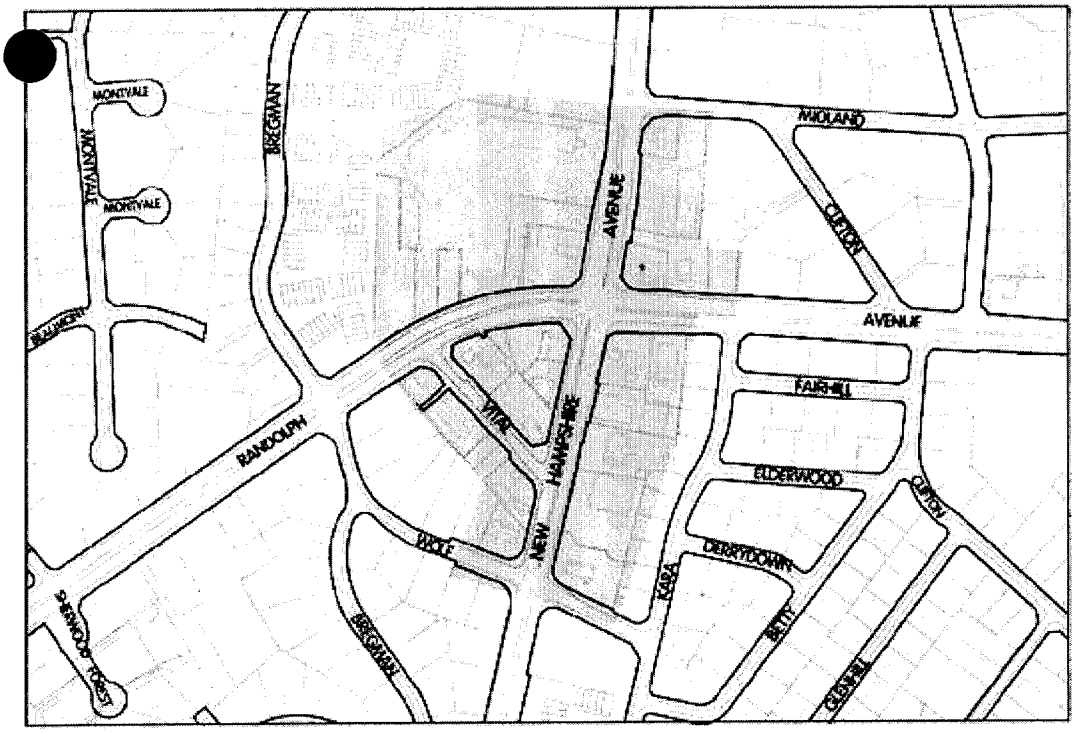
Cole, Larry

From: Janousek, Daniel
Sent: Thursday, May 23, 2013 12:18 PM
To: Cole, Larry; Foster, Eric
Cc: Berlage, Derick; Masog, Tom; 'Weissberg Victor (DPW&T) (E-mail)'; Hedgepeth, Tanya; Shaffer, Fred
Subject: RE: Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan Public Hearing Draft - and BPPAs

BPPAs Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas - Sec. 2-604
The "Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan" prepared by Montgomery County Planning Department staff establishes the BPPA's (Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas) that were established by the state (Sec. 2-604). These BPPAs are based on land use and proximity to rail transit. MDOT is looking for support mechanisms for the BPPAs, so their inclusion and functional designation is important. MDOT presented draft goals at the MWCOG subcommittee meeting this week that are addressing issues we brought up at our focus group meeting a few weeks ago. We may also look to update our plans and establish BPPA's in the plans as a matter of practice. The BPPAs support the additional right of way needs to accommodate the BRT, but also the entire multi-modal network. We might consider updating our own MPOT with the BPPAs.

http://www.sha.maryland.gov/oots/Appendix%20C%20-%20PedBikeCode.pdf

Map 20 Colesville BPPA



New Hampshire Avenue Phase I and II
Please coordinate with the City of Takoma Park's Multi-Way Boulevard design effort for the "New Ave." for the two-way median transitway on New Hampshire Avenue.

We will amend own MPOT at some future date to mesh with your recommendations for the 6+1 reversible on-lane median in Phase 2 and to be up to date with Takoma Park's project (or as it turns out).

Station Locations
Agree with the placement of the Oakview Drive and Northhampton Drive stops as they will service the extensive amount of multi-family housing that is there. It looks like they put the station points in the best locations for ridership maximization.

We will take a look at the rest of the document for other access and traffic issues. I am glad to see that you put a succinct plan process in the plan itself (last page).

DRJ/

Daniel Janousek, Senior Transportation Planner
Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission
14741 Governor Oden Bowie Drive
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Ph: 301-780-8116

From: Cole, Larry
Sent: Thursday, May 23, 2013 9:54 AM
To: Foster, Eric
Cc: Janousek, Daniel; Berlage, Derick; Weissberg Victor (DPW&T) (vweissberg@co.pg.md.us)
Subject: RE: Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan Public Hearing Draft

Eric, That works for me. Thanks. - Larry

From: Foster, Eric
Sent: Thursday, May 23, 2013 9:50 AM
To: Cole, Larry
Cc: Janousek, Daniel; Berlage, Derick; Weissberg Victor (DPW&T) (vweissberg@co.pg.md.us)
Subject: RE: Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan Public Hearing Draft

Larry

We will not be in a position to comment officially on behalf of the Planning Board or the County. However, Dan will review the draft and I will forward comments from the Transportation Planning staff for technical coordination purposes. Thanks for forwarding the draft.

[redacted]ic

Eric J. Foster
Supervisor, Transportation Planning Section
Countywide Planning Division
Prince George's County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
County Administration Building
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3037
(301) 952-3117
Fax (301) 952-3799

From: Cole, Larry
Sent: Wednesday, May 22, 2013 4:16 PM
To: Foster, Eric
Cc: Janousek, Daniel
Subject: Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan Public Hearing Draft
Importance: High

Hi Eric, We held the public hearing for this master plan last week and the public record closes on May 30th (next Thursday). I was curious whether Prince George's was going to comment on the plan, in particular the segment of the [redacted]w Hampshire Avenue corridor that is in PGCo and is shown in your BRT study map as being part of our study. The draft was e-mailed to you on 4/22:
http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/highways/documents/CountywideTransitCorridorspublichearingdraftApr13.pdf

To address our Board's direction for an aspirational BRT plan that looks beyond the 2040 forecast year and even beyond current planned land use, our Plan recommends a two-phase approach: Phase 1 includes those improvements that would serve current planned land use and has recommendations that are truly "in" the Plan; Phase 2 provides guidance for future master plan changes, including areas that are outside our jurisdiction: Rockville, Gaithersburg and PGCo. We've recommended only mixed traffic operations for the latter so essentially there's no change in the master plan for the time being (Phase 1). The change on your segment of NHAve would come only when you enact a change.

Can you give me a heads up as to whether you'll be submitting comments? We're compiling the comments and doing the responses now. Thanks. - Larry

Lawrence Cole, P.E.
Master Planner/Highway Coordinator
Functional Planning & Policy Division, Multi-Modal Networks Unit
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring MD 20910

301-495-4528
301-495-1302 (fax)
[redacted]y.cole@montgomeryplanning.org
http://www.MontgomeryPlanning.org

Cole, Larry

[redacted]m: Cole, Larry
[redacted]nt: Tuesday, May 28, 2013 12:46 PM
To: 'McDougall, Harold'
Subject: RE: BRT Impact on minorities and immigrants

Harold, I'm not sure I have a graphic showing all the corridors with the names on them because the map would get a bit messy. Here are some slides of the individual corridors if that helps. - Larry The Transit Corridor Network Map on the webpage has a key: http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/highways/brt.shtm and the individual corridors are shown in this Powerpoint presentation, beginning on page 43: http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/viewer.shtm#http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/highways/documents/BRTpresentationofStaffDrafttoBoard3-18-13.pdf

Larry

-----Original Message-----
From: McDougall, Harold [mailto:harold.mcdougall@Howard.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2013 12:38 PM
To: Cole, Larry
Subject: RE: BRT Impact on minorities and immigrants

Larry, can you send me a map with the BRT corridors named?

[redacted]anks

Professor Harold McDougall
School of Law
Howard University

From: Cole, Larry [larry.cole@montgomeryplanning.org]
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2013 11:32 AM
To: McDougall, Harold
Subject: RE: BRT Impact on minorities and immigrants

Good morning, Harold

Does sometime between 10:30a-2p on Thursday or 8a-2p on Friday work? If not, I'm pretty flexible next Monday or Tuesday.

Our mapping folks have put together three maps to help address your question/concern about impacts of the recommended BRT network on minority communities, which are attached for your info.

Larry

-----Original Message-----
[redacted]m: McDougall, Harold [mailto:harold.mcdougall@Howard.edu]
Sent: Saturday, May 25, 2013 10:09 AM
To: Cole, Larry

Subject: BRT Impact on minorities and immigrants

To: Larry Cole, Functional Planning & Policy Division, 301-495-4528

[redacted]r Larry,

As you will recall, the Planning Board Chair directed me to consult with you regarding the impact of the proposed BRT on minorities and immigrants. I would like to set up an appointment to do so, at your earliest.

I should also point out that the chair erred in denying me five minutes to speak. See your own website: http://www.montgomeryapps.org/planning_board/testify.asp

Professor Harold McDougall
School of Law
Howard University

Garcia, Joyce

From: Joe Fritsch <joe.fritsch@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2013 11:37 AM
To: MCP-Chair; county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: RE: Proposed Bus Rapid Transit System Related to Multi-Use Trails & Bike Lanes

RE: Proposed Bus Rapid Transit System Related to Multi-Use Trails & Bike Lanes

Dear Members of the Planning Board & County Council,

As the plans for the possible Bus Rapid Transit system (BRT) shift into high gear I want to ensure that this project will not overshadow or remove multi-use trails/sidewalks and bicycle lanes that are also in the master plan. One project in particular is the multi-use trail parallel to the BRT from Olney down to Glenmont. This trail is in the master plan to be built with the BRT.

Locally this trail will provide easy bicycle and pedestrian access from the center of Olney to the Olney Manor Park, indoor pool and the ICC multi-use trail. It will also provide access from Leisure World to these amenities along with shops and restaurants in Olney. These are just a few benefits this trail will provide along with providing a safe bicycle route to the Metro station in Glenmont. These benefits are greatly multiplied when taking into account the numerous residential, retail and recreational areas that will also be linked by this multi-use trail.

During the planning process of the BRT system I ask that planners keep an open mind and look for solutions instead of just removing multi-use trails and bike lanes, if space or logistical challenges arise. For example, there may not be enough room for both the BRT and multi-use trail in the median of Georgia Ave. as called for in the master plan. A solution would be to replace the sidewalk along the east side of Georgia Ave between Olney and Leisure World with a 12 foot wide multi-use trail.

My concern is this this multi-use trail and others will only be used as a carrot to gain support for the BRT. My fear is that once support and funding is gained for the BRT these much needed amenities will once again be greatly reduced or completely discarded as done with the ICC, Purple Line and other projects.

The answer to our growing transportation issues is not to just introduce or improve just one method of transportation. As Montgomery County continues to grow people will need all methods possible to move around the County and achieve the high quality of life we strive for.

Sincerely,

Joe Fritsch
17717 Buehler Rd
Olney, MD 20832

Garcia, Joyce

From: Veneeta Acson <acson79@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2013 2:46 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: no BRT

TO: MCP-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving bus in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Park Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Veneeta Acson
4630 Hunt Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Garcia, Joyce

From: Celesta Jurkovich <cjurkovich@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, May 28, 2013 2:51 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: May 16 public hearing - Item 11 - revision of already submitted testimony
Attachments: 5-28-13 resubmission of CCW-CCCFH testimony.docx

On May 14, 2013, I submitted written testimony to be presented by Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association (CCW) Transportation Co-Chair Elaine Akst. It was submitted on that date to meet the deadline for inclusion in the record and be distributed to the Board. Subsequent to that submission, on May 15 the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH) at its regular monthly meeting requested that CCW, one of its 18 member organizations, testify on behalf of this umbrella organization as well. CCW agreed and Ms. Akst announced in her testimony on May 16 that she represented the broader organization as well. The official record for comments was also extended through May 30, 2013.

Chevy Chase West would like to substitute the revised testimony to be made part of the Planning Board's record. It reflects the actions described above. It is attached. The exhibits which accompanied the May 14 submission have not changed, however. Thank you for making this change. We appreciate the opportunity to express our views and accurately reflect the organizations involved.

Celesta Jurkovich
President
Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association

Celesta Jurkovich
4603 Morgan Drive
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-657-8134 (home)
301-325-1865 (cell)

Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association

Testimony on BRT
May 16, 2013 Public Hearing Agenda Item 11

I am Elaine Akst, co-chair of the Transportation Committee in Chevy Chase West, a community of 500 homes just west of MD355 between Bradley Boulevard and Drummond Avenue. I am representing the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights as well as my community association which is one of its 18 members. I've included a map that illustrates that the only access to our community is via Wisconsin Avenue whose curb lane would be repurposed as a BRT lane in the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan being discussed today. No parallel streets exist that can be used as an alternative to Wisconsin Avenue.

My testimony should not be taken as a rejection of the concept of bus rapid transit. CCW supports efforts to improve mass transit, and has been working steadily with local and state officials to enhance transit options for our residents, including more frequent, more accessible, and more reliable local bus service, and improved pedestrian and bike facilities.

This master plan, as it relates to the Bethesda-Friendship Heights segment of MD355, raises many concerns for us.

It complicates our efforts to get better local mass transit. We are currently working to see improvements to four bus stops, and, we hope, delineated crosswalks with appropriate traffic controls as part of the State Highway Administration plan for a sidewalk/bikeway on the east side of Wisconsin. These are safety enhancements CCW and nearby communities need now.

It ignores real traffic issues on this stretch – first, vehicular access to Norwood Park, available only from Wisconsin Avenue, for the BCC preschoolers in the park plus the athletes and coaching staff – both adults and youths - involved in soccer, football, softball, baseball, and lacrosse on weekday afternoons. Secondly it ignores areas that are already effectively only two driving lanes since the southbound curb lane of MD 355 between Somerset Terrace and Western Avenue is essentially a parking lane for delivery vehicles and vehicles dropping off patients to the medical buildings there (Pictures are also attached); and the curb lane is already a designated right turn lane between Willard and Western Avenue.

We believe restricting a curb lane to buses presents significant access and safety issues for our residents and guests. We expect more congestion in the remaining two lanes; difficulty in nosing into traffic to exit CCW; difficulty enforcing a bus-only lane; difficulty in cutting through traffic to make a left turn to northbound Wisconsin; and frustrated drivers seeking a shortcut through our neighborhood, especially in morning rush hour when our children are walking to Somerset Elementary school and students are being dropped off at Concord Hill school on Wisconsin.

The plan's Phase 2 proposes to use the median on the Green Mile for BRT. Mr. Cole said this was based on possible development of the Chevy Chase Club property, which is highly unlikely for the well-financed, century old club. Our community opposes use of the Green Mile's median and requests that this plan be removed from Phase 2.

An earlier version of the plan suggested that a one-lane reversible busway in the median would require an additional 9' of right of way, to come from private property. Why is this data not published in the latest version? This option must be detailed publicly for any affected residents.

Planning staff predictions look at the entire MD355 corridor. We believe that ridership will be considerably less than the 1440 predicted between Bradley and Friendship Heights, in light of the lack of connectivity between Montgomery County bus service and DC bus service. Current RideOn volume here is small, partly because of infrequent service and unsafe bus stops. An advantage of BRT is supposed to be quicker boarding and access, but this won't happen if travelers must transfer from Montgomery county buses to either the Red Line or DC buses. There is currently no plan to extend service from either jurisdiction to the other.

This points up the problem in developing a one-size-fits all proposal, wherein standards and goals that are fine for one segment may not be appropriate for another. The standards laid out by the consultant IDTP for BRT should be carefully applied so that our residential neighborhoods can share wherever possible in the benefits of BRT, can be protected from deleterious effects, and can have local mass transit alternatives, if endorsed by the community, developed simultaneously with BRT efforts.

To do this, communities along proposed BRT routes MUST be consulted and heard throughout the planning and implementation process. We – local residents – know some things that planners don't about traffic patterns and needs.

Accordingly, we have the following suggestions for any BRT planning:
- any MD355 BRT first phase should go only to the Bethesda metro stop as its southernmost point.
- extension southward from Bethesda should be dependent on and developed in conjunction with extension of WMATA bus lines between DC and MD.
- dropoff issues between Somerset Terrace and Willard Avenue should be dealt with before designating a curb bus lane.
- local bus service between Bethesda and Friendship Heights should be improved to enhance eventual BRT use on this stretch.
- crosswalks and appropriate traffic controls must be instituted before designating a bus lane, to improve safe local bus and BRT access.
- if and when bus lines are extended between Maryland and DC, two stops between Bradley and Western should be part of any BRT plan, in accord with general practice of stops every half mile to mile.
- use of the median south of Bethesda/Bradley for BRT should be rejected.

Cole, Larry

From: Elizabeth Brenner-Leifer <ebrenner@rothwellfigg.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 2:34 PM
To: 'thomas.autry@montgomeryplanning.org'; Cole, Larry
Cc: 'citizenscommittee@villageofdrummond.com'
Subject: BRT 355/Wisconsin Ave.

Messrs. Cole and Autry,

Thank you for talking last night at the Concord Hill School.

I want to make sure that the Village of Drummond is on all of your mailing and emailing lists.

I have been on the Citizen's Committee for over two years, and the April 17, 2013 letter from Ms. Carrier to notify us about the public hearing on May 16, 2013 was the first letter we received about BRT in the time I've served.

Could you please make sure we are on your letter and email lists for all relevant Planning Board communications in the future?

Citizen's Committee
Village of Drummond
PO Box 70642
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Citizenscommittee@villageofdrummond.com

Also can you please let me know if the date for public comments will be extended?

Thank you and best regards,

R. Elizabeth Brenner-Leifer
Mayor
Village of Drummond

MCP-CTRACK

From: Marie Park <doublepark@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 11:10 AM
To: MCP-Chair; councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: Chong Park; Cindy Gibson; Ken Hartman
Subject: Petition to Extend Comment Period on BRT until June 7th
Attachments: winmail.dat

Please see the attached letter and signatures to extend the public comment period to June 7th. Please email my husband, Chong Park, if you have trouble opening the attachment. Thank you, Marie Park (parent of Kindergartner at Somerset Elementary School and 7th grader at Westland Middle School).

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Park, Chong" <Cpark@steptoe.com>
Subject: BRT Petition
Date: May 29, 2013 9:43:02 AM EDT
To: "'Marie Park (doublepark@verizon.net)'" <doublepark@verizon.net>

Chong S. Park
Partner
Cpark@steptoe.com<mailto:Cpark@steptoe.com>
Steptoe

+1 202 429 6275 direct
+1 202 429 3902 fax
Steptoe & Johnson LLP
1330 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
www.steptoe.com<http://www.steptoe.com/>

Dear Planning Board Chair Françoise Carrier and Chair of the Transportation Committee, Councilmember Roger Berliner:

We only recently learned about the County's plan for a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor for 355/Wisconsin Avenue. Our schools and neighborhoods are directly impacted by this plan yet we were unaware of the public hearing process, which is now closed. I am signing onto this letter because I believe the Planning Board should extend the May 30th deadline by 8 days to Friday, June 7th for e-mailed comments by the public. At a minimum, we believe this is required to ensure openness and transparency as the Planning Board and County Council moves forward on the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan.

Name	School (optional)	email address (required)
Diana Siman	Somerset	dmaxant@yahoo.com
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~~Josh Babcock~~		Jmbobcook@gmail.com

[redacted]

Eric Osberg	Stone Ridge School	eosberg@
Tina Coplan	[redacted] Chevy Chase	TLCOPLAN@
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Robert Menzi	Somerset	hotmail.com
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Laura Ginns	GINNSL@yahoo.com	Somerset/Drum
Ellie Globokar	Somerset	eglobokar@gmail.com
Ted Andrews	CCW	tteandrews@aol.com
Colin Warren	CCW.	cshop@OakAndApple.org

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~~Steve Seidel~~	~~stephen.seidel@verizon.net~~	CCS
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Terri Lukes	terri.lukes@gmail.com	NA
Celeste Jelkovich	cjlekovich@verizon.net	Citizen/taxpayer

BRT

May 28, 2013

Lloyd Guerci	CCW	LGJREG@hotmail.c
Alex Acosta	Somerset	alexandra.acosta@verizon.net
Thomas Stecher	CCW	rehcets@gmail.com
MORRIS PANNER	Somerset	mpanner@gmail.com

Cole, Larry

From: Daniel Wallace <daniel.wallace@gallaudet.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 2:48 PM
To: Cole, Larry
Subject: Re: BRT presentation to Burnt Mill citizens

Hi, Larry,

Thanks, I appreciate your consideration. We don't have a date for September, but I'll be in touch as soon as we have our schedule set.

Best regards,
Dan

On Wed, May 29, 2013 at 2:38 PM, Cole, Larry <larry.cole@montgomeryplanning.org> wrote:

Dan, I think we just have too crammed a schedule to fit a presentation in on June 10th. I think you said that you have quarterly meetings. If that's true and you'll be having a meeting in September, we can probably arrange to do a presentation then so that if your folks have comments or concerns, they can express them to the County Council as part of their public hearing, which should occur right after that.

If that works, give me a heads up as soon as you know your next meeting date. Thanks. – Larry

Lawrence Cole, P.E.

Master Planner/Highway Coordinator

Functional Planning & Policy Division, Multi-Modal Networks Unit

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring MD 20910

301-495-4528

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--
Dan Wallace
Assistant Director
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Washington, DC 20002-3695
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Fax 202-651-5489
email: daniel.wallace@gallaudet.edu

Cole, Larry

From: MCP-CTRACK on behalf of MCP-Chair
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:47 AM
To: Marie Park
Cc: Carrier, Francoise; Dolan, Mary; Cole, Larry
Subject: RE: Petition to Extend Comment Period on BRT until June 7th

Importance: High

Dear Ms. Park,

Due to the complexity of the draft Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, I am willing to grant your request to extend the deadline for written comments by one week, until June 7, 2013. I will be unable to grant any further extensions due to our deadline to get the plan to the Council. We look forward to seeing your written testimony and thank you for your interest in this important undertaking.

Françoise M. Carrier
Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board and Vice-Chair, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Phone 301-495-4605

From: Marie Park [mailto:doublepark@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 11:10 AM
To: MCP-Chair; councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: Chong Park; Cindy Gibson; Ken Hartman
Subject: Petition to Extend Comment Period on BRT until June 7th

Please see the attached letter and signatures to extend the public comment period to June 7th. Please email my husband, Chong Park, if you have trouble opening the attachment. Thank you, Marie Park (parent of Kindergartner at Somerset Elementary School and 7th grader at Westland Middle School).

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Park, Chong" <Cpark@steptoe.com>
Subject: BRT Petition
Date: May 29, 2013 9:43:02 AM EDT
To: "'Marie Park (doublepark@verizon.net)'" <doublepark@verizon.net>

Chong S. Park
Partner
Cpark@steptoe.com<mailto:Cpark@steptoe.com>
Steptoe

+1 202 429 6275 direct
+1 202 429 3902 fax

Steptoe & Johnson LLP
1330 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
www.steptoe.com<http://www.steptoe.com/>

Cole, Larry

From: Eileen Finnegan <finnegan20903@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:00 AM
To: Cole, Larry
Subject: Re: BRT public hearing record

Thanks Larry--
I did not realize how the "public hearing" file was kept. When I spoke with Tom, I had just been to the Chair's office to see the incoming on both the BRT and WOSG plans.
Eileen

From: "Cole, Larry" <larry.cole@montgomeryplanning.org>
To: "Eileen Finnegan (finnegan20903@yahoo.com)" <finnegan20903@yahoo.com>
Cc: "Autrey, Thomas" <thomas.autrey@montgomeryplanning.org>; "Anspacher, David" <david.anspacher@montgomeryplanning.org>; "Dolan, Mary" <mary.dolan@montgomeryplanning.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:50 AM
Subject: BRT public hearing record

Hi, Eileen

Tom Autrey told me that you asked yesterday about the public hearing record and specifically about e-mails and other written testimony that staff other than the Chair receive. I hold the official public record file in a binder at my desk that includes any e-mails. All the testimony that we've received as of last Friday (5/24) is included in the staff packet that we'll be posting later today. Anything that we receive up until the close of the record will be included in subsequent worksession memo(s). - Larry

Lawrence Cole, P.E.
Master Planner/Highway Coordinator
Functional Planning & Policy Division, Multi-Modal Networks Unit
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring MD 20910

301-495-4528
301-495-1302 (fax)
larry.cole@montgomeryplanning.org<mailto:larry.cole@mncppc-mc.org>
http://www.MontgomeryPlanning.org

MCP-CTRACK

From: Smirniotopoulos, James <james.smirnio@usuhs.edu>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:35 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Support Public/Rapid Transit

The DC metro area - especially Montgomery County - is in the top ten year after year for "worst traffic in the USA".

We should all work together to improve our road congestion and lower our ranking, so that we may "lose" this particular contest!

Public transportation provides many opportunities for complaints - and it won't fix everyone's problems all at once.

But a thoughtful approach - especially continued support and funding for the Purple Line - will go miles to improve our quality of life!

Kind regards,

JGS

--

P.S. Go Green! Please do not print this e-mail unless it is completely necessary.

James G. Smirniotopoulos, M.D.
President, USUHS Faculty Assembly, 2012-2013
Chief Editor, MedPix® - http://medpix.usuhs.edu/medpix
Program Leader, Diagnostics and Imaging - http://www.usuhs.mil/cnrm/leadership.html
Center for Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine
Professor of Radiology, Neurology, and Biomedical Informatics
Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
4301 Jones Bridge Road
Bethesda, MD 20814
Voice: 301.295.3145
FAX: 301-295-4165

"Success is not measured by who gets credit. Success is measured by getting things done." Connie Morella, former Congresswoman from Montgomery Cty, MD

"May we never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion." Dwight D. Eisenhower

MCP-CTRACK

From: MelaneKHoffmann@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:43 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Rapid Transit for the future of MoCo

Dear Chairman Carrier and Members of the Planning Board:

I'd like to add my voice to the thousands of others, neighbors in the grocery store, people I see at sports events, civic meetings, and school activities --- let's get serious about expanding rapid transit in Montgomery County. It is the ONLY way to get us out of traffic nightmares. Building more roads won't help -- just take a look at northern Virginia for a prime example -- they are wasting BILLIONS of dollars to dig themselves deeper into a car-driven mess.

We have a chance now, with new "lockbox" transportation funding, to make rapid transit work. We need visionary LEADERSHIP from the Planning Board on this issue, not tiny fixes here and there as a fig leaf. We need CCT built ALL THE WAY TO CLARKSBURG, we need expansion of Metro, we desperately need the PURPLE LINE, and we need express buses in the meantime while all that infrastructure is in the works.

Let's face reality: if we don't do something serious now, it will just get harder and harder to do. Let's build a comprehensive, workable transit system for the future in Montgomery County.

Sincerely,

Melane Kinney Hoffmann
23801 Peach Tree Road
Clarksburg, MD 20871
melanekhoffmann@aol.com

MCP-CTRACK

From: Alan L. Seifert <alanseifert@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:57 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Alan Seifert
4700 Hunt Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Tony Vernon <tonyvernon4@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:01 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Rapid Transit System

Hello,

I am very much in favor of the county investing in the Rapid Transit System. Our existing road infrastructure is simply incapable of handling the growth that is occuring in the county. Rockville, near where I live, is experiencing a construction boom that will overburden Rockville Pike. Giving people an affordable, more environmentally-friendly, option over cars will reduce congestion and make for more walkable neighborhoods. Rockville PIke is a snarled mess now even on the weekends. Without change, it will only get worse. Mass transit will ease that burden, and should be given priority over adding more lanes - something that never keeps up with development in our region. We have the worst commutes in the country already. Mass transit can ease that burden.

I am glad that the transportation and gas tax passed the General Assembly this year. The Purple Line and the Rapid Transit System will help our county become more livable, improving the commutes and also leisure travel for thousands. Instead of disruptive, polluting car traffic, mass transit can provide a higher-density solution to moving a lot of people around a dense area. We can become a model for suburban transit, if proper planning and funding is provided. Please support the Rapid Transit System, and other public transportation initiatives.

Best regards,
Tony Vernon
10005 Portland Rd
Silver Spring, MD 20901

MCP-CTRACK

From: Amy Fried, Ph.D. <amy.speechwriter@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:02 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: In support of Rapid Transit

Dear Montgomery County Planning Board Chair;

I am a Montgomery County resident writing in support of Rapid Transit for the county for all the reasons specified here:

http://www.smartergrowth.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/MoCo-RTS-How-to-testify-fact-sheet.pdf

However, I have a additional concern. I have a disabled relative who lives in Silver Spring. She is not able to drive, and would benefit greatly from expanded transit options, in order to get to her doctor appointments and other needs. She is trying to be as independent as possible, and hastening the development of the purple line, as well as more frequent bus routes, would help her greatly towards that goal. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Amy Fried
15-year North Bethesda resident

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jim Mercurio <jpm.4612@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:07 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: Nancy
Subject: Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan - 335/Wisconsin Corridor
Attachments: PB.ltr 053013.pdf

Chair Francoise Carrier

Attached is letter submitted on behalf of my wife and me providing our comments on the proposed Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan.

Please have the attachment distributed to the Planning Board members and appropriate members of the Planning Department.

If more information is needed for filing the attached letter, please advise me by reply email (mercurij@verizon.net), telephone at 301 351-3321 or mail addressed me at 4612 Hunt Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

Thank you.

James P. Mercurio

James P. Mercurio
Nancy C. Mercurio
4612 Hunt Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

May 30, 2013

SENT AS AN ATTACHMENT
TO AN EMAIL ADDRESSED TO:
mcp-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org

Hon. Francoise Carrier
Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Proposed Designation of Two of the Six Traffic Lanes on Wisconsin Avenue South of Bethesda Metro Station as Dedicated BRT Lanes

Dear Chair Carrier and Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

We live in Chevy Chase West, a community of nearly 500 households located on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue. After much study and thought, we have concluded that –

(1) the Planning Department has not demonstrated that designating two of the six traffic lanes on Wisconsin Avenue south of the Bethesda Metro Station as exclusive or dedicated BRT lanes would improve the overall traffic flow over that stretch of MD 355 and

(2) designation of two lanes of Wisconsin Avenue south of the Bethesda Metro Station is likely to have highly detrimental impacts on the residents of Chevy Chase West, as well as in close-by neighborhoods in the Town of Somerset, the Town of Drummond and the Village of Chevy Chase.

We thank you for the opportunity to present the reasons for our conclusions.

Dedicated BRT Lanes South of the Bethesda Metro Station

The hearing draft of the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan ("proposed plan"), on page 19, states "Guiding Principles" that the Planning Department presumably followed in making the recommendations contained in the proposed plan. With regard to "exclusive or dedicated bus lanes," the proposed plan draft states that

designating such lanes would be recommended "wherever there is sufficient forecast demand to support their use, to promote optimal transit speed in urban areas and surrounding suburban areas." Elaborating on that test on page 20 of the draft, the Planning Department explains that "the ridership used to determine when a dedicated bus lane is warranted can vary nationally," but it is "typically around 1,200 passengers per peak hour in the peak direction." The recommendations in the proposed plan nonetheless "are based on a lower threshold of 1,000 riders pphpd." And "[w]here forecast BRT ridership was less than the 1,000 pphpd threshold," the Planning Department then combined forecast BRT ridership "with forecast local bus ridership to identify corridor segments where dedicated lanes could improve bus travel for all transit users." The forecast year is identified as the year 2040.

In sum, the Planning Department's recommendations that traffic lanes be dedicated for BRT use rest largely, if not entirely, on forecasts that the combined ridership on BRT and local buses will exceed 1,000 pphpd in 2040. As for "optimal transit speed in urban and surrounding areas," the Department appears simply to assume, without supporting evidence, that on any stretch of road for which its 2040 forecast of BRT and local bus ridership exceeds 1,000 riders pphpd, "optimal transit speed" will be promoted. That assumption ignores the very real possibility, perhaps the likelihood, that BRT and local bus riders might meet that threshold on dedicated lanes cleared of trucks and automobiles for their use, while the traffic crowded into the lanes left for use by trucks and automobiles are more congested than before.

Under the proposed plan, dedicated BRT lanes would run approximately 20 miles along MD 355.[1] The focus of our concerns is the last two-mile stretch of that 20-mile route. The BRT and local bus riders pphpd in segments of those 20 miles vary depending upon which of the "Build" options is selected, but in segments of Wisconsin Avenue to the north -- between the Bethesda Metro Station and White Flint Metro Station -- the pphpd for ridership of BRT and local buses in 2040 is at least 1,700. In most segments on that stretch of Wisconsin Avenue, the pphpd exceeds 2,000, no matter which "Build" is selected.

By contrast, 2040 riderships forecast for BRT and local buses on Wisconsin Avenue south of the Bethesda Metro Station, which the Planning Department has measured in two road segments, are as follows:

(a) Between the Bethesda Metro Station and Bradley Boulevard (about half the distance between the Bethesda station and the District of Columbia line), Build 1 - 1,675 pphpd, Build 2 - 1,400 pphpd and Build 2A - 1,125 pphpd.

[1] MD 355 is variously named "Frederick Road" north of Rockville, "Rockville Pike" from Rockville south to a point just north of the Bethesda business district and "Wisconsin Avenue" south of that point and through the Bethesda business district to the Maryland-District of Columbia boundary line. Our concern relates entirely on portion of MD 355 where it is called "Wisconsin Avenue." We thus use that name generally to refer to MD 355 in this letter.

(b) Between Bradley Boulevard and the Friendship Heights Metro (on the District of Columbia line), Build 1 - 1,550 pphpd, Build 2 – 1,450 pphpd and Build 2A – 1,175 pphpd.[2]

Recommendations that two of Wisconsin Avenue's six traffic lanes on the portions of the road south of Bethesda Metro Station be dedicated BRT lanes has no sound basis in the hearing draft. Forecasts of the combined BRT and local bus ridership in 2040 – whatever the accuracy of such forecasts – tell us nothing about the traffic in the remaining four lanes. Overall traffic is not reduced by dedicating lanes to serve 1,500 BRT and local bus riders pphpd, if automobile traffic is not substantially reduced. In fact, it could simply force automobile traffic that now fills six traffic lanes into four lanes, thus adding to the very congestion that dedicated BRT lanes are supposed to address. But whether a significant number of county residents who today choose to drive their cars on a crowded Rockville Pike and Wisconsin Avenue, even though other means of public transportation are available, will patronize a Rapid Transit Buses in 2040 in any significant numbers is, at best, an open question. The proposed plan draft provides no basis for addressing that question, because it has no forecast of the 2040 automobile traffic (or for that matter, bicycle traffic) on Wisconsin Avenue south of the Bethesda Metro Station. It therefore has no sound basis to measure the impact of exclusive or dedicated BRT lanes on the overall traffic in that stretch of Wisconsin Avenue.

Another important aspect of its proposed plan that the Planning Department ignores is the number of cars and bikes that will be entering the dedicated right lane and impeding the BRTs and local buses from providing public transportation on a clear, dedicated lane. Eight streets in Chevy Chase West open onto Wisconsin Avenue. No way other than those eight streets exists for going out of or into the Chevy Chase West neighborhood by automobile. Thus, every morning, residents of Chevy Chase West drive out of their neighborhood and make turns onto Wisconsin Avenue during peak driving hours. At the corner of Hunt Avenue and Wisconsin, moreover, Concord Hill School operates a day school for approximately 100 children in kindergarten through third grade. Every morning, during peak hours, parents bring these children to the school in their cars, making turns from Wisconsin Avenue onto Hunt Avenue. After dropping their children off, they leave by making turns from Hunt onto Wisconsin.

Because of these exits by Chevy Chase West residents and the entrances and exits of Concord Hill parents, a dedicated lane on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue cannot provide an unimpeded thoroughfare for BRTs to speed their passengers from Bradley to Friendship Heights. In addition, drivers in the two lanes going south will also be tempted to cross over onto the dedicated BRT lane, if they are stopped in traffic or are not moving as quickly as they would like. The Planning Department has provided no

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[2] The proposed plan draft does not reveal whether the forecast ridership is BRT, local bus or a combination of both BRT and local bus ridership. That information seems important. If the 2040 forecast is that most of the riders in dedicated lanes south of Bethesda Metro Station are local bus riders, it would make little sense to send BRTs past the Bethesda Metro Station to carry the few BRT passengers forecast. This is especially the case here, where riders from Bethesda to Friendship Heights, and places in between, have both the Red Line Metro and regularly operating local buses and ride-on buses to serve them.

forecast of the frequency and total number of these and other possible encroachments on the dedicated lane during peak hours in in 2040, which could well reduce the number of 2040 BRT and local bus riders to a number below the Planning Department's threshold of 1,000 riders pphpd.

We know that the Planning Department wants to provide the county with a workable transit system. With regard to the last 2 miles of the 20-mile BRT route that the proposed plan recommends along MD 355, however, critical forecasts have not been presented. Without that information, we can have no confidence that running BRTs on Wisconsin Avenue past the Bethesda Metro Station and down to Friendship Heights would do anything to alleviate traffic congestion on that stretch of road. In fact, it could well make today's problems worse.

Detrimental Impacts of Dedicated Bus Rapid Transit Lanes

Representatives of Chevy Chase West Neighborhood Association have testified at the Planning Board hearing held on May 16, 2013 and sent letters to the Planning Board. In addition, individual members of our community have sent emails and letters to the Planning Board. Although we do not, in this letter, address the concerns about safety and access to our neighborhood that our neighbors have expressed, we certainly share those concerns, and we endorse their expression in the testimony given by Elaine Akst, co-chair of the Chevy Chase West Transportation Committee.

The forecasts that we deem needed before further proceeding on the proposed plan also bear on the likelihood that the injuries we and our neighbor have warned against will occur. As Ms. Akst summarized in her testimony –

> We believe restricting a curb lane to buses presents significant access and safety issues for our residents and guests. We expect more congestion in the remaining two lanes; difficulty in nosing into traffic to exit CCW; difficulty enforcing a bus-only lane; difficulty in cutting through traffic to make a left turn to northbound Wisconsin; and frustrated drivers seeking a shortcut through our neighborhood, especially in morning rush hour when our children are walking to Somerset Elementary school and students are being dropped off at Concord Hill school on Wisconsin.

The Planning Department summarizes its recommendations as based on, among other things, "corridors and treatments warranted by current zoning and related 2040 forecast base ridership that can be accomplished without major impacts on existing development." The impacts described by Ms. Akst are certainly major, and while the quote refers to "existing *development*," we believe that existing *neighborhoods* deserve no less protection against major impacts and that the burden lies with the Planning Department to present convincing evidence that we would have that protection under any traffic plan it proposes.

Conclusion

Continuing the long BRT route over MD 355 past the Bethesda Metro Station for two more miles to Friendship Heights offers little incremental benefit to the 79-mile BRT system the Planning Department has recommended, if it offers any benefit at all. The record as it now stands provide no reliable basis for concluding that any benefits would result. We urge that the BRT route proposed along MD 355 end at the Bethesda Metro Station and continue no farther.

Sincerely,

James P. Mercurio

Nancy C. Mercurio

MCP-CTRACK

From: richard mallen <rickdmallen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:20 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Comments on BRT Proposal
Attachments: Mallen BRT Comments.pdf

Please find attached my comments on the County's proposal for a BRT system.
Regards,
Rick Mallen

Comments of Richard D. Mallen
May 30, 2013

Dear Chair Carrier, President Navarro, and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of the Chevy Chase West neighborhood, which sits on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. My neighborhood has many virtues. For instance, it provides a safe environment for kids to walk, play, and bike; it has a strong sense of community; and it is close enough to DC to afford residents a reasonable commute via car, bicycle, or Metro.

Unfortunately, these virtues have been place in serious jeopardy by one aspect of the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan: the proposed use of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system on Wisconsin Avenue, between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. As explained below, implementing this aspect of the Plan will make traffic worse, not better, on Wisconsin Avenue; will endanger children, pedestrians, and bikers; and will degrade the quality of life and sense of neighborhood in affected areas. The Plan does not account for these harms, nor does it assess whether any alternatives to a BRT system would relieve congestion without endangering life or eroding neighborhoods. In light of these flaws, the County should reject the proposed BRT lanes between Bethesda and Friendship Heights, or, at a minimum, undertake a new analysis that more accurately assesses the impact of these lanes.

BRT Will Make Traffic Worse on Wisconsin Avenue

The Bethesda-Friendship Heights stretch of Wisconsin Avenue already strains under heavy traffic, even though vehicles have six lanes in which to navigate (three northbound and three southbound). During morning rush hour, for instance, southbound traffic is often backed up almost a mile from Western Avenue, and it can take 15 minutes or more to just to travel the short distance from Morgan Drive (where I live) to the D.C. border. Similar congestion occurs going northbound during evening rush hour.

The Plan will greatly exacerbate these problems by reducing the number of lanes by one-third, to four. It does not take a study to know that when the diameter of an already clogged artery is reduced by 33 percent, the patient's health will not improve. Here, the loss of two lanes will make a bad situation worse. Traffic could easily back up for miles, inflicting misery on rush-hour commuters who have no choice but to drive to and from work. Chevy Chase and Bethesda will become unattractive places to visit; residents will find it more difficult to perform simple tasks, such as shopping or picking up kids; area businesses will lose customers; and ambulances, fire fighters, and other first responders will struggle to reach those in need.

Perhaps the Plan is predicated on the assumption that many individuals who currently commute via car will switch to BRT once it is in place. This assumption is dubious at best. Individuals who prefer to use public transportation already have the option of taking the numerous Metro stations, located along the proposed BRT route, from White Flint, to NIH, to Bethesda and Friendship Heights. In other words, Metro already covers the very route that is under consideration for BRT. There is no reason to believe that the addition of a second, entirely redundant public transportation route to

Friendship Heights will cause drivers to abandon their cars when these same drivers did not find Metro to be an attractive option. Indeed, only a small minority of those commuting along the Wisconsin Avenue corridor work in Friendship Heights; if a Metro line to their ultimate destination farther downtown in the District has not been enough to induce them to abandon their cars, surely it defies common sense to think that a bus line that ends far short of their workplace will do so.

BRT Will Endanger Lives and Harm Neighborhoods

Although the benefit of this plan to the many Montgomery County citizens who live alongside the proposed new route is indiscernible, the almost inevitable harm is simple to envision. Those who have already chosen an environmentally sound alternative to driving – the many bike commuters who use Wisconsin Avenue – will find it impossible to use that thoroughfare as part of their route. The many children and teenagers who walk, bicycle, or scooter to and from schools located on or near Wisconsin Avenue between Bethesda and Friendship Heights will face great danger from the combination of high-speed buses and frustrated drivers struck in BRT-induced traffic. Changed traffic patterns resulting from BRT also may impede school bus and parent vehicle drop off to and pick-up from neighborhood schools.

Kids who use routes other than Wisconsin Avenue to walk or bicycle to school will not be exempt from these problems. That is because dedicated BRT lanes will make it impossible for drivers who live on the West side of Wisconsin Avenue to make left turns out of their neighborhoods. These motorists will have no choice but to drive to a limited number of side streets that have traffic lights, resulting in more traffic – and more danger – to neighborhood kids using those side streets.

At the same time, frustrated drivers commuting south on Wisconsin Avenue will increasingly use our neighborhood as a shortcut, turning west into our side streets and traveling south on Stratford Road for its approximately half-mile length, in the hopes of shaving a few minutes off their drive time. This is a phenomenon we already experience periodically, when Wisconsin Avenue backs up towards Bethesda. It is a harrowing experience, as our elementary-school age children walking to school seek to share the often unsidewalked streets with cars traveling much too fast for neighborhood roads with which they are unfamiliar.

The resulting concentration of traffic on a few side streets will make it more dangerous for anyone to walk, cycle, or play on or near these streets. Such dangers for our kids, combined with longer commutes for parents, will also harm quality of life in affected neighborhoods. It is hard to imagine a plan that would justify such a radical change in the character and safety of our neighborhood. It is even harder to accept that the County would consider inflicting these harms on its residents in order create a duplicative transit system that won't even serve County residents as well as the one that already exists.

The Plan Has a Number of Flaws

The Plan suffers from a number of flaws that create a bias in favor of BRT on the Bethesda-Friendship Heights route. A few examples are listed below:

- The Plan generally examines BRT on a countywide level, ignoring the impact on particular neighborhoods such as those between Bethesda and Friendship Heights.

- The Plan does not weigh the alleged benefits of BRT against the various harms it will cause, such as increased congestion where lanes are reduced from six to four and greater danger to neighborhood kids, pedestrians, and cyclists.

- The Plan does not assess the impact of BRT on the environment. For instance, if thousands of cars are forced to spend more time each day idling in rush-hour traffic, will the increased tailpipe emissions be greater than the reduction in such emissions resulting from persons using BRT instead of driving?

- The Plan proposes to eliminate the median on Wisconsin Avenue, but fails to examine the consequences of this step. For instance, northbound drivers currently are able to use cutouts in the median to make left turns between Dorset Ave. and Bradley Blvd. As a result, cars using these cutouts do not currently block northbound traffic. Will the proposed elimination of these cutouts under the Plan make traffic worse – *i.e.*, will left-turning cars cause backups on Wisconsin if the median is eliminated?

- The Plan fails to examine non-BRT approaches to determine if they would be more effective, safer, and less costly. For instance, much of the congestion on Wisconsin Avenue is currently caused by poorly timed traffic lights in Friendship Heights and the County's failure to enforce no-parking restrictions during rush hour. These problems could be fixed for a small fraction of the cost and effort of the BRT proposal.

For the foregoing reasons, the County should reject the proposed use of BRT between Bethesda and Friendship Heights, or at a minimum undertake an analysis that seriously examines the impact of BRT on affected neighborhoods.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard D. Mallen

Richard D. Mallen
4613 Morgan Drive
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Ted Glickman <tsgman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:46 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT on the MD355 Corridor

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT southward past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

As a former operations consultant to the MBTA in Boston, I also have to wonder whether the fixed and variable costs of adding a BRT system on the same route followed by the Red Line makes sense from a cost-benefit standpoint. Shouldn't the underground alternative of increasing the capacity of the Red Line by introducing additional cars be considered before investing in an above-ground alternative that would have a higher incremental cost and would undoubtedly be more disruptive?

Theodore S. Glickman, Ph.D.
Professor of Decision Sciences
George Washington University
Washington, DC 20052
(202) 994-4791

MCP-CTRACK

From: Lauren Fernandez <laurenfernandez@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:55 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: MD355 BRT - Concerned resident of CCW

TO: MCP-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Lauren Fernandez
4709 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Susannah Budington <susannahbudington@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:16 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Opposition to BRT south of Bradley Blvd

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,
> >
> > I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the
> Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT
> will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given
> adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no
> benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their
> own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place
> for a pilot project or experiment.
> >
> > MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our
> internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real
> implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down
> a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic. In fact, it will be downright impossible to exit our neighborhood turning left during rush hour without the curb lane.
> >
> > It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to
> rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce
> pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median
> transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian
> fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving
> buses in congested streets.
> >
> > We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting
> through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset
> Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be
> watching for small children.
> >
> > From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively
> two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical
> buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.
> >
> > In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery
> County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no
> additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro
> or a different bus at Friendship Heights.
> >
> > Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of
> challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local
> conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and
> Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here
> until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to
> offset the loss of a car lane.
> >
> > Sincerely,

Susannah and Jon Budington
4620 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
> >

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jeffrey L Blackman <jlb@debruceblackman.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:31 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Proposed BRT an especially bad idea south of Bethesda Metro

Dear Chairman Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I live in Chevy Chase West and am distressed at what we learned at the recent meeting regarding the proposed BRT corridor adjacent to our neighborhood. This clearly has not been given sufficient consideration by people knowledgeable about traffic, bike, and foot patterns in and around our neighborhood.

Wisconsin Avenue is our only point of access into and out of our neighborhood. It is already extremely difficult to turn left onto Northbound Wisconsin, particularly for our younger drivers, and is usually possible only by nosing forward and pausing briefly in the median. How are we supposed to turn left onto Northbound Wisconsin across a bus lane, with no median?

And what happens to traffic on Wisconsin in Friendship Heights, where the third lane is effectively a kiss-and-ride and delivery lane for people, many of them convalescent, visiting the high rises filled with medical offices? Traffic is already a mess there when it must squeeze down to two lanes. Will the No Parking rules there finally be enforced strictly -- something that would require a full-time traffic officer to enforce? Or will the buses continue to need to maneuver around the parked vehicles, negating the "rapid" in rapid transit?

As it is, very few of us use the bus service when it is a short walk to the Friendship Heights Metro, from which one may catch the subway or a D.C. bus. There's little point in taking the bus a short hop and then to transfer to another bus. There is no apparent benefit to our neighborhood of having a lane dedicated to buses speeding down Wisconsin when so few of us who live here use the existing bus service. Put the bus service in a median and even fewer will use it. It's nearly impossible to cross Wisconsin on foot in the stretch between Bradley and Dorset Avenue. It makes no sense to run this lane any further south than the Bethesda Metro station.

The dedicated bus lane will just crowd out existing drivers, and what will happen is that a few of them will cut into our neighborhood and try to speed through to beat the jams (something that already happens on occasion). With two elementary schools in our neighborhood, one preschool in Norwood Park, and an active community of bikers and dog-walkers heading toward the Capital Crescent Trail, that is a danger we do not want.

So we're being asked to make sacrifices for a service that none of use and which will make our neighborhood less safe.

Thanks. Let us know whom we can vote against when the opportunity arises. It's an issue our community won't forget and will vote on.

Sincerely,

--Jeff Blackman--

Hunt Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jessica Krash <jkrash@gwu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:38 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT on MD 355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights

To Whom it May Concern - I live on Langdrum Lane. My only exit from the neighborhood is to Wisconsin Ave in the area proposed for the rapid transit bus. It's VERY IMPORTANT that we have that median area to wait when making a left turn. If you need extra land, please take it from the country club. I think you could make a bike "path" (lane?) along the country club side there as well. Thank you, -- Jessica Krash, Langdrum Lane

MCP-CTRACK

From: peterldean@gmail.com on behalf of Peter Dean <GM@GreatLandlo
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:49 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Yes!

Please support a bold Bus Rapid Transit plan. We need a much more robust public transit system in our county and region. While I support the purple line I would trade it for a BRT line instead for that corridor plus a build out of the whole BRT plan.

The one thinkg I notice when I look at the plan is there is no "outer beltway" of transit. One obvious piece would be on the ICC but I'm sure that more thought would produce more useful ideas and plans.

--
Peter Dean
Montgomery County resident and small business owner.
301-434-8888 W
240-603-4321 C

MCP-CTRACK

From: laura hambleton <hambleton.laura@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 1:58 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Corridor down 355/Wisconsin Ave, Rockville to Fndship Hts

Planning Board,

I live on Hunt Avenue in Chevy Chase West, a community of nearly 500 single family homes off of Wisconsin Avenue, south of Bradley Blvd. This is the second time I am writing to the board about plans to run a rapid bus transit down Wisconsin/355 from Rockville to Friendship Hts.

I attended the meeting the other night with Larry Cole at the Concord Hill school. I am very grateful Mr. Cole took the time to talk with the community. He covered a lot of ground so to speak.

The explanation of the Planning Board's BRT plan, however, raises more questions and concerns and the premise of the plan don't seem be based on a clear understanding of this particular corridor, especially from NIH to Friendship Hts.

I very much live in this community. I have three children who have or are attending Somerset Elementary School, Westland Middle School and Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. My family and I use the Bethesda Pool, Norwood Park, the community centers in Bethesda and Friendship Heights. We ride public buses and take the metro. We bike and walk to Bethesda, Friendship Hts and the DC area around Chevy Chase Circle.

In fact when we were looking to buy a home we drew a radius around metro stops in Maryland and Virginia and targeted just those neighborhoods. As a result of our, we owned one car until relatively recently.

I like public transportation. We bought a house in CCW as much for the access to good public transportation as good public schools.

I also am well aware the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area is going through a profound change, from White Flint to NIH and the Naval Hospital to downtown Bethesda. I am also aware that these changes possibly will bring more jobs and more people to the region. I also appreciate how plans on paper and models can be manipulated and spun to fit a scenario that may or may not happen.

The depot in Silver Spring is a case in point.

But before we start dreaming of spending billions of dollars -- even if that money not be spent for years -- we should better what infrastructure we have and make it work as it was originally planned.

What about a pilot project whereby Metro regularly runs eight cars every three minutes during rush hour? What about more frequent local buses down Wisconsin to ferry commuters to Metro stops? As it is now, Bus 34 runs twice an hour.

And unlike those proposed BRT buses, Bus 34 actually stops in my neighborhood,

More pointedly, the BRT as proposed is just shipping commuters down a corridor to another metro stop. Perhaps DC will put in a BRT as well, but perhaps not.

And here is what is unique about CCW: MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic. The residents, schools and businesses along this corridor would see very little benefit to these BRT buses.

It will remain more practical for most of us in CCW to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. A BRT system will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School or the Concord Hill School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

The BRT would make Bethesda less livable for residents who need to get to local schools, shops and other places along and around Wisconsin Ave. You will be depriving local residents (and busineses) of parking near Wisconsin stores, by creating a special BRT lane, which will make traffic patterns much more complex for everyone but distant commuters on the BRT. I bike many places in Bethesda, but as with many.neighborhood residents, I also drive a school carpool and do larger errands that require a car. Our businesses do not have enough street parking as it is. And our public parking facilities, often less convenient for neighborhood shopping, fill up at popular times. New developments in Montgomery County attempt to mimic the feel of older, warm neighborhood areas by putting parking right in front of stores (Silver Spring, Kentlands, Rockville). Why would you be taking that feel away from a neighborhood that now has them?

One complication that I believe will make traffic worse, and more dangerous for all drivers, is the dedicated BRT and other bus line in what is now the turn lane for those who live in Chevy Chase West, Somerset and Chevy Chase Village. Having to cross a bus lane to turn into Chevy Chase West will be dangerous with the promised BRT every 3 minutes at rush hour, and will also cause tremendous backups on Wisconsin when drivers needing to turn slow or stop in a non-bus travel lane to wait for a clear and safe turning opportunity. This is a large public school neighborhood and we have many young drivers who use Wisconsin to get to BCC high school and then drive to after school sports and events; these BRT lanes will be especially dangerous for them. As significant, though, will be the difficulty of going North on Wisconsin from the deadend streets of Chevy Chase West.

Your planners recently explained that drivers emerging from our neighborhood, which only has Wisconsin as an egress, will not in fact be able to go north once the BRT lanes are in. They will have to drive south to Dorset Ave and make a u-turn there if we want to go North. That will cause a regular and huge backup at the Dorset light on Wisconsin, and that will in turn block one if the two non-BRT lanes for southbound traffic. And since the town of Somerset controls its roads, the community may very well limit access to Dorset and Cumberland Avenues.

This is not just a detail that can be worked out in the future with red light tinkering. And It will encourage dangerous driving at that light by young drivers, rushing to get to BCC high school in the morning, and others as well. It will also make an already dangerous intersection for young children who must cross there to get to Somerset ES or to the pre-schools in our area that much worse.

Finally, I have serious environmental concerns. The "green mile" has long been seen as a protected (from development) stretch of Wisconsin, an environmentally beneficial area to the growing urbanization of the region. If car traffic is the worry, Metro's red line, and better, already existing natural-gas powered buses are a more environmentally protective way to do it. The BRT will inevitable force a widening of Wisconsin--at a minimum 5 feet on either side--taking a leafy, old canopy tree area. It will also bring traffic, and bus exhaust that much closer to walkers, bikers and residents. If you have never walked up Wisconsin in the summer I suggest you try it; when you hit the green mile you can feel the temperature drop and the air grow sweeter.

Recently PEPCO took down many trees in our area. The negative effects during the summer months were immediately apparent. Some streets went from a shady and cool(er) to sunny and baking. It was stunningly noticeable. In this age of climate change concerns, stressing the canopy trees we have, or getting rid of them, is wrongheaded. Promises of replacement trees is not a solution; any new trees will be small and take 15-20 years to provide anything near what we have now. BRT is supposed to be an environmentally sensitive form of public transport. It is clearly less environmentally sensitive that encouraging greater use of Metro. In addition, while BRT lanes may be great in outer suburbs or new communities, where its design can be incorporated or accommodated easily, trying to shoehorn BRT lanes into the Bethesda-Friendship corridor is environmentally insensitive.

Again, thank you for considering my letter.

Sincerely,
Laura Hambleton
4616 Hunt Ave
Chevy Chase

MCP-CTRACK

From: Sarah Lindsey Holmes <zarajewelry@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 2:02 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Concerns

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please

remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Sarah Lindsey Holmes
4712 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Dina Kallay <dina.kallay@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 2:56 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT System - A very bad idea

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Dina Kallay
4833 Langdrum Lane
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Naomi Spinrad <nspinrad68@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 3:06 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, for the record

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West and I believe the County Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan as currently envisioned does not adequately and appropriately consider the impact of bus rapid transit on this segment of Wisconsin Avenue/MD355 (Bradley-Friendship Heights), neglects current and near future transit needs, and relies on unrealistic projections of ridership.

Wisconsin Avenue is the only way for vehicles to enter and leave CCW, as all our neighborhood streets are dead ends. Right now it can take a couple of minutes to make turns in or out of the community; with the loss of the curb lane, and likely increased backups in the center and left lane if the BRT does not attract riders, it will become even more difficult to exit. This will be exacerbated by buses bearing down every 2-3 minutes, making nosing out into that lane for exits risky.

The vast majority of our children walk to Somerset Elementary School. During backups on Wisconsin Avenue, drivers have often thought they could cut over and head south through CCW to avoid traffic. Stratford Road, parallel to Wisconsin, is the main route to the school, and not all its blocks have sidewalks. How frustrated drivers might impact the safety of CCW children is another major concern.

The BRT envisioned in this proposed plan will not even be realistically accessible for most of us. It will still make more sense to walk to Friendship Heights for the Metro in either direction or a bus down into DC, than to walk to Bradley to catch the BRT, or to wait 15 or 20 minutes in rush hour for the single bus that currently serves the four stops between Grafton and Nottingham.

It is because of the infrequent bus service, and, on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, the bus stops that are rough dirt patches without striped or controlled crosswalks, that most of us rely on our cars or walking to go north and south. Because of these factors, ridership on this stretch of Wisconsin is severely constrained. We want to see our transit options improved, and have been working toward that with SHA and Montgomery County. This plan undercuts those efforts.

Phase 2 of the plan would give us back the curb lane but take the median and the two closest lanes for BRT. It is unclear how this would integrate with local bus service and the planned SHA sidewalk and local bus stops on the east side of Wisconsin. Even more important, loss of the median would mean closing the median gaps to vehicles, requiring additional road miles and u-turns to get in and out of CCW.

CCW has been a vigorous defender of the median for other reasons. It is part of the tree canopy, and its trees and other plantings help to clean the air and reduce traffic noise for nearby residents.

Phase 1 of this plan should include a BRT transit way only down to the Bethesda Metro stop, as originally envisioned. Ridership data as well as current transit realities do not support a rush to take the curb lane for buses only further sout than that. Please eliminate any consideration of the median south of Bradley as a transit way. Please include wording t make development of the system dependent on quantifiable results of a small number of pilot studies, so that it can b determined how accurate the underlying models and predictions are before billions of dollars are spent, and roads an neighborhoods are disrupted.

I understand that this plan is "aspirational," and I think Mr. Cole and his team have done what they were asked to do, and have defended it well in the face of a great deal of criticism. But I believe it is up to members of the Planning Board to ensure that this plan adequately protects current residents and their property, and includes safeguards to prevent aspirations from becoming standards if the data doesn't support that.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Naomi Spinrad
4810 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jean Bernard <dranreb@starpower.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 3:43 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: The Proposed BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and Members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact of BRT between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that not only will not benefit from a BRT system, but also will face more danger navigating their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all of our internal streets are dead ends.
Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Having buses speed down a BRT curb lane is not conducive to cars trying to merge into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transit way that riders must access on foot, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses on congested streets.

My husband currently takes the Ride-On bus each day to the Friendship Heights Metro stop and comes home on the bus in the evenings.
The evening bus stops on the east (northbound) side of 355, and he must cross 355 to our street on the west (southbound) side of 355. I think it would be educational for all of the members of the planning board to do what he does. Have them all ride to the northbound Chevy Chase Boulevard stop, walk out onto a frequently muddy (and in the winter, icy) grassy area, and then wait for a break in the six lanes of north- and southbound traffic to cross the street. And have them do it in the pouring rain after dark!
Before anyone even proposes a BRT plan, you should have some consideration for the people who live here. How about crosswalks at the bus stops and streetlights that don't go out every month or two?

I believe even greater numbers of frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. Many drivers who think there must be an exit to Little Falls Parkway already speed through our neighborhood in the morning, and they do not watch for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park in that block to drop off and pick up patients at the 5530 Wisconsin Avenue medical building. Your plan does not acknowledge this problem.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line Metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.
And what is the point of duplicating above ground a service that already exists underground? If you think more people will use the BRT, you are mistaken.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place and this plan does not consider local conditions adequately. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part

of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Jean B. Bernard
4609 Chevy Chase Boulevard
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: bettyduskin@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 3:59 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Plan

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West since 1966. I concur with the reservations voiced by my neighbors in letters sent to you regarding the BRT. Not only does it not offer any advantages to those of us who live here, but it also poses numerous hazards.

A bit of history may be appropriate. I understand that the BRT was first mentioned in the County Plan in the 1950's. The Metro red line was installed in the 1980's. Now that the red line in in place covering exactly the route proposed for the BRT, I fail to understand why the BRT remains in consideration. It is expensive and its benefits are few, given that there is a county bus line that already operates along rt. 355. Has a cost/benefit study been made? If so, by whom? Is it available to all interested parties? If it has not been done, it should be. I understand that not all relevant factors can be quantified, but partial compensation for this failing can be made by providing a detailed list of the factors not included in the analysis. This will help to judge the validity of the cost/benefit results.

Moreover, I appreciate the additions to the County tax base provided by the continuing development (over-development?) of Friendship Heights and Bethesda, among other communities. I fail to understand, however, why this new revenue is to be squandered on a bus system that is not needed. I also wonder who the actors are who are prominent in supporting the BRT plan. If they are affiliated with commercial interests, then why should my tax dollars be used for this purpose?

I am getting more annoyed as I write, so I will stop in the hope that enough has been said to merit reconsideration of the BRT plan.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth Duskin
4805 Chevy Chase Blvd.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: kerri davis <daviskerri2001@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 4:04 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Disapproval for Proposed BRT Between Bethesda and Friendship Heights

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Kerri Davis
4616 Chevy Chase Blvd
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Barron, Jr., John H. C. <JBarron@duanemorris.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 4:15 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and Members of the Planning Board:

We have been residents of Chevy Chase West for 42 years. We are writing to express our concerns about the impact the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) will have on the corridor between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. This verdant area along Route 355 is commonly known as The Green Mile. We are a neighborhood that supports mass transit and "green" initiatives. Thus, many of our residents walk to either the Bethesda or Friendship Heights Metro Stations. Some take the Ride-On bus that already has several stops in our neighborhood along Route 355. We even have a few hardy souls who bike to work downtown using the Capital Crescent Trail which begins in Norwood Park in our neighborhood.

The existing walkway along the west side of Route 355 serves as a major north-south corridor for pedestrians between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. The walkway is also utilized my innumerable neighbors for exercise and recreation.

As traffic along the current six lanes of Route 355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights already is heavy, especially during the morning and evening commuting hours, the ability of our residents to pull into the "bullnoses" installed at several of our intersections and come to a full stop while turning left when coming north is an important public safety feature. The median is also critical to pedestrians exiting the Ride-On bus and needing to walk across Route 355.

We are not in favor of anything that would reduce the number of traffic lanes for cars and trucks, eliminate the bullnoses, or eliminate the median. We have already been affected by the removal of many of the mature trees along the east side of Route 355 thus altering the canopy that has been a hallmark of this corridor for generations. Simply put, we believe that these changes will significantly increase the likelihood of accidents and injuries to persons trying to cross Route 355 in our neighborhood. The streets in our neighborhood all end at Norwood Park or Little Falls Park so we have no alternative but to enter and exit off of Route 355.

The proposal to widen Route 355 is, in our view, unnecessary and will only serve to make crossing it on foot or on bike even more dangerous. If widening is to be effected, we believe that it should all be done on the east side of Route 355 by taking land from the Chevy Chase Club. This would be much less intrusive and likely cost less than acquiring land from so many developed homes.

We are a neighborhood that is not against innovation. Thus, our community already has cooperated with the Planning Board, the State Highway Administration and the Chevy Chase Club to permit installation of an entrance to the Club on the east side of the intersection of Route 355 and Norwood Drive to permit heavy trucks to access the Club grounds. Mixing heavy truck traffic into the existing traffic flow in this congested section of Route 355 may further erode pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular safety.

We also care about the small businesses in Bethesda, many of which our neighbors frequent. Parking is already heavily restricted on Route 355 in Bethesda and is now almost as costly as the District. Installation of

the BRT may cause the loss of these valuable short-term parking spaces that are critical to the viability of our small businesses. For that reason as well, we urge you to reconsider this project in the Bethesda portion of Route 355.

We understand that the Board and the County have a legitimate interest in providing a safe, environmental-friendly, fast and cost effective means of transportation. It already exists in the form of the Metro System. Metro should be expanded and our citizens should be encouraged to ride that transit system. With such expansion, the Metro System should have ample capacity for moving the greatest number of people with the least amount of disruption at the most economical cost.

For all of the above reasons—and many others not articulated here in the interest f brevity—we respectfully request that the Board reconsider the BRT project and, at a minimum, not change the traffic pattern, road width, medians and bullnoses along our portion of Route 355.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

John Barron
Donna Barron
4621 Chevy Chase Boulevard
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Lucretia Marmon <lucretiamarmon@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 4:27 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: High-Speed buses on WiscI am on a hiking trip and have only my cell phone on which to express my views on this matter. I oppose this development foe many reasons. Firstly, we havea metro stop in Friendship Heights and Bethesda. Local buses adequately s...

MCP-CTRACK

From: Ruthann Bates <ruthannbates@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 4:43 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Proposed BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment. It is simply too narrow to have high-speed, or even at-speed (35 mph) buses taking up precious lanes.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; ALL our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic, plus we believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid Wisconsin Ave. traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights. I and most of my neighbors, walk to Metro rather than relying on bus service, so the BRT would not benefit us and would cause multiple problems as enumerated above.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.
Sincerely,

Ruthann Bates
4631 Hunt Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-654-2358

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jean Cavanaugh <jeancavanaugh@fastmail.fm>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:03 PM
To: MCP-CR
Subject: BRT: Not for Route 29 south of White Oak

Dear Madame Chair,

First of all, I am in favor of improved public transit. However, it must be implemented carefully and after careful analysis, which I don't believe has been done specifically on the Route 29 route south of White Oak. Here are my concerns.

1. The Route 29 corridor is cited as one of the two priority routes, in spite of the fact that four of the other routes have been master planned for years, but never implemented. **Citizens have little faith** that a "world class" useful BRT will be built after the densities proposed for White Oak are approved.

2. BRT would be fine from the Howard County border to White Oak, but then **loop it down Lockwood and return it to Route 29 north** again.

3. **Do not bypass the standard analysis for transit projects.** Please ask MoCoDOT to do a **thorough analysis** of transportation uses between White Oak and SS Metro. How many vehicles are heading from northern neighborhoods (ie Burtonsville and Howard County) to the beltway? How many from local neighborhoods to Metro parking garages? How many would ride the BRT?

4. **Review the results of previous studies** that have ruled out BRT on Colesville Rd because of the many difficult challenges including the geometry of the Four Corners intersection which MTA says they are not changing, the location of a high school with lots of pedestrian traffic, and the many side streets that serve the residents of those neighborhoods - they need to get into and out of their neighborhoods during rush hour.

5. **What other ways can the county reduce vehicular traffic?** Increase local buses between White Oak and SS Metro. People now drive that distance because the buses are irregular and unreliable. The county may not be able to influence WMATA, but it has total control over Ride On service.

6. **Residents** from Route 29/Colesville Rd neighborhoods between White Oak and downtown SS should be intimately involved in any planning for this route **if** it moves forward. These neighborhoods will be severely impacted by the BRT but will have no benefits.

7. If the Rt 29 BRT route south of White Oak moves forward, look at **best practices** from other communities in and outside the U.S. for **maintaining integrity of local shopping areas serving local neighborhoods**. Do not destroy the Four Corners shopping district and walkable community it facilitates. It will cause more people to get into their cars to run basic errands.

Jean Cavanaugh
9207 Worth Ave
Silver Spring, MD 20901
--
Jean Cavanaugh
jeancavanaugh@fastmail.fm

MCP-CTRACK

From: Vikki Wachino <vwachino@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:09 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: Daniel Byman
Subject: Strong concerns about the BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Although I agree that public transit solutions are an importnat part of sustainable development in Montgomery County, planners have not given any consideration to local communities that will face significantly more danger traveling by car or foot in our community. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights, which already faces significant safety challenges, is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane pose further risks to cars nosing out into traffic. In addition, we believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving bus in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Park Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

There also seems to be no recognition in the plan that the existing grassy median between Bradley Blvd. and Dorset Ave. is not simply a pretty but discretionary amenity, but rather serves as a vital center turn lane for cars turning left in and out of Chevy Chase West. I ask that you each please drive to our neighborhood from DC during rush hour and turn left from MD355 North onto Hunt Ave. or Langdrum Lane, then turn right onto Stratford Rd., then right onto my street, Chevy Chase Blvd. and make a left back onto MD355 North. Now imagine attempting to access my neighborhood with BRT lanes down the median.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Your estimates indicate that approximately 1,500 people per hour during peak hours will pass through the Friendship Heights Metro Station from BRT. This stationâ€™s facilities are woefully inadequate to handle this surge in riders. The station has no â€œkiss-n-ride,â€ no parking garage, and no room for expansion. It seems likely that BRT buses will displace other buses from the limited spots in the bus station and I doubt your ridership estimates account for displacement of other bus routes. The Bethesda Metro station, slated for a $10M makeover, is much better equipped to serve as the connection between BRT and the Red Line.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.
Vikki Wachino

MCP-CTRACK

From: tobie bernstein <tobiebernstein1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:16 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Bus Rapit Transit proposals

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West. I am very concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights.

Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment. MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT is an effective and feasible approach.

Sincerely,

Tobie Bernstein
4809 Morgan Drive
Chevy Chase, MD

MCP-CTRACK

From: Nancy Abeles <thinkeyedeas@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:19 PM
To: MCP-Chair; MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Comments

Dear Madam Chair or Associate,

Nancy Abeles again, from Bethesda Crest Community on Wisconsin Avenue near NIH and Navy Med.

Thank you for acknowledging receipt of my prior testimony comments. I'd like to add a quick comment tied to one of my main points:

From my BRAC experience, I agree with recent Chevy Chase community feedback that it makes more sense to first determine what BRT implementation treatment works best for each segment of close-in 355, from immediately south of the Beltway onward. These segments are far more complex than remote or less established areas. Rather than waste time and taxpayer money by going foward on the basis of overall concept, as SHA did with BRAC, first define what's actually safe, physically feasible, and acceptable to communities after feasibility studies and outreach.

Communities in our stretch unfairly have had to spend years expending personal time and money to make up for miscalculations, wrong assumptions and outright mistakes for BRAC construction. Though we agree with the need for road changes, this unfair imposition did not promote "buy in" for conceptual designs, to say the least. I'd hate to see the same outcome all up and down "close-in" 355 for BRT.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Most sincerely,
Nancy Abeles

PS
All rumors of conflict-of-interest concerning professional profit from promoting BRT should be looked into. There is one major one floating around put forward online by a Washington Post reporter.

MCP-CTRACK

From: Daniel Byman <dlb32@georgetown.edu>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:34 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: 'Vikki Wachino'
Subject: Concerns about the BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and Members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Although I agree that public transit solutions are an important part of sustainable development in Montgomery County, planners have not given any consideration to local communities that will face significantly more danger traveling by car or foot in our community. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights, which already faces significant safety challenges, is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane pose further risks to cars nosing out into traffic. In addition, we believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving bus in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Park Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

There also seems to be no recognition in the plan that the existing grassy median between Bradley Blvd. and Dorset Ave. is not simply a pretty but discretionary amenity, but rather serves as a vital center turn lane for cars turning left in and out of Chevy Chase West – and there is no street with a stoplight as an alternative. I ask that you each please drive to our neighborhood from DC during rush hour and turn left from MD355 North onto Hunt Ave. or Langdrum Lane, then turn right onto Stratford Rd., then right onto my street, Chevy Chase Blvd. and make a left back onto MD355 North. Now imagine attempting to access my neighborhood with BRT lanes down the median.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different

bus at Friendship Heights.

Your estimates indicate that approximately 1,500 people per hour during peak hours will pass through the Friendship Heights Metro Station from BRT. It seems likely that BRT buses will displace other buses from the limited spots in the bus station and I doubt your ridership estimates account for displacement of other bus routes. The Bethesda Metro station, slated for a $10M makeover, is much better equipped to serve as the connection between BRT and the Red Line.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Daniel Byman

MCP-CTRACK

From: Denise Gershowitz <DGershowitz@concordhill.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:34 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and Members of the Planning Board:

Concord Hill School is a coeducational school for children in preschool through third grade founded in 1965. Recently, CHS had the opportunity to host a presentation from the Planning Department to learn more about the proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) network and draft Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. The MD 355 South Corridor is one of the corridors under evaluation, and CHS is located at 6050 Wisconsin Avenue in Chevy Chase, Maryland with frontage directly on Route 355 (our access is from Hunt Avenue). Our understanding is that under the current draft plan, the MD 355 South Corridor is proposed for curb lane transitway for Phase 1 and two-lane median transitway for Phase 2 for the segment from Bradley Boulevard to Western Avenue.

The Planning Department emphasized that the proposed system is at a very high level of planning at this stage and that many design solutions to potential problems will be addressed later. We want to make sure that if and when the system moves forward with further planning, design, and implementation, the County takes into consideration the following concerns:

Safety. Enhanced mobility that might be achieved by the BRT system should not come at the expense of safety. The BRT system should be designed and constructed to ensure the utmost degree of safety for all turn movements and crossings for pedestrians, vehicles, and bicycles entering and existing the School.

Accessibility. The system should be designed to preserve all existing turn movements for vehicles entering and existing the School and should preserve, if not enhance, stacking lanes to access the School. Obviously, any construction activity should be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible to minimize disruption to property owners along the corridor.

Property impacts. Our understanding is that 120-122 feet of right of way is proposed for the segment from Bradley Boulevard to Western Avenue and additional right of way may be required potentially to achieve that width. Space along the entire 355 corridor is very constrained. The CHS building, fencing, and playground are located in very close proximity to Wisconsin Avenue currently. Any additional taking, no matter how modest, could significantly impact the use and functionality of the School property. CHS strongly discourages any additional right of way acquisition.

Thank you for including these comments in the public record for the draft Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan.

Very Truly Yours,

Denise Gershowitz
Director
Concord Hill School

cc: Councilmember Roger Berliner
Ken Hartman, Bethesda Regional Services Center

Denise Gershowitz

Director
Concord Hill School
www.concordhill.org

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jane Dealy <jdthree@mac.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 5:54 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Jane Dealy
4800 Chevy Chase Blvd.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Malini Jadeja <malinijadeja@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 6:55 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Please do not have the BRT ruin our green mile between Bethesda and Friendship Heights!

There is NO reason to duplicate what the metro should be doing already. Increase the metro capacity and efficiency!
Thank you!
Malini Jadeja

MCP-CTRACK

From: nlb_5526@verizon.net
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:23 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Opposed to BRT

I am writing to express my opposition to building the BRT on the Wisconsin Ave corridor. It would duplicate the red line that runs from Friendship Heights and present increased danger to school children that have to cross that road. It would also cause increased car traffic on the road since the lanes for cars to travel on would be reduced. I also understand that we would lose the green median and people in local neighborhoods would be blocked from left turns at rush hour.

Nancy Batson
5526 Uppingham St.
Chevy Chase, MD

MCP-CTRACK

From: Lllong1@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:29 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: lllong1@aol.com
Subject: The 355/Wisconsin Avenue BRT Corridor

I strongly oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave. corridor because of the large number of young students who walk and bike to school on this corridor. This would be a health hazard and a danger to all who live or walk to school on this corridor! I adopt the Chevy Chase West neighborhood association position that BRT should stop at Bethesda Metro.

Sincerely,
Laura Long
4914 Essex Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: RFurcolo <RFurcolo@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:49 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Brt

Our family is against the BRT.

The Furcolo Family
4803 Grantham Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Sent from my iPhone

:P-CTRACK

om: Elizabeth Hurwit <ehurwit@verizon.net>
ent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 8:08 PM
o: MCP-Chair
:c: Mark Muro
Subject: Master Plan for BRT

Dear Chairman and Planning Board Members,

I write on behalf of my entire family to oppose the inclusion of the entire 355/Wisconsin Corridor in the Master Plan for BRT. We have adopted the Chevy Chase West neighborhood association position that at the very least, BRT should stop at the Bethesda Metro.

Although we are generally fans of mass transit and are concerned about traffic levels in our region, we believe that implementing this plan will create more problems than it will solve. We also believe it would be an unimaginably short-sighted and oddly ecologically contrary decision to destroy the Green Mile by cutting down hundreds of trees, perhaps getting rid of the median, widening Wisconsin Avenue, choking cars into two lanes in each direction, and duplicating a transit corridor that already exists underground in the form of the Metro--all for the sake of an unsuccessful attempt to move traffic along. It won't work. There will always be too many cars for our roads. And there is a better solution, namely, putting money into increasing Metro cars and station access as well as more frequent trips by the No. 34 Bus and more bus stops tied to crosswalks and perhaps a traffic light for pedestrians attempting to cross Wisconsin. We would be far better off making it easier for people to use existing mass transit.

The Master Plan sacrifices not only the beauty and lovely feel of the Green Mile, it also sacrifices safety. Residents will not be able to safely execute a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue. Residents will have difficulty merging right onto Wisconsin with BRT buses traveling 35 miles per hour on the curb lane in 2-3 minutes intervals (rush hour frequency) during BRT peak periods (6-10 a.m. and 3-7 p.m.). And, most important, it endangers pedestrians who will have to contend with two different types of traffic flow. Have you considered how many students walk, are driven by parents, or ride schools buses on that corridor during morning and afternoon rush hours? (We've been told 7,500.) Are you aware of how many schools and how many students will be affected?

We are also surprised that this plan is being considered at the same time as a sidewalk for pedestrians and bikes on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue. How would that recently debated proposal fare with this plan?

In short, this plan does not make sense to us, will not achieve improvements in traffic flow, and will result in major disadvantages for all who proceed by car, bus, foot, or bike on Wisconsin Avenue north of Friendship Heights. Please stop this plan from proceeding.

Thank you for your consideration,
Elizabeth Hurwit
Mark Muro
Olivia Muro
Abigail Muro
4521 Dorset Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Veneeta Acson <acson79@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 8:11 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Help me understand BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who would like to know more about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. I am concerned about the impact that BRT will have on all residents living on the West side of Wisconsin between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. I do not see how planners could have given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face physical danger and deterioration of living conditions all along the corridor. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is a livable area that will be killed by an inane idea. We have only recently learned of this harmful plan and have had no chance to have any say to our elected officials who must be concerned.

For the stretch between Bradley Road and Hunt Avenue MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave the community; all our internal streets are dead ends. It takes patience now to cross three lanes of traffic and sometimes it is very difficult to even turn into Wisconsin. The median strip is the only thing that makes movement in and out possible – at any time of day. A change that does not provide lights to allow exit and entry would create a hazard to every person in the area every day. Buses speeding down an uncontrolled BRT curb lane are not compatible with cars, people, and bicycles nosing into or across traffic. **Thousands of residents and children would be at real not imagined risk.**

Not just cars but pedestrians walking on the west side are already too close to traffic and I have seen the effects cars veering into the sidewalk, trees, signs, and fences. I don't know how a plan would keep these folks and the many bicyclist safe but I believe it is likely to create a walker rider horror strip. As it is there is no place to cross except at Dorset for the entire length. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transit way that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving bus in congested streets with no traffic control and no protection for people. I really don't want to become a sacrifice.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. This happens now whenever traffic is slowed on Wisconsin. These drivers will not be watching for small children. I have seen accidents happen at the school crossings. These are not theoretically worries.

Concord Hill school stands on the corner or Hunt Avenue. It and its children will also be exposed to danger and the lack of access may be a problem as well.

As you know further south from Somerset Terrace to Park Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

I see a very large and strongly united highly functional area that would be seriously damaged by a questionable experiment that tears the physical and human fabric of the neighborhood. At the same time I wonder how much the exclusive country club on the east side of MD355 is giving up in this plan. It is entirely unclear to me that there is any significant benefit to anyone and certainly not to this area. We are not dots on a map . We are people who have establish a reasonable place to live within Montgomery county which I now see under attack. This is not good government.

At the very least the challenges involved in any plan to disrupt established communities needs to be considered in light of the l conditions on the ground not lines on a master plan map. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. I know it did not consider us and the many thousands of residents that will be endangered. Our environment and neighborhoods are precious commodities. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and the use of a predictably dangerous BRT lane here until safety and impact on the human environment is assessed and it is assured that benefits far outweigh the obviously risks.

Sincerely,

Howard Streicher
4630 Hunt Ave
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Yasmin Choudhury <cyasminm@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 8:14 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT 355/Wisconsin Ave corridor

I strongly oppose the BRT bus proposal to Friendship Heights as it will only duplicate the existing metro line, which, if it had been running efficiently wouldn't give rise to any suggestion of a bus line. Secondly, these proposed buses would add to congestion and make the crossings unsafe for children and adults.

I STROnGLY OPPoSE the BRT buses to Friendship Heights

Yasmin Choudhury
4525 Dorset ave
Chevy Chase MD 20815

301 335-3642

MCP-CTRACK

From: Alex Acosta <alexandra.acosta@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 8:24 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: Proposed BRT on Wisconsin Avenue

I am a resident of the Town of Somerset and am writing to express my opposition to the proposed BRT plan for Wisconsin Avenue in Chevy Chase. On Tuesday, May 28, I attended Larry Cole's presentation regarding the plan at a meeting organized by residents of Chevy Chase West, which neighbors Somerset. Mr. Cole's presentation left many of our questions unanswered, particularly with regard to pedestrian and bicyclist safety along the stretch of Wisconsin Avenue between Friendship Heights and Bradley Boulevard. It appears that the BRT plan has been developed without any attention to or even awareness of the extensive pedestrian and cyclist traffic in this area. For this reason, I urge the Planning Board to reject the proposal, which would create a dangerous situation for cyclists and pedestrians, including the many children who must cross Wisconsin Avenue to attend Somerset Elementary School.

As outlined by Mr. Cole, the BRT would allow more buses to travel faster along Wisconsin Avenue by setting aside a lane in each direction exclusively for bus travel and installing a traffic signal system to facilitate queue jumping by buses. The queue jumping signal to be installed at the intersection of Bradley Boulevard, where a fire station is located, would make an already dangerous intersection even more hazardous. Between Dorset Avenue and Bradley Boulevard, the BRT would, ironically, create a heightened risk to bus riders who must cross Wisconsin Avenue where there are no crosswalks. Additionally, the BRT would not provide bicycle lanes for the many cyclists who travel this corridor.

As mentioned above, many students who attend Somerset Elementary School must cross Wisconsin Avenue because the school boundaries include parts of Chevy Chase Village. BCC High School students who live in Somerset and Chevy Chase West must cross Wisconsin Avenue in the other direction. In addition, residents of Chevy Chase Village also cross Wisconsin Avenue to go to Norwood Park and to reach the Capital Crescent Trail. The extensive pedestrian and cyclist traffic in this area make it unlike other segments of Route 355. Mr. Cole's suggestion that it resembles the area north of NIH/Navy Medical demonstrated a dismaying misunderstanding of the impact that the BRT would have on pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Thank you for taking the time to consider these comments. I hope the Planning Board will reject the BRT proposal for Wisconsin Avenue in Chevy Chase before additional staff resources are allocated to developing further this inappropriate and dangerous plan.

Alexandra Acosta
4700 Essex Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
alexandra.acosta@verizon.net
301.718.6312

MCP-CTRACK

From: Erin Veiga Malta <nenny70@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:33 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: Erin Veiga Malta
Subject: I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave BRT corridor

I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave BRT corridor due to:

- The large number of young students who walk and bike to school across this corridor;

-The BRT duplicates the metro route and its goals could easily be met by increasing metro cars and station access and increasing frequency of Bus 34;

-The possibility that the County may take 5 feet of property of land abutting people's homes along Wisconsin Avenue, alter the green mile;

-Residents will not be able to safely execute a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue

-The narrowing of 355/Wisconsin Avenue to only four lanes for regular traffic will only increase congestion.

Erin Veiga Malta
5516 Trent Street
Chevy Chase MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Alysa Emden <alysa@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:33 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Transitway Master Plan Comments - Edgemoor Citizens Association
Attachments: Edgemoor Citizens Association BRT Comments 5-30-13.pdf

Please find attached the comments of the Edgemoor Citizens Association("ECA") regarding the Transitway Master Plan, and particularly the proposed MD 355 BRT corridor.

Thank you for your consideration – Alysa Emden (ECA Board Member)

EDGEMOOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 30459
Bethesda, MD 20824

May 30, 2013

Members of the Montgomery County Planning Board:

We are writing on behalf of the Edgemoor Citizens Association with respect to the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) proposed for the MD355 corridor between Friendship Heights and Rockville. The Edgemoor Citizens Association represents 507 households located two blocks west of Wisconsin Avenue; our association's borders are Arlington Road on the west, Bradley Boulevard on the south, Wilson Lane on the north, and Glenbrook Road on the east. We live immediately adjacent to the central Bethesda retail area along Wisconsin Avenue.

Because our families live, work, and attend schools along this corridor, we are severely affected by traffic patterns on Wisconsin Avenue. Our high school age children traverse Wisconsin Avenue to go to and from Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. Elementary school children traveling from East Bethesda to attend Bethesda Elementary School, located in our neighborhood, must likewise traverse Wisconsin Avenue. Every day, our residents walk, bike, and drive in what is an extremely congested downtown area.

We have serious concerns about proposals to introduce BRT buses into this already volatile mix of pedestrians, bikes, and cars. The potential loss of the Wisconsin Avenue median to allow for frequent, relatively high speed (at least compared to surrounding traffic) bus service, presents significant safety issues. Pedestrians are already challenged to cross Wisconsin, and the median offers a welcome refuge for those attempting to navigate across many lanes of traffic. Replacing the median and trees thereon with bus lanes also would dramatically change the character of our downtown area.

This particular corridor is already well-served with public transportation options – the Metro Red Line runs directly under the proposed bus route! Ride-On buses offer service along that same corridor as well. We would suggest that devoting effort to improve and streamline those existing transport options is a far better use of limited taxpayer funds that creating a redundant third option. BRT may be appropriate in areas that are not as well served by Metro; it is not necessary or appropriate in this area.

With respect to the specifics of the plan, we understand that the proposal envisions a boarding station at Bradley Boulevard, and that BRT buses would get a special earlier green light ("queue jumping") at the intersection of Bradley and Wisconsin and move diagonally across the lanes of traffic to transition back and forth from median lanes (north of Bradley Blvd.) and curb lanes (south of Bradley). Introducing this traffic pattern in front of our neighborhood fire station, at an already over-challenged intersection, needs much more thought. East/west travel across Bradley Boulevard is already almost impossible at certain hours of the day; further squeezing the flow of traffic through that intersection will have ripple effects that will be felt many blocks away.

We agree with the comments made by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (May 16, 2013) challenging the accuracy of a key assumption in the BRT planning process. The DOT notes, "The assumption...is that the BRT plan would improve the overall operation of the roadway network for drivers still using the roads by increasing average travel speeds and reducing the growth in congestion countywide. However, the Plan does not demonstrate or prove the correctness of the assumption. This will be a critical metric to remember as individual corridors are planned and designed *to ensure that there is no detriment to the overall operations of the roadway network that could result in poorer operations and increased overall congestion and delays.*" [Emphasis added] In this regard, as residents who live adjacent to the affected corridor, we urge

you to consider not only the needs of drivers on the roadway network, but also the needs of pedestrians and bikers who must be able to move up, down, and across Wisconsin Avenue safely.

We understand that the BRT proposal for the MD355 corridor is just one aspect of a countywide plan. We urge you to keep in mind that what works in one place, may have a decidedly negative impact on another. Running BRT commuter buses three minutes apart directly through the heart of Bethesda will exacerbate already poor traffic circulation around and through downtown Bethesda, and effectively split a vibrant urban center into two, making it extraordinarily difficult for residents who live, work, and go to school here. That's a high price to pay, particularly since other public transportation options are already in place along the exact same route.

We urge you to reconsider this plan for MD355, and hope that you will continue to make an effort to reach out to affected communities, hear our concerns, and give them serious consideration.

Thank you.

Edgemoor Citizens Association

Len Simon	*President*	*len.simon@simoncompany.com*
Julie Doll	*Vice President*	*juliesdoll@yahoo.com*
Ken Levinson	*Vice President*	*levinsonk@gmail.com*
Susan Rubel	*Secretary*	*4rubels@comcast.net*
Alysa Emden	*Treasurer*	*alysa@comcast.net*

MCP-CTRACK

From: Joao N Veiga Malta <jvmalta@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:52 PM
To: MCP-Chair; councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave BRT corrido

I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave BRT corridor due to:

- The large number of young students who walk and bike to school across this corridor;

-The BRT duplicates the metro route and its goals could easily be met by increasing metro cars and station access and increasing frequency of Bus 34;

-The possibility that the County may take 5 feet of property of land abutting people's homes along Wisconsin Avenue, alter the green mile;

-Residents will not be able to safely execute a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue

-The narrowing of 355/Wisconsin Avenue to only four lanes for regular traffic will only increase congestion.

Joao N Veiga Malta
5516 Trent Street
Chevy Chase, MD

Sent from my iPad

:TRACK

adele o'dowd <adele.odowd@gmail.com>
Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:04 PM
MCP-Chair
Marie and Chong Park
Re: BRT on 355 - please include my comment in your report

:t:

Chairman,

ılize that when I sent my comments earlier this evening, I omitted my address. Here it is plus my comments. Thanks,

ele Medina O'Dowd
28 Hunt Ave, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

tention Planning Board -

ease accept my comments about the BRT Master Plan for the public record and the Planning Board work ssions. First I must take this opportunity to thank Larry Cole, Master Planner and Highway Coordinator, for taking the ne to come and address our community, Chevy Chase West. His clear communication was extremely helpful in getting ccurate information on the plans to our community and we owe him thanks!

low for my comments. I, for one, am FOR a transportation plan that includes BRT. However, and this is a big "BUT", I lo feel there are many problems with the master plan that keeps me from supporting it with a clear conscience, as it has been described. To put it very bluntly, where the master plan concerns the section of 355 between Bradley Blvd and Friendship Heights, the devil is really in the details! Not enough attention has been paid to those details in the master plan - I will mention a few issues that are most important to me personally and our community. We in the community, are quite unhappy with the lack of attention to those details because they directly impact our daily lives and in fact, our safety.

1. Mr. Cole told us that the center median would be a minimum size of 6', thus allowing people driving into our community the (continued) ability to make left turns into the neighborhood, when approaching from the south. As any good urban planner knows, a car parking space is minimum 9'. How is a person who is trying to turn left, ever going to safely wait in the median opening in order to make that turn. Let me point out that we are talking about many CCW households with teen and elderly drivers among others. This is basically unacceptable as planned, and certainly reduces the existing median. There must be a better solution. We would be trapped in our neighborhood. And if you suggest that adding a traffic light would be the answer, I can tell you that it would not. That would create a huge and unnecessary bottleneck inside CCW, a community of about 450 families. Where other communities in the area have additional ways in and out of their neighborhoods, ours does not. We do appreciate this limits through traffic, and everyone agrees that's a good thing, but being trapped on Hunt Ave behind a long line of cars at a traffic light waiting to get out, is no small detail to us, not to mention the fact that an additional light would further halt traffic on Wisconsin Avenue.

2. It is equally unacceptable that NO bike lanes have been planned for this stretch of road where many commuters are trying valiantly to do the right thing and get out of their cars. I am trying to use my own bicycle as often as possible. I work from home and have many clients in the area. I constantly cross Wisconsin Avenue to get into Chevy Chase Village and to visit my clients, using my bike. My 15 year old, 120 lb daughter rides her bike to B-CC high school on a daily basis in nearly all weather. Wouldn't we rather our teenagers do that than drive a car? Again, it is unacceptable that a forward thinking transportation plan and forward thinking county government (such as Montgomery County) can proceed with a master plan that not considered bicycle traffic IN the master plan. And, by the way, how will this effect the expensive pedestrian side walk planned for this section of road. I personally, was quite happy with the drawings I saw for it and agree with it's whole purpose - to facilitate pedestrians and get cars off the road. In my opinion, the exclusion of safe bike lanes and sidewalks is (alone) enough for me - a person who would support BRT - to be extremely unhappy. If this were not addressed in the master plan and left to be discussed later, that would never happen in reality. Mr. Cole's answer to a question posed about bike lanes plans last night, was that he would think the best thing to do is to build the BRT, put it into action for 5 years and then decide about the bike lane. No thank you. I think we can do better.

3. I left the meeting wondering, if there was any attempt to investigate the possibility of adding a metro stop at Bradley Blvd or just north to accommodate and connect to BRT. I understand this is not part of the county transportation purview, however, it would make a lot of sense for a big picture master plan for this area. In any case, improvements to Metro seems more likely to help with commuters coming from the north, trying to get downtown.

4. The Fire Station at Bradley Blvd is much loved and valued by this community. There has been no attention to how a BRT "queue jumping transfer" at Bradley Blvd, would effect fire trucks. How can this be? This is not a small detail.

5. More basically, I don't understand and I don't believe my community understands why we should think it's a good idea to move so many commuters all the way from Gaithersburg, Rockville and other locations more than 20 miles into town every single day. Is that the kind of city planning we intend to support in the long run? I don't think so. Jobs will be created in Montgomery County as population grows outside of town. I don't have anything against job growth in DC, but can so many live so far away from their jobs? It just isn't efficient for anyone. If they telecommute, ok, we can talk. It would be helpful if we could see that those in charge of planning for our area, were taking some of this into consideration.

Please understand, I DO support BRT. I do think it is a better way of moving people, environmentally, for our future. If I have such strong feelings about the details, you can imagine what others in my community think. Please, I respectfully ask you to listen to mine and my neighbors comments very closely and get it right!

Thanks you.

On Thu, May 30, 2013 at 5:41 PM, adele o'dowd <adele.odowd@gmail.com> wrote:
Hello Chairman,

Please accept my comments about the BRT Master Plan for the public record and the Planning Board work sessions. First I must take this opportunity to thank Larry Cole, Master Planner and Highway Coordinator for Planning Board, for taking the time to come and address our community, Chevy Chase West. His clear communication and calm under fire was extremely helpful in getting accurate information on the plans to our community and we owe hime thanks!

Now for my comments. I, for one, am FOR a Transportation plan that includes BRT. However, and this is a big "BUT", I do feel there are many problems with the master plan that keeps me from supporting it with a clear conscience as it has been described. To put it very bluntly, where the master plan concerns the section of 355 between Bradley Blvd and Friendship Heights, the devil is really in the details! Not enough attention has been paid to those details in the master plan - I will mention a few that are most important to me personally and our community. We in the community, are quite unhappy with the lack of attention to those details because they directly impact our daily lives and in fact safety.

1. Mr. Cole told us that the center median would be a minimum size of 6' thus allowing people driving into our community continued ability to make left turns into the neighborhood when approaching from the south. As any good urban planner knows, a car parking space is minimum 9'. How is a person trying to turn left ever going to safely wait in the median opening to make that turn. Let me point out that we are talking about many households with teen and elderly drivers among other. This is basically unacceptable, as planned and certainly reduces the existing median. There must be a better solution. We would be trapped in our neighborhood. And if you suggest that adding 1 traffic light would be the answer, I can tell you that it would not. That would create a huge and unnecessary bottleneck inside CCW, a community of about 450 families. Where other communities in the area have additional ways in and out of their neighborhood, ours does not. We do appreciate this limits through traffic, and everyone agrees that's a good thing, but being trapped on Hunt Ave behind even 10 cars at a traffic light waiting to get out, is no small detail to us.

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Thanks you.

--
a

adele medina o'dowd
adele.odowd@gmail.com

www.willowlandscapedesign.net
plants, shrubs and trees
for more than just the bees
202.255.0728

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a

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plants, shrubs and trees
for more than just the bees
202.255.0728

MCP-CTRACK

From: Paul Dorn <padorn_md@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:19 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: STOP the BRT

I am opposed to the BRT for 355/Wisconsin AVenue, the Green Mille,
-because students use that corridor walking a biking,
-narrowing Wisconin Avenue will increasy congestion a great deal on a road alreary congested,
-residents of communities along the Green mile wilL have difficulty merging inot Wisconsin with BRT bus route,
-BRT duplicates the Metro route.
Hope you stop the BRT plan,

Georgette Dorn
4702 Essex Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Sophie Toujas <momincharge5@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:31 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Planning board ,

I second Marie's Park written comments .

Sophie Toujas
4803 De Russey Pkwy
Chevy Chase MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Verity Eftos <veftos@yahoo.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:53 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave BRT corridor

I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave BRT corridor due to:

- The large number of young students who walk and bike to school across this corridor;

-The BRT duplicates the metro route and its goals could easily be met by increasing metro cars and station access and increasing frequency of Bus 34;

-The possibility that the County may take 5 feet of property of land abutting people's homes along Wisconsin Avenue, alter the green mile;

-Residents will not be able to safely execute a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue

-The narrowing of 355/Wisconsin Avenue to only four lanes for regular traffic will only increase congestion.

Verity Eftos
5516 Trent Street
Chevy Chase MD 20815

Sent from my iPhone

MCP-CTRACK

From: rogerjackdog@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:04 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: brt

I live at 4807 Derussey Parkway, Chevy Chase, Md. I oppose any alterations to route 355 in my neighborhood. The green mile from Friendship Heights to Bethesda should be preserved. The subway already runs, along this route and it should be utilized to the fullest, instead of making driving more convenient. Roger Weisman

MCP-CTRACK

From: Victor Cha <vcha@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:24 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Notice of opposition to BRT lane on 355

As an 19-year resident of Chevy Chase, MD, I oppose BRT on 355/Wisconsin Avenue because it duplicates metro service and is pedestrian/biker unfriendly. I am concerned about the safety of high school pedestrians, particularly at the lunch hour. I believe BRT lanes on 355 will increase traffic and pedestrian hazards unnecessarily with little net benefit.

Sincerely,
Dr. Victor Cha

4811 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase MD 20815
301-654-8529

MCP-CTRACK

From: Missy Reingruber <mreingruber@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 10:58 AM
To: MCP-Chair; councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: BRT 355/Wisconsin Ave Corridor

I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave. corridor.

I have been a resident of Somerset for 22 years, and grew up in Chevy Chase Maryland and therefore understand the need for change and accommodating new traffic patterns but this corridor is impractical and unnecessary and anyone who actually lives here and commutes up and down Wisconsin will tell you that it will cause congestion and no longer be a safe place for bikers, walkers (many of whom are students going to BCC or their jobs in Bethesda) and the residents that rely on the Ride On. Frankly, with the construction in Bethesda for the next few years one would think keeping Wisconsin as open as possible would make far more sense. Certainly the Metro already provides a high speed alternative from Friendship Heights to Bethesda; this proposal is redundant and wasteful for this particular area of Bethesda.

Missy Reingruber
4522 Dorset Avenue
Chevy Chase MD 20815.

MCP-CTRACK

From: Mary Geffroy <Mary@Senecaprop.com>
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 10:06 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT - Wisconsin/355 corridor

To whom it may concern:

I reside at 4808 Essex Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland, and I oppose the proposed BRT along the Wisconsin Ave/355 corridor.

Sincerely, Mary Geffroy

MCP-CTRACK

From: Katharine Scattergood <kscatt@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 6:54 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Disagree with bus lanes

On Wisconsive Ave.

That is my position as a long time resident of Bethesda who lives and spends most of the day in the effected area.

Thank you

MCP-CTRACK

From: Dania Fitzgerald <daniafitz@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 6:26 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Proposal

I am writing to add my voice in adamant opposition to dedicated rapid transit bus lanes on Wisconsin AV from Friendship Heights through Bethesda. I think it will present too many hazards to pedestrian safety on stretches where there are no sidewalks.

Dania Fitzgerald
4801 Cumberland Av
Chevy Chase, MD
Dania Fitzgerald 301.641.6550

MCP-CTRACK

From: Mary allen <mldallen@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, May 31, 2013 4:01 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: 355/Wisconsin Avenue Corridor

I oppose the proposed high speed busses on the Wisconsin avenue corridor. Local busses currently operate on Wisconsin Avenue while the Metro is underground. I cannot understand why this is necessary. The stretch between Bradley Lane and Friendship Heights is lined with residential streets that only have access from Wisconsin. To exit from those streets and go north, the islands in the middle are needed unless the county is planning on adding lights along that stretch.

Mary Allen
4715 Cumberland Avenue
Sent from my iPad

MCP-CTRACK

From: Ebzeryjb <ebzeryjb@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:39 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: 355/Wisconsin Ave. BRT Corridor

I am writing to state my opposition to the proposal for the Wisconsin Ave. BRT Corridor, which I believe would produce enormous inconveniences to residents along the route for little if any gain, since it already is served by the Red Line. Traffic on Wisconsin makes it difficult enough for Somerset residents to use that street, and it would be practically impossible when one lane is limited to buses and commuters and other travelers were forced to share only two lanes. I believe traffic would back up for miles, even in off-rush hours. It would make life in this segment of the county intolerable.

Thomas Dimond
4914 Dorset Avenue
Chevy Chase Md. 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Karen Huang <karenhchuang@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 11:37 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave. corridor BRT

I oppose the 355/Wisconsin Ave. corridor BRT because of the large number of young students who walk and bike to school on this corridor. The BRT should stop at the Bethesda Metrol

Thank you.

Karen Huang
5523 Uppingham Street
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Maureen Holohan <maureen.h29@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 3:16 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: mcdot.director@montgomerycountymd.com
Subject: Oppose Rapid Bus line route 10b.- Southern Rt. 355/Wisconsin Ave.
Attachments: oppose rapid bus plan.docx

Ms. Carrier and Mr. Holmes,

Attached please find a letter from me regarding the proposed rapid bus line 10b. I have also included it below. I am a neighborhood resident along that route and have three children who walk to Somersert Elementary School. Our family will be gravely impacted if the bus line is imposed, and I would ask that you read my letter in opposition to the rapid bus line and place it in the record.

Thank you for the consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.

Maureen Holohan

4622 Langdrum Lane
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815
29 May 2013

mcp-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org

Ms. Francoise Carrier

Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board

Montgomery County, Maryland

Dear Madame,

I live in Chevy Chase West, an area west of Wisconsin Avenue, south of Bradley Lane. My children attend Somerset Elementary School in Chevy Chase and will attend BCC High School in Bethesda. I am writing to you to express my extreme opposition to the rapid bus plan for southern Route 355/Wisconsin Avenue (plan 10b). This bus plan is a terrible idea for our residents, children, bicyclists and walkers.

Here's what we love about where we live (and why we were willing to live in a smaller, older house):

1. A close-in neighborhood, where we can walk south to Friendship Heights or north to Bethesda, including walking to a metro stop, the market and grocery store.
2. A place that is tranquil and green.

3. When we want to drive, we can easily get out of our street and be at our destination quickly since the location is so convenient.
4. My three children can walk or bike to school safely.
5. Downtown Bethesda along Wisconsin Avenue is a charming area that is a place to stroll and relax, with flowers and many local businesses.

The plan to add two rapid bus lanes by cutting two through lanes for regular traffic is horrible because:

1. The plan creates a great danger in getting out of or onto my street by car. Every street in our neighborhood exits onto Wisconsin Avenue; there is no other route. Cutting across lanes in which buses are going fast, and car lanes slower, will lead to unsafe egress and many accidents. Pulling back onto my street across a bus lane may be even more dangerous.
2. The speed differential between the buses in their lanes and the cars will be huge. Speed differentials have been proven to be a huge factor in causing more frequent and more serious accidents.
3. Make it too dangerous to walk along Wisconsin Avenue for me or my children. My son walking to BCC High School during rush hours will be affected greatly. I am concerned that kids crossing the street over 2 bus lanes and 4 traffic lanes will be significantly more likely to misjudge traffic. Teenagers do not always cross at crosswalks or with traffic lights.
4. Widening Wisconsin Avenue will only create more speeding vehicles when traffic is lighter and decrease safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vehicles.
5. Losing the median in Bethesda or in our area south of Bradley Lane is a severe safety hazard for turning cars and pedestrians, and is ugly.
6. Crosswalks (without lights) will be too hazardous to use if traffic is squeezed into two lanes with larger, faster buses in the median or outer lanes. It gets very confusing for drivers and pedestrians alike. There are many elderly walkers who will be at particular risk.

There is nothing in this rapid bus proposal that benefits me, my family, my school or my community. Rapid bus lanes that mirror the red line metro tracks do not make sense. This proposal to reduce through traffic lanes on Wisconsin Avenue will take a peaceful, green, walkable community and turn it into a hazardous parking lot. Please do not ruin a historic and wonderful part of southern Montgomery County with the rapid bus plan.

Sincerely,

Maureen Holohan

cc: Steering Committee and MCDOT Director Arthur Holmes, Jr.

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jody Fidler <jodyfidler@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 3:57 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: brt

I am writing to express my deep concern over the plans I have read regarding a new Bus lane. Most significantly, this bus lane appears to present imminent danger to pedestrians in the area. It is hard enough to cross Wisconsin Avenue as it is and adding a specific bus lane with additional rules will only make the area more treacherous to navigate as a walker, biker and driver. I urge you to reconsider your plans for the safety of those that live in and visit the area.
Sincerely,
Jody Fidler
4108 Rosemary St.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Erica Antonelli <erica@sideporchproductions.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 4:06 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: John Charles
Subject: BRT between Bradley and Friendship Heights

Hi,
I'm a resident of Chevy Chase West. Based on the meeting last night at Concord Hill, I learned that:

- drivers exiting neighborhoods on Wisconsin will no longer be able to use the gaps in the median when executing a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue. This will literally TRAP our neighborhood. The only way we can exit to head North is by making a left, which is already scary and dangerous, even with the median there. There is no consideration of this in the plan! We usually drive half way across and wait, then make the left. There is rarely, if ever, an opportunity to fully make the left. We need the median.

-during rush hour, Rapid Transit Buses (BRT) will be traveling on Wisconsin Avenue at 2-3 minutes intervals to maximize ridership during those peak periods. They will travel at 35 miles per hour, avoiding congestion due to BRT-only lanes, and there will not be any bike lanes. Where is the SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOLS being promoted by the federal government?

-the County may take 5 feet of land on private property abutting Wisconsin Avenue, including residential property.

There was a LOT more covered at the meeting, but please give full consideration to access in and out of our neighborhood, and a safe way for our children to get to school.

Thanks,
Erica Antonelli
4616 DeRussey Pkwy.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Kristen Mosbaek <km@kristenmosbaek.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 4:11 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: rapid transit

Dear mcl-Chair, I like the idea of rapid transit along Wisc. Ave. I think it's important to include a bike lane as well as some form of nature. The trees and bushes, we see now, are so calming and pretty.
~Kristen

Kristen Mosbæk Communications
http://www.kristenmosbaek.com
km@kristenmosbaek.com
301-907-0330

Last night's meeting at the Concord Hill School with Larry Cole from the County Planning Department, was well attended by parents and residents in Chevy Chase West, Somerset, and Bethesda. Send an email to " mcp-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org " by midnight on Thursday, May 30th to record your position on the BRT plan for Wisconsin Avenue. Some highlights at the two hour meeting that took listeners by surprise:

-that the County may take 5 feet of land on private property abutting Wisconsin Avenue, including residential property.

-the fact that drivers exiting neighborhoods on Wisconsin will no longer be able to use the gaps in the median when executing a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue

-during morning and afternoon rush hour periods, Rapid Transit Buses (BRT) will be traveling on Wisconsin Avenue at 2-3 minutes intervals to maximize ridership during those peak periods. They will travel at 35 miles per hour, avoiding congestion due to BRT-only lanes.

-Wisconsin Avenue and 355 will be narrowed to 4 lanes for regular vehicles.

-Larry Cole stated that no bike lane is included in the Master Plan for our area

-BRT buses would get a special earlier green light ("queue jumping") at the intersection of Bradley and Wisconsin and move diagonally across the lanes of traffic to transition back and forth from median lanes (north of Bradley Blvd.) and curb lanes (south of Bradley).

-The BRT proposal includes the construction of boarding stations in the median at Bradley Blvd., Bethesda Metro, and Cordell Avenue.

MCP-CTRACK

From: alison fortier <alison.fortier@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 4:22 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Public Comments on BRT/355/Wisconsin Avenue/Safety
Attachments: Comments on the BRT Route Along 355 to Friendship Heights.docx

Thank you very much for your consideration, Alison Fortier

Comments on the BRT Route Along 355 to Friendship Heights

Alison B. Fortier
4714 Falstone Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815 (Town of Somerset)
alison.fortier@AOL.com

Like most of my neighbors, I only learned three weeks ago of the BRT and the plan to extend it along Wisconsin Avenue to Friendship Heights. On May 16 I attended the Planning Commission Hearing and on May 28 the meeting with Larry Cole and others at Concord Hill School. The May 28 meeting generated more questions and concerns than it answered:

- Larry Cole repeatedly responded to questions by stating that Mongtomery County would not have the answer until much later phases of the planning; in other words, the Master Plan will go to the County Council largely as a TBD. But these questions and concerns are very real and urgent and require answers prior to locking in Plans and commitments.
- The BRT on 355 will accommodate 1175 people per hour in peak hours. This number seems low given the high cost of the BRT and the capacity of the existing Red Line to handle additional passengers by adding cars and more frequent trains.
- Larry Cole noted that the Green Mile (Bradley to Friendship Heights) carries only 55% of the automobile traffic that exists north of NIH/the Naval Hospital. There may be a requirement for a BRT on Rockville Pike; however, the requirement south of Bethesda does not appear to warrant the high cost involved. Bethesda is a planned metro hub; why go beyond Bethesda? The Metro offers public transport into the District and beyond to Virginia.
- Between the light at Bradley and Wisconsin and the light at Dorset and Wisconsin, there are 10 streets and 6 driveways to homes. Those 10 streets only access Wisconsin; there is no western side exit. Currently cars exiting those 10 streets may enter the median, pause, and then enter north-going traffic. Yet, to accommodate the BRT, the medians will be eliminated or narrowed and not provide a safe haven to cars turning north. There is no logical or safe U turn option south on Wisconsin to serve as an option for those traveling north.
- With the BRT in the right curb lanes, there are great safety concerns about cars exiting these streets at all and crossing the dedicated BRT lanes to go either north or south especially since the buses to be worthwhile are to go at a higher speed than the automobile traffic. Ironically, the neighborhoods along the Green Mile have gone to great lengths to slow the automobile traffic on Wisconsin for reasons of safety.

- School children cross Wisconsin in both directions to access Somerset Elementary and to access nursery schools on Chevy Chase Circle. The BRT would increase speed and make crossing Wisconsin extremely dangerous for school children at the many schools.
- Residents of Somerset walk to the Metro in Friendship Heights. Many bicycle down Wisconsin Avenue. As Appendix D-6, MD DOT comments read: Further review is needed regarding consistency of BRT with bicycle accommodations (read: there are none now). There is concern that bicycles will choose the sidewalk putting pedestrians at risk rather than attempt to "share" the curb lane with a fast moving bus. The DOT comments also noted the narrow curb width between the fast moving buses and automobiles that will create safety concerns.
- The western blocks in Friendship Heights between Dorset and Willard hold apartment complexes inhabited by the elderly and office buildings occupied by medical offices. The elderly use the right hand lane as a drop off lane to exit cars to access their doctors' offices. Often this can take great time—an 85 year old with a walker is not fast or agile. This happens at all times of the day including rush hour. While this practice can be inconvenient to commuters, there is no way around it. The BRT does not take this into consideration.

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jim Wallwork <J1903Wallwork@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 5:04 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Proposed RTV Plan

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Please address questions raised by the comments/recommendations made by the Institute for Transportation & Policy Development (ITPD) in its report, *Demand & Service Planning Report to Montgomery County,* of December 2012:

1. **From ITPD: "As a practical matter of public administration, however, Montgomery County has limited experience managing projects of this scope, scale, and complexity. Developing only one BRT corridor will be an administrative challenge in Montgomery County, let alone an attempt to develop and deliver multiple corridors simultaneously; a task no other municipality has ever attempted." (ITPD page 5) Why is Montgomery County not heeding this advice?**
2. **Why is Montgomery County selecting more corridor routes rather than the four recommended by ITPD?**
3. **Why is Montgomery County including in its RTV plan the 355 section from Bethesda Metro to Friendship Heights Metro, when the ITPD report does not include this route, which traverses mostly a residential area?**
4. **Why should this proposed 355 corridor not end at Bethesda Metro, as originally planned, rather than continuing to Friendship Heights Metro? What are the advantages over the added taxpayer costs, especially since sections of this road will need to be widened at considerable cost?**

Thank-you for entering these questions into the public record for your subsequent response.

Jim Wallwork
5630 Wisconsin Ave, Apt 302
Chevy Chase MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Greg Kiel @ NDSE Bethesda <greg@nextdaysignexpress.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 6:23 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF THE BRT PLAN FOR WISCONSIN AV

To whom this concerns

I have property and operate a business on Wisconsin Ave Is the county not responsible for advising property owners of zoning changes and including/inviting them to hearings?
I have not be notified by anyone from the county about the BRT Plan for Wisconsin Ave.
I do not understand how the county planning Board operates if they do not notify property/business owner about issues that effect the owner of property
as well as effecting business on Wisconsin Ave.
I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF THE BRT PLAN FOR WISCONSIN AVE

The median is a welcome to visitors arriving in downtown bethesda.
Bethesda is a different kind of community than Rockville,We are pedestrian friendly.People that live and work in Bethesda walk and ride their bikes more than use their cars or mass transit.
The planning board is not taking in consideration the residents of bethesda needs and are more interested in getting people from one place to the other the fasted as they can.
We live in a fast pace environment and by removing the median we currently have that are well landscaped and give a visual break to the miles of black top and a place for pedestrians
to cross safely is very important in more ways than I can explain.I do not want to see Wisconsin ave turned into Rockville Pike and this is exactly what you are planning.
I have reviewed your plans for Rockville and the county is trying to add median and bike lanes to slow the traffic and that is great and on the other hand you want to remove the median
and narrow the lane and add bus lanes this will turn Wisconsin Ave into Rockville Pike how does this make any sense.

Does this also mean the parking meters on Wisconsin Ave will be removed I do not see if this was addressed.

I work on Wisconsin Ave and as long as I have been working on Wisconsin Ave you can only park between 9-3:30 on both side of the street and I have been told the reason for this is because
the county need the lanes open for emergency reasons even through rush hour traffic usually only go South in the morning and North at the end of the work day.
Leaving the entire South going lanes open and the evening rush.This policy has never made any rational sense to me.
If you take away a lane of traffic on the Wisc. where are the emergency vehicles suppose to go?

Why won't the county use one of the North lanes for morning rush hour and one of the South lanes for evening rush hour.
This seems to me to be a better solution than turning or beautiful Bethesda part of Wisconsin Ave that is well planted and give Bethesda a look of it own that

turning it into an asphalt super highway.This could not be more the opposite of how I envision the future of Bethesda

--

Greg

next day sign express
7850 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, MD 20814
301.986.0310
www.nextdaysignexpress.com

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jonathan Berlowe Binder <jsbbinder@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 6:30 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Bus Rapid Transit: Comments

Good afternoon. I live in the Town of Chevy Chase and strongly support the Bus Rapid Transit Plan (BRT). My support specifically includes ensuring that BRT extends to the Friendship Heights area. Without a doubt, BRT would create a public transit system that would vastly improve connections in the most heavily congested corridors of the county. With traffic expected to get even worse as development continues all around us, this proposed system is well worth exploring to help reduce traffic congestion without sacrificing safety. Please let me know if you have any questions. Respectfully,
Jonathan Berlowe Binder

MCP-CTRACK

From: Roberta Faul-Zeitler <faulzeitler@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 7:31 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Testimony for May 16 2013 Planning Department Hearing
Attachments: Testimony for May 16 2013Planning Board Hearing.pdf

May 29, 2013

TO: Francoise Carrier, Chair Planning Board, Montgomery County

I am attaching testimony as an individual on the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master plan, prior to the close of the stated two-week period following the May 16 public meeting, to provide my comments as part of the community response to the proposal.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Roberta Faul-Zeitler
Member, Committee of 100 on the Federal City
8904 Colesville Road
Silver Spring MD 20910 USA
Voice 301-565-0965
Email: faulzeitler@verizon.net
Green News Update: http://greennewsupdate.com

Written Testimony for the Montgomery County Planning Board

RE: May 16, 2013 Public Hearing on the BRT

Roberta Faul-Zeitler
8904 Colesville Road
Silver Spring MD 20910
Email: faulzeitler@verizon.net; Tel.: 301-565-0965

My family has lived for 16 years at 8904 Colesville Road in a single family residence about one block north of Spring Street, the start of the SS CBD. My remarks are my own, but represent input from many people who live in our community. We know Colesviille Road/US 29 well and the serious safety issues that affect both vehicular traffic and people who live in close-in neighborhoods, and desire to walk to work, to the library,walk with their kids to enjoy downtown, and commute by bicycle. I am a strong advocate for public transit, and personally have used public transit for 40 years, first by bus while living in DC, and by subway into DC after moving to Silver Spring.

I do not support the proposal for the US 29 BRT busway as currently outlined in the original study and the Planning Department staff study. I urge you to reconsider and set priorities first for other BRT routes that have fewer traffic design, vehicular safety and pedestrian safety issues, despite the recommendations of the planning staff to use Rte 29 as a testbed for the whole system.

Route 29/Colesville is a failed road that carries 35,000 vehicles a day (past my home) from Howard, Prince Georges, upper Montgomery and other jurisdictions. The lower end is like a funnel – with a little over one mile of reversible am/pm rush hour lanes – to accommodate the flow of traffic turning onto to Spring, Cedar, Georgia, 16th, and E-W Highway into the District and elsewhere. It would be a mistake to think the road's failure is based only on the volume of passenger vehicles. This road is a primary artery for thousands of heavy construction vehicles, 18-wheelers that deliver to Giant/Safeway/CVS, emergency vehicles, myriad buses both public and private, service trucks of all sorts, even local construction and delivery vehicles.

Reducing passenger vehicles alone will not make downtown Silver Spring and nearby neighborhoods the safe, walkable, bikable and enjoyable community that the Coalition for Smarter Growth embraces.The CBD is a major county asset that was redeveloped with hundreds of millions of dollars of county, state and federal support and tax abatement to make it a success. And we are squandering that with an unsafe pedestrian and vehicular safety environments.

Lower Colesville has several F grade intersections, with LATR volume of 1800 in the CBD and 1600 for Silver Spring/Takoma Park. It has among the most congested intersections, and the ranking of these places is rising, according to county statistics: Colesville at Sligo Creek (32ND), Colsville at University (22ND), East-West Highway at 16th Street NW.

It is certainly not clear how running 250 buses per hour through the CBD (as proposed for the Transit Hub) will make Silver Spring a comfortable, family-friendly environment.

In 2012, the County Department of Transportation conducted a highly targeted pedestrian safety study on Colesville Road from Spring Street to North Noyes. The 30-page report indicated that the roadway and

pedestrian safety are compromised in a variety of ways: chronic speeding, red-light running, reckless driving, accidents involving pedestrians and hydroplaning into front yards, poor vehicular signage, lack of police enforcement, and lack of additional traffic calming devices. **The MoCo traffic division says it is too dangerous to give tickets for moving violations on Colesville; yet there is not a single red light camera or speed camera on Colesville!**

Another pedestrian study by the Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations is now underway (May 2013) at intersections and pedestrian crossings that involve Colesville at Fenton, Spring, Cameron, S. Noyes and North Noyes (as well as selected Georgia Avenue locations). This study may have been prompted by the marked increase in pedestrian vehicular accidents (and fatalities) this year in Montgomery County.

Here are my concerns and recommendations:

1) The BRT should be planned and implemented, if at all, as an intercounty/interjurisdictional transit system (bus and/or light rail) that involves cooperation and functional elements in Montgomery, Prince Georges, Howard, and Frederick Counties, as well as the District of Columbia. **Montgomery County is attempting a self-contained system** for issues of volume, congestion, design, safety and demand that require a broader, regional approach.

2) There are distinctive differences – and even modalities -- of **how to reduce the traffic we currently have and how to reduce (anticipatory) the traffic impact of future development.** Neither of the studies (2011 and planning staff) demonstrates with specific data and approaches how the BRT is being planned to deal with both current and future needs. The county is attempting a one-size-fits-all approach.

3) The current system of buses – private buses (Dillon/Eyre), Metro buses (both locals and express) and County-operated Ride On service – should be thoroughly vetted and considered for major upgrades and improvements, prior to any further consideration, implementation or earmarking of funds for a billion-dollar plus BRT system. There are already multiple private and Metro buses that provide "rapid" or express-type service to transport commuters from Baltimore, Annapolis and other communities to Silver Spring and the District. There are insufficient data in both BRT studies – or made available to the public – to identify why the current public/private bus system cannot be upgraded and expanded with **proper management, marketing, resulting in lower infrastructure and operating costs for taxpayers.**

4) The 2011 study and planning department study fails to indicate the demographics, demand and marketability of the BRT system overall, and of the Route 29 BRT in particular. **On Page 57, the study indicates, "... the highest priority for implementation in the near-term should be given to corridors with the highest existing bus ridership, particularly those where road repurposing is recommended and corridor improvements can be constructed most quickly.... [T]heir high ridership will provide the greatest immediate benefit to existing transit riders and accommodate latent demand...."** This is the rationale to "greenlight" the Route 29/Colesville and New Hampshire Lines. It fails to address how to ameliorate the existing

volume/congestion of 29/Colesville for reducing current passenger vehicles on the road, with its emphasis on **carrying existing bus riders.**

5) White Oak Masterplan and Development: The points listed above (#4) as the rationale to proceed quickly with Route 29 and New Hampshire BRT lines is specious. It is clear that the developers of the White Oak/Labor College/Gudelsky properties must have public transit components in their plan to successfully gain approval for the first 5 million square feet of the 14 million square feet of planned retail, office and homes. This appears to be the impetus for giving priority to the Route 29 BRT (and New Hampshire Avenue line) over other BRT lines in the county.

6) If there is to be any Route 29 line, it is more logical to identify the route actually needed for White Oak development: Burtonsville to Lockwood, to New Hampshire through to Fort Totten Metro, (the same distance as to downtown Silver Spring, 6 miles) where there are 3 Metro lines (yellow, green, red), ample bus transfer systems, and opportunity to commute to Virginia, University of Maryland, DC federal agencies, etc The "lower end" of the BRT route in Silver Spring appears to be a convenient way to justify the transit needs related to White Oak redevelopment, without addressing the need to reduce current passenger vehicles on the road.

7) The BRT system overall and the Route 29 BRT assumes conventional peak a.m. and p.m. occupancy by riders who go into or through the District for business during "normal" business hours (7 a.m. to 7 p.m.). It does not appear that the 29 BRT will accommodate (at all) the variety of employment scenarios that exist in this region: people with flex schedules (arrive at work at 6 a.m./ready to commute home by 2:30 pm); people who work afternoon to midnight shifts; those working overnight with 11 pm or midnight arrival. This might include nurses, hospital workers, service people who work late into the evening. It also includes people who work on Saturday and Sunday.

8) Finally, I have to express extreme reservations about the autonomy the County Executive and his Executive Branch team should be afforded in making decisions and detailed plans for design, ROW takings, budgeting and implementation of ANY rail system, whether bus or other type of transit, for Montgomery County. The Ride-On system operated by the county is deeply flawed and the County has not adequately addressed questions of schedule, reliability and driver safety. Silver Spring residents have been sorely tested with an ongoing construction site (the so called Transit Hub) and lack of safe bus shelters and other amenities for years, during multiple iterations of the design (now down to an unsightly concrete bunker) and a "finished" facility that is deemed to be unsafe, as well as acknowledged to be grossly over-budget and behind schedule. It stretches credulity that the County can be trusted to plan and implement any county-wide BRT system when it has failed to deliver on its own local Ride-On system and completion of the Transit Hub in a timely way.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit my remarks.

MCP-CTRACK

From: Linda Yoder <yoderlt@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 7:36 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT proposal

Dear Chairman

I'd like to go on record in objection to the BRT proposal as it now stands. As a resident of Chevy Chase West, I am convinced you are placing the residents and other drivers who enter this neighborhood in harm's way when you eliminate the median pull offs to safely enter and exit our neighborhood. Since there is no other entry into Chevy Chase West other than Wisconsin Avenue, you need to ensure that safe egress and entry points are maintained.

With the high volume of traffic on Wisconsin Avenue, it would not only be dangerous to have cars sitting in this high-speed corridor waiting for an opportunity to turn into the neighborhood but would back up traffic for blocks during rush hours. Each year it is becoming harder to make these turns even with the median entry points, but at least we're not sitting in a traffic lane on Wisconsin Avenue stopping the traffic behind us. I can only anticipate the chain reaction fender benders that will occur.

Furthermore, with Metro and Ride On buses already available, there is no demonstrated need for this BRT designated lane proposal. The elimination of Wisconsin Avenue lanes will further congest our area and add to pollution as more cars idle on Wisconsin Avenue. Please rethink this proposal and do not eliminate the median spots for entry into and exit from Chevy Chase West!
Thank you

Linda Yoder
4624 Morgan Drive
Chevy Chase, MD 20815-5315
yoderlt@yahoo.com

MCP-CTRACK

From: Ava Kaufman <akaufman8689@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 7:36 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

As a resident of CCW on Drummond Ave I am opposed to the new bus lanes on Wisconsin Ave. They will make it impossible to exit my street going north onto Wisconsin in the morning -- and that is the only exit available to me during school hours. Without the median to pull into while waiting for the northbound traffic to clear, I will have to drive south, then U-turn at the light at Dorset. If a lot of cars are doing that it will cause a back-up in the southbound lanes. We will also lose the residential nature of our neighborhood. There is already access through the Red Line Metro and the Ride-on buses. I do not think there is a need for further public transportation on Wisconsin. Why not put these buses on Connecticut or River Rd, which have no Metro and are equally important arteries to downtown? I hope the commission will reconsider its plans

Ava Kaufman
4817 Drummond Ave

MCP-CTRACK

From: Richard Latty <richard.latty@soleng.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 8:15 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT and Metro rail

Importance: High

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is extremely concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights and communities like ours. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment or a full implementation. I strongly oppose the disruption to the Chevy Chase West section of Wisconsin Avenue and the investment in the BRT.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic or bicycles – which are on the rise. Bicycles will be pushed to sidewalks.

We (myself and many neighbors) have been walking to the Metro for years without need or use of the bus service. It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving bus in congested streets. Look at our own bus fatalities presently.

Others have cited danger to children and pedestrians in our neighborhood and I concur. We see these cut-throughs when Wisconsin Ave is backed up. They go to Morgan where they must re-enter Wisconsin creating dangerous conditions for children of Somerset Elementary and Concord Hill.

From a business and practical view, we have a tremendous existing infrastructure for mass transit – the metro system. We have invested and continue to invest in the metro system. I believe it to be a very wise investment. It is a diamond asset of our community. Any enhancement to local transportation should leverage this asset wherever possible. That was in fact part of the argument for the metro system in the beginning. Future transit loads could be best served by expanding the capacity of the metro system. Now we abandon it in our transit need planning? Now it no longer has the expansion ability previously promoted? We should be increasing utility of this system – adding cars, trains, installing new track where current track goes to single lane or sources of bottleneck; enhance access to remote stations to encourage more utilization. Metro is all electric. It is mostly underground. It reduces road congestion, accidents, emissions. Metro is win-win. BRT is win-lose. While the auto industry is struggling to make electric transportation practical, Metro already has! It is congested because it is so wonderful.

While I appreciate including "out of the box" considerations in the planning process, we need to include the full assessment. Clearly the issues of Metro are more knowable while those of BRT are less. I also appreciate that you must be sufficiently ahead of the load in order to provide a practical implemented solution as the load increases.

Looking into the future for our area, I have to ask when an administration will awaken to the fact that having the critical elements of the federal government in Washington DC is not such a good idea and they

move Dept of Interior to Nevada or Wyoming; USDA to Iowa, Indiana or Nebraska and so on – thus reducing transit load and risk. Or the wide-spread availability of high speed internet and VPN enabling millions to perform their work from home or satellite offices.

Thank you for the hard work this task must entail.

Sincerely,

Richard Latty
4705 Langdrum Lane
Chevy Chase West

MCP-CTRACK

From: Martha Lewis <mbslewis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 8:39 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Bradley to Western

Questions:
1. How do you propose that anyone, pedestrian or driver, access travel northward on Wisconsin Avenue from Chevy Chase West?
2. Why would you choose to take five feet of property from homes along Wisconsin Avenue, rather than from the
east side, i.e., Chevy Chase Country Club, where it would not be missed in the slightest?
3. What is the population that will fill a bus every 2-3 minutes along this proposed one mile, which would not be travelling farther and,
therefore, have greater advantage and convenience by using the Metro on the same route?

Martha Lewis
4608 Norwood Drive
Chevy Chase Md 20815
301-469-0467.

MCP-CTRACK

From: Neil and Janine Gregory <njgregory@msn.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 9:31 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT in Bethesda

I'd like to record my support for BRT on Wisconsin Avenue, as a resident of downtown Bethesda, I welcome additional mass transit options to reduce traffic congestion in Bethesda.

I hope the design will also accommodate bike lines, which are also important for getting around Bethesda without a car. I mostly travel around Bethesda by bike, so this is very important to me.

Thank you.

Neil Gregory
5209 Wilson Lane, Bethesda

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jonathan Fredman <jmfredman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 9:51 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Proposal for Wisconsin Avenue Between Bradley Boulevard and Friendship Heights

To whom it may concern,

If the following reports are true, they provide even more reasons that the proposal to establish BRT between Bradley Boulevard and Friendship Heights is not only without purpose, but highly detrimental:

- the possibility that the County may take 5 feet of property of land abutting people's homes along Wisconsin Avenue.
- the fact that drivers exiting CCW will no longer be able to use the gaps in the median to come to a rest when executing a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue.
- the fact that during morning and afternoon rush hour periods, Rapid Transit Buses (BRT) will be traveling adjacent to the CCW curb at a consistent 35 miles per hour [is that the posted speed?] at 2-3 minutes intervals to maximize ridership during those peak periods.
- the fact that Wisconsin Avenue and 355 will be narrowed to 4 lanes for regular vehicles (except in the City of Rockville which is its own municipality independent of Montgomery County and which has not agreed to give up two of its vehicle lanes).

Sincerely,

Jonathan Fredman
Chevy Chase West

MCP-CTRACK

From: Beth Spiegel <ebspiegel@earthlink.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 10:49 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Chairman- We recently moved the neighborhood of Somerset. Our two boys go to local schools and have friends that live across Wisconsin Ave. We have practiced crossing Wisconsin safely many times. We are strongly against the building of the BRT down the center tree island and for reducing the width of the road and possibly reducing the pedestrian walkways. This will decrease our children's and our safety, and by increasing access of our neighborhood it could decrease the safety of our homes as well. Please consider the safety of four children and homes by rethinking the BRT and finding another area for its home. Thank you,

Elisabeth Spiegel

MCP-CTRACK

From: Jan White <janwwhite@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 11:02 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Fwd: Strong objection to Rapid Bus Transit on Wisconsin Ave between Bethesda and Friendship Heights

Dear Chairperson:

My apologies. I failed to include my street address on my email below opposing the BRT South of Bethesda Metro.

My address is 4832 Chevy Chase Blvd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

Anne W. White

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jan White <janwwhite@verizon.net>
Subject: Strong objection to Rapid Bus Transit on Wisconsin Ave between Bethesda and Friendship Heights
Date: May 29, 2013 1:28:41 AM EDT
To: MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org
Cc: Jan White <JanWhite@pasternakfidis.com>

Dear Chairperson:

I strongly urge defeat of any plan to remove the median from the Green Mile and dedicate two lanes of Wisconsin Ave traffic to buses between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. It is very disappointing that this concept is even being considered, given the grave safety threat it poses to residents in the area and the damage to our quality of life. I hope that all who are considering the BRT will come to our neighborhood, which has only one possible outlet, Wisconsin Ave, and try to make a left hand turn going North on Wisconsin during rush hour. The only safety protection residents have is the median, where only one car can sit to wait for traffic to stop going North. To turn north (a left hand turn from Chevy Chase Blvd, where I live), there is a long wait for Southbound traffic to stop to allow cars to get to the median. Northbound cars must then wait in the median for a break in North bound traffic. I drive to my downtown Bethesda office on this route daily. Out of 20 exits from my street, I estimate that only about twice can I make an immediate left turn. The rest of the time, I have to make it to the median and wait in order to leave our neighborhood. Moreover, my exits are not during rush hour, as I go to work after rush hour to avoid the traffic. If the median is eliminated, Wisconsin Ave will not be safe to turn left from our neighborhoods. We have only the exit onto Wisconsin Ave.--no other route out of the neighborhood. If we are forced to go South (by your Plan), we will be directed into the Friendship Heights traffic, with no ability to turn around (by u turn or any other way) to head North. I urge you to go to River Road and Ridgefield (near American Plant Food) and imagine trying to cross traffic and make a left hand turn across 5 lanes of heavy traffic. This is the situation you will create for our residents if you go forward with this ill planned concept.

Frequently the drive to Friendship Heights from my street (Chevy Chase Blvd) last winter was over 20 minutes. This is because Southbound traffic frequently backs up over half a mile. If you eliminate two of our lanes, we will be blocked from exiting (similarly to how residents on Bradley Blvd have become blocked by traffic that backs up and sits in front of their exits). With the back up that results, the only ability we would have to exit would be if you installed traffic lights, and our neighborhood roads are too narrow to accommodate all the residents who would have to line up to use the light.

Our neighborhood will become landlocked if you pursue this plan. Drivers will face great danger every time they leave their homes. It is bad enough that going onto Wisconsin Ave will be so dangerous, but it is unimaginable that drivers will have to face this danger every single time they leave their houses. Statistically, this creates a much higher risk of death and injury because of the frequency of this danger, since we would face it every time we leave home. This is an issue that will be the number one issue of importance to our residents.

Please do everything you can to defeat this plan that creates traffic danger and will erode our quality of life. We have bought our homes and paid high property taxes, and your plan would undermine the confidence we have put in the County to protect us, our quality of life, and our property values.

We expect to follow this issue until we can defeat the plan.

Best regards,

Anne (Jan) W. White

MCP-CTRACK

From: Julie@mannes.com
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 11:11 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Strong opposition to the BRT project between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights

Dear Chairman:

I am writing to express my complete agreement with the testimony of Elaine Akst, co-chair of the Transportation Committee in Chevy Chase West, on May 16 at the public hearing. As she so thoughtfully and eloquently said,

"I am Elaine Akst, co-chair of the Transportation Committee in Chevy Chase West, a community of 500 homes just west of MD355 between Bradley Boulevard and Drummond Avenue. I am representing the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights as well as my community association which is one of its 18 members.

I've included a map that illustrates that the only access to our community is via Wisconsin Avenue whose curb lane would be repurposed as a BRT lane in the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan being discussed today. No parallel streets exist that can be used as an alternative to Wisconsin Avenue.

My testimony should not be taken as a rejection of the concept of bus rapid transit. CCW supports efforts to improve mass transit, and has been working steadily with local and state officials to enhance transit options for our residents, including more frequent, more accessible, and more reliable local bus service, and improved pedestrian and bike facilities.

This master plan, as it relates to the Bethesda-Friendship Heights segment of MD355, raises many concerns for us.

It complicates our efforts to get better local mass transit. We are currently working to see improvements to four bus stops, and, we hope, delineated crosswalks with appropriate traffic controls as part of the State Highway Administration plan for a sidewalk/bikeway on the east side of Wisconsin. These are safety enhancements CCW and nearby communities need now.

It ignores real traffic issues on this stretch – first, vehicular access to Norwood Park, available only from Wisconsin Avenue, for the BCC preschoolers in the park plus the athletes and coaching staff – both adults and youths - involved in soccer, football, softball, baseball, and lacrosse on weekday afternoons. Secondly it ignores areas that are already effectively only two driving lanes since the southbound

curb lane of MD 355 between Somerset Terrace and Western Avenue is essentially a parking lane for delivery vehicles and vehicles dropping off patients to the medical buildings there (Pictures are also attached); and the curb lane is already a designated right turn lane between Willard and Western Avenue.

We believe restricting a curb lane to buses presents significant access and safety issues for our residents and guests. We expect more congestion in the remaining two lanes; difficulty in nosing into traffic to exit CCW; difficulty enforcing a bus-only lane; difficulty in cutting through traffic to make a left turn to northbound Wisconsin; and frustrated drivers seeking a shortcut through our neighborhood, especially in morning rush hour when our children are walking to Somerset Elementary school and students are being dropped off at Concord Hill school on Wisconsin.

The plan's Phase 2 proposes to use the median on the Green Mile for BRT. Mr. Cole said this was based on possible development of the Chevy Chase Club property, which is highly unlikely for the well-financed, century old club. Our community opposes use of the Green Mile's median and requests that this plan be removed from Phase 2.

An earlier version of the plan suggested that a one-lane reversible busway in the median would require an additional 9' of right of way, to come from private property. Why is this data not published in the latest version? This option must be detailed publicly for any affected residents.

Planning staff predictions look at the entire MD355 corridor. We believe that ridership will be considerably less than the 1440 predicted between Bradley and Friendship Heights, in light of the lack of connectivity between Montgomery County bus service and DC bus service. Current RideOn volume here is small, partly because of infrequent service and unsafe bus stops. An advantage of BRT is supposed to be quicker boarding and access, but this won't happen if travelers must transfer from Montgomery county buses to either the Red Line or DC buses. There is currently no plan to extend service from either jurisdiction to the other.

This points up the problem in developing a one-size-fits all proposal, wherein standards and goals that are fine for one segment may not be appropriate for another. The standards laid out by the consultant IDTP for BRT should be carefully applied so that our residential neighborhoods can share wherever possible in the benefits of BRT, can be protected from deleterious effects, and can have local mass transit alternatives, if endorsed by the community, developed simultaneously with BRT efforts.

To do this, communities along proposed BRT routes MUST be consulted and heard throughout the planning and implementation process. We – local residents – know some things that planners don't about traffic

patterns and needs.

Accordingly, we have the following suggestions for any BRT planning:

- any MD355 BRT first phase should go only to the Bethesda metro stop as its southernmost point.

- extension southward from Bethesda should be dependent on and developed in conjunction with extension of WMATA bus lines between DC and MD.

- dropoff issues between Somerset Terrace and Willard Avenue should be dealt with before designating a curb bus lane.

- local bus service between Bethesda and Friendship Heights should be improved to enhance eventual BRT use on this stretch.

- crosswalks and appropriate traffic controls must be instituted before designating a bus lane, to improve safe local bus and BRT access.

- if and when bus lines are extended between Maryland and DC, two stops between Bradley and Western should be part of any BRT plan, in accord with general practice of stops every half mile to mile.

- use of the median south of Bethesda/Bradley for BRT should be rejected."

As a Chevy Chase West homeowner, parent, and taxpayer, I am opposed to the proposed Rapid Transit Buses (BRT) between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights. As a long-time resident of Chevy Chase West, I am extremely concerned that the negative impacts of this segment of the public transit project have not been adequately studied and addressed by the Master Plan for the County. Specifically, I am extremely concerned about pedestrian and bicycle safety, safely exiting our neighborhood onto Wisconsin Avenue (in both directions, but especially making left hand turns northbound), safety issues created by queue jumping, etc. Our neighborhood was informed for the first time of the following disturbing issues at last night's meeting led by Larry Cole:

-the possibility that the County may take 5 feet of property of land abutting people's homes along Wisconsin Avenue

-the fact that drivers exiting CCW will no longer be able to use the gaps in the median to come to a rest when executing a left turn onto Wisconsin Avenue

-during morning and afternoon rush hour periods, Rapid Transit Buses (BRT) will be traveling adjacent to the CCW curb at a consistent 35 miles per hour at 2-3 minutes intervals to maximize ridership during those peak periods.

-Wisconsin Avenue and 355 will be narrowed to 4 lanes for regular vehicles (except in the City of Rockville which is its own municipality independent of Montgomery County and which has not agreed to give up two of its vehicle lanes).

-Larry Cole stated that no bike lane is included in the Master Plan for our area

BRT buses would get a special earlier green light ("queue jumping") at the intersection of Bradley and Wisconsin and move diagonally across the lanes of traffic to transition back and forth from median lanes (north of Bradley Blvd.) and curb lanes (south of Bradley).

The BRT proposal includes the construction of a boarding station in the median at Bradley Blvd.

The BRT project is an illogical waste of taxpayer dollars which could be better spent by improving our current Metrorail and Ride-On Bus systems. Please reconsider your plan.

Sincerely,

Julie Mannes

4814 Drummond Ave.
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Julie@mannes.com
Sent: Wednesday, May 29, 2013 11:29 PM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: I am opposed to BRT in Chevy Chase West (MD-355 between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights)

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board:

I am a long-time resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to my local community that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in our own area. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic. It is hard enough already to turn onto Wisconsin Avenue from my neighborhood during rush hour without BRT buses speed down the curb lane.

It will remain more practical for my family members (husband and four kids) to walk to Metro and local schools than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or
local. There is not even a BRT stop planned between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights. I believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or
a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses along congested streets.

I truly believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children. This happens now during rush hour when traffic backs up between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights and will only become worse with the addition of BRT along that stretch of roadway.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients (often disabled and/or elderly) at the medical buildings (5530 and 5454 Wisconsin). There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

There has been no thought given to where the BRT buses would turn around at Friendship Heights, which is already extremely congested.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions in CCW. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane in each direction.

Sincerely,

Julie Mannes
4814 Drummond Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Joanna Acocella <jbacocella@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 12:19 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Commentary

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

The meeting with Larry Cole to discuss the impact of the BRT project on the Chevy Chase West green mile was eye opening -- frightening new facts emerged (like the fact that buses will travel at a steady clip of 35 mph down the curb lane every 2-3 minutes), and yet plenty of questions went unanswered (apparently because details aren't relevant at this point in the planning process).

I am not unconcerned about the growth in vehicular traffic in the area. But I am also not unconcerned about the impact of removing precious green space, eliminating the ability for drivers to safely enter/exit a residential neighborhood, and claiming private land. MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

I encourage you to spend a morning rush hour on this section of MD355/Wisconsin Avenue. To navigate the roads requires skill and patience. It is already a challenge for young and old drivers alike and our neighborhood lays claim to plenty of both. The grass median serves as a safety valve for cars looking to turn left in or out of our narrow streets. It also serves to keep traffic flowing on MD355 by acting as a turn lane. South of Willard Avenue, the rush hour already loses one lane of traffic as vehicles stop in the curb lane to allow patients to exit their cars and enter the numerous medical buildings. Neither of these realities appears to have made it into the planning process.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

I must admit to not fully understanding the interplay between the various planning boards, advisory committees and elected officials in determining the final outcome of this project. Forgive me if you are not the right person at the right time to address this. But after the expensive and outrageous debacle that is the Silver Spring transportation project, every one of our county officials and planners should be keenly aware of and held

accountable for transportation decisions of this magnitude in terms of both cost and safety.

Please stop the BRT experiment on the Green Mile.

Sincerely,

JB Acocella
Chevy Chase Boulevard
jbacocella@yahoo.com

MCP-CTRACK

From: Wendie Smith <wendiesmith@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 6:31 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Wendie Smith
4602 Norwood Drive
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Bernadette Kiel <kielcrew@me.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:26 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

Good morning. I am a resident of downtown Bethesda and I OPPOSE the plan to change Wisconsin Ave. to include a bus lane in the middle.

The current landscaping provides a beautiful welcome to visitors to downtown Bethesda. Why would you change that to less green space and more hardscape? What happened to Bethesda Green???

Why are you making Rockville a more pedestrial/bike friendly town and Bethesda not? Give it and take it away, makes no sense. Downtown Bethesda is a residential community. Do you know that our children walk to elementary school and high school? Walking/biking to high school requires many kids to cross Wisconsin Avenue. Adding a bus lane will make it even more difficult than it is to cross the street. These same kids also leave for lunch every day, many of them walking into Woodmont Triangle to Chipotle to eat. Again, this requires crossing Wisconsin Ave. Is there safety not a concern?

What happens to parking on Wisc. Ave? We already have enough parking problems, why would you take away parking? This will greatly effect businesses along Wisc. Ave.

If you want to encourage people to use mass transit, give them a discount on Metro. It's runs the same direction of the bus lane.

You are making a bad choice to remove the media strip on Wisconsin Ave. I OPPOSE this change.

Bernadette Kiel
Resident, Downtown Bethesda

MCP-CTRACK

From: Barbara Hoover <BarbaraRHoover@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:27 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT

I strongly oppose the plan but would support more metro stations to accommodate a larger population. The gaps between stations are simply to far.

Barbara Hoover
Chevy Chase, Md

Sent from my iPad

MCP-CTRACK

From: Edie Purdie <ediepurdie@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:35 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT impact on Chevy Chase West and communities between Bethesda and Friendship Heights.

TO: MCP-Chairman@mncppc-mc.org
Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is not the place for a pilot project or experiment.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic. Indeed the proposed removal of the median and its intermittent gaps will seriously impact drivers' ability to turn left from the neighborhood and north on MD 355.

It will remain more practical for most of us to walk to Metro than to rely on bus service, whether BRT or local. We believe that BRT will reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

We believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children.

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

Creating BRT in established communities presents a unique set of challenges in each place. This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan, and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Purdie

4808 Chevy Chase Blvd

Chevy Chase MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Lis Nielsen <lis.nielsen@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 7:43 AM
To: MCP-Chair; lis.nielsen@verizon.net
Subject: NO to plans for BRT on Wisconsin Ave

As a Bethesda resident, I am deeply concerned about plans to remove trees and narrow sidewalks along Wisconsin Ave for a new rapid transit bus lane. This will adversely impact the appealing character of downtown Bethesda and the corridor that extends to Friendship Heights. It will make the experience of pedestrians less pleasant, raising the temperature and potentially reducing traffic to businesses and restaurants along the street due to less shade. It will effectively turn Wisconsin into a highway cutting right through our community. We ALREADY have rapid transit from Rockville to Friendship Heights! The Metro serves this purpose well. What we need to assure a healthy future for our community and its residents is a more walkable and bikeable infrastructure.
Please do not alter our community in this way!
Respectfully,
Lis Nielsen
111 Lucas Lane
Bethesda 20814
301-718-1695

MCP-CTRACK

From: joshf@usual-suspects.org
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 8:16 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Opposition of removal of median on Wisconsin/355

I am writing to register my opposition to the removal of the median strip on Wisconsin Ave / 355 for BRT purposes.

Thanks,
Josh Freedman
Bethesda
--

MCP-CTRACK

From: Nancy Balz <Nancy.Balz@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 8:49 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov Berliner; councilmember.floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov; Ike.Leggett@montgomerycountymd.gov
Subject: BRT bus only lanes on Wisconsin Ave, through Bethesda, etc.

I am opposed to the proposed bus only lanes, 2-3 minute intervals between buses, 35 mph speed limit for buses in the bus only lane, surrounding neighborhoods drivers not being able to use the gaps in the median to make left hand turns onto Wisconsin, special earlier green lights for buses, and five feet of land taken along Wisconsin Ave.

These are all points in a plan which has no accommodation for pedestrians who use Wisconsin, especially the five feet removal which will create a greater conflict between pedestrians and bicyclists. The situation along Old Georgetown Road is bad and now you would make that the model for Wisconsin. I oppose it.

Nancy Balz
7816 Glenbrook Road
Bethesda MD 20814
(301)654-8663

MCP-CTRACK

From: Judith Graef <graefwkd@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:04 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Wisconsin Avenue plan

To Whom it May Concern
As a long time resident of downtown Bethesda I must register my disapproval of the BRT plan proposed for Wisconsin Avenue. pedestrian safety has been a constant issue in this area, a fact frequently highlighted by police. There is always heavy pedestrian traffic, especially during the school year. Introducing a special lane for rapid bus transport will add to the problem. In addition, this community has been making considerable concessions, over the years, to accommodate having close and convenient Metro subway service.

Judith L Graef
5201 Wilson Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814

Sent from my iPad

MCP-CTRACK

From: Keith Ernst <keith.ernst@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:14 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: Elaine Akst
Subject: BRT plan comments

I am writing to express concerns about the portions of the proposed BRT plan that would affect Chevy Chase West and other communities located adjacent to Wisconsin Avenue, between Bradley Boulevard and Western Avenue.

I would like to ask that the concerns expressed by Elaine Akst at a May 16 public hearing on the event be treated as incorporated in this letter and incorporated into any summary of comments as if fully set forth in this email.

I would also like to add some additional perspective on some of the issues she rasied at that event.

While I join Elaine in her general support for improved mass transit solutions for Montgomery County, I too am very concerned that the current plan for the BRT will have uniformly negative effects on my community. In fact, the current plan seems to isloate our community and make vehicular ingress and egress complicated, unpleasant, and potentially dangerous in addition to creating additional hazards for pedestrians, including the many children who live and play in our neighborhood and make use of neighborhood streets, which in many cases are the only paved service since sidewalks are not uniformly available.

As I understand the plan, no BRT stops would be provided South of Bradley Boulevard until the terminal stop, essentially skipping our community entirely. Even if a stop or two is included, it is unclear to me whether the fare structure would entice riders to use the bus despite the proposed frequency. At the same time, as Elaine points out, efforts to improve service on the local 34 line, which is a key resource for residents and those that work in the area, will likely be set back by the current plan.

In addition, the plan will result in restricted options for access to Wisconsin Avenue in both directions, a critical defect given that Wisconsin Avenue is the only entrance and exit route for our neighborhood. First, turning right (southbound) on Wisconsin Avenue will be much more difficult when three lanes of vehicular traffic are squeezed into two. Second, turning left (northbound) will be complicated if access to the median buffer curb cuts are restricted, as I understand is potentially the case. The likely solution to this problem is the installation of one or more traffic lights, further slowing traffic on Wisconsin Avenue, and of perhaps greater concern, funneling all traffic in the neighborhood (residents, service providers, school busses, etc.) onto one or two residential streets, unfairly burdening residents of those streets and all connecting lanes as well as the children and other pedestrians that use those same narrow roads now.

Finally, in terms of isolation and safety concerns, I believe that traffic will detour from Wisconsin Avenue into the neighborhood at peak hours. This is not mere conjecture. During a recent water main break at Wisconsin Avenue and Dorset Avenue, Southbound traffic backed up in response to a lane closure and I personally witnessed dozens of drivers (over a span of just several minutes that I was present) detouring into our neighborhood in search of quicker routes and then exiting back onto Wisconsin Avenue. These drivers were understandably unfamiliar with our streets, in a hurry to make progress on their trip, and, as a result, were

driving in generally unsafe ways. The changing traffic patterns anticipated in the plan, as I understand it, threaten to recreate these conditions on a daily basis.

On one other point, I would like to ask that the phase 2 plan portions that would result in alteration of the median and potential loss of curbside trees be reconsidered as Elaine suggests. The transition from Friendship Heights to Bethesda that is provided by the "green mile" is a valuable asset to the larger community, including Montgomery County as a whole. It signals to those entering out county that they are leaving Washington and entering a new place, where quality of life is emphasized. Loss or damage to this asset is more than aesthetic, it goes to the heart of what has made Bethesda an attractive place to work, develop, and live. This value is admittedly harder to quantify and easy to underweight in the face of calculations that must be made about transportation needs based on readily quantifiable estimates of traffic, but we neglect it at our own peril. Once lost, such assets are exceedingly difficult to rehabilitate or recover.

Thank you for considering my comments and for your continued public service.

Sincerely,

Keith Ernst
4711 De Russey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

MCP-CTRACK

From: Lorraine Voles <lvoles@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:34 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Rapid Bus Transit -- Wisconsin Avenue Corridor

To whom it may concern:
I am concerned about the county's planning process for a Rapid Bus Transit on the Wisconsin Avenue corridor between Bradley Boulevard and Friendship Heights. I live on Drummond Avenue and during school hours the only egress from our street is Drummond to Wisconsin Ave. Turning left on Wisconsin is already a challenge and the open spot between north bound and south bound traffic is very important so one is not forced to wait for four to six lanes of traffic to clear.
I am also concerned about the noise factor during rush hour, students from two elementary schools walking near these buses, the lack of bike lanes and the possibility of taking of people's private property.
I will be paying close attention to this issue as it moves forward as will my neighborhood association.
Thank you,
Lorraine A. Voles
4515 Drummond Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD

MCP-CTRACK

From: Robert Silverberg <rsilverberg@sgbdc.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:52 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Objections to BRT Plan

Set forth below are my comments on the Staff Study recommending BRT service between Friendship Heights and the Bethesda Metro stop. Whatever the benefits of BRT service north of the Bethesda Metro stop, there is no justification for extending the BRT to Friendship Heights for the reasons cited below:

There is simply no substantial justification for a ***third*** public transit corridor between Friendship Heights and Bethesda Metro stop.

The impacts resulting from the reduction in the capacity of Wisconsin Ave for cars and trucks south of Bradley Blvd. has not been studied or considered.

Morning and evening rush hour traffic will result in even longer backups than is now the case, thereby increasing pollution along Wisconsin Ave. directly impacting the Chevy Chase West (CCW) community.

High potential of cars to cut though CCW to avoid traffic along Wisconsin Ave. in rush hours.

In Phase 2, no left turns out of CCW would be permitted thereby requiring drivers to make difficult U-turns across the median while avoiding buses in order to go north on Wisconsin Ave. (New Orleans famous St. Charles Ave. trolley cars often strike cars turning into the median strip on St. Charles Ave. I know I lived in New Orleans).

There is no substantial evidence the BRT service will cause a reduction in traffic on lower Wisconsin Ave by diverting drivers to BRT riders. And why should it considering the availability of Metro and Ride-On bus service.

According to one study conducted by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Research Results Digest 362, drivers shifting to BRT will actually incur an increase in transit time, thereby throwing into question the theory that BRT transit times will be sufficiently fast as to encourage drivers to take the BRT in lieu of driving. Likewise, the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy notes that in the County that most residents can park their cars at home and near work, making it difficult for BRT to divert car owners to the BRT unless the congestion on Route 355 (brought on by the forced reduction in roadway capacity) is very significant.

This same study acknowledges that the loss of capacity for mixed flow traffic can cause a "significant increase in vehicle delay". Wishing this inconvenient fact away, as does the Staff Study, does not serve the Planning Board well. Further, this impact must be considered when performing the mandatory cost/benefit analysis.

Access to and from CCW is solely by Wisconsin Ave. There is no "back way" into the community. Clogging up Wisconsin Ave. will have a substantial negative impact on the community, the value of our homes, and ultimately a reduction in County real estate tax revenues based on lower home value appraisals. These very real costs must be included in any calculation of the costs of the BRT project.

(Looking at the issue from the perspective of the benefits to the CCW community, note that there would be no stops between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights, meaning that although the BRT will back up traffic on Wisconsin Ave, (by the forced elimination of two Wisc. Ave. lanes) CCW residents will have to walk to several blocks in either direction to take advantage of the BRT should it be built. CCW gets all of the detriments and none of the (alleged) benefits of the BRT. How can the Planning Board so disadvantage a community of almost 500 homes.)

Any proposal that is predicated on intentionally increasing congestion on the roadway in order to induce drivers to switch to the BRT is an unacceptably bad public policy and an unwelcome form of social engineering. My tax dollars should be given equal weight to the taxpayers that may have a greater interest in taking public transit than I do. Purposefully increasing roadway congestion is not the answer. Where the District Govt. recently tried it on Wisconsin Ave. NW, south of Massachusetts Ave., delays and backups have been created where none existed before a lane was removed in each direction from the roadway—similar to the Plan for Wisconsin Ave. in the County. I for one avoid the worst of the congestion on Wisc. Ave in the District by going through neighborhood streets in NW Washington. Causing traffic to divert from thoroughfares to neighborhood streets is not good policy but is nonetheless the consequence of intentionally inducing traffic congestion. And where the backups of traffic now build, vehicular exhaust pollution is higher than before the DC Govt. undertook its Wisconsin Avenue project. It is reasonable to expect the same result in Maryland if 1/3 of the capacity of Wisconsin Ave is lost to the BRT system.

An independent study of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) found that project peak hour, peak directional ridership on Route 355 is less than ¼ the minimum recommended by the FTA to support a BRT lane. Further ITDP forecast ridership is lower than actual ridership levels reached on BRT lines throughout the world.

The cost per new daily rider is extremely high (by your estimate of capital costs and passenger demand, $12,500 per new daily rider) and thousands more than all but one of the 5 recently studied BRT systems. Mineta Transportation Institute, From Buses to BRT, Case Studies of Incremental BRT Projects in North America, Table 19. And this calculation assumes the staff's overly optimistic estimate of ridership.

The funding source for the BRT system has not been identified. Fares are only forecast to cover 33% of the O&M cost. Even this estimate is suspect since it is based on the Staff's over optimistic ridership forecast. Cost to build out the system is estimated between $2.3 and 2.5 billion. The County is already a very high cost jurisdiction. How much more of a burden can the County impose on its taxpayers? Or how much debt is the County willing to take on in order to test its theory of BRT public benefits.

The Planning Board staff admits that many of the facilitation issues that must be addressed will only be considered once the Plan is approved by the Council and the County Executive. Yet the homeowners in Chevy Chase West and Somerset had many real world, practical questions about how the BRT lanes would impact their communities for which no answers were given other than that the questions will be studied sometime in the future. This struck many in the audience at the recent public meeting, myself included, as an example of inadequate planning. The Staff knew nothing of the characteristics of stop and go traffic on lower Wisconsin Ave., including, the use of the sidewalks and cross walks by school age children and the frequency of required curb lane drop offs in front of two large medical buildings, often by elderly individuals who take considerable time to come and go. Knowing these issues have not been adequately addressed by Staff should inform the Board's vote on the BRT Plan even if the study of these issues was intentionally (but incorrectly) left to a later time.

There are ready alternatives to BRT. First, of course, is Metro (the gold standard of mass transit systems) and its capacity to increase service by reducing headway and increasing the number of cars per train. The Staff assumed, incorrectly, that increasing Metro capacity was simply not possible. (And it bears repeating that this Metro service runs directly under Wisconsin Ave on which the BRT lanes would be installed, rendering BRT completely redundant). Second, Ride-On buses, which are currently very undersubscribed by substantial margins, could be increased in frequency to attract more riders. It is not clear the Staff properly considered either of these alternatives before advocating a full blown BRT system—a system that will simply parallel existing mass transit options along Wisconsin Ave.

And I end where I started. Given the considerable cost and dubious benefits, I again must question why the Planning Board believes that yet an additional mass transit alternative is advisable to run from the Bethesda Metro stop to Friendship Heights when there are so many negative impacts by taking the curb lane and perhaps later the median strip for the BRT system and when there are already in place two public transit options for those traveling the lower portion of Wisconsin Ave. in the County.

Very truly yours,

Robert P. Silverberg
4612 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Robert P. Silverberg
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fax 202-944-3306
mobile 301-922-8895

MCP-CTRACK

From: Lisa Krochmal <lisakrochmal01@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:55 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: BRT Plan for Wisconsin Avenue--DISSENT

Dear County Planning Deparment

I am resident of Somerset off of Wisconsin Avenue and I would like to register our dissent to the BRT plan for Wisconsin Avenue.

With the Red Line metro available it is completely not useful nor safe to add fast bus service. Instead the county should be coordinating more to bring ridership to the metro.

Wisconsin is already congested and serves many neighborhoods on either side, which would be literally cut off by the BRT plan. In addition shouldn't the county be encouraging more of walkable neighborhood around Friendship Heights-adding the BRT would severly disrupt the businesses and already limited nature of the walkability of Friendship Heights.

We strongly disagree with the plans, which includle eliminating the medians (which add to walkability), eliminating lanes and limiting turning.

The BRT service sounds dangerous considering the children coming to school at Somerset and completely contrary to encourage metro ridership, walking and biking. If anyone is going to take public transport down Wisconsin, they'll take the Metro,

PLEASE DO NOT CONTINUE WITH THIS PLAN.

Regards

Lisa Krochmal

Somerset Resident

MCP-CTRACK

From: Robert Silverberg <rsilverberg@sgbdc.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:07 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: FW: Objections to BRT Plan

From: Robert Silverberg
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 9:53 AM
To: 'mcp-chairman@mncppc-mc.org'
Subject: Objections to BRT Plan

Set forth below are my comments on the Staff Study recommending BRT service between Friendship Heights and the Bethesda Metro stop. Whatever the benefits of BRT service north of the Bethesda Metro stop, there is no justification for extending the BRT to Friendship Heights for the reasons cited below:

There is simply no substantial justification for a ***third*** public transit corridor between Friendship Heights and Bethesda Metro stop.

The impacts resulting from the reduction in the capacity of Wisconsin Ave for cars and trucks south of Bradley Blvd. has not been studied or considered.

Morning and evening rush hour traffic will result in even longer backups than is now the case, thereby increasing pollution along Wisconsin Ave. directly impacting the Chevy Chase West (CCW) community.

High potential of cars to cut though CCW to avoid traffic along Wisconsin Ave. in rush hours.

In Phase 2, no left turns out of CCW would be permitted thereby requiring drivers to make difficult U-turns across the median while avoiding buses in order to go north on Wisconsin Ave. (New Orleans famous St. Charles Ave. trolley cars often strike cars turning into the median strip on St. Charles Ave. I know I lived in New Orleans).

There is no substantial evidence the BRT service will cause a reduction in traffic on lower Wisconsin Ave by diverting drivers to BRT riders. And why should it considering the availability of Metro and Ride-On bus service.

According to one study conducted by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, Research Results Digest 362, drivers shifting to BRT will actually incur an increase in transit time, thereby throwing into question the theory that BRT transit times will be sufficiently fast as to encourage drivers to take the BRT in lieu of driving. Likewise, the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy notes that in the County that most residents can park their cars at home and near work, making it difficult for BRT to divert car owners to the BRT unless the congestion on Route 355 (brought on by the forced reduction in roadway capacity) is very significant.

This same study acknowledges that the loss of capacity for mixed flow traffic can cause a "significant increase in vehicle delay". Wishing this inconvenient fact away, as does the Staff Study, does not serve the Planning Board well. Further, this impact must be considered when performing the mandatory cost/benefit analysis.

Access to and from CCW is solely by Wisconsin Ave. There is no "back way" into the community. Clogging up Wisconsin Ave. will have a substantial negative impact on the community, the value of our homes, and ultimately a reduction in County real estate tax revenues based on lower home value appraisals. These very real costs must be included in any calculation of the costs of the BRT project.

(Looking at the issue from the perspective of the benefits to the CCW community, note that there would be no stops between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights, meaning that although the BRT will back up traffic on Wisconsin Ave, (by the forced elimination of two Wisc. Ave. lanes) CCW residents will have to walk to several blocks in either direction to take advantage of the BRT should it be built. CCW gets all of the detriments and none of the (alleged) benefits of the BRT. How can the Planning Board so disadvantage a community of almost 500 homes.)

Any proposal that is predicated on intentionally increasing congestion on the roadway in order to induce drivers to switch to the BRT is an unacceptably bad public policy and an unwelcome form of social engineering. My tax dollars should be given equal weight to the taxpayers that may have a greater interest in taking public transit than I do. Purposefully increasing roadway congestion is not the answer. Where the District Govt. recently tried it on Wisconsin Ave. NW, south of Massachusetts Ave., delays and backups have been created where none existed before a lane was removed in each direction from the roadway—similar to the Plan for Wisconsin Ave. in the County. I for one avoid the worst of the congestion on Wisc. Ave in the District by going through neighborhood streets in NW Washington. Causing traffic to divert from thoroughfares to neighborhood streets is not good policy but is nonetheless the consequence of intentionally inducing traffic congestion. And where the backups of traffic now build, vehicular exhaust pollution is higher than before the DC Govt. undertook its Wisconsin Avenue project. It is reasonable to expect the same result in Maryland if 1/3 of the capacity of Wisconsin Ave is lost to the BRT system.

An independent study of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) found that project peak hour, peak directional ridership on Route 355 is less than ¼ the minimum recommended by the FTA to support a BRT lane. Further ITDP forecast ridership is lower than actual ridership levels reached on BRT lines throughout the world.

The cost per new daily rider is extremely high (by your estimate of capital costs and passenger demand, $12,500 per new daily rider) and thousands more than all but one of the 5 recently studied BRT systems. Mineta Transportation Institute, From Buses to BRT, Case Studies of Incremental BRT Projects in North America, Table 19. And this calculation assumes the staff's overly optimistic estimate of ridership.

The funding source for the BRT system has not been identified. Fares are only forecast to cover 33% of the O&M cost. Even this estimate is suspect since it is based on the Staff's over optimistic ridership forecast. Cost to build out the system is estimated between $2.3 and 2.5 billion. The County is already a very high cost jurisdiction. How much more of a burden can the County impose on its taxpayers? Or how much debt is the County willing to take on in order to test its theory of BRT public benefits.

The Planning Board staff admits that many of the facilitation issues that must be addressed will only be considered once the Plan is approved by the Council and the County Executive. Yet the homeowners in Chevy Chase West and Somerset had many real world, practical questions about how the BRT lanes would impact their communities for which no answers were given other than that the questions will be studied sometime in the future. This struck many in the audience at the recent public meeting, myself included, as an example of inadequate planning. The Staff knew nothing of the characteristics of stop and go traffic on lower Wisconsin Ave., including, the use of the sidewalks and cross walks by school age children and the frequency of required curb lane drop offs in front of two large medical buildings, often by elderly individuals who take considerable time to come and go. Knowing these issues have not been adequately addressed by Staff should inform the Board's vote on the BRT Plan even if the study of these issues was intentionally (but incorrectly) left to a later time.

There are ready alternatives to BRT. First, of course, is Metro (the gold standard of mass transit systems) and its capacity to increase service by reducing headway and increasing the number of cars per train. The Staff assumed, incorrectly, that increasing Metro capacity was simply not possible. (And it bears repeating that this Metro service runs directly under Wisconsin Ave on which the BRT lanes would be installed, rendering BRT completely redundant). Second, Ride-On buses, which are currently very undersubscribed by substantial margins, could be increased in frequency to attract more riders. It is not clear the Staff properly considered either of these alternatives before advocating a full blown BRT system—a system that will simply parallel existing mass transit options along Wisconsin Ave.

And I end where I started. Given the considerable cost and dubious benefits, I again must question why the Planning Board believes that yet an additional mass transit alternative is advisable to run from the Bethesda Metro stop to Friendship Heights when there are so many negative impacts by taking the curb lane and perhaps later the median strip for the BRT system and when there are already in place two public transit options for those traveling the lower portion of Wisconsin Ave. in the County.

Very truly yours,

Robert P. Silverberg
4612 DeRussey Parkway
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Robert P. Silverberg
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mobile 301-922-8895

MCP-CTRACK

From: Terry Roberts <terryroberts3@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:20 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Proposed BRT on Wisconsin Ave-- Bad idea!!

Dear Chair Carrier and members of the Planning Board,

I am a resident of Chevy Chase West who is concerned about the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan and the impact that BRT will have between Bethesda and Friendship Heights.

Planners have not given adequate consideration to local communities that will not only receive no benefits from a BRT system, but will face more danger navigating in their own areas. MD355 between Bethesda and Friendship Heights is **definitely not the place for a pilot project or experiment**.

MD355/Wisconsin Avenue is the only way to enter and leave CCW; all our internal streets are dead ends. Any change on this stretch has real implications for accessibility, usually for the worse. Buses speeding down a BRT curb lane are not conducive to cars nosing out into traffic.

I believe that BRT will greatly reduce pedestrian safety. Whether using a fast-moving designated lane or a median transitway that must be accessed on foot by riders, BRT-related pedestrian fatalities in other countries point to the dangers of a large, fast-moving buses in congested streets.

I believe frustrated drivers will try to avoid traffic by cutting through our neighborhood, endangering our children who walk to Somerset Elementary School on streets with no sidewalks. These drivers will not be watching for small children-- or even for adults!

From Somerset Terrace to Willard Avenue, MD355 is already effectively two lanes, because vehicles park there to drop off patients at the medical buildings. There is no recognition of this use in the plan.

In light of the lack of connectivity between bus service in Montgomery County and DC, continuing BRT past the Bethesda Metro will provide no additional benefit to riders, who will need to transfer to Red Line metro or a different bus at Friendship Heights.

This plan does not adequately consider local conditions. **Please remove consideration of the median between Bradley and Western as part of this plan,** and defer consideration of a BRT lane here until a pilot project elsewhere shows that BRT can attract enough riders to offset the loss of a car lane.

Please acknowledge receipt of this registered objection. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,
Theresa Walsh Roberts
4818 Drummond Avenue
Chevy Chase MD 20815
301-657-1455

--
Terry Walsh Roberts
terryroberts3@gmail.com

MCP-CTRACK

From: Rivera, Angela <angela.rivera@urs.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:21 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: RE: Please support greater investment in Rapid Transit and Public Transit in general

Hello –

I am a Montgomery County resident, bordering Takoma Park, and we would love to see a stronger commitment to improved public transportation infrastructure in the region, and particularly Rapid Transit. Having travelled and lived abroad, we find it mind boggling that our nation's capital and surrounding areas have such a difficult time relinquishing the automobile and committing to a denser, more integrally connected urban environment. Please support proposals for investment in our public transportation.

Thank you,

Angi Rivera, LEED AP (BD+C), Assoc. AIA, CDT
URS Corporation | **Regional Sustainability Practice Leader**
2020 K Street, NW | Suite 300 | Washington, DC 20006
tel: 202.772.0651 | mob: 202.213.5275 | angela.rivera@urs.com


Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail

Click here for URS 2013 Sustainability Report

MCP-CTRACK

From: Laura DeBruce <ldb@debruceblackman.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:28 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Don't approve the BRT

Dear Chairman and Council Members,

Please do not approve the BRT down Wisconsin Avenue. It is redundant, a waste of taxpayer dollars, and destroys the Green Mile. Plus, our community has no representation on your board. We will remember this vote come election time.

Sincerely,

Laura DeBruce
Hunt Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD

MCP-CTRACK

From: Maura Vanderzon <maurabv@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:28 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Cc: Jim Vanderzon
Subject: Wisconsin Avenue BRT

Dear Parks and Planning Chairman,

I would like to record my position as being STRONGLY OPPOSED to the Bus Rapid Transit plan for Wisconsin Avenue between Bethesda and Friendship Heights. There is a perfectly adequate Metrobus route as well as the Red Line subway along this corridor already, and this stretch of Wisconsin is heavily used by pedestrians, schoolchildren and cyclists, whose safety would all be compromised by this proposal. In fact, I believe the biggest impact on transportation in this area would be to install a dedicated bicycle lane, which would enable many of us who live in the area and drive along this route regularly to feel safer getting out of our cars and onto our bikes.

The BRT lanes are a REALLY AWFUL idea and I sincerely hope that the outcry against them will be so loud that this plan will be DOA very soon.

Thanks for allowing me to express my thoughts.

Maura Vanderzon
4902 Falstone Avenue
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
maurabv@verizon.net
301-951-7172

MCP-CTRACK

From: Bryce Vermillion (CBRE, Inc) <v-brverm@microsoft.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:32 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: OPPOSE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

This is a terrible idea, let's just cut down all the tree in downtown! Then we can cause more pollution, add more smog to our great metro that is losing 20 -100 yr. old trees that protect our city from smog by the minute! All in the name of traffic! Not to mention the danger that will ensue for my sons walking to school (BCC) with buses whizzing up and down downtown.

Protect the environment for future generation!!!!!! More pavement is NOT the answer.

Bryce Vermillion | Project Manager, CBRE

v-brverm@microsoft.com | o 301.771.8165 | c 202.375.4289 | http://refweb

Real Estate & Facilities
Building Intelligent Solutions

Microsoft

MCP-CTRACK

From: Marie Park <doublepark@verizon.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:36 AM
To: MCP-Chair
Subject: Comment opposing 355/Wisconsin BRT Corridor in its entirety
Attachments: Dear Planning Board.docx

Marie Park, Somerset ES and Westland MS parent
4806 Derussey Parkway, Chevy Chase

Dear Planning Board Members,

I oppose the inclusion of the entire 355/Wisconsin Corridor in the Master plan for BRT. I believe that BCC High School (located north of Bethesda metro) students will face increased risk of pedestrian accidents when walking to and from school and during their lunch break if BRT is implemented on this corridor. At the May 28, 2013 Meeting with Larry Cole at the Concord School, Mr. Cole displayed statistics in his Power Point presentation to suggest that cars cause more deaths and injuries than trucks and buses. His slide was misleading though because the numbers he cited were from the National Highway and Transportation Administration's examination of all injuries and deaths related to vehicle accidents (driver and passenger deaths and injuries were included) and not specific to pedestrian injuries.

My concern is the increased risk when you (1) introduce large buses that will be traveling in high frequency, 2-3 minutes during morning and afternoon rush hours, and (2) give those buses designated-lanes to travel, resulting in two different types of traffic flow on 355/Wisconsin Ave. Last September 2012, the Rio press noted that their new BRT system caused 4 pedestrian fatalities very soon after it was implemented—including the death of a 17 year-old high school student who was hit by the BRT bus as he walked to school. See http://riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/rio-real-estate/brt-accidents-causing-concern-in-rio/. The 355/Wisconsin Avenue Corridor is unique because more than 7500 students walk, are driven by parents, or ride schools buses on that corridor during morning and afternoon rush hours (see school list below). NHTSA has repeatedly explained the increased safety issues for student walkers. (See attached NHTSA report excerpts).

The 355/Wisconsin Ave. corridor includes Richard Montgomery High School (2200 students) and BCC High School (2400 students with renovation)—two of the largest public high

schools in the MCPS system. At both schools, students have lunch off-campus and cross the road during a 40-minute lunch break. BCC High School students often jaywalk, finding breaks in the traffic flow in order to cross 355/Wisconsin Ave. Because BRT buses are better able to travel the posted speed limit and have traffic signal priority; they travel at a faster speed than regular congested traffic. Having these large buses traveling faster than the other 4 lanes of traffic makes crossing and jaywalking more dangerous. BRT traffic light signaling is also different than traditional light signaling, to which these high school students are accustomed. Queue jumping and signaling priority (sensors that give BRT buses a green light as they approach) will cause confusion and misjudgments by students when crossing the 6 lanes of traffic. Currently, more than 1800 students are enrolled at BCC High School. Sit at that intersection at 10:54-11:34 a.m. and try to imagine these 14-18 year-olds crossing when it reaches the projected enrollment of 2,400 students (the number when BRT would be implemented). A signaled crosswalk can't contain that capacity so students will continue to seek other ways to cross Wisconsin Ave. when buying lunch. This corridor should not be included in the Master Plan.

Schools on 355/Wisconsin Ave. BRT Corridor (7,617 Students)

Richard Montgomery HS: **2,200** students (9^{th} -12^{th})
BCC High School renovation- capacity of **2,400** students (9^{th}-12^{th})
Georgetown Prep: **480** students (9th-12th)
Stone Ridge: **660** students (pre K-12^{th})
Concord Hill: **100** students (preK- 3^{rd} grade)
Bethesda Elementary School renovation- capacity **568** (K-5^{th})
BCC Cooperative Nursery School: **26** students (pre-K)
Oneness Family School: **140** students (pre-K- 8^{th} grade)
Somerset Elementary School- **516** students (K-5^{th} grade)
Holy Cross- **527** students (9^{th}-12^{th})

Marie Park, Somerset ES and Westland MS parent
4806 Derussey Parkway, Chevy Chase

(excerpt from NHTSA Review of Studies on Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety, June 2012- see www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811614.pdf)

SPECIAL PEDESTRIAN TOPICS

Child Pedestrians

In 2009, 272 children 15 and younger were killed as pedestrians and another 15,000 were injured. In that same year, 19% of all children 5 to 9 who were killed in traffic crashes were pedestrians. Children 15 and younger accounted for 7% of the pedestrian fatalities in 2009 and 25% of all pedestrians injured in traffic crashes (NHTSA, 2010a). NHTSA data show that male children are significantly more likely to be killed and injured as pedestrians than females (NHTSA, 2011). Studies show that child pedestrians are most likely to be involved in crashes on residential streets in urban areas, particularly in the late afternoon or early evening (Kupferberg-Ben & Rice, 1994; Schieber & Vegega, 2002).

A study of pedestrian crashes of children younger than 11 in San Jose, California, reported that the most common behavior was the mid-block dart-out, which accounted for 30% of all crashes. Approximately 20% of crashes involved an ice cream truck and 25% occurred at intersections. Most crashes occurred on roads with speed limits of 25 mph or less and traffic laws or regulations were violated in 76% of all crashes. The young pedestrian was the violator 75% of the time (Aoki & Moore, 1996). Similar results were found in a study by Kupfenberg-Ben and Rice (1994). They demonstrated that children under 5 were most likely to be hit when darting out from between parked cars and most crashes involving children less than 10 years old occurred on local streets (Kupferberg-Ben & Rice, 1994).

Studies show that child pedestrian fatality rates are strongly influenced by traffic volume. Year-to-year changes in United States child pedestrian fatality rates (fatalities per 100,000 population) between 1970 and 1988 were strongly correlated with changes in vehicle-miles traveled. While child pedestrian fatality rates decreased throughout the period, they decreased more when traffic volume dropped and decreased less when traffic volume rose (Roberts & Crombie, 1995). Similarly, studies show that children are 6 times more likely to be involved in crashes on streets with high traffic volumes[3] compared to streets with low traffic volumes. Moreover, children were almost 4 times as likely to be involved in crashes when crossing high-speed roads (over 50 km/hour or 31 mph) than low-speed roads (Roberts et al., 1995). Similarly, a study by Kupfenberg-Ben and Rice (1994) reported that most crashes occurred within higher density residential areas and significantly more crashes occurred during the summer months (June to September) than any other month of the year. Crash rates were highest in the afternoon during after-school hours (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.) and additional peaks were observed around 8 a.m. and noon to 1 p.m. More crashes occurred on weekdays than weekend days (Kupferberg-Ben & Rice 1994).

3 High volume is defined as areas with more than 1,000 vehicles per hour

Crash-Typing Children

Patterns of exposure to traffic for urban children show that most pedestrian injuries occur while the child is at play or walking to a specific destination (Posner, Liao, Winston, Cnaan, Shaw, &

Durbin, 2002). Posner et al. (2002) identified the pre-crash events and the child's usual pattern of street play and pedestrian activities. Results show that 71% of the injured children were walking to a specific destination right before the crash. Even though walking to or from school accounted for 81% of street crossings, only 22% of those injured while walking to a destination were walking to or from school. The other destinations included walking home from a destination other than school, which accounted for 26% of crashes. Another 13% were hit while walking to the store, 12% were hit while walking to a neighbor's house, 2% were walking to a playground, and 18% were walking to some other destination. Some 29% of injured child pedestrians were playing right before the crashes and 28% of those were intentionally using the street for play. The injured children were mostly male with a mean age of 8.7 years, and most injuries were minor.

Child Pedestrians – Decision Making

Studies argue that children lack the experience and cognitive ability to make accurate judgments on various aspects of traffic safety, such as judging the speed of oncoming vehicles and assessing whether it is safe to cross (Muttart, 1995). Foot et al., (1999) revealed that as children age, they become more proficient in recognizing safety-relevant features in traffic scenarios. Child pedestrians are at heightened risk in traffic because they are not able to distinguish the sound and visual stimuli that are important to their safety (Foot, Tolmie, Thomson, McLaren, & Whelan, 1999). Other studies show that children under age 6 may not understand the causal sequences that may result in a crash. A study by Thornton et al., 1999, comparing comprehension of drivers and passenger behavior by children at different ages, demonstrated that children 5 and younger were not able to understand the behaviors of drivers and passengers that may lead to a crash, whereas 15-year-olds were much more likely to identify both driver and pedestrian behaviors that might lead to a crash (Thornton, Pearson, Andree, & Rodgers, 1999).

Studies further show that children make their decisions based on the distance of the vehicle without considering the vehicle's speed. Younger children (5 to 9 years old) were especially unable to make safe decisions regarding vehicle approach speeds above 37 mph (Connelly, Conagle, Parsonson, & Isler, 1998).

Marie Park, Somerset ES and Westland MS parent
4806 Derussey Parkway, Chevy Chase

C. Pedestrian Characteristics and Behavior

In addition to walking speed, pedestrians can be differentiated by spatial needs, mobility issues and cognitive abilities. It is crucial to understand the characteristics of the range of pedestrians that may be accessing transit to help develop the safest possible system.

The table below summarizes some important pedestrian characteristics to consider when making pedestrian safety improvements near transit.

Pedestrian Group	Characteristics & Behaviors
Child Pedestrians	• May have difficulty choosing where and deciding when it is safe to cross the street. • May have difficulty seeing (and being seen by) drivers of all types of vehicles, including buses because of less peripheral vision and shorter stature than adults. • May have difficulty judging the speed of approaching vehicles. • May need more time to cross a street than adults.

(From NHTSA Pedestrian Safety Guides for Transit Agencies, Chapter 4)

MCP-CTRACK

From: Ellen Globokar <eglobokar@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 30, 2013 10:45 AM
To: councilmember.andrews@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.berliner@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.ervin@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.floreen@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.rice@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.riemer@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.leventhal@montgomerycountymd.gov; councilmember.navarro@montgomerycountymd.gov; county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov
Cc: MCP-Chair
Subject: Construction of BRT Lanes on Wisconsin

Dear Councilmembers,

I am writing to strongly appose the construction of BRT Lanes along Wisconsin Ave., particularly between Bradley Blvd. and Friendship Heights. I live in the town of Somerset and we have many people who walk to Friendship Heights and cross Wisconsin to go to three pre-schools at the circle at Connecticut. Many children cross Wisconsin to attend Somerset Elementary and Concord Hill. Every day, I watch near misses. I can't imagine what will happen when busses are allowed to go speeding down Wisconsin unimpaired by traffic. It is already difficult for those of us on the West side of Wisconsin to get out of our neighborhoods but if this plan goes through West Chevy Chase will not be able to go north when they turn onto Wisconsin.

Over the past few years, traffic on Dorset Ave has more than doubled due to the heavy traffic on Wisconsin. Because traffic backs up a few blocks south of the medical buildings on Wisconsin, people choose to cut through our town to save a few minutes creating traffic jams on a street than was laid out in 1906 and cannot handle the traffic. Eliminating the lane along the sidewalk will only create more traffic for our town as well as create a hardship for those who need to be dropped off at the medical building.

Finally, I do not understand the rationale that allows development without taking into consideration how these people will travel to their workplace. The other night at a public meeting on this issue, I heard the presenter say,"Wait til White Flint is built. Then you are really going to see traffic." White Flint did not magically appear. It was approved with no thought apparently on the impact of those neighborhoods south of the development. And now we are paying the price. All along we were told that people will ride the metro but apparently that isn't the case because a group of folks now want to duplicate that very same route above ground.

The Green Mile and the neighborhoods that surround it are unique. It is not Rockville Pike, Georgia Ave, or Old Georgetown Road. We do not want or need your BRT lanes so save your money and put it into improving the RED Line.

I and my neighbors have also been very disappointed in the lack of outreach and notification. Were it not for a few people who found out about this proposal recently, none of us would have known. You are elected, as apposed to the planning board so I do think you have a responsibility to inform and educate. I also urge you to not wait until the plan is completed but to stop it immediately.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Ellen Globokar
4919 Dorset Ave
Chevy Chase, MD
20815