

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
September 10, 2024**

Voting Members

Bob Banach	Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Justin Burgett	Town of Somerset
Elizabeth Demetra Harris	Friendship Heights Village

Non-Voting Members

Sandra L. Brecher	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Peter Fosselman	B-CC Services Center
Ronnetta Zack-Williams	M-NCPPC Downcounty Planning

TMD Staff

Jim Carlson	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services

Absent

Chief John Fitzgerald	Chevy Chase Village Police
Ahkeia Payne	GEICO

Guests

Natalie Avery	Friendship Heights Alliance
Elaine Binder	Somerset House Management Assn.
Charles Crerand	CBRE
Samuel Damesa	MCDOT
Rachel Davis	Walnut Street Creative
James Donohoe	The Donohoe Companies
Shelley Monique Mann	TMD Outreach
Julian Mansfield	Friendship Heights Village
Kevin Obike	MCDOT
Tom Quinn	ANC-3
Fernando Snellings	TMD Outreach
Corey Pitts	MCDOT
Jason Winans	Chevy Chase Land Co.

Item 1 & 2- Introductions/Minutes Review: Jim Carlson opened the meeting and attendees introduced themselves.

The Committee reviewed January meeting minutes.

Item 3 – 5500 Wisconsin Avenue Redevelopment: Jad Donahoe briefed the Committee on redevelopment of 5500 Wisconsin Avenue. Located in the Village of Friendship Heights on the west side

of Wisconsin Avenue, the development will contain new retail, parking, and apartments. The Brooks Brothers retail currently located at the site will move to Chevy Chase Collection during construction. Features of redevelopment include:

- 300 new apartments
- 11,000 sf of new retail with higher 16ft -18ft ceilings, replacing the current low hanging structures
- Undergrade parking
- A one-way pedestrian friendly shared street designed to slow vehicles
- Starting early next year construction will begin with utility relocation
- The hotel at the current site will remain in operation during the construction process
- Monthly progress reports to the Village of Friendship Heights and all interested.
- Major construction will begin later next year and continue for 2 years

Mr. Donahoe discussed the coordination with the State Highway Administration & Friendship Heights Village for the project and for the design on Wisconsin Avenue, as it is a state highway that the project wants to turn into a boulevard. The floor plan of the future site shows a large city block with retail wrapping around the new shared street with the store front set back from the street to allow for café seating.

- New circular travel patterns
- Base of building is H Shape and forms a tower as you go up- green roofs all the way up
- The shared street is located off public
- Looking a birds-eye view the project is located between Wisconsin Avenue & The Hills Plaza

Discussion continued regarding the shared street features:

- Green features, such as trees and benches and sidewalk to promote car drivers to feel as “guests”, as the roadway is geared toward pedestrians and cyclists.
- As it has its own parking deck and delivery receiving area, Marriott hotel upgrades such as replacing the current wall with a window and current bike room installations will remain in operation during construction.
- The bike room is featured along with e-bike charging and sidewalk bike parking with locks

Although he is not looking forward to the inconveniences of construction, **Julian Mansfield** thanked **Jad Donohoe** for working with the Village of Friendship Heights. Q& discussion followed:

- Shared street discussion - one way design to keep operations tight, causing cars to completely stop as they pull over off the Village streets
- Inquiry regarding traffic mitigation operation of the new structures and TDM plan filing - Mr. Donohoe’s team is looking into on-site outreach and promotion of TDM
- A suggestion to communicate when permits/plans have been submitted for site construction - none yet, plans submitted later this year.
- Management of construction trucks
- Demolishing the existing 60-year garage will contribute to less digging of new land for redevelopment
- Providing plywood coverings for pedestrians during construction - working with SHA & Village for protected access

- Maggiano’s has only one access on Wisconsin Avenue, but there will be more access of the construction site.

Mr. Donohoe provided his contact information and presentation to **Jim Carlson** for distribution to the Committee.

Item 4 – Metro Update: Cory Pitts reported on WMATA operations, announcing their next board meeting on September 26th that will cover 40 months of growth; ridership is up to 81 percent of pre-pandemic levels with buses showing the strongest increase. Also reported:

- A recent survey showed that customer satisfaction has increased due to a drop in crime and fare jumping
- Navigating WMATA’s confusing formula for calculating proposed budget cuts
- Creating a fund reserve for Metro operations - operating budget is for only one year but need multi-year for better forecasting.
- Suggestion to report Friendship Heights ridership amounts.

Sande Brecher announced the Great Seneca network new bus service started Sunday, September 8th serving as part of the Great Seneca Transit Network connecting Gaithersburg, Rockville and the Shady Grove Life Sciences areas to unlock development staging triggers. As part of phase one, the Pink & Lime routes will run between Shady Grove Metro and Trville; phase two will add the operation of the Grey & Cobalt bus routes. The new service will provide easy & frequent connection to Shady Grove Metro and the Universities of Shady Grove.

Item 5 – Employer TDM Plans/Annual Reports: Jim Carlson presented TDM plans to the Committee for review and the plans were recommended to be sent to DOT Director for approval.

Item 6 – Marketing Outreach: Shelly Mann reported on outreach activities:

- Pre-Car Free Day outreach activities
- Participation at the Marketplace Festival w/ Friendship Heights Alliance-Barlow Building
- Walk & Ride outreach
- An explanation of Car Free Day’s national annual event that takes place September 22nd; and since it is on Sunday this year, events are taking place Monday, September 23rd with events promoting travel to religious places for Sunday.

Sande Brecher noted that walking is the official exercise of Maryland - the Walk & Ride Challenge, currently underway, promotes walking by getting employer teams of 3-5 to compete for prizes. Also announced:

- “Walk Maryland Day” is October 2nd – register as a Walk Leader or Sole Mate
 - [Walk Maryland Day](#)
- New cross-jurisdictional service between Tysons and Bethesda, Route 798- \$4.80 each way

Item 7- Around the Room:

Adjourn

Next meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2024