



Minutes

PROJECT: Richmond Highway BRT Executive Committee Meeting #8

DATE & TIME: May 29, 2020 1 - 3 PM

LOCATION: Conference Call (a recording of the meeting is posted at <https://soundcloud.com/fairfaxcounty/richmond-hwy-brt-executive-committee-may-29-2020>)

Attendees:

Vanessa Aguayo, FCDOT	Jennifer Mitchell, DRPT
Monica Backmon, NVTA	Christine Morin, BOS
Tom Biesiadny, FCDOT	Anna Nissenen, FCDOT
Barbara Byron, DPD	Nick Rinehart, VDOT
Aaron Campbell, BOS	Matthew Renninger, BOS
Helen Cuervo, VDOT	Dan Storck, Supervisor – Mt. Vernon
Noelle Dominguez, FCDOT	Kaylie Teshome, BOS
Tom Fahrney, FCDOT	Marcus Wadsworth, BOS
Ricky Foley, FCDOT	
Robin Geiger, FCDOT	Seth Garland, PMC
Todd Horsley, DRPT	Lara Hegler, PMC
Sally Kidalov, BOS	Laura Jeffords, PMC
Ron Lilley, FCDOT	Suresh Karre, PMC
Rodney Lusk, Supervisor -- Lee	Henry Kay, PMC
Doug Miller, FCDOT	Jenny Koch, PMC

Vanessa Aguayo opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Vanessa reported that the project was accepted by FTA to the Project Development phase of the New Starts program on March 13, 2020. We are scheduled to advance to the Engineering in fall 2021. There is a one-month delay in completing the Categorical Exclusion to allow for the Section 106 Consulting Parties process. 30% plans are on schedule to be completed in July 2020. Vanessa confirmed we have selected Option B for the Hybla Valley station which allows Fordson Road to remain open for turns in both directions. Vanessa reported that the stormwater management features will follow County standards and include landscaping amenities such as naturalistic shapes for wet and dry ponds, tree canopy, interpretative signage, and walkways.

The public involvement program has been adapted to account for COVID-19 limitations on in-person meetings. The community conversation was deferred. A newsletter was distributed April 1. FCDOT is considering opportunities for virtual public engagement on topics such as station architecture, NEPA, and the project schedule. Robin Geiger reported that County agencies have not been holding meetings, but Neighborhood Services and the Board of Supervisors have developed ways to communicate with the public. An in-person public information meeting is



tentatively scheduled for September. In response to a question from Supervisor Dan Storck, Robin said FCDOT has not investigated holding meeting outdoors at shopping centers but would do so going forward. Supervisor Storck said that virtual meetings are not enough to engage the community, and to consider locations that where the biggest project impacts will occur. Supervisor Rodney Lusk said his office has successfully used Crowdcast, and he could arrange to share his license with FCDOT.

Vanessa reported on the revised project schedule. The original schedule has not been updated since the 2015 study led by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation. The project undertook a “re-baseline” which was completed in May. The updated schedule reflects decisions about project delivery, the VDOT project schedule, right of way needs, and construction activities and durations. The project will be delivered in two sections. Section 1 will be design-build to transfer some of the right of way risk to the contractor and Section 2 will be design-bid-build. Section 2 will be delayed to allow the VDOT project to be completed which allows time for the County to complete design drawings. Vanessa reviewed the major factors contributing the longer schedule: NEPA, utility relocation, design changes and enhancements, right of way acquisition, and construction sequencing.

Vanessa reviewed the new schedule milestones. NEPA will be completed this fall. Full parcel right of way acquisition will continue until 2024. Utility relocation will continue through 2029, and Section 1 will open in mid-2030. We are still analyzing the revised VDOT schedule, but Section 2 could also be completed in 2030. Overall, there is a 39-month delay for Section 1 and an 18-month delay for Section 2. We are looking for opportunities to compress the schedule such as starting acquisition of partial parcel acquisitions, seeking input from contractors, advertising the Section 2 contract before VDOT is complete, or including incentives for the contractor to accelerate. Each of these opportunities carries some risk of increased cost. In addition, continuing schedule risks include right of way acquisition and relocation, utility relocation, schedules of adjacent projects, hazmat mitigation, agency coordination, and coordination with private development.

Seth Garland presented the station architecture topic. He provided a review of the design process to date which included the development of programming criteria, review of Embark and corridor urban design guidelines, and consultation with County staff and the Community Advisory Group. We shared six designs with the Executive Committee in February, and selected Option B and a combination of options C and E. Supervisors Storck and Lusk provided additional comments in March and May. The committee also asked for ways that each station could reflect the community it serves.

Seth reviewed “approved” Concept B which includes a dynamic form that reflects the aviation history of the corridor and warm “wood look” materials. The compelling aspects of concepts C and E include references to historic, peak-roofed structures and a clean, uncluttered layout. Seth reviewed four study approaches that addressed prior input. The approaches included a modified roof pitch, different column options, a new color palette, and a decluttered interior.

Supervisor Lusk asked about windscreens that are perpendicular to the back windscreen, and Seth noted those were included near the seating area.



Seth reviewed options for community identity that included integrating graphics into the windscreen, a stand-alone identity pylon, and customized railings and/or paving patterns. These ideas would be further developed in the 30% and 60% plans.

The next step would be to take two approaches to 30%, obtain additional input from the Executive Committee this summer, and present the designs to the public in fall. If in-person meetings are not allowed, we will develop a scale model or digital fly-through. Based on that feedback we would select a single preferred concept to take to 60% plans.

Supervisor Storck said he prefers that each station be as unique as possible, and the unique features should be visible from a distance. He prefers durable materials, so the station continues to look good into the future. Seth said materials selection is part of the design process, and the goal will be a 30-year design life. In response to Supervisor Storck, Seth said the materials for both designs would be similar, though Option E has an opportunity for stone cladding for the end pieces. Vanessa said the design goal is a balance between cost and permanence.

Jennifer Michell said that for the Richmond Pulse project the station design was subject to extensive public input which limited the agency's ability to modify the design to reduce costs when the bids came in above the budget. Vanessa said the stations are accounted for in the budget, and the 30% re-refresh of the cost estimate will account for these design options. In response to Tom Biesiadny's question, Seth said the two design options are in the same cost range for materials.

In response to Vanessa's request for concurrence on Design Study 4, Supervisors Storck and Lusk discussed the options. Supervisor Storck said the lower the roof profile the more the two designs look alike, and he prefers to give the public two distinct options. Supervisor Lusk said Design Study 4 was a good compromise. Supervisor Storck agreed, and the committee concurred that that Design Study 4 should be carried forward to 30%.

Nick Rinehart asked whether the community identity element could be more sculptural to reflect each community. Tom said it could, and the form depicted in the rendering was a placeholder.

Vanessa asked if there were any members of the public on the call who wished to comment. There were none.

Vanessa said the next committee meeting would be scheduled for August or September, depending on the schedule for public input. The meeting concluded at approximately 2:30 PM.

Prepared by H. Kay