



County of Fairfax, Virginia

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods and diverse communities of Fairfax County

Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee

March 26, 2019

Government Center, Conference Room 11

Board of Supervisors Members Present:

Sharon Bulova, Chairman
Penelope Gross, Mason District (Vice Chairman)
John Foust, Dranesville District (Committee Chair)
John Cook, Braddock District
Pat Herrity, Springfield District
Catherine Hudgins, Hunter Mill District
Jeff McKay, Lee District
Kathy Smith, Sully District
Linda Smyth, Providence District
Dan Storck, Mount Vernon District

County Leadership:

Bryan Hill, County Executive
Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive
Beth Teare, County Attorney

Transportation Advisory Commission:

Jeffrey M. Parnes (Chair)

Link to agenda and presentation materials:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/board-supervisors-transportation-committee-meeting-march-26-2019>

Supervisor Foust called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 12, 2019, meeting were accepted with no changes.

2. Fairfax Connector and Metrobus Plans for Alternative Service during WMATA's Reconstruction of Blue/Yellow Lines South of Reagan National Airport Station

Michael Felschow and Anna Nissinen (FCDOT) briefed the Board on the Fairfax Connector and Metrobus plans for alternative services regarding Metrorail's shutdown and reconstruction of the Blue/Yellow lines south of Reagan National Airport Metrorail Station. Platforms built 35 to 40

years ago are deteriorating, due to exposure to weather and de-icing agents for decades. Concrete repair is a necessary safety project. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) major outage guidelines aim to minimize customer impacts. There will be no Blue or Yellow Line Metrorail service south of National Airport from Saturday, May 25 to Monday, September 2, 2019. WMATA will focus construction work in the summer and on major holiday weekends to reduce impact on regular commuters, rather than conducting a series of smaller outages. Metrobus will provide alternative services including: free express bus shuttles, free local bus shuttles connecting closed stations, and increased capacity on nearby existing routes. Fairfax County was asked to provide support during the station shutdowns. FCDOT staff have evaluated the existing Fairfax Connector bus service and resources to determine what assistance the County can provide. The station shutdowns impact the Connector operations at the Huntington, Van Dorn and Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Stations. Fairfax Connector will provide more trips on express Routes 393 and 394 from the Saratoga Park and Ride lot to the Pentagon. The County is also promoting existing alternatives to driving alone options.

Supervisor McKay thanked staff for the presentation, and thought it was well done. He stated that the County should explore parking opportunities for the slugging community. WMATA should offer free parking to the sluggers. Commuters who are inconvenienced by the shutdown should be able to park for free at Metrorail parking to use the bus. The County should work with Metro regarding that issue. Tom Biesiadny, FCDOT Director, replied that staff have been working with WMATA on the parking issue. Supervisor McKay asked about the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC) plan during the shutdown. Mr. Felschow replied that PRTC is working with the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) to add as much capacity as they can. PRTC does not plan to add more bus routes during the shutdown, but they are in the process of planning. Supervisor McKay stated that the County needs to discuss providing additional service with PRTC, because people from Prince William County are traveling to Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station to use Metrorail.

Regarding the platform rehabilitation project schedule, Supervisor McKay asked for clarification for the status of the Huntington and Franconia-Springfield stations from September 2 to December 2, 2019, and the impact closing stations. Mr. Biesiadny replied that during that time, the stations will be open; however, it is possible that the contractors may not be able to finish all the work. The contractors have incentives to finish the work on time. Supervisor McKay stated that it is not acceptable that WMATA has not provided a detailed schedule of what will happen to the stations from September 2 to December 2. Previously, WMATA had told everyone that the stations will be back up and running after Labor Day (September 2). Mr. Biesiadny stated that the information was new to the County. His staff is working with WMATA to provide individual briefings with Supervisors McKay and Storck on the details of the plan. Supervisor Herrity stated that he wanted to be included on the meeting, because his district will be impacted by the shutdown, as well.

Supervisor Gross asked about the outreach efforts to inform the hotel industry regarding the shutdown. Ms. Nissinen replied that the County and Visit Fairfax have a very close working relationship. Visit Fairfax is working with the hotel industry to spread the word to the hotels, conventions, travel agencies, major employers, etc., about the shutdown. WMATA is doing a very expansive ambassador outreach program at the stations. Fairfax Connector will be participating in outreach efforts. Supervisor Gross suggested that appropriate agencies keep track of the hotel usage during the shutdown, and the economic impact to the County.

Supervisor Storck stated that he was surprised to learn that the construction period is extending to December. He expressed his disappointment with WMATA, that they did not tell the County about the construction delay when they met with him about two weeks ago. He supported Supervisor McKay's suggestion of free Metrorail parking for sluggers and commuters affected by the shutdown. He asked how the bus stops on Huntington Avenue and the south bus bays at Huntington Station function during the shutdown. Mr. Biesiadny replied that the bus stops will use the right turn lane, and will not block the travel lanes. Mr. Biesiadny stated that WMATA will not shut down the south bus bays at this time; however, they may have to do it when they take down the garage. Supervisor Storck expressed his concerns that WMATA has failed to communicate with the County regarding their plan for the shutdown. Mr. Biesiadny replied that he will reiterate this to WMATA, and they will be scheduling meetings with Supervisors McKay, Storck and Herrity. Supervisor Herrity suggested that the Committee should have more meetings with WMATA, regarding the Silver Line, Metrorail, buses and garage issues. Chairman Bulova stated that she will look for the nearest date to schedule a meeting with WMATA at a Board meeting, or at this Committee.

3. Pole Mounted Speed Display Signs Pilot Program

Vanessa Holt and Neil Freschman, FCDOT, briefed the Board on the Pole Mounted Speed Display (PMSD) Signs Pilot Program. FCDOT staff were directed by the Board to review and coordinate the display sign data collection with the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD). The goals of the program are to reduce speeding on residential streets, provide data sharing between FCDOT and FCPD, and evaluate FCDOT staffing needs to administer the program. This is a one-year pilot program. FCDOT will purchase and manage four PMSD signs that are battery powered signs with 12-inch speed digits.

Two signs will be installed at each of two locations at one time. The program anticipates installation by current staff at nine locations (one per district), during the pilot year. The eligible roads will be determined by VDOT criteria and will be further refined based on the findings of the pilot program. FCDOT will determine location priority, based on existing speed problems, input from the Board and staff, geographic location, feasibility of installation and coordination with FCPD. The duration of data collection will be six weeks per location. The signs and display speed will start collecting data one week before the speed display is visible to drivers. They remain "on" for four weeks, then turn off for a week while data collection is still recording

to document changes in driver behavior. Only the speed data will be collected; no other data is collected by the program. Staff will need to check on the equipment periodically and charge and replace batteries weekly. Staff will evaluate the effectiveness of reducing speeds and evaluation of the equipment, installation process, software interface and staff time.

Commissioner Parnes, TAC, asked staff to clarify that the cameras and the intent of this program will not be used to collect data other than speeds. The response was that only speed information is collected, and the equipment is not capable of taking photos. Supervisor Foust stated that the program is needed because it works. Supervisor Herrity stated that the intent of his Board Matter was to provide data collection and more resources for the FCPD. FCDOT will have access to the shared data for their studies. He stated that typically the speeding problem is in one direction; therefore, placing the speed signs in both directions may not be necessary. He commented on the use of solar powered panels, questioned why staff would use the battery powered panels, and the issue of maintenance. Mr. Biesiadny responded that FCDOT shares data with the Police Department on a daily basis. The data that this program collected is County data, and it is set up specifically to allow for a common portal to share with the FCPD.

Regarding the issue of battery power versus the solar power, Mr. Freschman stated that after staff inspected the equipment from the vendor, and for temporary installation, the battery powered equipment is preferred, because it is easier to install by staff. The battery powered equipment is smaller and can be mounted lower to the ground.

Supervisor Cook stated that his intention for creating this program was different from what staff has proposed. The intent was to have FCPD install the speed signs at locations that already have been identified by the citizens as the high speed intersections. The purpose use was to identify the time that had an overwhelming number of speeders, so the police could follow up to catch the speeders, and move the speed signs to the next location. Supervisor Cook stated that the proposed program is being set up with a different purpose to gather and store data for a different usage, and not for his original intent. Mr. Biesiadny responded that the pilot program was developed with the input from the police. These signs are different and more stationary as compared to the police mobile trailers. The data that will be collected is just speed data. The reason for the collection is to show what the speed was before implementing the signs, when it is implemented, and after the signs turned off to determine if the speed would go back up or people continue to slow down. Supervisor Cook stated that the police explained to him, if a sign is up for a prolonged period of time at a location, it would lose its effectiveness and tends to blend into the background. The signs are not the long-term answer. Mr. Freschman stated that the real purpose is for temporary traffic calming to slow vehicles down during the time the signs are in place. He agreed that keeping the signs in place permanently will lose the intended effectiveness.

Chairman Bulova stated that she was concerned about the battery replacement issue, and asked if staff has looked at other models that are powered by solar. Ms. Holt responded that staff has

given that serious consideration and had the sign vendor demonstrated both systems. It came down to the fact that FCDOT does not have additional staff to install these signs, and that the solar panels are cumbersome, heavy, and required a long ladder for proper installation. The cloud data interface that is currently used by the police will track the battery life remotely. Staff will need to replace the battery once per week. The solar panel is more difficult for the pilot program, because they will be moved every 6 weeks or so. Supervisor McKay suggested that staff look what other County departments may have and partner with them to share their resources. Mr. Biesiadny replied that staff will explore this issue with other departments. Supervisor Foust asked if there is any analysis on the effectiveness of signs placed for a long period of time. Ms. Holt replied that there are data that show prolonged placement signs are not effective at reducing speed. Supervisor Storck asked if any other jurisdiction has done similar studies that the County can look at the effectiveness of these speed signs. Ms. Holt replied that VDOT has done some studies. VDOT developed the criteria based on those studies. Prince William County has done a small study at two or three locations. They found that it was a limited single digit percentage reduction in speed, but the public viewed this program favorably. Supervisor Storck asked how people can be reminded not to speed without too much government intrusions.

Supervisor Foust stated that staff should explore the solar option and update the Board on the results. Mr. Biesiadny stated that staff will look at the option for coordinating with other agencies and whether or not that the long-term use of solar power is more effective for this program. Supervisor Smith questioned the long-term goals of the program, and whether the program would be expanded if it is determined as an effective measure to reduce speed. Supervisor Foust stated that the program is a small investment to address the speeding problem in the neighborhoods. Supervisor Storck also questioned the value of the program, and said the Board will have to accept the fact if it turns out that it is ineffective. Supervisor Gross stated that staff was asked to study pole mounted signs and did exactly what the Board had asked staff to do. She thought that the pilot program should move forward. She stated that each district must have a few locations that could use these signs.

Bryan Hill, County Executive, recommended that staff work with Supervisor Cook's office to review the language of the Board Matter and come up with a plan. Supervisor Herrity stated that he agreed with Mr. Hill's recommendation, and suggested that staff update the Board of the results of both Board Matters from Supervisors Cook and Herrity. Supervisor Hudgins stated that staff should address the concerns and come back to brief the Board with a solution. She disagreed that the program is not a value to the County. Supervisor Smith stated that the program will provide data for a cost-benefit analysis to determine whether the Board should invest more money to it. Mr. Biesiadny stated that staff will reach out to all Supervisors' office, and ask for specific locations for the signs.

Supervisor McKay stated that there is no minimum traffic volume listed in the criteria, and recommended that staff should study a mixture of neighborhood roads and main roads like

Franconia or Braddock Roads. Mr. Biesiadny replied that within the requirements, the equipment needs to be installed on two-lane road in a residential neighborhood. Staff will study a mixture of cut-through traffic roads and others.

4. Chapter 2 Roads

William Capers, III, (FCDOT) and Hayden Coddling (OCA) briefed the Board on the issue regarding Chapter 2 roads. Chapter 2 roads are named for the County Code (§2-1-1) chapter describing procedures for managing County-owned property, as in “dedicated to public use or title to which is the name of the Board of Supervisors or the County”. There are over 100 Chapter 2 roads in the County that are unimproved, non-County maintained rights-of-way, that have not been accepted into the VDOT Secondary System. Under VDOT’s current policy, new roads accepted into the Secondary System have to have at least three unique users. Current County Code requires for each new user to pay an escrow for future construction of a public road. Escrows are managed by Land Development Services in DPWES. Staff has done two case studies: Washington Street (Springfield District) and Lyles Road (Lee District). The County is considering many options, such as providing escrowed money to current residents for maintenance purposes, vacation, construction of a road to VDOT standards, and interim construction of a road. Implications of any proposed policy, County Code or Code of Virginia changes, will require detailed analysis involving the County Attorney, the Zoning Administrator, and all affected agencies. Staff will conduct further investigation of implications of the various options, based on the Board’s guidance. Alternatively, the land owners can work together to construct a road to VDOT standards at their expense.

Commissioner Parnes suggested change the term “original owners” to “current owners”. Supervisor Herrity explained the issues with Chapter 2 Roads with the example of Washington Street. There are six lots on Washington Street and three houses were built and contributed to the escrow. The fourth owner will have to absorb \$400,000 to \$500,000 or the difference to construct part of the public road using the collected escrow. It is not possible for the three land owners to come up with \$400,000 to build the road themselves. All parties wanted to find a solution, but it is difficult to change the County Code.

Due to the time constraint, Chairman Bulova asked if staff could conclude the presentation. Supervisor Herrity replied that there is no solution for this problem. Chairman Bulova suggested that staff work with the individual Supervisor’s offices to determine if there could be a County-wide policy to address this issue. Supervisor Herrity suggested that he could chair a small committee to work with other Supervisors and a small group of staff from the County Executive Office, the County Attorney, FCDOT and DPZ to develop with a range of solutions. Supervisor Foust suggested that Supervisor Herrity put together a Board Matter for the Board consideration.

7. Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation

Due to time constraint, the presentation on the Silver Line Phase 2 Implementation was postponed to the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m. The next BTC meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2019.