

Town of Chevy Chase

Long Range Planning Committee

Minutes of March 12, 2008

7:00 P.M. Town Hall

John Navratil, notetaker

Members Attending: Pat Burda, Kathy Strom, Bruce Douglas, Mary Anne Hoffman, Charles Duffy Tammy Harris, John Navratil, Tina Copland, Steve Seidel, Marty Saggese

Members Absent: David Lublin

Also attending: Sam Schwartz, Harris Schechtman, Annie Weinstock of Sam Schwartz PLLC (SSC)

Resident visitor: Rose Miller

Call to order: Pat Burda convened the meeting at 7:00.

Minutes of the February meetings were approved.

Purple Line:

The meeting was primarily dedicated to the Purple Line issues as SSC consultants were in attendance to explain their findings to date with respect to their analysis of ridership studies and other information released to date by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). Among their major criticisms of the MTA analysis were:

- The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) options studied were not true BRT systems, with signal priority and other measures to improve travel time; they noted the BRT route did not use the Capital Crescent trail (CCT) near Silver Spring, unlike the other options, which increased travel time; they also noted that MTA overestimated number of buses needed by a wide margin, which increased the capital costs in the BRT option.
- The number of light rail cars necessary for the light rail option were underestimated, lowering capital cost estimates and tilting the MTA analysis in favor of the CCT alignment.
- Overall, SSC argued that the Medical Center area had more jobs and housing currently, and was projected to grow faster than Bethesda.
- SSC felt that federal funding of the Jones Bridge Road (JBR) BRT alignment to the Medical Center (MC) was a more likely prospect than federal funding of the light rail CCT alignment.

After the discussion the SSC consultants gave the committee a dress rehearsal of the slide show that they planned to show the Town Council at its monthly meeting the following evening. Various reports are being developed for Council approval and public dissemination.

The consultants are also meeting during this trip with representatives from Chris Van Hollen's office; Roger Berliner's office; MTA; the County; Delegate Al Carr; and various representatives from community groups.

Woodmont East: Pat reported that her last testimony before the Planning Board was politely heard but that the Board approved the Woodmont East development plan without any further modifications to the developer's plan.

Strategic Plan Update: A meeting with Bridget Hartman and Todd Hoffman had been set up to review the strategic plan.

The next meeting will be the third Wednesday in April and the meeting adjourned about 9:30.