



MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
MINUTES May 26, 2020 7:00pm

Members

Present: Larry Schoen,
Ted Cochran
David Zinner
Monica Simon
Alice Giles
Shariar Etemadi
Terri Hansen
Aphaia Harper
Ron Hartman
David Drasin

Staff: Bruce Gartner, Executive Secretary
Jason Quan, Office of Transportation
Chris Eatough, Office of Transportation
Kimberly Woods, Office of Transportation
David Cookson, Office of Transportation
Allison Calkins, Office of Transportation
Brian Muldoon, Office of Transportation
Molly Nur, Office of Transportation

**Members
Excused:**

**Members of
the Public:** Joel Hurewitz
Holly Arnold
Kate Sylvester
Mary Kendall

1. Review of unofficial minutes from May 26,2020

Larry Schoen went over the minutes from the previous meeting with the MTB members. David Zinner suggested adding the addresses to the projects listed under item #4. Bruce Gartner agreed to the changes which also included correcting the spelling of Larry’s last name and adding David Drasin’s name to the attendees list. Ted Cochran moved to approve the minutes with corrections, Shariar Etemadi seconded that motion.

2. Public Comment- General Topics

Joel Hurewitz a Columbia resident voiced his concerns regarding the budgets and suggested that the council should compromise with their two factions by cutting less and raising taxes. Joel also briefly discussed his concerns regard the scooter permit process. Which included recommending that the Oakland Mills zone should overlap with Downtown Columbia and concerns regarding docking stations. Joel also believes that there is a lack of communication between CA and the county regarding the scooters.

3. Announcements/Updates

i. Status of FY2021 Operating and Capital Budget Request-Bruce Gartner

Bruce Gartner announced that the County Council votes on the capital budget tomorrow. The budget is expected to be reduced significantly to decrease the reliance of the transfer tax that was introduced by council members and the administration. OoT has voiced concerns regarding the reduction of funds (ie, consulting funds for the design manual) with the Council. Negotiations are taking place at a fairly high level regarding the reductions. Ted Cochran voiced concerns regarding the potential delay in the design manual. Larry encouraged the MTB members to contact their council representative regarding funding cuts to transportation. Bruce announced that the County will not be doing any new transit service. Fortunately, the County is expected to receive \$3.7 million from the Cares Acts Funding from the MTA through the FTA. The funds received are expected to cover the fare lost due to the pandemic. The county is expected to receive reductions in funds from the State in the upcoming fiscal year. While the RTA is currently not collecting fares from riders, they are expected to have 80% of regular bus service restored by June 14th. The goal is to start collecting bus fare again by Labor Day.

ii. Status of E-Scooter Permit- Chris Eatough

Chris Eatough informed the group of changes to the permit based on feedback from the public and members during last month's MTB meeting. There is a new draft of the terms and conditions for E-scooters. The maps have been updated as well as the citation for the visually impaired. The goal is to have everything up and available within the next couple of weeks so that scooter applications can be filed in June and companies can be up and running the following month. While so far there is only one scooter company that has shown interest in the completing the scooter process, it is still open to all interested. Shariar Etemadi questioned why there is only one company showing interest. Chris explained to Shariar that Scooter companies are probably not confident that they would make money in Howard County because of the demographics as compared to more urbanized areas like DC and Baltimore.

iii. Introduction of New Staff-Bruce Gartner

Bruce introduced Molly Nur as the newest member to the Office of Transportation team. Molly is the new Transportation Planner II, previously occupied by Albert Engel. Molly is a Howard County resident. Molly's transportation experience includes working for a consulting firm, local government and volunteer work for many Howard County organizations. The GIS specialist position is expected to be vacant for a while due to budget cuts.

4. New Business/Ongoing Business

i. MDOT-MTA Presentation on Draft Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan (CMRTP)- Holly Arnold, MDOT-MTA Deputy Administrator

Holly Arnold went over the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan presentation. The RTP is a plan for improving public transportation in the region of the next 25 years. The plan is a guide for the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration, local transit operators, and local jurisdictions to focus on planning efforts and investment on addressing service coverage gaps and areas of need. Members of the public are encouraged to read and comment on the draft Regional Transit Plan. The public comment period is currently open until June 18th. September 2020 the plan will be reviewed, and a final plan will be published. The plan is due to legislation by October 1st which MDOT MTA is currently on schedule for.

There are 3 goals for the plan: optimize existing transit services, optimize connectivity and integration of existing and future services, and enhance fiscal sustainability. The Regional Transit Plan is organized around 6 objectives: Provide Faster More Reliable Service, Grow Ridership, Increase Jobs & Opportunities, Improve the Customer Experience, and Be Equitable. The Plan proposes many recommendations, grouped into three Initiatives: Strategies, Transit Network Improvements and Regional Transit Corridors. The plan identifies targets, which will be tracked on a Progress Dashboard. Examples:

- Increase MDOT MTA's on-time performance for Core Bus to 85% by 2025
- Increase the percent of tops and stations that are ADA accessible by 25% every ten years.
- Achieve majority zero-emission bus fleet by 2045.

More information regarding the draft plan can be found at <https://rtp.mta.maryland.gov/>

ii. Update on Howard County General Development Plan- David Cookson

David Cookson introduced Mary Kendall, Deputy Director of Planning and Zoning.

The HOCO by Design General Plan Update Overview was presented by Mary. A general plan is a document that makes policy statements and consists of maps, goals, and implementing actions. It is the framework for the future (provides a clear blueprint on how HoCo should grow and be preserved in the future) and must be updated every 10 years. It is considered a tool for long range coordination by looking 20 to 30 years into the future and guiding a wide range of decisions related to land use, transportation, historic preservation, and economic just to name a few. Howard County's last general plan update was in 2012.

Some Examples of General Plan Influence & Planning Board Roles:

- The General Plan establishes a clear policy on how and where the County will develop and grow as it adjusts to evolving economic, environmental and social conditions.
- The County makes capital budget decisions based in part on the recommendations of the General Plan.
- Functional Plans like Walk Howard and Bike Howard as well as Masters Plans like Downtown Columbia Master Plan take a deeper dive into specific issues or geographies with the guidance from the General Plan and further refine policies and recommend more specific implementation strategies.

The Planning and Zoning Board is currently in the beginning of the General Plan process. DPZ has four categories of public engagement (which includes both virtual and non-virtual components):

1. Educate-includes public engagement initiatives designed to ensure that HoCo residents are kept informed about HoCo By Designs progress and opportunities to participate. As well as ensuring that participants understand planning issues big and small.
2. Inform- include opportunities for everyone to share big ideas, preferences, and visions for Howard County's future.
3. Collaborate- public activities involving collaborating are more granular and require a higher degree of cooperation to facilitate an exchange of information.
4. Feedback- involves the HoCo By Design team presenting milestone findings for public reaction and comment.

The next steps in the process (Timeline for approval of General Plan Guidelines):

- June 15th- Public Hearing with County Council (Guidelines are Council Resolution-CR89-2020)
- July 6th- Council Action (County Council will vote on the guidelines for adoption)

iii. Complete Streets Implementation Team (CSIT) Update- Chris Eatough

Chris Eatough gave a brief CSIT updated which included the following:

- CSIT is still working through the design manual updates with WRA (consultant)
- Monthly meetings are being held virtually with CSIT.

- Internal meetings are happening in between the monthly CSIT meetings with DPZ and DPW.
- CSIT is currently working on a community engagement plan with WRA firm and the Horizon Foundation.
- CSIT is working on updating the policy regarding sidewalks in the public right of way.

iv. Miscellaneous

- White Acre & Stevens Forest Intersection- Ted Cochran voiced concerns regarding the visibility of stop sign at that intersection and a recommendation to make the intersection a 3 way stop. Chris Eatough suggested that Ted email him the pictures.
- Restriping on State Roads-The State has recently restriped a section of Dorsey Road but failed to add bike lanes. David Zinner questioned the communication process regarding the restriping of State roads. David Cookson informed David Zinner that HoCo coordinates with the State on a quarterly basis. State policy is to put bike lanes on state roads through development projects or resurfacing. David Cookson will investigate that restriping project and follow up with the group later.

5. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

6. Next Meeting

The next MTB meeting is scheduled for June 23,2020.

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Bruce Gartner	/2020 Date
Executive Secretary	

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Kimberly Woods	/2020 Date
Office of Transportation	