

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING/
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMISSION
THURSDAY, JULY 24, 2008**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank A. de la Fe, Chairman, Hunter Mill District
Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District
James R. Hart, At-Large
Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District
Timothy J. Sargeant, At-Large

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jay P. Donahue, Dranesville District

OTHER COMMISSIONER PRESENT:

Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield District

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Janyce Hedetniemi, Chair, Braddock District
Jennifer Joy Madden, Hunter Mill District

STAFF PRESENT:

Richard Stevens, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Robert Owolabi, Fairfax County Department of Transportation
Peter Braham, Zoning Evaluation Division, Department of Planning and Zoning
David Jillson, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning
Steve Elliott, Office of the Chairman of Board of Supervisors
Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk, Planning Commission Office

OTHERS PRESENT:

Lori Greenlief, McGuire Woods
Mike Harris, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Haydn Heman-Ackah, Dulles Transit Partnership
Andrew Pittman, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
Marcia McAllister, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority
Bruce McLeod, Commonwealth Consultants
Lou Mosurak, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation
James VanZee, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

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Chairman Frank A. de la Fe called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., in the Board Conference Room, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

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Commissioner Hart MOVED THAT THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MINUTES OF June 25, 2008 BE APPROVED.

Commissioner Flanagan seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Chairman de la Fe noted that the committee would be briefed on the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. He said that Planning Commission public hearings on special exception and 2232 applications would be held in October 2008.

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Richard Stevens, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, delivered a PowerPoint presentation on the project, a copy of which is in the date file.

Mr. Stevens explained that there would be a 23-mile extension of Metrorail branching off the Orange Line after East Falls Church to the Dulles Connector Road, Reston-Herndon Corridor, Dulles International Airport, and into Loudoun County. He said the project would provide a seamless connection into Tysons Corner and would open the Dulles Corridor to the rest of the region. He noted that the project would be constructed in two phases: Phase 1 to Wiehle Avenue and Phase 2 to Dulles International Airport with two additional stations in Loudoun County.

Mr. Stevens reviewed a map of the project and the proposed Tysons Corner Stations. He explained that a 41-foot strip of land had been preserved in the medians of the Dulles Access Road and the Connector Road for future rail since 1964. He said the final Environmental Impact Statement had been approved in 2006 and the Board of Supervisors had authorized the County Executive to enter into agreements to construct the rail line in 2007.

Mr. Stevens outlined the actions taken by the County to fund and implement the project. He pointed out that since the project was being treated as a State project, the Department of General Services would be responsible for approving all designs, issuing permits, and performing inspections. He said the Department of Conservation and Recreation would be responsible for stormwater management and erosion and sediment control plans to ensure compliance with federal state and local lines. Mr. Stevens said the stricter of the County and State regulations would apply in these areas.

Mr. Stevens discussed the design of the project and station amenities. He presented photo simulations of the exterior and interior of each Tysons station and the Wiehle Avenue station, Tysons Corner Center, and the Route 7 median design and streetscape. He reviewed the cost of the project and said construction would take place from 2009-2013 with a completion date of July 31, 2013. After three to four months of testing, Mr. Stevens said the stations should be operational in December 2013.

Mr. Stevens responded to questions from Commissioner Sargeant and Chairman de la Fe about intersection and mid-block pedestrian crossings on Route 7. Mr. Stevens said a final decision on the crosswalks would not be made until the Tysons Task Force Report had been issued.

Commissioner Lawrence said it was important that this project be coordinated with County transportation staff supporting the Tysons Task Force. Mr. Stevens replied that it was, noting that Cambridge Systematics was the consultant for the rail project and for the Task Force. Responding to a question from Commissioner Lawrence, Mr. Stevens said bike lanes would be provided on Route 7.

Mr. Stevens and Peter Braham, Zoning Evaluation Division, Department of Planning and Zoning, answered questions from Commissioner Flanagan about the size of the Metro platforms and their canopies, the design and cover of pedestrian bridges, and the distance between the piers.

Responding to a question from Chairman de la Fe, Mr. Stevens said the bridges would be 16 feet wide from handrail to handrail. In reply to another question from Chairman de la Fe, Mr. Stevens said that the platforms would be designed to accommodate canopies that covered the entire platform in the future

Answering questions from Commissioners Hart and Sargeant, Mr. Stevens explained how the new Silver Line would connect with the existing lines and said that the level of service on the Blue Line would remain the same

Responding to questions from Commissioner Sargeant, Mr. Stevens said no trains would be removed from the Blue Line and the level of service to the Pentagon would remain the same. Mr. Stevens said he believed that most of the BRAC employees would be commuting north towards Fort Belvoir and there would not be a huge transit demand for them from other areas.

Chairman de la Fe said it would make sense to reroute some of the Blue Line trains because the only stop between Rosslyn and the Pentagon was Arlington Cemetery which was often closed.

Mr. Stevens responded to questions from Chairman de la Fe about the report of the Reston Metrorail Access Group concerning pedestrian access and funding for the Wiehle Avenue Station. Mr. Stevens said that the parking structure might have only one underground level due to the topography.

In response to a question from Commissioner Murphy, Mr. Stevens said every sign in the Metro system would have to be changed and that the names shown were only placeholders and subject to change. Commissioner Murphy suggested that the names be related to geographical features or intersections which could serve as a vehicle for tourism. Mr. Braham noted that signage would be shown on the special exception plats and the 2232 drawings.

Commissioner Flanagan and Mr. Stevens discussed the architecture of the proposed stations. Commissioner Flanagan commented on the attractive design of the Tysons East Station.

Responding to a question from Chairman de la Fe, Andrew Pittman, Lead Architect, Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project, said painted steel would be used to construct the stations.

Commissioner Sargeant expressed concern about the adequacy of transit for the large number of employees expected to be generated by BRAC and said he did not agree that they would all be commuting from the south. Mr. Stevens said if they were to come from the north, they would be reverse commuters which was desirable.

Chairman de la Fe raised the possibility of the project being put on hold when a new administration took office in 2009. Mr. Stevens said that it was anticipated that a recommendation would be made to Congress before it recessed at the end of this year.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 p.m.
Frank A. de la Fe, Chairman

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Planning Commission Office, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved on: January 15, 2009

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission