

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
2. Advisory Group's Role
3. MTA Presentation
 - Overview/Brief History
 - Description of Alignment & Issues
 - Questions & Answers
4. Housekeeping

Advisory Committee Members: Phil Alperson, Ed Asher, Pat Baptiste, Veda Charrow, Eric DeVaris, Karen FitzGerald, Peter Gray, Tony Hausner, Jonathan Jay, Laurie Kelly, Byrne Kelly, Sue Knapp, Caleb Kriesberg, Mike Marsh, Bill Mellema, Andy O'Hare, Ted Power, Chris Richardson, Joe Rodriguez, Karen Roper, Rob Rosenberg, David Saltzman, Harry Sanders, Fred Schultz, Todd Solomon, Judy Tso, Mier Wolf

Absent Members: Marcy Fisher, Clay Harris, Rob Lanza, Anne Martin

Others: Tom Autrey (Staff), Katherine Holt (Staff), Marcia Goldberg (Staff), Mike Madden (MTA), Harriet Levine (Consultant to MTA), Helen Reed, Terri Mannarini, Angela Fedi, and Pam Browning

1. Welcome & Introductions

Tom Autrey began the meeting at 7:05 pm. Each member of the committee introduced themselves as did people in the audience.

2. The Advisory Group's Role (Tom Autrey)

Tom gave a five minute summary of the overall role of the Advisory Group – i.e., to assist and advise the staff during its review of the MTA's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the development of a Purple Line Functional Master Plan.

3. MTA Presentation (Mike Madden - MTA) (handouts)

Mike Madden presented a PowerPoint presentation. The following are questions and comments raised during Mike's presentation.

- To clarify, there will be a series of public hearing in various locations for the DEIS? *There will likely be two formal public hearings in each County. Attendees*

will be given an opportunity to give verbal testimony and/or submit written testimony.

- *What has been the attendance at public meetings held by MTA? The meetings are generally well attended. The numbers can vary depending on the location of the meeting. Typically, there are anywhere from 50 to 150 people in attendance. It depends in some instances on the number and type of issues under consideration.*
- *December 3, 2007 will be the first Open House showing preliminary ridership, travel time, and capital cost estimates.*
- *How is a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) determined? The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is selected through the process that is currently underway (i.e., the alternative analysis going on now). A decision on the LPA will be made after the public hearings. The final decision on the LPA rests with the state, after considering input from the local governments, public hearing input, etc.*
- *Will there be a 30-60 review period? The MTA is planning a 45-day review period.*
- *Who produces the DEIS? The State produces the document. The document that goes out for review and comment will include an analysis for each alternative but no recommendation as to the Locally Preferred alternative. Comments from the public hearing are included after the hearings are held.*
- *The data that is presented in December - will it include consideration of the eventual closure of Walter Reed and the resulting impact on Bethesda National Naval Medical Center? Yes.*
- *Could you explain what this group could do for MTA? While Tom is probably the best person to answer that question, the MTA welcomes input from the advisory committee as with any civic organization. MTA is looking forward to getting input and would be glad to return to review other items when appropriate. Tom noted that the Advisory Group has somewhat of a unique role in that it is the only forum where representatives along the entire alignment are at one table. It affords folks an opportunity to get a sense of the opportunities and challenges along the entire alignment within the County.*
- *What are MTAs expectations for this group? The advisory committee is a valuable public outreach resource for the MTA process. However, the advisory committee doesn't have an official role in MTA's process – i.e., it is a Committee set up by the Planning Board. Tom noted that the advisory committee will be providing Planning Board staff input which would then also be provided to the Planning Board and (afterwards) to the County Transportation & Environment Committee.*
- *Tom also noted that something to keep in mind is that the Purple Line is County Policy – the segment between Bethesda and Silver Spring is included (i.e., a specific alignment is identified) in adopted Master Plans and the segment east of*

Silver Spring is mentioned in a more general way (with references to state studies underway at the time). In response to a question about the Advisory Committee's ability to introduce new alternatives, Tom indicated that there are limited staff resources to analyze anything other than DEIS alternatives. The Planning Board staff is not in a position to develop new data related to completely new alternatives as a part of this process.

- *Mike Madden noted that the State looks at adopted master plans when considering potential alignments. The Master Plan alignment as currently developed in the DEIS is slightly different from the Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment. As an example, the trail is now on the north side of the alignment for a segment from Pearl Street to a point just west of Jones Bridge Road. Consideration is being given to an alignment on the south side of the CSX alignment. Another change is that the DEIS does not include any single track segments – something that was included in the Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment.*
- *If you are not on the Purple Line mailing and want to be added, you can go to the Purple Line web site under contact us and fill out the form.*
<http://www.purplelinemd.com/pages/newsletters.html>
- *Has MTA considered light rail transit (LRT) without rails such as what they do for the Montreal subway, which is on tires? This type of facility is quiet. The MTA is not considering trackless trolleys, but the Bus Rapid Transit system is not dissimilar (only without an overhead catenary). The Bus Rapid Transit system, if selected for the LPA, would likely use hybrid electric vehicles.*
- *Has the State considered enhancements in MARC service (specifically a shuttle that would connect the two segments of the Red Line – e.g., between Silver Spring and Rockville) as part of the TSM (Transportation System Management) alternative? The Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) recently announced that MDOT will be developing a strategic plan for improving MARC service. With respect to increased MARC service as part of the TSM alternative – that is not included. One reason it is not included is that it would require substantial investment in additional cars if it were introduced as a peak period service improvement, a capital intensive approach that is not generally considered falling within the scope of a TSM type improvement. There are other operational issues that would also have to be resolved (e.g., coordination with CSX).*
- *Can we have a copy of the presentation without the maps via email? Yes, you can have a copy of the presentation.*

4. Housekeeping for Advisory Committee (Tom Autrey)

Upcoming Meetings:

A calendar was handed out to each committee member that contained the dates the auditorium is not available as well as holidays. Each member was asked to mark on the calendar for November, December, and January the dates they are not available, which needed to be handed to Katherine at the end of the meeting. Katherine will email the committee with the next date of the meetings by the close of business on Oct. 31, 2007.

It was suggested that there be two meetings for November to prepare for MTA's Open Houses in December. There should be one meeting in December.

Due to time constraints, it was suggested that we discuss the rest of the agenda at the next meeting in November. These items include the following:

Project Websites and Internal Communications

Purpose and Outreach Strategy Report (Handout)

http://www.mcparkandplanning.org/board/agenda/2007/documents/20070517_PurpleLine.pdf

Some Ground Rules to Consider

Organization of the Advisory Committee

It was recommended by two of the committee members that the Committee discuss the housekeeping items at the next meeting in depth as the first item on next month's agenda. It would also be helpful to have a map or drawing that layouts the dates for the Master Plan and the State's processes to make sure they dovetail. *Tom indicated that the staff could provide that information (see related discussion below).*

Based on the Purpose and Outreach Strategy Report, there are conflicting dates between MTA's schedule and the County's schedule. Is there merit in moving the master plan schedule up to meet the DEIS? There is a concern that the most effective way for the Advisory Group to have input is through the forwarding of the staff Draft of the Functional Master Plan as well as (and at the same time as) providing input/comment on the staff analysis of the DEIS. *The original schedule was set up so that the Committee and staff would have benefit of the LPA selection before the Staff Draft was completed. While the staff does not believe the absence of a Staff Draft would necessarily limit the scope of the Advisory Committee's role, the question is a good one. Tom committed to reviewing the issue with Rick Hawthorne and other staff as the response could result in some shifting of staff resources.*

Can we influence timelines and can we influence things with the State? *The timeline is included in the Draft Purpose and Outreach Report so yes, within some limits, we can move things around if there is an obvious need. Our schedule (and the current Planning Board Master Plan process) calls for the Draft Purpose and Outreach Report to go back*

to the Planning Board to be finalized. The staff agrees with a point that was made at the meeting by a Committee member - the Committee's ability "to influence things" with the state (or County for that matter) is not necessarily constrained by the absence of a Staff Draft of the Functional Master Plan. The Committee was appointed by the Planning Board. The make-up of the Committee (by design) is such that many different viewpoints are represented. Most parties directly involved in the Purple Line planning process will be interested in what each member of the Committee has to say about the project – the Committee members will have unique knowledge of the project and will have had an opportunity to discuss the many issues in an open forum with representatives from other locations along the alignment.

If the State picked a preferred alternative, will the master plan confirm the state's plan? That remains to be seen at this point. One of the arguments put forth for moving the Staff Draft of the Functional Master Plan up to coincide with the staff recommendation to the Planning Board is that, theoretically, the two would be in agreement and therefore would offer a stronger overall reflection of what the community planning process thought was the best approach. There is no question that if the MTA recommends a different LPA, the Staff Draft of the Functional Master Plan (if forwarded at the same time as the staff recommendation for the LPA), will have to be revisited in some fashion.

5. Meeting End

The meeting concluded at 9:20 pm.