting for tickets. It also accommodates overlap and ancillary space to provide the driver some flexibility for stopping while recognizing the need for flexibility with regard to precision in a BRT system. Kyle also explained how there are two tests used to determine the length of the station based on ridership, space, and safety via NFPA 130 during emergency situations and the TCRP manual for normal operations.

Several questions were raised during the conversation. What is the average amount of time a bus would be stopped at a station? Kyle explained that the dwell is comparable to WMATA at approximately 20

seconds. The same member asked about how buses turn around at Shady Grove and Kyle noted that the buses would use the existing loop road.

Why are there two buses at the station at the same time if buses are running 3 minutes apart? Rick noted factors such as driving at different speeds, or a bus waiting at the light while another comes up behind it and other possible scenarios that might cause buses to bunch/platoon at a station.

A technical team member noted that the team is aiming to get a level of service C to create an efficient space on the station platforms. John Bull explained that a Level of Service C is an industry standard for the area associated with the free movement of pedestrians. It was asked if the buses would stop if no one was at the station. Rick noted that it is possible that they would not have to but would at least slow down. He also cited the Maryland Transit Administration's LRT Line in Baltimore and explained that the system had the same capability but noted that operators still stop at every station.

Kyle showed the group examples of how art was incorporated into wind screens at stations.

ADA safety and comfort was raised as an additional concern, an attendee noted that chairs with arm rests are preferred for ease of use. Kyle emphasized that these stations are "not your typical bus stop" and as such, would use different materials and amenities than what is typically used at a bus stop.

Kyle discussed the role of safety in station design as they are designed to be open and well lit to eliminate blind spots. He also noted the accommodation of an emergency phone, cameras, and detectable warning strips as additional measures to promote safety.

Several opened the discussion to include potential lighting pollution for people who live near the station. John mentioned that the architects are aware of lighting pollution concerns and that the lighting design would have appropriate levels on the platform and avoid lighting pollution.

Kyle expressed the intent to create a system-wide architecture that represents the premium service achieved by the CCT project. The goal is to create an architecture that is dynamic enough to provide a brand for the system while still integrating with the surrounding communities. The Health Line in Cleveland was used as an example of a system that achieved a similar concept.

A committee member asked if the team had spoken with the King Farm architect and suggested that the team coordinate with the architect to receive feedback. MTA agreed to arrange a meeting.

Station Architectural Concept Discussion

The team laid out the station drawings on the table for the group to review. Kyle then began to provide an overview of the concepts and how they applied the concepts to both ground and aerial stations. He stated the intent of the exercise is to walk through the advantages and disadvantages of each type. He also explained how the groups input would factor into the development of the stations.

Kyle explained how the *Helix Concept* was developed as a generative form symbolic of the biomedical influence along the corridor. The team first developed the concept at the center platform prototype and then applied the concept to the remaining stations. Kyle explained how the *Framework Option* creates an open clear space for the station. He noted how the Framework option allows for green space as opposed

to the Helix concept. Kyle also explained how the Framework concept includes a continuous frame as opposed to the Helix concept which includes two distinct canopies.

Kyle highlighted the primary differences between the two architectural concepts with respect to specific design attributes. These attributes include presence, canopy structure, canopy coverage, canopy glazing, transitway barrier, adaptability, and platform edge treatment. Kyle noted that the purpose of this meeting was to illustrate different attributes between the two concepts. Some of these attributes, such as the detectable warning strip color or the amount of planting in the median between the transitway and curb, are interchangeable between the two concepts.

One member asked what the safest platform edge treatment is and Kyle noted that it is really a matter of perspective. Kyle explained the different types of treatments across different systems. The member also asked about accident statistics. Another team member cited standards that are used to guide station design with regards to safety and warning areas. The member also asked when the ADA standards were developed and the team noted that they were last updated in 2006.

The group discussed the ADA treatments and asked if the City of Rockville had a specific position on the elements. Craig Simoneau noted that the city doesn't and that elements would be subject to review by MTA. Several attendees noted that they did not want concrete pavers on the platform due to durability and maintenance concerns. Another person, expressed concerns about materials that are susceptible to weather conditions (i.e. making conditions more slippery). A recommendation was that the pedestrian crosswalks should be more focused as functional elements than as pure architectural elements.

Solar technology was also discussed. The team was intrigued by its possible use to help supplement electrical demand at the station in regards to the canopy materials. Kyle noted that the team is looking at the proper use of glazing, the amount of transparency and translucency as it relates to any heat gain on the platform so as to avoid a greenhouse like affect.

It was asked if the Helix concept worked with the aerial station. The team clarified that it was the center column aspect of the Helix option that is not preferred at the aerial station.

Kyle asked the group if they felt that the CCT station platforms need 60% coverage or needed to be designed to provide additional coverage in the future. The group members agreed that 60% coverage was sufficient. One member expressed concern for the limited canopy coverage. He also stated by observation, the primary concern is covering people waiting for the bus when they are at the station. Kyle explained that extending the canopy would protect the surface as much as possible to keep the platform edge as dry as possible and asked if the canopy should extend over the transitway or just the platform.

One member asked about the bus travel lane width and Kyle explained that it would be 11' at the station. Rick emphasized (in response to a follow-up question) that the roadway median curb would remain while additional green space could possibly be accommodated in the median. The member was concerned about the Framework columns and their proximity to the travel lanes. Another member noted that 3' would help with snow storage while another member emphasized how that would be another reason to not have a column on the raised median. Kyle also explained that the transitway barriers would act as a deterrent for people entering or leaving the station area midblock rather than using the designated access locations.

The group asked about the specific ridership used by the team to get a sense of how many people would be using the station. Traceé suggested this could be discussed in meeting #7 when Operational issues are presented. Another member asked if the stations team coordinated with the operations team on platform sizing. Kyle clarified that they are working together. It was noted that that the King Farm board and several AAC members were looking for a neoclassical station design. Kyle explained how new transit systems are built everyday through historic city centers. He also suggested that the context of a modern design can actually promote the historic nature of the surrounding community. One member suggested that less obtrusive is better. Others agreed as well.

During the wrap up discussion a few final questions were asked: Will daily operations start from Shady Grove or Metropolitan Grove? Rick clarified that vehicles would start service from both ends.

The final comment of the meeting came from a member noting concern about the expansiveness of the concrete as an issue in addition to the other comments mentioned throughout the meeting.

Rick Kiegel noted that all of the large displays are in the handouts. He encouraged the team to go home and review them and raise any other issues at the next meeting. Rick also explained that the drawings that have a lot of grey which can change as the project moves forward to add more color and take away the misperception of a lot of concrete.

General Discussion/Closing

The meeting adjourned at 8:42

Next Meeting

- Date – January 26th – Ingleside at King Farm
- Topics: Environmental and Noise