



**FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS
TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA
July 9, 2019**

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. @ Wisconsin Place Community Center
5311 Friendship Boulevard, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

Chair: Barbara Moir Condos Vice Chair: John Mertens
Staff Contact: Jim Carlson / (240) 777-8382 (301) 318-0328
james.carlson@montgomerycountymd.gov

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- | | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| 8:30 | 1. Introductions/Agenda Review (additions/deletions) | Barbara Condos |
| | 2. Review/Approval of Meeting Minutes
May (©2) | All |
| 8:35 | 3. Ride On "FLEX" Micro-Transit Pilot | Will Kenlaw
MCDOT/Program Manager-Ride On |
| 9:05 | 4. Dockless Vehicle Pilot Update
Sample Memorandum of Understanding – handout | Jim Carlson |
| 9:15 | 5. Employer Outreach Update | Stephanie Webber
Sharp & Co. TMD Outreach |
| 9:20 | 6. Updates: TMD/Police/DOT/Other County Updates
Willard ped signal – waiting for Pepco
Loose brick issue – bus station
Traffic & ped countdown signal project/355 – Tauben letter to SHA
Live discussion with County Exec Marc Elrich, Thurs. 7/11 @ 1:30 | Sandra Brecher
Chief John Fitzgerald
Derrick Harrigan
Jim Carlson |
| | 7. New Business / Around the Room | |
| | 8. Adjourn
Next meeting date: September 10, 2019 | |

Information Items

*Barbara Tauben email to SHA re: MD355 signal project
Ride On Flex press release*

**Friendship Heights
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
May 14, 2019**

Voting Members

Barbara Condos (Chair)	Town of Somerset
Charles Crerand	CBRE Asset Services/Wisconsin Place
Elizabeth Demetra Harris	Friendship Heights Village
Christopher Itteilag	Somerset House Management Association
John Mertens (Vice Chair)	Friendship Heights Village
Manuel Ochoa	Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights
Ahkeeia Payne	GEICO

Non-Voting / Ex Officio

Derrick Harrigan	B-CC Services Center
Katie Mencarini	M-NCPPC

TMD Staff

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

Absent

Sandra L. Brecher	MCDOT/Transportation Policy-Commuter Services
Chief John Fitzgerald	Chevy Chase Village Police
Afua Ofori	Polinger Co./Large Employer

Guests

Bob Joiner	The Agenda News
Julian Mansfield	Friendship Heights Village
Mayor Jeffrey Slavin	Town of Somerset
Stephanie Webber	Sharp & Company

Item 1 & 2 – Introductions/Minutes: Members and guests introduced themselves

Item 3 – Employer Traffic Mitigation Plans & TMP Annual Reports: **Jim Carlson** opened discussion with companies that submitted TMP annual reports and have met the eight County requirements. He asked the Committee to recommend for approval, based on meeting the requirements and other measures taken to meet mode share goal of the TMD. **Mr. Carlson** also discussed:

- The importance of establishing a company point of contact to assist in disseminating information to employees
- How the commuter survey identifies commuting issues with achieving mode share goals during the peak period:
 - Surveys provide only a snapshot of commuting patterns as they are not scientifically based - Commuter Services seeks an 80 percent completion rate

- Although TMP participation is required by law, the County does not currently enforce it to encourage business-friendly communication partnerships; however, NextGen TDM will have stronger, more enforceable guidelines due to its Countywide Traffic Mitigation requirements

Item 4- Dockless e-Bike & e-Scooter Pilot Expansion: Mr. Carlson updated the Committee on the Dockless pilot which is being extended for an additional six months and will include pedal assist e-bikes and e-scooters to improve mobility choices.

- Dockless vehicles service the first mile-last mile commutes
- Personal mobility vehicles help to fulfill the TMD mission of reducing single occupant vehicle (SOV) use by increasing alternatives to transit access for minorities and underserved communities
- Surveys conducted in other cities showed commuters used the e-vehicles to commute to work, school or entertainment and if they were not available would have mostly driven or taken Uber
- Riders could be fined if vehicles are parked outside of geo-fenced areas – the process is still being worked out
- Scooters are recharged every night and e-bikes every three days
- Dockless vehicles will not be allowed in the agricultural areas of the County
- The Maryland Legislature has classified scooters as bikes under State law, but cannot go faster than 15 miles per hour and can be ridden only in the street or on designated paths
- Scooter crash statistics are generally lower compared to number of trips generated – most crashes are first time users and after dark; however, crashes should reduce over time
- State law requires riders 16 years and under to wear a helmet
- E-assist vehicle riders are more likely to comply to with traffic laws, such as stopping at lights/signs due to the ease of restarting them after stopping

Mr. Carlson explained that during the MOU process with Dockless vehicles the County seeks to provide safety by:

- Providing rider training and educating the public on proper parking and right-of-way
- Having contact information easily visible for the public and rapid responses by companies
- Finding the right balance in deployment of vehicles
- The County requires a \$10,000 insurance bond
- Monthly reporting of stats on usage, complaints, accidents

Other points discussed:

- Main complaint is riders not knowing where to park bikes when trip is over
- Using app to deactivate lock and the importance of locking them to prevent theft
- The concern that some potential users have with parking them after a trip and then not being available for return trips
- Possibility of theft as the scooter locks become deactivated when charging
- Hording scooters for increased servicing payment
- Little or no training and lack of oversight leading to improper servicing of vehicles and the importance of making companies liable
- Questions and comments can be directed to 311 customer service

Item 5 – Employer Outreach Update: Announced:

- Bike to Work Day-Friday May 17th

Item 6 – Updates:

- City cycling class on June 1st
- Installing ped activated HAWK beacons

Item 7 – New Business/Around the Room: Committee discussion regarding how some HAWK traffic light designs are not changing driver behavior due to pedestrian false sense of security created by the improperly designed lights that flash yellow to warn drivers, but not turning red to force them to stop.

Adjourn: Next Meeting – July 9, 2019

Carlson, James

From: Barbara G. Tauben <bargben@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 13, 2019 11:15 AM
To: AFutrell@sha.state.md.us
Cc: marc.korman@house.state.md.us; Friedson's Office, Councilmember; Julian Mansfield; Carlson, James; bobjoiner@verizon.net
Subject: MD 355 Signal Project
Attachments: ISSUES & QUESTIONS SHA FEB2019.docx

Mr. Andre Futrell
District 3 Engineer
Maryland State Highway Administration

This is to follow up the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) *Traffic and Pedestrian Countdown Signal* project on MD 355 (Wisconsin Avenue) in Montgomery County. The specific location is a mid-block crossing between Willard Avenue and South Park Avenue on the 5400 block of Wisconsin Avenue, in the Friendship Heights Central Business District (CBD).

When I walked by the location on June 11, 2019, I discovered that the SHA had begun activation of the new traffic and pedestrian countdown signals. It was quite a shock. I had no idea that the action would be taking place on that day, as I had not received any notification. You may recall my various communications about the project, beginning in December 2018. For your convenience, I am summarizing the sequence of events.

My December 14, 2018 letter, addressed to Administrator Slater, raised questions about the placement of a particular pedestrian countdown signal. I questioned why the new countdown signal had been placed in the middle of a sidewalk, in front of a building housing numerous medical offices. The placement was considered to be an obstacle for pedestrians walking North or South on the West side of Wisconsin Avenue. The pictures I supplied with my letter clearly showed potential conflicts for persons with mobility issues; for medical emergency vehicles; and for fire/rescue vehicles that are frequently at the building.

Administrator Slater's response dated January 29 stated, in part, that ADA standards required the specific placement of the pole. The Administrator further advised that contact for additional questions or concerns or to schedule an onsite meeting should be directed to you, as the SHA District 3 Engineer. I sent an email to you (2/13/19) expressing continuing concerns and accepting the offer to meet onsite. I also attached a list of questions. Your response on February 14 stated "we will investigate and respond with findings...". Another copy of the questions is attached hereto.

When no further reply was received, I made several attempts (email and phone) to obtain a staff contact for the project. The most recent of which were sent in May. I have not received any responses from SHA since your February reply. While the June 11 action to activate the signals seems to make the matter a *fait accompli*, it is still important to receive answers to the questions posed in February.

In addition to the separate questions I previously submitted, I was never able to obtain the following information:

- Whether there is a reference or project number for the project
- Which District 3 division managed the project
- If there was a staff contact

Finally, I want to express my personal concern about the manner in which this inquiry was managed. I am dismayed that there was no notice that the activation would begin June 11. Also, I am puzzled why there were no further communications from District 3 after your brief February 14 email.

I have worked with SHA District 3 many times over the years in my former capacity as a local elected official, as a president of a civic association, and now as an individual. I generally found the staff to be very forthcoming, so this experience must be an anomaly.

District 3 encompasses both Montgomery County and Prince Georges County. Perhaps that fact and the increasing highway construction workload may have had a bearing on the time this project has been underway. Perhaps it is time for County and State officials to consider establishing a separate district for each County.

I look forward to receiving an answer to the questions posed herein and to those in the attachment.

Thank you.

Barbara G. Tauben
Barqben@AOL.com

cc: Marc Korman, Maryland State Delegate
Andrew Friedson, Council Member, Montgomery County Council
Julian Mansfield, Manager, Village of Friendship Heights
Bob Joiner, Publisher, *The Agenda News*
Jim Carlson, Coordinator, Friendship Heights Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee

ISSUES/QUESTIONS re PEDESTRIAN COUNTDOWN SIGNALS
MID-BLOCK CROSSING
MARYLAND 355 (WISCONSIN AVENUE)

1. Does the project have an official project number to use for reference purposes? (Before writing to Administrator Slater, I tried to obtain that information but extended contact with District 3 personnel proved unsuccessful.)
2. Is the project a Level 2 or Level 3, or neither? As you know, there are different requirements depending on the designated category. According to the “Accessibility Policy & Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities along State Highways”, Level 3 projects are held to the highest ADA standards for ADA compliance. (I am assuming my copy of the June 2010 edition is still current as that date is shown on the website.)
3. What type of pedestrian countdown signals were installed at the mid-block crossing? There are different forms of Accessible Pedestrian Signals. Do the new signals contain audible messages? Do they contain Leading Pedestrian Interval mechanisms?
4. What type of Pedestrian Indicator Signal heads were installed for the new (now covered) mid-block crossing signals?
5. Section 4E.10 of the latest “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices” (MUTCD), 2009 edition, states:

“Accessible pedestrian signals that are located as close as possible to pedestrians waiting to cross the street provide the clearest and least ambiguous indication of which pedestrian crossing is served by a device”.

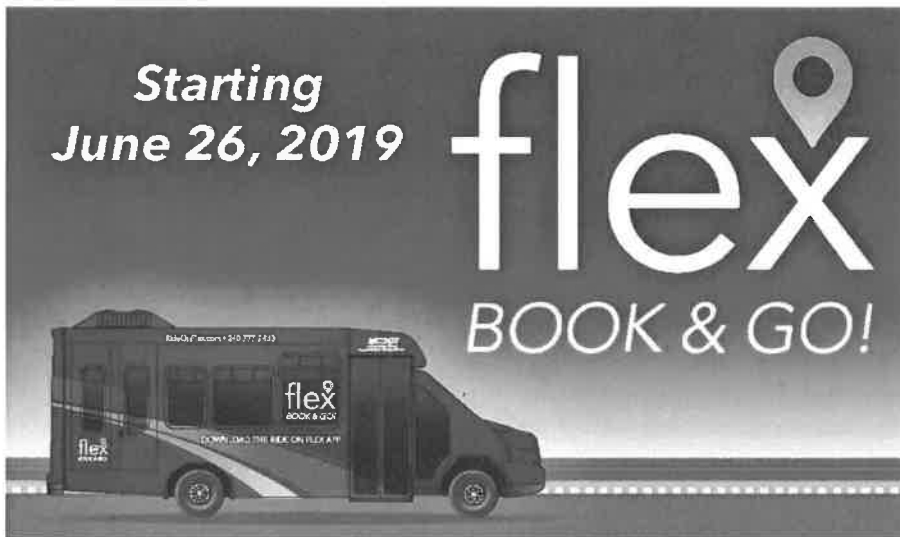
 - a. The old (existing) pedestrian crossing configuration does not include separate accessible detectors on the median. Pedestrians in the Friendship Heights community are accustomed to having only one set of pedestrian signals to observe as they cross the median East and West. They will now have two new devices in the median. Will all of the pedestrian signals be coordinated with the same time sequence?
 - b. Do past practices and studies indicate that pedestrians will quickly adapt to looking at the median devices for instruction on when to cross?
 - c. Does Section 4E.10 apply to the Friendship Heights mid-block crossing project?
6. The mid-block crossing project was reconstructed to hang new traffic signals on new overhead mastheads but the old poles were not replaced. The existing poles have deteriorated and contain large rusted areas. Why were the old poles retained?

Press Releases - Department of Transportation

MCDOT Home » Press Releases » Release

County Executive Elrich, Councilmembers Katz and Riemer, MCDOT to Launch Montgomery County's 'Ride On Flex' Microtransit Service on Wednesday, June 26

For Immediate Release: Friday, June 21, 2019



Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich, County Councilmembers Sidney Katz and Hans Riemer and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Director Al Roshdiah will join other stakeholders at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, June 26, at Rockville Town Square to launch "Ride On Flex," the Washington region's first on-demand public transit service.

After almost a year in development, MCDOT's Flex pilot program will test residents' receptivity to an innovative, low-cost service that can be requested through a mobile phone app powered by Via, a developer of on-demand, public mobility solutions. During the pilot program, Flex will provide corner-to-corner service in defined zones in the Rockville and Glenmont/Wheaton areas. Standard Ride On fare policy will apply to the

new service, which means riders will pay no more than \$2 as they board. The 11-passenger Flex buses are wheelchair accessible and offer free WiFi.

Using the Ride On Flex app, riders can request trips from a designated pick up spot to a drop off location within the same service zone. The app is now available for free download from the Apple and Google stores.

After requesting service, riders will be given an estimated time for pick up and drop off and will be directed to a pickup location. Flex will operate Monday through Friday in the Rockville zone from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and in the Glenmont/Wheaton zone during peak periods (6-9 a.m. and 3:30-7 p.m.). The zones offer connections between households, transit hubs, commercial centers and public services.



The Flex service holds tremendous promise not only for taking cars off our roads, but also improving equity for residents who need an affordable solution for getting around quickly," said Montgomery County Executive Elrich. "During the pilot program, I am hopeful we will prove that on-demand service fills a hole in our transit system and that it will lead to eventual expansion to serve more areas of the County. This is the type of creative solution we need as part of our efforts to make transit more user friendly."

Over the last several months, MCDOT has sought input from a wide range of community groups about the pilot program. At a public forum in April at Loiderman Middle School in Silver Spring, MCDOT staff unveiled plans for the pilot program and took questions and comments from residents.

"Our goal for Flex is to reshape the way residents think about getting around in the served Glenmont/Wheaton and Rockville zones," said MCDOT Director Roshdieh. "In Glenmont/Wheaton, we hope to see residents using Flex to fill first mile/last mile gaps in their daily commute. In Rockville, the service lends itself more toward daytime errands and trips. Residents' experiences, and the feedback they provide on the different spans of service in the two zones, will help us gather vital information about how they use this new service and point us toward the direction of future growth."

MCDOT is encouraging residents to download the free Ride On Flex app now. Rides cannot be booked until June 26, but by downloading the app now, they can register and become familiar with the app's interface and how to book rides.

"Via is thrilled to partner with MCDOT to provide residents with a convenient, affordable, and congestion-reducing transportation alternative," said Daniel Ramot, CEO and co-founder of Via. "Via's powerful passenger matching and vehicle routing algorithm will enable multiple riders to seamlessly share the vehicle. This technology makes for quick and efficient shared trips without lengthy detours, or inconvenient fixed routes and schedules."

Area transportation officials will be watching to see what can be learned from the Flex pilot program. At a recent Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Private Providers Forum, MCDOT Senior Planning Specialist Deanna Archey spoke about the Flex program.

A grant from MWCOG will support a MCDOT performance assessment of the new service. The grant will enable MCDOT to analyze trip data and user feedback.

More information about the Flex program is available here.

Release ID: 19-100

Media Contact: Maureen McNulty 240-777-7199



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