

**Greater Shady Grove
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
September 5, 2018**

Voting

John Brandt / Universities at Shady Grove
Ellen Poltilove / Johns Hopkins University
Paul Yanoshik / RE/MAX Realty Services

Non-Voting

Joseph Allen / Neighborhood Representative – Gaithersburg

Ex Officio

Sandra Brecher / Representing MC Dept. of Transportation (MCDOT) Director
Capt. Thomas Didone / Montgomery County Police
Catherine Matthews / Upcounty Regional Services Center
Alyssa Roff / City of Gaithersburg

Staff

Nakengi Byrd / Montgomery County Commuter Services
Jim Carlson / Montgomery County Commuter Services

Absent

Ed Axler / M-NCPPC
Steven Kelley / NIH-National Cancer Institute
McClellan Quinn / EYA

Guests

Jennifer Bolick / Van Eperen
Zach Deshaies / Van Eperen
Benny Garcia / Westside Resident
Gehmelle Johnson / NCI
Corey Pitts / MCDOT

Item 1 – Introductions

Item 2 – Minutes: March, May & July minutes approved.

Item 3 – Bus Rapid Transit Update: **Corey Pitts**, MCDOT provided an update on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), a 22-mile bus system running on MD Route 355 from Bethesda to Clarksburg. The system offers bike boarding, comfortable seating, off-board fare payment for faster service and weather protected platforms. Vehicles will be equipped with transit signal priority by prolonging a green traffic light, allowing buses to pass intersections when lagging in travel time. Also discussed:

- The project timeline - Phase 1 study completed early last year. Phase 2 will be completed by early fall, with the design construction to begin after County Council and County Executive elections – Phase 2 study to find a recommended alternative.

- Making alternative studies easier to read by providing more quantitative results, such as numbers for ridership and travel time, along with environmental impacts associated with each alternative.
- Segmenting the project so each section can be worked on independently.

Mr. Pitts described the three alternatives and station design:

- Alternative A is mostly mixed traffic with queue jump at critical intersections.
- Alternatives B & C, with B being mostly median run and C a curb-run.
- A consulting group assisted with station design to be adaptable without detracting from surrounding environment, clear glass windscreens.
- Stations equipped with tall totem flashing markers – allowing room to grow to accommodate increasing ridership.
- Solar panels offset power needs.

Outreach:

- Open houses in January and February at locations along 355 corridor - Clarksburg, Gaithersburg and Bethesda.
- BRT representatives frequently attend community & civic association meetings.
- Formed focus groups and stakeholder meetings.
- BRT website – “Get On Board BRT” and social media outlets used.

Questions/Discussion from the Committee:

- How is the coordination with other transportation projects, such as M-83 with the BRT system – State studying connections to Germantown, and the system will adapt as the BRT system operates.
- Finding the road space to accommodate the BRT system and making the system ADA compatible and easy to use were some of the biggest challenges so far.
- Goal is to make the system as comparable to driving time as possible – system is faster due to not having to find parking.
- Buses are equipped with three places for bikes; however, there will be a ‘wait and see’ for bike demand and ease of use.
- Funding strategy for the project will be developed once they have a better picture still in the early stages – however, most likely Federal funds.

Item 4 – Marketing Outreach Update:

- Last day of Farmers Market at Johns Hopkins for the year – TMD staff doing outreach.
- Participating in emergency preparedness simulation at John Hopkins University.
- Working with employers to offer “Corporate Roller” Capital Bikeshare discounts to employees.
- Walk and Ride Challenge – registration underway.
- Car Free Day – September 21st.
- Working with employers to complete Traffic Mitigation Plans and Annual Reports.

Item 5 – Updates: Capt. Tom Didone reported there were 11 fatalities so far this year, compared to only 11 for the entire last year. Our area averages 40 percent of pedestrian involved crashes – the national average is 20 – 30 percent. However, we are at 60 percent currently: crisis level. October – December is when the most crashes occur.

- Pedestrians must yield to drivers when crossing outside of crosswalk - pedestrians are about 40 percent at fault in crashes and drivers are 60 percent – making eye contact with drivers is important.

- The need for drivers to look out for cyclists when making left turns – when making right turns drivers fail to see activity in front of them because they are looking left making sure there is clearing of traffic in the opposite direction.
- Piloting road safety campaign in Wheaton Central Business District (CBD), then to all CBDs in the County.
- Crash investigations look at the driver, the pedestrian and immediate environment.
- County is meeting with State Highway Administration (SHA) to make roads safer along the Georgia Avenue corridor.

The Committee discussed pedestrian safety issues at Shady Grove Road and Crabbs Branch Way, affecting the Westside residential community.

- Speed cameras – law not allowing in commercial areas, only residential or school zones.
- Changing how we think about accidents by calling them crashes because someone is at fault when they occur.
- The added crossing time to the light at Lake Lands and Great Seneca Hwy causing large gaps in traffic and encouraging jaywalking.

Sande Brecher announced:

- Park(ing) Day- Friday, September 21st
- Car Free Day Friday, September 21st and Saturday, September 22nd
- Free MCDOT Extra bus service shuttle to Clarksburg Outlets and Black Hills Recreational Park
- Visualize 2045 presentation at Upcounty Regional Center - COG's initiative of planning for transportation projects to reduce congestion in the region.
- Climate Mobilization presentation at County Council.
- Working to introduce NextGen TDM (Transportation Demand Management) legislation to County Council to expand application of TDM beyond the current Transportation Management Districts.

Around the Room: Universities at Shady Grove has a new building with three levels of paid parking - \$80 a month for students and \$2 an hour up to \$14 for visitors. Garage is also equipped with bike facilities with repair station inside and charging for electric vehicles.

Adjourn – Next meeting November 7, 2018