

**Silver Spring
Transportation Management District
Advisory Committee
January 11, 2024**

Items 1 & 2 – Introductions/Minutes Review: **Jim Carlson** opened the meeting and members & guests introduced themselves, including new additions to Commuter Services, **Kevin Obike**, Travel Smart Ambassador and **Samuel Damesa**, TDM Administration & Compliance Coordinator.

November’s minutes were submitted for review.

Item 3 – United Therapeutics Expansion: Head of Corporate Real Estate, **Thomas Kaufman** gave an overview of their acquisition of parking garages owned by Montgomery County to expand their operations. **Mr. Kaufman** provided a summary of how United Therapeutics began in their research to cure rare pulmonary diseases. Founder **Martine Rothblatt’s** 6-year-old daughter was ill with a rare lung disease. **Rothblatt** purchased the rights to a possible molecule cure due to the medical industries unwillingness to conduct research as it was not cost effective. United Therapeutics was created to research drugs and manufacture organ transplants. Further research has led to 3D printing of organs and the recolonizing pig organs with human skin cells to create personalized organs before the end of the decade.

As operations expand so does the company’s real estate need, leading to the purchase of County Garage 2. **Mr. Kaufman’s** role is to secure space for growth. He is working with **Jeremy Souders**, Acting Chief of MCDOT parking to acquire the garage and relocating the operations maintenance building, fiber hub and parking. Other points of the presentation were:

- MCDOT & UT collaboration on identifying locations to relocate parking facilities and submitting permitting agreements
- The agreement is fully executed but need the County Executive & County Council’s approval which will be by the first half of this year.
- 30 months from agreement process to beginning construction then 15-year construction process.
- Montgomery County being open to economic expansion was the motive behind partnership with UT.

Jeremy Souders explained that since parking Garage 2 is not fully utilized, the site has been released to UT in keeping with the goal of right sizing parking in the Silver Spring area. An analysis was conducted of post-Covid impact on garage parking. It revealed that out of the 1,100 parking spaces only 400 were being used. If no surrounding parking is used, the area would need to accommodate 750 spaces. Although, Garage 7 & 51 can receive back flow, a new above ground parking site was chosen – parking area behind the Filmore. The redevelopment will include retail, affordable housing and equipped with EV stations and future installation of solar panels. Also reported:

- The Maintenance Operations building will be centrally located to Brookville maintenance facility
- The tier level 3 fiber hubs will be located on UT property on Spring Street equipped with EV charging and solar.
- 2 ½ years for negotiations regarding use and analysis and the disposition process was 3-4 months.

The disposition process includes public hearings - one for the County Executive & one for County Council. Documents are not available for public view until all agency stakeholders such as the Housing Opportunity Commission weigh in on the process. UT's plans for the garage acquisition went to the County Executive and the Council was notified within four months; however, a deal was uncertain until six months ago. **Mr. Kaufman** explained that if Silver Spring expansion did not pan out then they would have gone to a site in North Carolina. He is happy to stay in Silver Spring. Q&A:

- Parking reduction due to the future Purple Line light rail system analysis determined that there will be a need to accommodate 125 spaces.
- Accommodation of the future affordable housing will be added to the new parking structure-675 spaces total.
- This is not UT's first land acquisition, MC sold garage 21 in 2011.
- Maintaining aging garages is costly and MC Parking would like to see 90% parking utilized, incorporating affordable housing and green space as a measurement of success.
- Making sure parking demand matches up with the utilization of alternative modes of transit.
- The land agreement documents are not available for public view as it is still early in the process however the parking demand study is available on the MC Parking website.
- 15 years to start the construction process the phasing has not been determined yet.
- Net Zero construction will depend on the building's purpose as the manufacturing process is energy intensive.
- Geothermal reduces heat by sending it into the earth and is not an energy generating process
- The balance between Research & Development and real estate make it difficult to predict employee capacity as build out has not been decided.
- Above ground parking facilities provide greater flexibility with glass enclosed visible stairwells and greater access to solar (southern exposure)
- EV ports supported by Federal Grant funding.
- Green roofs are not ideal for garages as there are weight capacity limitations-not good for parties.

Item 4 – Metro Update: **Gary Erenrich** reported that Metro Finance Committee will broadcast their board meeting live starting @ 10am today and the proposed budget is on the WMATA website. The Committee's action is to submit to the Board and later the public, proposed budget cuts for 2025 & the 6-year CIP to close Metro's \$750 million gap. The hope is to have action by April in time to apply for Federal Grants as Covid funding has run out and there is not enough revenue to cover costs. Also reported:

- Additional funding from Jurisdictions is unlikely as they are facing Transportation cuts
- Due to the working partnership of Maryland Governor Moore and Transportation Secretary Paul Wiedefeld, they were able to secure \$150 to Metro by cutting from Maryland transportation programs.
- Proposed service cuts include closing 10 stations, 67 bus route eliminations and 47 service reductions which will impact Metro access.
- Reinstating turnbacks at Grosvenor station, increasing Red Line wait times to 20 minutes and a 20% increase in fares are some items proposed.
- Since Metro used annual dedicated funding for rehabilitation maintenance for a state of good repair program, they have maxed out funding requiring service reductions.
- Moving funds to operating for Preventive Maintenance will cause Metro to defer future investments in the system.

- In Montgomery County the Metro system provides 2/3rds of bus routes and Ride-On provides the remaining 1/3rd
- State legislation for longer term Metro funding however there is little left due to transportation cuts.
- The public comment process will allow arguments against proposed budget cuts- argue against turnbacks.
- Mass teleworking causing low ridership.
- The difficulty in changing Metro system to accommodate the lopsided ridership due to the inability to change back if conditions change.

Ms. Brecher explained that opportunities to weigh in as individual and as a collective Advisory Committee are available during the public comment process.

Item 5 & 6 - Updates/Employer Outreach Updates: The updates were tabled due to lack of time.

Adjourn Next Meeting: TBD

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet
January 11, 2024**

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Chris Kabatt	Wells + Associates	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Harriet Quinn	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Vacant	North & West Sector Plan Area		
Chris Perry	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Eric Donald	Main Engineering / Small Business	X	
Shanavia McKinney	Innovative Life Healthcare /Small Biz	X	
Vacant			
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Vacant			
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (3)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT-Commuter Services	MCDOT Director or Designee	X	
Larissa Klevan	M-NCPPC	X	
Jacob Newman	Silver Spring Regional Center	X	
Staff			
Nakengi Byrd	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	MCDOT-Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Jennifer Bolick	TMD Outreach Team	X	
Carson Henry	SS Urban District	X	
Jay Elvove	SS Citizens Advisory Board	X	
Gary Erenrich	MCDOT	X	
Nahom Tekle	SS Community Engagement Cluster	X	