

**Town of Chevy Chase  
Long Range Planning Committee  
Minutes of April 15, 2008  
6:30 P.M. Town Hall  
Steve Seidel, notetaker**

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

**Members Absent:** Bruce Douglas

**Call to order:** Pat Burda convened the meeting at 6:30.

**I. Minutes of the March Meeting:** approved by the meeting.

**II. Purple Line:**

1.) **Update on activities:** Town Council voted unanimously to send a letter to public officials requesting that a true Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) option on Jones Bridge Road be fully examined as one of the Purple Line options. The Committee reviewed and approved a draft of the letter and a related press release that would also be issued.

2.) **Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) Event:** Mary Anne Hoffman and Tina Coplan presented the results of a very successful initial planning meeting with representatives from other interested communities and organizations for the May 31 event to celebrate the CCT and the potential impact of the Purple Line on it. There was agreement that the event would be called "Connect with the Trail" and that it would include both family fun activities (e.g., free snow cones, family fitness demonstrations) and information on the impact of the Purple Line on the trail.

3.) **Town Outreach:** The Committee agreed that to keep the Town fully informed about this issue that Sam Schwartz would present his study at the town meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Information on the letter sent to public officials and on the upcoming briefings on the consultant reports (April 24<sup>th</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup>) would be put on the town web site and included in a flier to the community.

4.) **Bethesda Metro Elevator:** The Committee agreed that more information would be sought on the budget process for resources for the southern entrance to the Bethesda metro before action, if any, would be taken concerning this project.

**III. Bethesda Development**

1. **McDonalds on East-West Highway:** This property has been purchased by a New York developer, the Clarett Group, with the intent to build an office building on the site. According to Judy Daniel (MNCPPC) the site is zoned to allow for mixed use development with a 90 foot height limit. The developer will be holding an information meeting on April 24<sup>th</sup>. The

committee agreed to follow this development with a focus on any issues arise concerning variances, amenities, etc.

**2. Pier 1 Site:** This property is now owned by the Jaffe Group, a local developer. They are in the early stages of planning to develop this site and have been in discussions with St. Johns about purchasing development rights from next door in exchange for 70 parking spaces for use by the church. The site is in the CBD zone 1 which allows for a wide range of uses and a building height of 75 feet along Wisconsin Avenue and 35 feet in the rear. The committee discussed the importance of this development as a buffer to the town and the need to retain the rear parking along Western Avenue. Further information on the use of density transfers at this site is also needed. Steve Seidel will circulate a note to committee members on issues related to this development and may have an initial meeting with the developer to learn more about its plans.

#### **IV. Pedestrian Bike Path:**

The County appears poised to implement an alternative bike path through downtown Bethesda to supplement the existing tunnel pathway. This alternative is part of the Master Plan and involves designating bike lanes on several surface streets. The committee discussed that the use of surface streets raises safety issues for bikers and other path users and how this might relate to the possibility of the Purple Line using the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue.

#### **V. Governance Study**

Pat met with Town staff on this issue and discussed possible use of a consultant to examine the roles and responsibilities of Council and staff. Given other pressing priorities, this issue was put on hold for now.

#### **VI. Conservation Easements:**

Based on discussions, it was agreed that the Environment Committee would take the lead on this issue and that we (Tammy Harris) will liaison with them on it.