

EISINGER TESTIMONY 2/15/22, MNCPPC 270 Corridor Forward Report, COUNTY COUNCIL HEARING

The introduction to the Original October 7th Planning Staff Report indicated that the purpose of the Corridor Forward plan was to look at the transportation network extending through the County between points north to the city of Frederick and south to DC and Northern Virginia. Unfortunately, thru later modifications the study falls far short of its original objective. Regarding the BRT elements it is now a near term recommendation with limited lifespan, with the metro extension: in an ain't never going to happen time frame.

I am here addressing the 270 issues, not to discuss whether someone can classify a bus as a BRT when it is merged with traffic, so enough said on that. In its phasing, the plan recommends 1) extending the Metro Red Line on the MARC rail track to Germantown and no further, staying inside the County and 2) increasing service on the MARC rail train, which has a very limited connection to Frederick. Metro would require the cooperation of the surrounding government entities that compose WMATA and would take years as well as negotiating with CSX, which has been historically impossible. Increasing passenger capacity on MARC So, it proposes extending metro, which currently cannot even keep 50% of its fleet in service due to fatigue of the metal wheels, since it so old now and antiquated, and essentially putting direct pressure on the Ag Preserve to keep funneling commuters through it at an ever-increasing

rate with possible new stations that could require road improvements in the Ag Preserve.

I established The High Road Foundation to not just protect the Ag Preserve from the neglect demonstrated by the planners but also to protect the Economic Base of the County, by modernizing our transportation system to Frederick and Northern Virginia, make it cost effective, make it environmentally sound, and get unnecessary single passenger automobiles off the roads and prevent further expansion of our asphalt impacting the MS4 program and our pocketbooks:: and here is how:

Existing publicly owned transportation corridors have the capacity to accommodate additional transportation infrastructure so WHY NOT REUSE THEM? Selecting an elevated transit mode that will have a small footprint, that can be designed to avoid underground utility conflict, that can be constructed at night on land already in the public domain, in less time, and with less risk at less expensive accomplishes this goal: We are talking about a transit mode that has technologically come into its own in the last 10 years, just like electric cars have: An elevated Monorail. It is not Disneyland, and it is not Homer Simpson, so our planners need to wake up.

A recent MDOT study concluded Monorail is viable, its construction costs per mile are comparable to light rail, while carrying five times the number of passengers as Light rail and costs one quarter the cost of an extension of Metro while carrying the same amount of passengers as a metro.

Per passenger carried, Monorail is 5 times cheaper than light rail, and 4 times cheaper than metro.

The Foundation has done preliminary civil engineering, ridership and economic impact studies for a multi-leg monorail network over existing public rights-of-ways in and thru the County connecting outside jurisdictions:

And guess what:

- The public owns 98% of the land required. No land acquisition costs required and no one to approve it or disapprove it. We own the ground. No delay to acquire the ground, and the NEPA studies are essentially already done.
- This system is completely grade separated and does not interfere with existing bikes, pedestrians, automobiles, or wildlife, i.e no roadkill, and is 100% safer than on grade transit,
 - It can be constructed off site and erected at night to remove existing traffic impacts during construction
 - It has a very small footprint and fits in the existing rights of ways dodging utility relocation costs and shedding very very little storm water into our streams
 - The structural system of a monorail has a life span of 100 years, and the propulsion is electric. The cars even last longer than light rail systems or metro.
- By Limiting the contingency of land acquisition, the element that blew up the Purple Line budget, you can determine construction cost with 95% certainty.

There is no other transit mode that offers these benefits. Keeping the northern transit corridor in the

existing 270 right of way is the only solution that takes pressure off the AG Preserve, gives us a transit mode carrot to attract employers to the county and fulfills the original goal of the Study.

Thank you for your time.