There were about twenty attendees at each presentation of the Basics of the Purple Line.

Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment:
When was the New Carrollton to Silver Spring alignment included in the planning process? *A rail extension east of Silver Spring is referred to in general terms in the East Silver Spring Master Plan of December 2000, having been considered earlier as part of a Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study.*

Is the Master Plan of the Purple Line double-tracked in some sections? *Yes*

Is the double tracking near the stations or around the Country Club? *See Chapter III of the Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment for a description of the station locations and track segments. In general, the double track segments were (1) in Bethesda from Woodmont to just east of Pearl Street, (2) from a point just west of Connecticut Avenue to a point just west of Jones Mill Road, (3) from a point just east of Rock Spring Park in the Lyttonsville Road area to the Walter Reed Annex area,(4) along the CSX right of way in the area between Ballard Street and a point south of Spring Street, and (5) at the Silver Spring Metrorail Station, extending just south of Ripley Street.*

Is the Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment adopted alignment consistent with the Maryland Mass Transit Authority (MTA) alignments? *No, the State is not considering the single track option that is proposed in the Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment.*

If the State is not entertaining a single track option, how will the State resolve the conflict between the Master Plan and their proposal? *There would need to be a revision to the Master Plan. This is what the eventual adoption of a Purple Line Functional Master Plan would accomplish.*

What is the law for right-of-way (ROW) abandonment for the railroad? *The background related to the Georgetown Branch Right of Way purchase by the County is provided on page 7of the Georgetown Branch Master Plan Amendment (January 1990).*

Does the County have ROW through CSX? *It is my understanding that the County owns the right of way.*

What is the width of the ROW for the project? *The ROW width in the tunnel in Bethesda is less than 60 feet. In other areas the right of way exceeds 100 feet.*

Connecting Places, People, & Paths in the County:
Why was the Purple Line proposed and/or why is it in adopted Master Plans? *To connect important places, peoples, paths jobs in the County and to enhance east-west connections (problems with getting from east to west).*

There is concern about neighborhood impacts. People do not want transit oriented development around the stations. *Many of the stations in existing neighborhoods will likely be walk-up stations – not the kind of stations you now may associate with Metrorail. One of the challenges facing the project team is to limit impacts on existing well established neighborhoods with housing prices that are relatively reasonable when compared to the County's high cost of housing.*

What's being done to preserve communities and neighborhoods? *As noted above, the MTA team is aware of the concern. Community Focus Group meetings have been held where the potential impacts are reviewed in some detail. Some alignments have been modified or dropped as a result of this collaborative effort. The process will continue – especially in areas where there is an identified concern.*

Will there be a bike trail with direct access to Silver Spring Metro Station? *There are multiple options under consideration with respect to the connection on the Colesville road side. On the Bonifant Avenue side, there is a planned connection with the Met Branch Trail on the upper level of the Transit Center. Given the complexities of the connections, you are encouraged to review this question with the MTA staff at the open houses in December.*

Is there a trail going over the train? *As currently envisioned, the trail will be above the train in the tunnel area in Bethesda. There will be a ramp on the Woodmont Avenue end of the tunnel (outside of the tunnel) where trial users can dismount and return to the surface.*

How will staff frame issues in the big picture with the Advisory Committee and what happens if it is outside of the Advisory Committee focus? *One of the most important roles of the staff will be to present issues in the context of the overall project benefits and impacts – from one end of the alignment to the other. Given the complexity of the project, issues will be raised that are outside of the Committee focus. As an example, Planning Department staff does not have the resources to conduct analysis on alignments not included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) being conducted by the MTA.*

Will the Advisory Committee make recommendations for MTA analysis and verify their data? *The Committee can certainly suggest areas or issues that it thinks should be examined by either the MTA or Planning Department staff. Both agencies, however, have relatively specific scopes of work associated with this project, and in the case of the MTA, have federal guidelines to*

adhere to as well. The verification of data on the part of the Planning Department staff will likely involve the comparison of data with that from other locations from across the country – as a reasonableness measure. The Planning Department staff does not envision any wide-scale attempt to verify source data used by the MTA in the DEIS process. Any extensive verification effort would be very time consuming and in some cases duplicative (e.g., in the case of the land use data that provide the Council of Governments who in turn uses in the forecast modeling that the MTA uses).

Is the project purpose to take cars off the road? Or is it about linking Bethesda to New Carrollton? *The Purple Line is in the County's Master Plans between Bethesda and Silver Spring to provide better east - west connectivity in an area that is conducive to high transit usage because of existing and future land use patterns. A proposal to extend the line east of Silver Spring was made for essentially the same reason – to connect activity centers from east to west. Any estimate of the extent that the project is expected to take cars off of the road in a growing area will be dependent upon the results of the MTA modeling effort.*

Does the State have a single alternative that is being reviewed? *No, MTA has a number of alternatives under study – a total of six "build alternatives". Three of the build alternatives involve Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and three involve Light Rail Transit (LRT).*

Will the Advisory Committee be focused on MTA's proposed alignments? *Yes – the Advisory Committee will be largely focused on the relative merits of the alternatives that the MTA is reviewing.*

Will there be an alternative that the community will decide? *The Advisory Committee is free to recommend any alternative to those being examined by the MTA but it should do so with the understanding that the Planning Department staff does not have the resources to analyze any additional alternatives. Any extended time spent on other alternatives takes away time from the analysis of the alternatives that will be considered in recommending a Locally Preferred Alternative.*

Who selects the "Locally Preferred Alternative"? *The state selects the Locally Preferred Alternative (or LPA). The term LPA is a bit of a misnomer (i.e., the County does not have the last word) because the DEIS is developed under federal guidelines and the State of Maryland is considered a "local" entity.*

Will the Advisory Committee recommend an alternative to MTA? *The Advisory Committee will work with the staff to develop a staff report that will be presented to the Planning Board. It is anticipated that the report will include a recommendation for the Planning Board's consideration. It is also anticipated that members of the Advisory Committee will want to present*

their own views to the Planning Board and the Planning Board has indicated that they welcome this input. It is also anticipated that the Planning Board will forward a recommendation to the County Council's Transportation and Environmental Committee regarding the Locally Preferred Alternative.

What is the time line for the Advisory Committee to report to the Planning Board? *The DEIS is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2008. It is anticipated that the Committee will be providing input for a staff report that will be reviewed by the Planning Board either just before or just after the Planning Board's August break.*

Why did MTA reject specific alternatives? *Information on the history of specific alternative alignments is available on the MTA project website and also in the Planning Department's Purpose and Outreach Strategy Report (see the Planning Department project web site at: http://www.mcparkandplanning.org/Transportation/projects/bicounty.shtm)*

A suggestion was made to have the Advisory Committee discuss the entire process and explain how the alternatives were dwindled down from several to three and finally will be one alternative. *See the response to the question above. In addition, the Planning Department staff can develop a brief summary report of the history of the alternatives based upon the Draft Detailed Definition of Alternatives Report (March 2006) distributed by the MTA.*

Does there have to be a consensus or is it about process? *With respect to the Advisory Committee's work, it is more about process. Given the complexity of the project, it is unlikely the Advisory Committee will reach a consensus about a specific alignment or possibly even mode. The Advisory Committee's role is to make sure that the Planning Board and staff are aware of what the Advisory Committee believes to be important (individually and collectively) and to help the staff broaden its outreach effort. The Advisory Committee membership (by design) represents a diversity of interest and a geographic balance. It is that diversity and balance that makes the input so valuable to the Planning Board and staff.*

Could you please clarify the Inner Purple Line and the Outer Purple Line? What does it mean? *The "Inner Purple Line" simply refers to a proposed alignment that is wholly inside the Beltway. The Outer Purple Line included part of an alignment that was not inside the Beltway for part of the alignment.*

Consensus about the Purple Line:
Are there space connectivity challenges? *There are connectivity challenges, if you are referring to challenges posed by introducing a Transitway in a "built environment." There are significant challenges in Bethesda, in the area of the tunnel just east of Woodmont Avenue, along the CSX right of way, at the Silver Spring Transit Center, and in East Silver Spring, among other locations.*

How many substation boxes will there be for the project? Where will they be located? Will the wires impact the trees and how far into the trees will they wires go? *This is another question for the MTA team.*

Will zoning in the master plans be changed to a transit oriented development zone or mixed use per ordinances? *There is one active Master Planning effort underway along the alignment in Montgomery County – it is the Takoma/Langley Sector Plan and it just started.*

There are renters in neighborhoods in the vicinity of the transit center in Takoma-Langley Park. What is being done about ensuring renters staying in the area versus getting priced out of the area because it is no longer affordable? This happened to the D.C. Heights area.
As noted above, The Takoma-Langley Park Sector Plan is now underway. That plan will ultimately provide the vision for the area. More immediately, the impact on neighborhoods is an analysis that is required to be done per the federal government DEIS process.

Who owns the land in Takoma-Langley Park? Is it privately owned? What is the status with the Taco Bell site? *The shopping center owner owns the area where the Takoma Langley Transit Center is to be located. The owner and the MTA are in negotiations regarding the purchase of the area required for the Transit Center.*

Competing with the Car:
Would there also be competition with the environment and the alignments? *Yes. For instance, the alignment under any alternative will impact some parkland.*

Photo Slides:
The Power Point photos show a train comprised of a single car. Have we changed from multiple cars to single cars? *All of the photos are intended to be representative – not specific examples of what is being proposed. The train length (i.e., how many cars make up one train) will depend on ridership. The maximum length of the station platforms under consideration by the MTA is 200 feet.)*

What are the widths for vehicle types? *A streetcar is about 8 feet wide, a bus is 8.5 feet wide, a light rail vehicle is about 9 feet wide, and an urban traffic lane is about 10 to 11.5 feet wide.*

We won't know how many cars are needed until the ridership numbers are released. Correct? *Yes, preliminary ridership numbers will be available in December per the MTA schedule and may give us a better idea of whether it is reasonable to assume single car trains during the off peak period.*

Why did you not include photos of the Baltimore light rail? Do you have photos of light rail with residences? *We will look for photos of light rail operating in a residential setting.*

You should take advantage of having a light rail in your back yard and go ride the light rail in Baltimore. *Some of us have ridden the light rail in Baltimore but your suggestion is a good one. There are other examples we can draw from as well – systems with cars that are smaller in size and have low floors for ease of boarding.*

If you increase the average speed, how many people will change their mode choice due to with decreased travel time? *I don't know the answer to this question, but MTA's model does take travel time into consideration.*

Is there a significant cost difference between mode, type of equipment, and route segments? Will this cost difference be reflected in ticket prices? *There is not a major difference in the cost of operating the system, but there is a difference in capital cost. It can vary depending on equipment (rail or bus, etc.)*

What happens to the travel impacts in inclement weather? *Travel would be improved in inclement weather – a rail trip could very well be more reliable than an auto trip in inclement weather – depending upon the road conditions.*

What is the life expectancy of the equipment? *The life expectancy of a bus is 12 years and light rail vehicle is probably about 20-25 years.*

Improving Average Speed makes a difference:
Why is there a hard sale for competition for autos and transit? *About one-third of the County falls within the agriculture preserve creating additional competition for transportation. The County will continue to experience growth in jobs and housing. Our plans direct much of that growth toward existing and planned transit infrastructure so that we slow the growth rate of trips made by auto. The goal for transit is also reliability. Buses can get stuck in traffic, which is terrible, but the light rail is reliable because there is no competition with traffic.*

If there isn't a significant change in speed, will the federal government still give funds for the project? *Travel time benefits are an important part of the evaluation process. Because the evaluation process involves an overall rating and how it is compares with other proposed projects across the nation, it is almost impossible to determine what the Federal Transit Administration recommendation will be if the project meets certain thresholds.*

Developing Alternatives:
What are TSM and Grade Separation? *"TSM" (Transportation System Management) refers to improvements that can be made that are not capital intensive – the improvements do not involve major investments in right of way or large acquisitions of vehicles for new fleets. "Grade Separation" refers to the separation of roadways or Transitway at conflict points – like tunnels or an overpass through a change in elevation.*

Estimating Ridership:
What kind of projections will be given? *The projections will be for weekday peak hour and total weekday ridership.*

Will the projections be based on time period and configurations? *Yes – configuration meaning alternative alignments.*

There is a concern that the State already has the ridership numbers, which is why they are adding more stations. *Arriving at an accurate ridership estimates is an iterative process. The Planning Department Staff believes that the MTA began to take another look at the station locations after they examined the existing ridership patterns on bus routes as part of the Enhanced Bus Study that was done as part of the Purple Line planning process. Regardless, and as noted before, the initial ridership estimates are expected to be available at the open houses in December.*

When are the ridership estimates available? *The estimates will be presented by MTA in December 2007 at the open houses.*

How is ridership estimated? *Ridership is estimated through what is called a four step computer model that takes into account population and job forecasts, how many trips are generated, where*

and how the trips are made, and over what facilities (roads or rail). The model is "calibrated" or tested against existing conditions as a means of assuring reliability in forecasting future ridership.

There will be an increase in Naval Medical / Walter Reed Medical Center employees traveling from east to west because of the transfer of employees from Walter Reed. How will they be accommodated? *One alignment (a Bus Rapid Transit alignment along Jones Bridge Road) includes a stop at NIH / Naval Medical. The MTA Project Team is indicating that they do not expect the employees to have a significant impact on Purple Line ridership – the number of additional employees (as opposed to visitors) is relatively small. One of the most effective near term measures for enhancing access to transit at Naval Medical is to open a new entrance to the Medical Center Red Line station on the east side of Rockville Pike at Naval Medical.*

Was NIH ever considered as an endpoint at Medical Center instead of at Bethesda? *The Planning Board was against the alignment due to impacts on neighborhoods at Jones Bridge Road.*

Was the Beltway ROW ever looked at as a possible alignment? *It was looked at early on in the process and was dropped because of the cost and impacts.*

Schedule for the Functional Master Plan:
How do ridership statistics fit into the DEIS? *Ridership (particularly trips expected to experience time savings) are a key part of the evaluation.*

Will ridership be a part of the DEIS? *Yes, as well as cost estimates.*

Is ridership a traffic analysis? *No, it is different from ridership and cost estimates, but will be included in the DEIS.*

Will the public be able to see the cost effectiveness analysis and the traffic analysis before the DEIS? *The initial ridership estimates and an initial look at the impact on traffic along the alignment will be available at the Open Houses in December. The Planning Department staff does not expect the cost effectiveness analysis to be available in December but we will check with the MTA staff.*

There needs to be a cost estimate for tunneling and deep tunneling for the alternatives. It is also critical to get main line and y-line (side streets) traffic analysis. *We will discuss this with the MTA staff.*

What is the Advisory Committee? *The Advisory Committee is an important part of the Planning Department's Master Planning process. A Master Plan Advisory Group (or Committee) is established by the Planning Board in many cases to provide advice to the staff and Planning Board during the development of Master Plans.*

What will the Advisory Committee do regarding the Purple Line project? *The Advisory Committee will provide input through the review of staff and MTA reports during the final stages of the development of the DEIS, the consideration of a Locally Preferred Alternative, and the development of a Purple Line Functional Master Plan.*

How often will the Advisory Committee meet? *It will begin with monthly meetings and could change to twice a month in the window from spring to fall 2008 – between the publication of the DEIS and the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative.*

When is the Locally Preferred Alternative selected? *The schedule calls for the selection to be made after the publication of the DEIS in the spring of next year.*

Will the State DEIS take into consideration various alternatives and will data be given for the alternatives in the EIS? *Yes.*

Does the COG model include BRAC? *Yes, although the MTA has indicated that they expect the BRAC impact on the Purple Line ridership to be relatively modest during weekday peak travel periods.*

If the DEIS is released in April, there is a 45-60 day comment period before the public hearing. When will the Planning Board make their comments, before or after the public hearing? Will the Planning Board comment after the public hearing? *I would expect the Planning Board to want to hear public comment at the formal hearings, if possible, before developing a recommendation for the County Council's Transportation and Environment Committee.*

A map or outline will be helpful for the Advisory Committee with milestones to better understand the relationship between MTA, the County, and the Advisory Committee's roles. *The Planning Staff will go to work on putting this together.*

Where will the Open Houses be held? *The Open House locations will be posted on the MTA's website. In the past, the Open Houses have been organized in such a way that an attendee will move from one exhibit station to another with an opportunity to ask questions of the project team located at each station.*

Could the Planning Board have a formal presence at MTA's Open Houses? *We will certainly make the Planning Board aware of the dates. We expect the staff to be present as well.*

Could Mike Madden bring experts to the Advisory Committee meeting in the future to discuss ridership, traffic impacts, etc? *The Planning Department staff will forward the request to the MTA.*

MTA focus group minutes need to be online. MTA does a good job about going into civic associations when invited.

If you could give me sound bites to take away from this meeting what would they be?
The project is about improving east west travel in an established and growing area. As a result, it has some challenges – funding, the trail, East Silver Spring and potential impacts in that location, Sligo Park, the challenge of preserving neighborhoods and affordable housing, among other things. The concerns expressed by the communities along the alignment are real concerns – most support transit.

Could you please give the Advisory Committee a better understanding of their role in the process and on the committee on Tuesday? *Yes.*

How will the Advisory Committee function? *We will also go over that in Tuesday's meeting. The structure of the Advisory Committee is an important issue given the many different viewpoints about the Purple Line and related issues.*

Open floor to questions:
What is the justification for the Purple Line? *The justification for the Purple Line is to improve east west connectivity in a developed and growing area. The need for the Purple Line (i.e., an indication of the extent to which the facility would be used) is expected to be demonstrated in the DEIS analysis.*

Is there a docket room to retrieve documents, comments, etc.? *Yes, there is a project web site at www.purplelinemd.com in addition to this project web site maintained by the Planning Department.*

Does parking, pollution, costs of a car (gas, maintenance, operation, segment of road) go into the cost estimate? *I am not sure I understand the question. The cost of parking is one thing that is considered in most models when determining what mode (bus, rail, auto, walk, and bike) someone may choose for a trip.*

How can we build roads and transit at the same time from a cost perspective? *If you are talking about the federal level, the funds come from different pots of money at the federal level.*

Will there be changes in the bus routes? *Yes, you can expect the bus routes in the immediate area of the Purple Line to be modified to avoid duplication of service. Care will be taken in the redesign to avoid the complete elimination of service along heavily traveled roads where passengers will still want to get on and off over distances that are shorter than the Purple Line will be designed to accommodate.*

Will a bus station be needed on Wayne Avenue because the buses would disappear or would they still be needed with the Purple Line? *See answer above. In all likelihood a number (not all) of the buses you typically see on Wayne Avenue during the peak period would no longer operate in the same manner (i.e., along Wayne Avenue while duplicating the Purple Line service).*

How do you find the arrival time of buses? *WMATA's website (metroopensdoors.com), phone 202-637-7000, or by using NextBus system (currently being updated and not available).*