MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

COUNTYWIDE TRANSIT CORRIDORS FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN PUBLIC HEARING

+ + + + + THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2013 + + + + +

The Montgomery County Planning
Board met in the Montgomery County Planning
Department Auditorium, Montgomery Regional
Office Building, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver
Spring, Maryland, at 6:00 p.m., Fran‡oise
Carrier, Planning Board Chair, presiding.
PRESENT

FRAN€OISE CARRIER, Planning Board Chair,

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

CASEY ANDERSON, Planning Board Member and Commissioner

NORMAN DREYFUSS, Planning Board Member and Commissioner

AMY PRESLEY, Planning Board Member and

Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT

LARRY COLE, Functional Planning and Policy Division

DAVID ANSPACHER, Functional Planning and Policy Division

MARY DOLAN, Functional Planning and Policy Division

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the Master Plan of Bikeways, as amended; the

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Purple Line Functional Plan, as amended; and
the General Plan on Wedges and Corridors for
the Physical Development of the
Maryland/Washington Regional District for
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amended.

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Also, the Appendix for the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan; the Letters of Transmittal to the County Executive, the County Council, Adjacent Municipalities, the Maryland State Highway Administration; and the Montgomery County Delegation; copies of newspaper ads for tonight's hearing and certified proof of publication from the Gazette and the Washington Examiner; all comments including emails received from the public and government agencies between the ad publication and the closing of the public record; and a transcript of the public hearing, when available.

We recommend that the record for this public hearing remain open for two weeks

until May 30th, 2013, given that the staff
memo for the Board's first work session is due
on that day. We'll summarize and respond to
the testimony received after tonight's hearing
to the best of your ability and respond to any
remaining comments the following week.

Before the Board hears testimony,

I'd like to discuss the process that we

followed for this Functional Plan which was

outlined in the scope of work the Board

approved in September of 2011.

Our starting point was the 150mile network in Montgomery County DOT's
Feasibility Plan with consideration given to
additional corridors recommended by the Rapid
Transit Task Force whose final report
recommended a 162-mile network. Our
recommended network by contrast is 79 miles
total. That's just to give you the range of
options and considerations in there.

And that concludes our opening statement for tonight's hearing.

CHAIR CARRIER: How about Steve

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Elmendorf?

1 (No audible response.)

CHAIR CARRIER: Neither one?

Okay. Dan Reed. Christine Slater. Lindsay

Hoffman. Theodore Van Houten. Heather Brutz.

Okay. Looks like some people aren't here, so we'll see who isn't when we get there.

Mr. Reed, you're first.

MR. REED: Thank you. Hi, my name is Dan Reed. I'm an urban planner, a board member of the Action Committee for Transit, and I live on Route 29 in East County. I'd like to testify in support of bus rapid transit on my street and elsewhere in Montgomery County.

Seven years ago I had a lousy bus commute to an internship in Bethesda. It regularly took over an hour-and-a-half, most of which was spent going down Route 29 to Silver Spring where I'd switch buses. The experience inspired me to start writing a blog called "Just Up the Pike" about ways to make

the Route 29 corridor a better place to live and get around. Through the blog I met so many people in this community for whom transit is a life line, whether because they can't drive, can't afford to drive, or like me want to drive less, and they're hungry for an alternative to traffic.

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After riding the Orange Line BRT in Los Angeles last fall, I was convinced it would be a good solution for my street, Route 29, and the other 10 proposed BRT corridors in Montgomery County. I'm confident BRT will help us get where we're going to today and support future development like in White Flint However, BRT won't be as and Rockville Pike. effective if buses don't have their own dedicated lanes, particularly major choke points where it's geometrically impossible to move everybody in a car, places like Wisconsin Avenue in Bethesda, or Four Corners, here in East County, where I spend hours every week.

It may sound counterintuitive to

purpose a lane for transit. People will tell you, including this evening, that there's no room for transit. That's false. It guarantees a fast reliable alternative to sitting in traffic. And without that, people who have the option to drive will continue to do so.

Luckily this plan proposes giving buses a dedicated right-of-way in many parts of the county, but in other ways it shies away from making a firm recommendation whether because of logistical difficulties or vocal resistance from a small handful of neighbors. We can't afford to be wishy-washy about this. People will continue to come here, and that's a good thing, but forcing them to bring their cars isn't.

Growing up in Montgomery County I
was taught that our community values diversity
in all its forms and that must include a
diversity of transportation options. This
plan isn't about taking away something from

include residents, businesses, and property owners and seek consensus to achieve positive solutions. We have been actively involved in the White Flint Sector Plan since 2007, holding hundreds of meetings and meeting with thousands of residents to find consensus and community support for the plan in place today.

The award-winning White Flint
Sector Plan recommends, quote, "A transit
focus multi-modal mobility system that
supports the proposed urban center and local
neighborhoods." More specifically, it
suggests bus rapid transit on Rockville Pike
and we believe it is the right solution for
this emerging area.

We are pleased that the Countywide Transit Corridors Plan includes BRT through White Flint, and notes that the Maryland 355 south corridor, where White Flint is, has the highest daily ridership forecast for any corridor evaluated in this plan. White Flint is already a nationally-recognized example of

suburban redevelopment and is poised to become an economic engine in this county, which is the economic engine for the State of Maryland. But in order for White Flint to reach its potential, we must have the most forwardthinking infrastructure possible.

Right now traffic on Rockville

Pike through White Flint is no treat. Even

without redevelopment, this traffic will only

get worse unless we put some smart solutions

to work. We use cars because we don't have a

choice.

However, with a reliable alternative we can entice more drivers out of their cars for more of their trips. We believe that this is only truly rapid transit when lanes are dedicated for its use.

Otherwise, vehicles are just buses sitting in the same traffic as everyone else.

The reliability offered by dedicated lanes gives riders the confidence to trust transit to get them where they need to

be when they need to be there. And each time a rapid transit vehicle buzzes by cars stalled in gridlock the system will earn a few new customers.

We are not anti-car. We are prooptions. But car has long been king on
Rockville Pike and just as we are introducing
a new mix of uses on the pike, we need to
introduce new modes of transportation as well.

We do not want to welcome our new neighbors and businesses to the area with unmanageable traffic, nor penalize those who are already here, many of whom are excited to be a part of a visionary new community, but are understandably concerned about an increasingly bad traffic situation. A new Rockville Pike is the crux of a new White Flint.

We ask that you continue to support the vision of the White Flint Sector Plan with the Countywide Transit Corridors Plan, and not only include BRT on Rockville

Pike, but also dedicate lanes for transit.

2 Thank you for your time and attention.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Van Houten?

MR. VAN HOUTEN: Yes. Good
evening. My name is Ted Van Houten. I live
car-free in Silver Spring and I support the
Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master
Plan as a way to increase accessibility for
transit riders across Montgomery County.

Montgomery County is fortunate to have a lot of transit options; Metrorail,
Metro and Ride On Buses, MARC. And we'll have
Capital Bikeshare by the end of the year.
Fingers crossed.

Bus rapid transit would be a new service and enhance the existing transit network. On Georgia Avenue and Route 355, bus rapid transit can serve the areas between Metrorail stations and help to fill in the gaps which are at least a mile long between stations and often longer. On routes that

already have Metro service, BRT will help
people take transit who live too far to walk
to a Metro station. On Viers Mill Road and
US-29, bus rapid transit is the most costeffective way to provide new transit service
and the best way to connect growing
communities.

Traffic across the county is bad enough and if we don't take advantage of the opportunity that BRT presents, traffic will only get worse, choking our environment and Montgomery County's economic competitiveness.

evolve it's important to keep the features that will distinguish it from existing bus service. BRT vehicles must receive signal priority. They must have separate branding from regular buses. And most importantly, BRT must have dedicated lanes, especially in bottlenecks and along congested corridors.

BRT must be implemented in a way that is convenient and efficient as possible to the

people who will ride it, which will increase ridership and decrease the amount of traffic for those who will continue to drive.

and Development Policy has standards for BRT, ranking them as gold, silver and bronze. They recently released a report surveying BRT routes in America and found that only five of them meet their standards, all ranked at the bronze level, which is the lowest. No gold standard BRT currently exists in the United States. Let's change that and strive to build the best BRT system in the nation right here in Montgomery County. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you all.

I'll call the next group, and I'll circle back
to people who weren't here when I called them
the first time. Stewart Schwartz. Nancy
Ables. Harriet Quinn. Robert Dyer. Richard
Levine.

Oh, I'm sorry. I was supposed to switch two people, wasn't I? Michele Riley

regional organization with thousands of members here in Montgomery County and we strongly support the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan while also urging greater commitment to dedicated lanes.

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We believe the county has done -staff has done an excellent analysis to determine the corridors with the greatest potential and need for high-quality transit service as a rapid transit system can offer and one that complements our existing Metro infrastructure and the coming Purple Line. We applaud the underlying principle of the plan which was originally enshrined in the 1993 General Plan that more efficient use of our public rights-of-way is essential to support our economic development in an environmentally sustainable way and in a way that preserves our existing communities.

As the country grows and traffic rises on its already congested roadways, we know that endless road widenings and new

interchanges won't solve the problem and will only do more harm to existing neighborhoods. Therefore, we must look to maximize the movement of people through our roadways, prioritizing transit where there's more efficient use of public space while also planning for complete streets that welcome the transit users.

As to the specific focus of this plan, we believe the corridors proposed for inclusion in the Master Plan create a network that works to connect the planned and already growing activity centers throughout the county, although in later comments we will mention two additional inter-county connections.

We support the proposals for additional right-of-way where feasible and necessary and worked out with the community and also strongly support prioritizing the repurposing of lanes, particularly when they can move more people than cars to achieve --

and also to achieve dedicated lanes in a more economical, sustainable way that has less impact on surrounding communities.

We recognize that the treatments proposed are guidelines and will be determined more specifically as more detailed planning moves forward, but looking towards implementation we urge the Board to keep specific treatments open, and urge implementing agencies to seek the highest quality treatments possible, meaning dedicated lanes wherever you can, in order to attract the most riders and create the most successful transit network possible.

We also urge the county to take
the bike and pedestrian priority areas
proposed in this plan very seriously as
pedestrian deaths have risen in the county.
We must ensure that the implementation of a
rapid transit system makes these corridors
safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and all
transit users by designing the roads for

slower speeds, creating narrower lanes,
buffers for pedestrians, wider sidewalks and
other improvements.

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In that context we believe --Let me turn to the regional excuse me. connections here. We have two priority regional connections we think should be added to the plan. Number one is a transit connection to Tysons Corner. As the I-270 job corridor in Tysons grow, it will be essential to provide a transit link for commuters to avoid traffic and providing a fast direct link that would prove more effective in support of your planning goals than the perennially proposed Virginia Potomac bridge crossing. Just last year Montgomery County Council members and the Fairfax Board of Supervisors had really I think an historic meeting where they discussed this important transit connection, and it should be a top priority. And secondly, we also urge you to

Neal R. Gross & Co., Inc. 202-234-4433

coordinate with Howard County in your

continued planning for the US-29 corridor.

The only way we're going to deal with this traffic is to intercept more of those commuters before they crowd Downcounty roads.

So we urge the Board and staff to work closely with the local communities to get the details right while also looking to the needs of future generations as we plan for a robust and transformative transit network for the county.

Montgomery County has a respective history of forward-thinking planning from its Ag Reserve to its affordable housing and its transit-oriented communities. This is just such a plan and vision as well that will offer high-quality transit service necessary to connect the compact walkable and transit-oriented activity centers that are both necessary to deal with worsening traffic and your growing population. But they're also visionary for creating livable, sustainable and thriving communities where people will

have real options to leave their cars at home.
Thank you.

3 CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Ms. Ables?

MS. ABLES: Thank you for the opportunity to be heard today. I represent Bethesda Crest an infill community on 355 between the Beltway and Cedar Lane, a constrained right-of-way stretch close to Walter Reed, NIH, and downtown Bethesda.

As concurrent BRAC Zone residents, we're already involved in 355 traffic remediation through the county forum for all direct BRAC stakeholders. BRAC road projects were designed without prior feasibility studies or outreach to affected communities. This wasted time and taxpayer money by preventing constraints from being factored into proposed remediation. Like neighboring communities we must continue to expend private resources to compensate for lack of government agency preparation and to halt devastating

1 design flaws.

To avoid a repeat of this for BRT, our community met several years ago with Councilman Marc Elrich, who first introduced the BRT concept. Though he assured us that the beauty of BRT is that it can tailored to fit existing conditions, in current recommendations our stretch is a double center median section requiring 355 widening. Homeowners bought at Bethesda Crest accepting that the master plan allowed possible changes to 355.

BRAC, however, revealed that to satisfy this body's conditions for Bethesda Crest's development, due to objections by the surrounding older neighborhood, widening 355 onto our front hill became extremely difficult, if not impossible due to the following factors.

To implement the amended development plan on our very steep hill, during construction it became necessary to

build both above and below-ground retaining
walls interspersed around and through the
frontage to stabilize the hill and buttress
homes onto it. The steep hill already
experiences erosion under normal
circumstances. If the hill were truncated
with buttressing foundations removed and trees
lost, the result would radically exacerbate
erosion and further threaten stability of the
hill and homes.

To fit infrastructure including the storm drain system into the amended plan, these items have to be shoehorned between the buttresses, front drive, mature tree root systems, a Metro service tunnel and the front retaining wall. It took three years for the developer to figure out how to engineer and build this. No alternate space exists for these features to be relocated.

Further requirements would be compromised by widening. The site plan was shifted to preserve local and regional

character despite higher density, and interior and 355 perimeter forest conservation easements were mandated. Widening would obliterate the conservation easement along 355 that upholds required aesthetics and tree canopy. Pedestrian stairs down to 355 that sit on a buttress may not be able to relocate and retain access to 355 for local bus stops.

Bethesda Crest's central road provides public and emergency response vehicle access also to the surrounding neighborhood. Cedar Croft Drive is already at a maximum safe gradient. With 355 widening, it would shorten, steepen and disconnect from homes, driveways, custom retaining walls and brick sidewalks. Moreover, the excessive gradient would cause public vehicular hazard to and from 355.

MPDU community. Since the front most affected homes abut other homes, and since this is a common-property community, any effect to them

or common frontage, physical or economic, would impact detached and all fellow home owners. All of these complexities which posed risks and liabilities to private property and public safety caused widening of our 355 frontage for BRAC to be deemed unfeasible and not cost-effective. It was eliminated from proposed road projects.

Chris Van Hollen stipulated that
BRAC road changes must fit within limitations
posed by existing physical community
conditions. We know that planners and Board
members uphold this objective for BRT. We are
concerned, however, about actual
implementation, not just in relation to our
neighborhood, but for overall Bethesda. If
the county proceeds with BRT, then double
median bus lanes on 355 inside the Beltway
must be eliminated from the transit plan and
changed to non-invasive curbside treatment.

If you take green space and trees from either or both sides of 355 south of the

Beltway, it would be come as ugly as the White Flint 355 stretch you're trying to improve, and that would be both inappropriate and illogical.

This is a great place to live,
work and enjoy. As Montgomery County adapts
to growth and change, I think we all want
transit solutions that can keep it this way
but that everyone can welcome. Thank you very
much.

(Applause.)

CHAIR CARRIER: I'm going to ask to not have applause, please. We don't have time for it. Thank you.

Mr. Dyer?

MR. DYER: Thank you, Madam Chair, and fellow commissioners. I'm Robert Dyer, lifelong resident of Bethesda, and I just want to urge you to put this plan into the context of the county at large rather than just White Flint or Silver Spring and to look at the numbers when we're facing years of structural

deficits here, scare money for transportation.

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And when you look -- for example, the American Legion Bridge Study showing 23 percent of Maryland drivers are heading to A Potomac River crossing would take Dulles. about -- that's almost a quarter of the traffic off the American Legion Bridge. The Purple Line is a route that has one of the highest riderships for bus and doesn't have Metro going along it. That's a very good project. M83 Upcounty is long-promised for car-dependent areas that are exploding in growth up there. But BRT does not have the data to support ridership. It turns out that the forecasting model is simply that we think people will ride a fast bus. And this is really junk science.

When you look at 355, 70 percent overcapacity right now, this plan decreases it 33 percent. Now you're 103 percent over. If you pretend the 15 percent of people would switch in the fantasy scenario to be BRT,

you're now 88 percent over capacity and you've spent \$5 billion and you're 18 percent worse with traffic than you were before you started. So, you know, my first thought is what is the budget for calculators here for the staff?

And just existing and planned density around the Metro stations, it's already there around those stations on 355. And I also wondered if the staff has looked at the City of Rockville, what they're doing.

The staff is suggesting an Edmonston station for BRT, but the city is actually advocating putting the highest density down by Twinbrook, not up there.

And I think really that when the product requires sabotage of the highway system to get ridership, that just tells us that this is a terrible product. And really it's a war on cars, but it's also a war on working families. Should we declare war on the single mom who's driving 355 to get to daycare, pick up the kid and go home up to

Montgomery Village? I don't think that's

appropriate and I think an anti-car attitude

is just counterproductive at this point.

We're talking about moving a million people

inside Montgomery County, and that's going to

require every mode of transportation.

So I would really urge you to put this in the context of the entire county's interests. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Levine?

MR. LEVINE: Yes, I am Richard

Levine, President of the Locust Hill Citizens

Association. We've submitted a statement for

the record, and I'll shorten on delivery.

The Locust Hill community is

located on the east side of Rockville Pike

immediately inside the Beltway north of Cedar

Lane. As such, we're directly affected by the

plan, both as commuters and residents along

the complex and physically-constrained two
thirds mile portion of the proposed 355 south

1 corridor.

Our message is simple: The Board should not include median busways inside the Beltway in the 355 corridor should the Board move forward with the Functional Plan based on BRT. Rather, the Board should incorporate the less-disruptive and potentially more transit-friendly curb lane alternative. At a minimum, curb lane busways along our segment of the pike should be in phase 1 just as they're in phase 1 in the segment between Bradley Boulevard and Friendship Heights.

At the outset we commend the public hearing draft for recognizing that the planned growth of the 355 south corridor cannot be accommodated by assuming that increased commuting will be accomplished through the use of an increasing volume of single-occupant vehicles. Consequently, transit-oriented solutions seem necessary.

We also commend the draft for recognizing that widening Rockville Pike

within the Beltway for BRT purposes is not a viable option. However, where we part company with the discussion draft is its recommendation for median transitways inside the Beltway on 355. We believe this recommendation is insupportable on the current record and one that can be made, if at all, only after a detailed cost-benefit analysis.

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Significantly, as set out on the public hearing draft, usage estimates for median busways inside the Beltway build 1 are not appreciably greater than the user estimates for build 2 incorporating curb lanes south of Grosvenor Metro station. A fivepercent peak hour advantage for median busways in the segment between Pooks Hill Road and Cedar Lane compare to curb lane busways is simply not meaningful given that the forecast relate to a date 27 years from now. result, the disadvantages of median busways inside the Beltway should tip the balance toward curb lanes, particularly give median

busways' higher costs. The downsides do exist.

First, median busways would require widening rights-of-way to accommodate median bus stops and left-turn lanes. Several examples exist in our short stretch of the pike. We have the examples in our official record that we've -- statement we've submitted.

Second, median busways would shift high-volume traffic into the curb lanes increasing noise and pollution for adjacent residents, while a curb lane approach would serve as a buffer from such general traffic by limiting the curb lane to transit vehicles.

Third, median busways appears to be a less-effective approach toward incentivizing commuters to get out of their cars because they're likely to leave Ride On buses stuck in the congestion of the two remaining general purpose lanes rather than moving swiftly in dedicated bus lanes.

Conversely, if Ride On buses uses median busways, they could no longer make existing local stops since the only median stops would be the BRT stops. Additionally, curb lanes have the flexibility to more easily permit use of these priority lanes by authorized vans transporting commuters to remote parking lots or buildings.

Lastly, left turns would not be allowed at an un-signalized intersection.

This would be a hardship for Locust Hill since our southbound -- vehicles coming southbound on the pike can only get to our community by making left turns. That would be prohibited.

This hardship and disruption would be completely unnecessary if curb lane busway lane were utilized.

We note that these harms mirror the disadvantages listed for a median busway alternative as set out in the March 8, 2013 Parsons Brinckerhoff memo appended to the hearing draft. The memo also suggests that

Montgomery County officials consider a phasedapproach to BRT implementation.

In sum, we hope that upon reflection you conclude that curb lane busways will be the most appropriate way to implement BRT on Route 355 inside the Beltway. As a minimum, a decision to adopt a median busway should be deferred until phase 2 after detailed cost-benefit analyses are completed based on actual usage patterns.

Locust Hill thanks you for your consideration.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Ms. Riley?

MS. RILEY: I'm Michele Riley,
President of the Woodmoor-Pinecrest Citizens
Association which represents about 1,200 homes
in the area along Colesville Road and
University Boulevard in Silver Spring.

We're one of five neighborhoods in the Four Corners Area. For many, Four Corners is just an intersection or an area to get

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through on the way to the Beltway or downtown Silver Spring, but for us it's a thriving diverse community of over 20,000 residents, 10 schools, 6,000 students, and numerous retail businesses.

Despite that fact that our neighborhoods were divided up and separated with the Beltway was constructed, our community maintains many of the attributes that have characterized it for the last 77 years, and that the Planning Department is trying to create in other areas. We're community-oriented, walkable, affordable and green. In addition, over 30 percent of our residents utilize public transportation, which is twice the overall rate for county residents.

The proposed amendments to the Master Plan of Highways include proposals for two BRT routes through the center of our neighborhood. There aren't any other residential areas in the county that would be

affected as much by the changes proposed in this Functional Plan. While we appreciate the staff's work on proposing solutions and there is great support within our community for public transit, we are obviously concerned about the potential significant impacts to this community that we love and that has previously described attributes that made us what to move here.

We recognize we live in a very busy area and we've worked hard to adapt to the changes that have come over time while trying to maintain the safety of our streets. For those living along the Route 29 corridor south of New Hampshire Avenue, Route 29 is Main Street and provides the only access to neighborhoods along it. However, the evolution of this iteration of BRT proposals has been troubling because there is no citizens advisory committee.

Some of our main concerns to the plan relate to the removal of general travel

lanes and the resulting impact on traffic flow, increased congestion and increased cutthrough traffic in our neighborhoods and the impact on the quality of life.

Previous studies for a median busway showed the level of service degrading an entire grade at intersections.

The impact on pedestrian safety.

The fact that most of the traffic in the area is coming to and from the Beltway and those drivers would not be riding the BRT.

An express service along Route 29 that would serve Howard County and Upcounty residents with park and ride lots at the expense of Downcounty because there would be few stops, no park and rides and residents will see continued decrease in local bus service.

The taking of additional property because there is no additional right-of-way available below New Hampshire Avenue. Also the right-of-way charts in the plan do not

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reflect the right-of-way needed for stations or for the required widening of sidewalks and curbs and only indicate minimum takes needed, not maximum.

Finally, the placement of BRT routes on paper and to the countywide plan in order to justify additional large developments in White Oak and elsewhere along BRT routes.

These routes would be placed in the Master Plan without any alternative analyses or costbenefit analyses.

while we'd love to be able to embrace the current BRT proposals as the solution to the complicated challenges we face in this area, unfortunately far too many questions remain about this plan. And when these questions are asked, we are told that they will be taken up in the next phase. We tried to be open-minded, but are frustrated by some of the overly optimistic assumptions being made in this proposed plan and the fact that in this round of proposals there has been

1 no impact analysis done.

The lack of this analysis is
especially troubling since the plan proposes
to take general travel lanes away along Route
29 and the staff shows on a 2.5 percent time
saving system-wide. In the past similar plans
were not adopted because the costs far
outweighed the benefits. It seems that the
current approach is to ignore all the previous
data.

Our requests. At our March 20th membership meeting the Woodmoor-Pinecrest Citizens Association unanimously agreed that much can and should be done to improve our existing services and that the existing infrastructure should be improved and built upon before creating an entirely different system. We request the following:

- (1) Provide more funding for WMATA so that Metrorail can return to the level of service in past years.
 - (2) Increase the frequency of

current bus service. In recent years the bus service in our area has been cut back. We need more buses, not fewer.

- (3) Add BRT attributes to current bus services to speed the boarding process such as prepaid boarding, multi-door and level boarding and electronic NextBus sign technology.
- (4) Improve local stops by providing more shelters.
- (5) Implement express bus lanes on the shoulder were feasible on the interstates of I-270, 495 and 95.
- any additional BRT corridors in any Master
 Plan pilot projects should be implemented
 along at least one of the four routes
 previously designated and approved by the
 Council for BRT in master plans, including
 Viers Mill Road, Corridor Cities Transitway,
 North Bethesda Transitway, and Upper Georgia
 Avenue. Once the outcomes of those pilot

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traffic as every automobile. We must increase our people-moving capacity rather than to seek to move the most cars at the fastest speeds possible. Widening roads is not only expensive, but it creates a hostile environment for pedestrian crossings and bicyclists.

So how can we move more people without widening roads? We can use part of our existing roadways for BRT. One bus carries as many people as 60 single-occupancy vehicles. By repurposing part of the public right-of-way for us by BRT, buses will travel in their own lanes bypassing gridlock and they can serve as their own advertisement.

BRT's features include highfrequency service in peak hours, electronic

NextBus displays, prepay kiosks so drivers
don't have to stop to collect fares, and entry
via any and all doors just like Metrorail.

BRT also reduces the cost of transportation.

AAA says it costs 10,000 a year to own a car.

With better public transit two-earner
households might be able to forego the second
car and reduce their costs. Teenagers and
students could rely on transit rather than
autos. This frees up parents from
chauffeuring and also would reduce the number
of new drivers on the road. And some day
aging baby boomers will give up their cars and
have reliable transit.

While travel between suburban destinations is quite common, it's underserved by public transit. The east-west routes in the BRT plan are very important and must be included to provide a network effect. We also urge that the BRT not be traveling in mixed traffic. This will simply create bottlenecks and take away from the speed and efficiency of the transit. BRT supports existing activity centers, but will also be key to the growth of future plans like White Oak Science Gateway and White Flint.

WMATA's priority corridors network

are for the highest ridership corridors and align very closely with the routes in the BRT plan. ACT urges implementation of these priority corridors as a first step to give the public better transit sooner. We suggest an initial pilot of BRT on New Hampshire Avenue if the state allowed a lane to be repurposed The WMATA Metro extra canine line for BRT. could provide limited-stop very fast service between FDA and White Oak and Fort Totten. This could be used as a test case to allow planners to design, learn and redesign and it could be done with minimal expense. A few extra buses and some operating costs.

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One final comment. ACT would ask the Planning Board to separate out the last part of the document starting on page 69, the MARC Brunswick line expansion. We'd like to see it addressed on its own merit so that MARC's growth and expansion can move ahead quickly.

With that, that's the end of my

testimony. Thank you for allowing me to
speak. And I'm sorry I got here late.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Quinn?

MS. QUINN: Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you this evening. My name is Harriet Quinn and I'm a resident of the Woodmoor neighborhood in Silver Spring.

I've chaired our Traffic and Transportation

Committee for the last five years. I am speaking as an individual.

I agree with all of the points made by Michele Riley earlier in her testimony and would like to strongly endorse her request that a pilot project be implemented before adding any additional routes to the countywide plan. Despite the fact that the county has approved four previous projects for BRT, some approved many years ago, we do not have anything on the ground to prove that the BRT will do what is being promised.

Putting additional routes in the

Master Plan only puts the county in a position of promising something that it may not be able to deliver on. Let's try at least one of the routes, previously-approved routes first to get some lessons learned before adding more. Then if more should be added, please create citizens advisory committees for any future routes so that there can be real dialogue among the various agencies and stakeholders.

In addition to the list of improvements Michele listed, I would also add support for the MARC service enhancements that the staff has recommended and endorse Ms.

Slater's proposal for a pilot project on New Hampshire Avenue, assuming the residents there approve of that.

With regard to Route 29, this corridor deserves much more attention to detail than is being given in this document.

It's really three separate segments with different characteristics and is a route for which there is no alternative for most

residents. This corridor is not only a major commuter route, but it is also Main Street for our neighborhoods, provides the only access to many of the existing neighborhoods along it, and has substantial pedestrian activity.

In our own neighborhood we've worked very hard in recent years on solutions for improving safety as Four Corners was found to have the second highest pedestrian collision rate in the county. While many improvements have been made, safety remains an ongoing issue all along the corridor. As you may know, there have been many serious pedestrian accidents in the last few months along Colesville Road, including at least one fatality.

Unlike for some residents along other major north-south corridors in county, many of the 90,000-plus residents who live along Route 29 do not have access to an alternative route. For example, those living along Connecticut Avenue can use Wisconsin and

Georgia Avenues and vice versa. The

Colesville Road ramp to the Beltway has the
highest volume of vehicles entering the
Beltway in Board. The queue in the morning in
the right-hand lane can extend beyond a mile.
This is the same right-hand lane that is
supposed to be used by vehicles wishing to
make left turns that are not permitted at the
Four Corners intersection.

geometry is unique in the State of Maryland in that you must turn right to go left, yet many vehicles cannot make the turn because of the backup to the Beltway. It's worth noting that a great deal of the traffic in the Four Corners area is traveling to and from the Beltway and those vehicles would still be on the road since the proposed BRT would not travel on the Beltway.

While there's consensus that many transit improvements are needed in the county, we voted unanimously that we could not support

the current recommendations, but we support
many improvements to transit in the county.

So we ask for your careful consideration. And
thank you for your time and for the staff's

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

MS. QUINN: Thank you.

that we've got a lot of people standing in the back and we have five chairs up here that nobody's using because they're facing away from us so speakers won't sit there. If anybody would like to come get a chair, you may. And Mr. Autrey is coming up here to sit, which is a good idea. That opens two chairs right there at a key place. You get a table even if you take one of those.

So you can't come up when somebody's speaking, so come now. They're all being shy. All right. Well, then stand.

Are you coming to help, Mary?

22 Thank you.

time as well.

There's also a chair, an open seat right in the front row and one in the second row, another one right here in the first row.

All right. Thank you, Mary.

Mr. Williamson?

MR. WILLIAMSON: I am a lifetime resident of Silver Spring and have attended numerous presentations by the Planning staff, and Mr. Leggett's task force in the last year, and the February 21st meeting before the Planning Board. Most of my questions and comments I've been asking for the last year and still waiting for a lot of answers. So tonight I will try again.

How much time is saved by commuters along Route 29 using a BRT and what study has been done to determine this?

How many riders will BRT pull from Metro and Ride On and what study shows this?

A busway was proposed for Route 29 in 1996 and showed the same or worse congestion in the level of service from Sligo

Creek Parkway to New Hampshire Avenue and that was before their proposed 20,000 to 25,000 square feet of development north of White Oak. What published study or model shows the level of service improving or congestion decreasing after the White Oak development is completed with the BRT?

One of the co-chairmen of the task force has said repeatedly that BRT will not work if it goes into mixed traffic. Staff has it in mixed traffic in parts of Route 355 and Route 29. Will this being in mixed traffic slow the BRT so much as to affect ridership? How do we know?

We are constantly told so much of what we ask is in the details to be worked out. Shouldn't we have more answers before we go farther along and spend upwards of \$10 billion on something that no study has shown will improve traffic?

The ITDP did a study last year and said money would be better spent by improving

existing service, that ridership would not justify the cost. None of this plan for Route 29 has been included in most of the master plans where all the affected homeowners, commercial sites and neighborhood associations are given adequate notice and ample time to get answers to these and other pertinent questions.

In areas where the BRT is in mixed traffic then a median and back into mixed, how will this occur? Where has this ever been done successfully?

The BRT requires signal
prioritization. How does this affect the flow
of crossing streets in areas of lots of
pedestrian crossings such at Four Corners?
Will BRT be widened at any time for the BRT?
Of course it will. And if so, what property
will be taken? Property will most definitely
have to be taken wherever the station is
located. The median is not wide enough and if
a station is along the curb lane, it will have

to be taken from homeowners or commercial sites. Have any been notified? Not likely.

The task force and your staff are advocating transit to promote ever more development. This is true at White Flint and especially true north of White Oak. The number of riders gained from a BRT will be overwhelmed by the additional traffic from the proposed development. It is most certainly not enough to justify the dollar cost and the disruption of our neighborhoods.

You will hear many BRT proponents speak glowingly about it. Few of them live along the proposed routes and their neighbors won't be affected by the disruption the BRT will bring. It is easy to be for something if it has no direct impact on you. Some of the proponents don't even live in Montgomery County.

And until and unless you get answers to these questions and comments, I urge you to slow the process. In the

meantime, take the advice of the ITDP and approve existing service. Thank you very much.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Goffman?

MR. GOFFMAN: Hi. Yes, I'm Ethan Goffman. I'm speaking for the Montgomery County Sierra Club group and I will say I do live on 355 right along the route of the proposed BRT.

system for Montgomery County, by shifting more trips from cars to transit, will help the environment by reducing the emissions that cause air pollution and global climate change. In addition, the proposed transit system is a critical component of the county's commitment to encourage the growth of smart growth centers served by enhanced transit.

Successful smart growth helps preserve

Montgomery County's open spaces and watersheds which benefits everyone. The size of these

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benefits is directly related to the number of people who use the rapid transit system. As ridership increases, overall air emissions decline, smart growth is encouraged and environmental benefits go up. If ridership fails to meet expectations, environmental benefits are smaller as well.

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What increases ridership? elements are key: The rapid transit system is designed to make a transit trip competitive to a private vehicle in terms of travel time. This includes dedicated lanes for vehicles, off-vehicle fare collection and boarding through multiple doors which reduces dwell time at stops and frequent service. Dedicated lanes are crucial as they can pass traffic, draw new riders onto transit and allow far more riders in a single lane than one dedicated to cars or mixed use. We support the draft plan's discussion of when it makes sense to repurpose a traffic lane and dedicate it to transit.

The rapid transit system must be a network of interconnected routes. The 10 proposed routes accomplish this extremely well. We're particularly pleased with the draft plan's support for more rapid transit routes connecting the eastern and western parts of the county. While we support building the entire system in a relatively short period rather than rolling it out one or two routes at a time, it is most important that these routes be of maximum quality and there is improved access to rapid transit stations and stops. Improving bicycle and pedestrian access to stations and stops can significantly expand the number of potential riders. We are pleased that the draft plan devotes significant attention to these improvements.

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At the same time we would like to make two suggestions for the Planning Board's consideration. Do not abandon the idea of repurposing traffic lanes to create dedicated

transit lanes in the face of criticism that it is anti-car. Five of the ten proposed routes include segments where one traffic lane in each direction would be converted to dedicated lanes. Most of these segments are within the Beltway where the right-of-way cannot be expanded and transit ridership and car traffic is the heaviest. More people and more jobs are coming to Montgomery County over the next 20 years, and avoiding these changes will only lead to more traffic congestion.

As the draft plan outlines, when projected transit ridership through these congested areas during peak hours exceeds the number of people that private vehicles can carry, then switching that lane from general traffic to a transit lane maximizes the carrying capacity. This is not anti-car. It simply recognizes that sometimes the best way to move the maximum number of people through a congested area is by means of a combination of rapid transit vehicles running in a

dedicated lane and private vehicles in the adjacent lanes.

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And the other suggestion is to avoid recommending a bare bones system. features mentioned at the beginning of my testimony; dedicated lanes, frequent service, off-vehicle fare collection, boarding through multiple doors, are not the signs of a goldplated system. They are central to the creation of a transit system that will attract significant numbers of new riders. Eliminating these features will reduce initial costs, but the resulting system will fail to give Montgomery County's growing population affordability mobility and expanded access to jobs.

Any routes not up to RTB standards should be given another name such as Ride On Plus. Otherwise, they risk lowering the system's branding value and hurting ridership.

Twenty-nine seconds.

Demographics. More young people are not using

cars as much. They prefer high-tech. That's probably permanent. We want to attract young people, young professionals to Montgomery

County. We've got to move towards transit, because that's the wave of the future.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you. Mr.

Morrison?

MR. MORRISON: I only need three.

My name is Drew Morrison. I'm a rising senior

at Yale. I live in Bethesda, and for the last

two summers I worked for the Montgomery County

Executive's Office on the BRT initiative. I

don't work for the county anymore, but a

summer where you don't go to a Planning Board

meeting, that's a summer wasted.

(Laughter.)

MR. MORRISON: And for me, the county talks a lot about how we can attract and retain young people. I'm here to maybe represent young people. And there are three reasons why transit is so essential to retaining and attracting young people.

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The first is \$1 trillion dollars in student loan debt. Young people can't buy houses. We can't buy cars because we're saddled with debt.

Secondly, we think there are advantages to the sort of walkable lifestyle that transit enables. If you can do everything in one place, that's a great thing.

But the third thing is a moral obligation. My generation doesn't have the time, doesn't have the luxury to degrade the environment in the same way that we did. And we also like the community that the sort of walkable transit-oriented developments have created in places like Kentlands and Orenco Station across the country.

I'd like to also address the equity issue that was brought up earlier.

Without reliable transit it's very difficult for lower-income people who do not own cars to reliably access jobs in this county. And if we want to be a place of opportunity for

people from all stripes, we need to have reliable transit.

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And so that comes to the point that others have made, that we need that dedicated right-of-way that allows this transit, this BRT system to really be rapid and to operate in the most efficient, effective way possible.

A lot of people have raised concerns about "Don't be too bold. Do a pilot project first." The way I see this project and why I was so excited to work on it is that this is an opportunity for the greatest 20th Century suburb in the United States to become the greatest 21st Century suburb. We made mistakes as a 20th Century suburb. We degraded the environment. Sprawl became isolating. It's inequal. Not everyone gets the same benefits. A 21st Century suburb corrects those mistakes. And you have to be bold to do it. We built an interstate highway We built wedges in corridors. system. That

everybody's here in that group.

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fact, my house backs up onto Ward 6 and I look

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out the windows of the rear of my house and I can watch the traffic go by. So I actually am able to speak not just for the city, but for somebody who's affected and understands the actual traffic on New Hampshire Avenue.

The city has passed a resolution;
City Council did, on May 6th, which we
submitted to you. That resolution basically
says that the city is on board with the BRT
Functional Master Plan and we're going to do
our very best to support it. So I'm not going
to spend time praising the plan. I think
that's already been done by various people
here who are in favor of it. I want to say
though that from our perspective we sort of
see is the devil is in the details.

I know New Hampshire Avenue has been talked about to some degree as perhaps one of the pilots that could be used early on for this, and that may be fine. Who's to say? But I would point out though that New Hampshire Avenue is an extremely heavily

trafficked corridor, as you know. It actually kind of functions in such a way that the six lanes going both directions in the peak hours makes it virtually just a very inhospitable environment for people who live on either side of New Hampshire Avenue.

The recently-approved Takoma/
Langley Sector Plan envisions at the
intersection of University Boulevard and New
Hampshire Avenue a major redevelopment of that
area, and we want to make sure that that
redevelopment is not in any way deterred by
the currently suggested treatment, which would
be a two-lane median treatment down the middle
of New Hampshire Avenue.

One of the things we want to do is to try to make New Hampshire Avenue a unifying street that will bring together the commercial and residential aspects of the city on both sides of New Hampshire Avenue. We're afraid that the center lane exclusive lane for that may more or less create what would be seen

visually, kind of like a Berlin Wall. It's already difficult enough for pedestrians to get across six lanes of traffic. If they have to deal with Jersey barriers and other things like that, it's going to make it really prohibitive.

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We also realize that the current suggested plan is for a stop at the transit center at Langley Park at the intersection of New Hampshire and University, another stop at the Ethan Allen Gateway and one at the Maryland Gateway at Eastern Avenue. Most of those buses are probably going to be -- if this is implemented be full of commuters. so it will then become a way by which commuters will get into the city and out of the city, which is good. But on the other hand it's not going to provide much of service to people who live on both sides of New Hampshire Avenue because the stops are so far apart.

As you know, I'm sure, that there

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exists the New Hampshire Avenue Master Concept
Plan which talks about creating New Hampshire
Avenue as a multi-way boulevard. The city has
been working with Montgomery County Planning,
Prince Georges Planning, State Highway
Administration, the District of Columbia and
the Council of Governments to figure out how
we can make that work. The current -- the
treatment proposal in the Functional Master
Plan for BRT would conflict with that concept
plan.

And so I'm not here to say something can't be done or shouldn't be done. I think it's too early for us to take those kind of positions and pronouncements. It's just to simply say that we're going to have -- we really want to work very closely with the planning process on the BRT as it affects New Hampshire Avenue and we look forward to the possibility of doing so.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Mr. Schultz.

Mr. Wilhelm?

MR. WILHELM: For the record, I'm

Dan Wilhelm. I'm speaking tonight for the

Greater Colesville Citizens Association.

The citizens association has urged the county for decades to address road congestion problems and the spillover effect of cut-through traffic in residential areas. The BRT corridors included in the Draft Master Plan are a good start to building the BRT network. Once implemented, the 10 proposed corridors will start to address the road congestion. They will also start to address other problems like pollution and global warming. For these reasons, GCCA supports including the 10 corridors being included in the Master Plan.

As a history lesson; this predates
I think all of you on the Planning Board, I
was involved in the Planning Department's
Transportation Policy Report that concluded in
2002. That effort looked at over a hundred

road and transit projects, mostly road projects, land use changes, better management of our transportation infrastructure. It concluded that congestion would only get substantially worse even if all these things were built. And, you know, I'm not sure where the money would come from because in those days it was almost \$10 billion. So today it would probably 20 billion or more.

The TRP, the transit -- the TPR developed a concept of what is now being called bus rapid transit as a possible method of addressing congestion. The TPR eventually led to the County Executive's Transit Task Force which expanded and refined the BRT concept. The TTF recommended network is much more cost effective than the large number of projects considered in 2002. While we support including the 10 corridors, we fill more study is needed to determine the actual treatment and the number and location of stations that will be implemented.

1 We urge the plan to contain 2 language to provide the implementing agency with the flexibility to decide upon the 3 treatment after more study. The studies of 4 5 two corridors; Veirs Mill and Georgia Avenue, are currently underway. Including all the 6 7 corridors in the Master Plan will allow such studies to be undertaken for all of them, 8 9 assuming the Council approves them and 10 provides the needed funding.

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configuration has yet to be determined, the implementation agency also needs flexibility to acquire additional small amounts of land.

And I've looked at some places where you could put bus stations and they don't require much space. So, you know, you have to be kind of creative and there's a lot you can do without disrupting existing businesses.

The county currently has a study underway to determine how to reconfigure the local bus routes and integrate them with the

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BRT routes. I think that's a really key thing, because you need the local buses to get people out of the neighborhoods and businesses to the BRT routes.

Both of these efforts must also address pedestrian circulation. Since the study has only recently gotten started, the results are not yet available. Flexibility and acquiring small amounts of land is critical. We urge the Master Plan include a short section of Cherry Hill Road, a segment of the Randolph Road corridor, so that it extends from Rockville Pike to FDA Boulevard, which is what's proposed in the White Oak Gateway Master Plan, which you're going to hear next week. That section is included -- oh, I already covered that.

Anyway, in conclusion we urge the Planning Board to support the draft with the minor changes. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Anderson?

MR. ANDERSON: For the record, I'm

Dave Anderson. I live at 8708 1st Avenue in

Silver Spring and I'm here to share with you

why I am in favor of the bus rapid transit

element in the Corridors Plan.

I thought the best way to do that would be to recall for you a conversation I had earlier this week with my automobile insurance agent who -- among other things he asked me what was the first year that you drove an automobile? And I told him 1955.

And I did not say to him, but I did think to myself, if only it were possible to recreate the driving conditions of 1955. You know, there was a movie in which a DeLorean made that possible, but since we don't have that available --

(Laughter.)

MR. ANDERSON: -- we have to do something. Obviously things are getting worse and we must have some cost-effective answer to the congestion and the long commute time that

1 we have in this metro area.

grandchildren. I have two of them who by all indications will be growing up as teenagers in Montgomery County in the very near future.

I'm hoping for their safety as well as my own.

And I often say to my friends that those two children, 8 and 12, are my only possible ticket to immortality. And this being the case, I have a vested interest in those two, as well all the other precious young people who are growing up under some of the foulest traffic conditions imaginable in America.

So I favor the bus rapid transit plan and if you help us get the elements in place of that plan, including dedicated lanes, platforms, prepay facilities, I can say to you that those people in my age cohort will do our best to remain safe and to keep the young people safe. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Steinberg?

1 MR. STEINBERG: I represent myself 2 at this point in my life.

I studied this thing very closely.

Fortunately I had the big book that was made for it, so I was able to look hard. And of course I love mass transit. I grew up in my adolescence in it. But I have real problems with the way this thing is laid out. One thing, the medians which are supposed to be simple, are not. You have to build bridges to get to them. There's money involved. There's the American with Disabilities Act. You have to gratify that.

And then it comes all down into
the Bethesda and Silver Spring, including
Connecticut Avenue, which hasn't been
included, every rush hour. And it's going to
get worse because of Howard County and
Frederick, Howard particularly. There's been
no measure, practical measure that is go out
there every day for a week and count. It
hasn't happened. We know that they're going

to grow. They don't have rapid transit to connect. It's all coming here. And it's going to go to the choke points unless you want to spend the kind of money that it takes to build overpasses or underpasses for every red light. You can't.

So you need something else that solves this problem, and I suggest two things: One is the circle line to connect all the spokes of the Metro, and it would be a Metro system. It is a take-off of Doug Duncan's original Purple Line, but much more expanded. Appropriate today because of the BRAC and other federal involvements, it could be funded.

The other I propose is what we had when the Metro opened, free transfer, free transfer from the bus to the train and reverse. And it would save a hell of a lot of money. You wouldn't have to go into this.

The existing bus system would work if you had a remedy for the current overcrowding on Metro

Good.

MR. McDOUGALL:

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(Laughter.)

MR. McDOUGALL: Okay. Well, I'm

one of the handful of neighbors on US-29

opposing this project. As you can see,

there's more than a handful of us. I am also

-- I heard from a rising senior from Yale.

I will say that I'm a senior citizen from

Harvard College --

(Laughter.)

MR. McDOUGALL: -- the opposing alma mater. And the young man actually said something very interesting. He said that this would help low-income people. By low-income people I'm assuming he also includes minorities and immigrants. Actually, it's not going to help minorities and immigrants, the BRT on US-29, because most of us lived in the downcounty area. We're fairly concentrated. And the BRT will not stop in our neighborhoods. In fact, they will come through our neighborhoods like an express train.

There's Blair High School where

3,000 kids have to cross US-29 at Four

Corners. This dedicated lane that we heard

one of the earlier speakers talk about would

go right through there. These kids have to

have -- it's like Wile E. Coyote and the

Roadrunner getting across there. Right? And

now we're going to have something roaring

through there that can override traffic

signals? I mean this is just an accident

waiting -- lots of accidents waiting to

happen.

We've heard, you know, eloquent discussions about the diversity of Four Corners, how it's thriving. Livable.

Walkable. I walk there. I mean I walk to Red Maple, a sushi place, just opened up. Is that going to go? Is that where the BRT station is going to be? Trader Joe's. You know, you already have a really difficult time getting in there. How are you going to get in there with these things overriding traffic signals?

Financing is another problem.

There's been some discussion of special

assessments on people half a mile on either

side. It's not going to work. It's against

state law. It's against the constitutional

law.

yet come.

By the way, in addition to a history lesson, I'm a law professor at Howard University, colleague of Ike Leggett's, and I was a candidate for the chairmanship of the Planning Board in the early 1990s, nominated by then-Councilman Ike Leggett, and I withdrew from consideration in favor of Art Holmes who had been in the county longer than I had and who had the backing of the county branch of the NAACP. So I don't address the -
CHAIR CARRIER: Your chance may

(Laughter.)

MR. McDOUGALL: Well, I actually
-- people have asked me about that, but I'm
shying away actually. I'm really shying away.

I have my hands full just dealing with stuff like this. I mean, like a lot of people who are minority and immigrant along US-29, I'm one -- I'm the first generation in my family to own a home. And these dedicated lanes and widenings, they threaten, you know, what we have. And I don't think we're being selfish. I've heard the term "NIMBY," but I'm hoping that it doesn't get translated into not in minority neighborhoods, because that's where this things to be ready to go.

I can also tell you that while we've been kind of denigrated as a handful of neighbors opposing this project, I've been seeing a handful of emailers proposing it. I get email blasts from various organizations saying come down and testify in favor of the BRT. Emailers don't sue for constitutional violations, but property owners do. That's it.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you.

I think I would really urge you to talk to our

	Page 84
1	staff, because I've looked at the routes and
2	I don't think that there is I would be
3	really surprised if there were any
4	statistically-significant difference in the
5	racial makeup of the neighborhoods where these
6	go, because they crisscross the entire county.
7	MR. McDOUGALL: I'm talking about
8	US-29.
9	CHAIR CARRIER: Oh, well we have
10	routes all over the county.
11	MR. McDOUGALL: I'm talking about
12	US-29.
13	CHAIR CARRIER: Maybe that one,
14	but that's
15	MR. McDOUGALL: Well, that's
16	CHAIR CARRIER: just one
17	route
18	MR. McDOUGALL: But that's an
19	CHAIR CARRIER: in a network.
20	MR. McDOUGALL: That's a very
21	important one to me and to the people who live
22	where I live.

	Page 85
1	CHAIR CARRIER: Well
2	MR. McDOUGALL: But I have
3	CHAIR CARRIER: I just wanted
4	to point out that there certainly is not an
5	effort to send BRT only into minority
6	neighborhoods.
7	MR. McDOUGALL: Well, I have 40
8	law students in my property in my real
9	estate financing class who I think will
10	probably be researching that topic in the
11	fall. So I probably I will be happy to
12	talk to the staff about it.
13	CHAIR CARRIER: Let us know what
14	they find out.
15	MR. McDOUGALL: I certainly will.
16	CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you.
17	Marie Park?
18	MS. PARK: My name is Marie Park
19	and I moved to Chevy Chase West in 1998 after
20	living several years in San Francisco and
21	Oakland. In San Francisco my husband worked

in the city attorney's office and defended in

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the city in bus accident lawsuits. It doesn't take an expert or my husband to tell you that high-speed transit buses result in deaths, injuries and expensive legal claims. In fact, there are actually attorneys who advertise themselves as transit bus accident lawyers.

According to the National Highway and Transportation Administration, 462 pedestrians were killed by transit buses from 2000 to 2011. And that's only the fatalities. The number of injuries is much higher.

For example, after paying millions of dollars a year in accident claims, the Greater Cleveland Transit Authority decided to add a recording on each of its 400 buses that repeatedly warns, "Caution, pedestrians, a bus is coming."

In Hartford, Connecticut where a 54-year-old woman was killed by a transit bus last November, transit bus drivers complained that they cannot see people entering the pedestrian walkways from their driver's seat.

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Buses also increase pedestrian accidents caused by regular vehicles whose drivers have decreased visibility as they pass or move around these large buses.

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I'm not saying that all buses are bad, but this plan is bad, bad because you're totally disregarded the concentration of schools on Wisconsin Avenue in both Bethesda and Chevy Chase. Students cross Wisconsin Avenue multiple times a week, usually during the morning rush hour. BCC High School, the Concord Hill School, the Oneness-Family School, BCC Cooperative Nursery School and Somerset Elementary School are all either on Wisconsin Avenue or a few blocks from its six Your plan also hurts young pedestrians lanes. because you are taking away the raised median in Bethesda and potentially the one in Chevy Chase, medians that provide a safe resting stop for student walkers who don't make it across Wisconsin Avenue before the light change.

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According to a June 2012 National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration review of studies on pedestrian safety, older teenagers, those between 15 and 19, accounted for over 33 percent of the bus-related accidents and more likely to be involved in crashes while walking along the roadway.

Pedestrians under 10 were shown to be over-involved in mid-block intersection dashes in bus-related crashes.

With no school bus serviced provided to over 30 percent of BCC High School students, more than 600 students have no choice but to walk to BCC High School when it opens at 7:25 a.m. and then cross Wisconsin again at the 2:10 afternoon dismissal.

Concord Hill School located right on Wisconsin Avenue has more than 100 children in K through 3rd grade who arrive between 8:20 and 8:40 a.m. Students in grades 4 through 8 at the Oneness-Family School also located on use Norwood Park at least four days a week,

1	therefore crossing Wisconsin Avenue eight
2	times a week on foot.

Somerset Elementary School has 516 students, many who bike or walk across
Wisconsin Avenue from Chevy Chase Village.

CHAIR CARRIER: I will need to ask you to bring it to a close. You can submit the rest of it in writing.

MS. PARK: That's fine. Okay. I think the irony is is that when earlier members of this Board decided to widen Wisconsin Avenue to six lanes, they decided that the added cost of putting in medians was worth the increase in pedestrian/driver safety. The irony is now this Board is asking you to use taxpayer money to take out these medians. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. One other thing I wanted to mention, Mr. McDougall.

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes?

CHAIR CARRIER: The idea --

MR. McDOUGALL: I'm very popular.

1 CHAIR CARRIER: Yes, well,

2 something else you said that --

MR. McDOUGALL: Yes.

4 CHAIR CARRIER: -- I wanted to

5 give you a little extra information.

6 MR. McDOUGALL: The buses would

7 not be able to go through traffic lights.

8 They would be able to keep the traffic light

9 green a little longer.

MR. McDOUGALL: Right, and one --

11 CHAIR CARRIER: So it's not that

12 it would look to pedestrians like it was a red

13 | light to them. They would still have a green

14 light.

MR. McDOUGALL: No, no, I

16 understand.

17 CHAIR CARRIER: Okay.

18 MR. McDOUGALL: But it's -- you

19 know, but you have --

20 CHAIR CARRIER: Because it sounded

21 like you thought they were just going to

22 sailing on through a red light.

	Page 91
1	MR. McDOUGALL: Well, you know, I
2	mean they will. I mean, the thing is that
3	kids who are crowded
4	CHAIR CARRIER: I'm sorry, I
5	didn't mean to start a dialogue.
6	MR. McDOUGALL: Well, let but
7	I know, but you did
8	CHAIR CARRIER: If you knew that,
9	then fine.
10	MR. McDOUGALL: But you did raise
11	something and I'd like to respond.
12	CHAIR CARRIER: No, you can
13	characterize it however you like.
14	MR. McDOUGALL: No, it's not a
15	CHAIR CARRIER: I just wanted you
16	to understand
17	MR. McDOUGALL: It's not a
18	characterization.
19	CHAIR CARRIER: that they don't
20	go through red lights.
21	MR. McDOUGALL: I just want to be
22	sure that I understand what you're saying.

Hampshire Avenue on a regular basis. I've

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taken at 6:30 in the morning and I've taken it at 11:00 at night, and it's been standing room only at both times and it's usually very full the buses along that route.

So I also have in the past lived in Silver Spring, and I used to teach north of White Oak. And I took the bus to get up there along the -- the Z buses to get up there. And a lot of my students also took the bus to get to school. So I think that -- I think someone made a point earlier about students, but I think that generally speaking, like, students take transit a lot, at least my students did. And so I think that, like, making it easier for them to get to school through public transit is a great thing.

My final point is that my understanding is Montgomery County is projected to have a huge population growth over the next 30 years and if everyone -- if were to try to rely on cars to move everyone around, no one would get anywhere because the

traffic just wouldn't move. It already barely moves during rush hour. And so I think that by, you know, focusing on BRT and like really -- and dedicated lanes for transit we can increase the capacity of the public transportation system to help move property And I think that other alternatives owner. such as, I don't know, like widening the roads would be incredibly expensive and ultimately wouldn't even I don't think help congestion. So I think when you look at like the combination of trying to like help reduce congestion for like a more affordable price, I think that BRT is a good solution for that. CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you. Mr. Hausner? MR. HAUSNER: Hi, I'm Tony Hausner, a member of the Indian Springs Citizens Association Board and I'm speaking

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for our board.

proposals.

Neal R. Gross & Co., Inc. 202-234-4433

We support the bus rapid transit

Our highways are too congested and

BRT will bring both transportation relief, be more cost-effective, better for the environment and all of these compared to our current dependence on automobiles and traditional buses.

We have the following thoughts about BRT, however: First of all, we recommend that reversible lanes be used where feasible. This will reduce the number of lanes that are needed.

Second, we want to be sure that pedestrians can cross the roads where the BRT operates. Many of our citizens cross several lanes of traffic on Colesville Road in order to take the buses that go down this route and without a median there, it's very difficult to cross the highway. If you take out the median, you'd have to travel several blocks out of your way in order to cross at a traffic light, and that would discourage people from using buses. So it's essential that the medians stay where they are right now.

Finally, we want assurance that if BRT is put into place that there be no zoning changes impacting our neighborhoods, that wherever there are BRT stops that you don't change single-family neighborhoods surrounding those transit stops. Thank you.

7 CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Mr. 8 Hausner.

Ms. Ditzler?

MS. DITZLER: Hello, I'm Barbara
Ditzler. I'm here representing the League of
Women Voters of Montgomery County and I'm
chair of the Transportation and the Land Use
Committees.

The League believes that the current transportation system will benefit from incorporating bus rapid transit. The Functional Master Plan of Montgomery County should be modified to incorporate proposed changes to make that possible.

We support the concept of transportation access for all in Montgomery

County. The BRT will help achieve this access by connecting transit among the Metrorail, the Metrobus, Ride On, MARC, the Purple Line and Corridor Cities Transitway. It will prioritize how many people are moved rather than how many vehicles are moved throughout the county. It help ease boarding for parents with strollers, for the elderly, for those with disabilities with level boarding. It's going to improve our environment for all residents by reducing single-vehicle use.

traffic congestion. It will help to reduce energy consumption. And it will also expand from a few routes with more projected ridership routes and then go into the less-viable routes, which is a logical way to go. Rather than trying to build all routes at the same time, we think that the Planning staff has a good plan to progress it. We think that encouraging people to be using bus rapid transit and the routes is going to also

1 encourage the economic development of
2 Montgomery County.

In addition, by using current rights-of-way and incorporating a transit priority system with traffic, we expect that the system will be attractive to many people who currently do not use mass transit and it will also be cost-effective. Public transit is demonstratively much more desirable when the full costs and benefits of all options are considered and not just the dollars.

The League thanks you for your consideration of our testimony and appreciates the opportunity to advocate for all in Montgomery County. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Ms. Finnegan?

MS. FINNEGAN: Good evening. I'm Eileen Finnegan. I'm currently the President of the Hillandale Citizens Association and I feel like I've been here way too much recently.

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we're not quite in sync. There are some

But in reading both, and I've noted my own

copies of each document, I can tell you that

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want to be nitpicky, but some of the old plats have 100 feet right-of-way in some very important areas. So hopefully not putting that off too far for the full detailed studies for each route, I think we can look at those or would hope that someone can look at those so property owners have a little bit of a heads up. We'd also like some additional flexibility in station locations.

And as you heard earlier, Takoma
Park shares New Hampshire Avenue with us to
the southern end and the northern end and I
think some of the ideas that Takoma Park has
in their concepts of how they'd like their
streets to work for their community in fact
may be appropriate for our section of New
Hampshire Avenue from the Beltway through
White Oak. And I think having some -- not
cookie-cutter approaches, but have some
similar approaches may make for a much nicer
New Hampshire Avenue corridor in total.

On the Route 29 corridor, this is

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a little controversial in our community in that many of our residents also have to go through Four Corners. If you live in Hillandale, you either get on the Beltway or you get on 29 for the most part. So in fact, some folks are very concerned about the traffic conundrum and how that's going to be solved in Four Corners.

But we do have an opinion on the route that uses Lockwood to Stewart. And in the BRT Transit Functional Master Plan there is a recommendation that -- during planning that that route be -- or a separate route on 29 be considered to supplant that route on Lockwood and Stewart Lane. We see a value to keeping the BRT on Lockwood and Stewart.

The last concern that I have, in a minute-thirty, is really one of priorities, and it goes beyond the Planning Board, but this BRT project is very fluid in the county.

Of course we've had a little bit of the history in an earlier speaker with the Transit

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Task Force, etcetera, and there's now a steering committee out of DOT. And there are CIP PDFs that have already been put forward.

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I am hoping that when this comes together with the recommendations from the Planning Board to Council there will be an assurity that in fact the priorities that we're making in our community with the White Oak Science Gateway of New Hampshire and 29 resting on a BRT concept, that both of those routes will be given the proper weight so that one isn't 20 years behind the other. Because I think it's important as we look at that part of the county and this particular large plan that there be some consideration given so that New Hampshire Avenue can go forward as a full BRT and not necessarily as some secondary WMATA priority corridor. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Wellemeyer?

MR. WELLEMEYER: Good evening. My name is Jonathan Wellemeyer and I am a life-

long resident of Montgomery County. Having been brought up in one of the most diverse progressive and successful counties in the country, I've been instilled with a number of That includes values of values. inclusiveness, collectivity and most of all planning for a brighter future. That also means that I grew up in a car. It's true that I do actually technically have a choice to walk about a mile from my childhood home and get on the 10, the Z10 or the C8 and get to work in a little over two hours. That's not really a choice in my mind and that is something that bus rapid transit can change, but really only if there are dedicated lanes.

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There are a number of points I was going to make, but they've already been elegantly made by my fellow proponents of the BRT aspect of this plan as well as the plan in general, so I might say a few more general things and also say that -- well, I was going to talk about traffic on 29. That's sort of

object thinking. And one of the problems I see is that it's easy to get caught up in object thinking about how this plan is going to affect -- whether it's my commute and I'm for the plan, or if it's going to affect my home value or my pedestrian walk and I'm against the plan.

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This really is about systems thinking, and systems thinking is how we plan for the future in this county. We got here because we took bold steps in the past and that's the only way to achieve the brighter future that I think everybody in my generation certainly is looking forward to. We can't preserve the past land use mistakes in the absence of perfect evidence. That's not a way to plan for the future. We are going to get more people, we are going to get more jobs and we're going to get a lot more development. And keeping things the same is not going to help us with that. I know we can't realize this potential by doing nothing.

And finally I'll say I love my I'm not about a war on cars. I don't car. think anybody here is. My car is clean, it's comfortable, it gets me everywhere I want to go, but I don't want my children, if I have children here in this county, to grow up in the back seat of my car. I want them to have independence. I want them to be able to move and explore this county freely and to be able to work, live and play with ease all across the county. So thank you for your time. CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you. Ms. Nyamweya -- I'm sorry. You say it. MS. NYAMWEYA: Nyamweya. CHAIR CARRIER: Nyamweya. It's very pretty.

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MS. NYAMWEYA: Thank you so much.

I'm testifying as an individual. Good

evening. I am a Silver Spring resident, a

wife, a mother, a worker. As I speak today I

represent a family with ties of more than 50

years in this area. I drive a car and I take

Metro to work. I support your vision of a vibrant working future for this entire region.

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I do think we need a vision right now and I do think that vision has to emphasize the word "collective" or the word "shared" because we have such a diverse intertwined community. We share roads, restaurants, houses of worship, parks, shopping centers, hospitals. It is the nature of this county to be forward-thinking, to be inclusive, to be conscious of each other and of the environment and of our responsibilities. And it is in this county's character to act on what we know. We know we need less congestion on our roads, less frustration for our drivers, better ways for people to move around. Our county has so much to offer, but traffic is such a hassle in so many places.

We use Route 29 to visit our daughter in Towson, so we know that corridor well. Another daughter lives in Crystal City

and hesitates to come to Silver Spring because the drive is unpredictable or Metro has delays. We go to Four Corners often and to White Oak. We travel on Georgia Avenue to Philadelphia Avenue into Takoma Park. travel across Kensington via back roads unto Route 355 to Rockville and Gaithersburg and down to D.C. We use Veirs Mill Road. cross East-West Highway to Bethesda. drive can range from smooth to horrible depending on the roads that day. We use University Boulevard to College Park and Piney Branch Road and New Hampshire Avenue. all to say that we get around the region in many directions.

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We love to drive, but are bothered by ever-present road congestion. Metro is decent, but rapid transit would be a good alternative. We don't want land encroachment in any neighborhoods, so we are willing to accept a bus rapid transit system. It is an exciting idea and a necessary option in such

a busy crowded growing region. A fast-moving, reliable, safe, rapid transit system that would not encroach on land, because it uses existing lanes, is a good idea. A bus rapid transit system would lessen cars and thus carbon emissions, would create jobs, would allow car lanes to move freely, would allow transit lanes to move a lot of people around quickly, would let emergency vehicles through when needed and really is the picture of the future.

Why is this the future for our county? Because it gives everyone options and it means we are responsible thinkers. A bus rapid transit system accommodates everyone and gives a way to ease congestion and open and connect regions. Our family supports this forward-looking plan that enables our residents to thrive and visitors to see a place worth visiting. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you to this group of speakers. I'll call up the

next group. Elaine Akst, Michelle High, Freda

Mitchem, Livia Nicolescu, Elizabeth Ewing, and

Greg Kiel. One, two, three, four. Okay.

Five out of six. That's pretty good.

Ms. Akst is first.

MS. AKST: Thank you. I'm Elaine
Akst, Co-chair of the Transportation Committee
in Chevy Chase West, a community of 500 homes
just west of Maryland 355 between Bradley
Boulevard and Drummond Avenue. I'd like to
start off by saying I support Michele Riley's
earlier testimony.

I'm representing the Citizens

Coordinated Committee on Friendship Heights as well as my community association, which is 1 of 18 members. I've submitted a map that illustrates that the only access to our community is via Wisconsin Avenue, whose curb lane would be repurposed as a BRT lane in the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. No parallel streets exist that can be used as an alternative to Wisconsin Avenue.

My testimony should not be taken as a rejection of the concept of bus rapid transit. CCW supports efforts to improve mass transit and has been working steadily with local and state officials to enhance transit options for our residents including more frequent, more accessible and more reliable local bus service and improved pedestrian and bike facilities.

This Master Plan, as it relates to the Bethesda-Friendship Heights segment of Maryland 355 raises many concerns for us. It complicates our efforts to get better local mass transit. We are currently working to see improvements to four bus stops and we hope delineated crosswalks with appropriate traffic controls as part of the State Highway Administration for a sidewalk bikeway on the east side of Wisconsin. These are safety enhancement CCW and nearby communities need now.

The plan ignores real traffic

issues on this stretch. First, vehicular access to Norwood Park available only from Wisconsin Avenue for BCC preschoolers in the park plus athletes and coaching staff, both youth and adults involved in soccer, football, softball, baseball and lacrosse every weekday Secondly, it ignores areas that afternoon. are already effectively only two driving lanes, since southbound curb lanes of 355 between Somerset Terrace and Western Avenue is already essentially a parking lane for delivery vehicles and vehicles dropping off patients to medical buildings. And the curb lane is also already designated right turn lane between Willard and Western Avenue.

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We believe restricting a curb lane to buses presents significant assets and safety issues for our residents and guests.

We expect more congestion in the remaining two lanes, difficulty nosing into traffic, enforcing a bus lane and difficulty cutting through traffic to make left turns to

northbound Wisconsin. Also frustrated drivers seeking a shortcut through our neighborhood, especially in the morning rush hour when our children are walking to Somerset Elementary School and students being dropped off at Concord Hill School on Wisconsin.

The plan's phase 2 proposes to use the median on the Green Mile for BRT. Mr. Cole said this was based on possible development of the Chevy Chase Club property, which is highly unlikely for the well-financed century-old club. Our community opposes use of the Green Mile's median and requests that this plan be removed from phase 2.

An earlier version of the plan suggested the one-lane reversible busway in the median would require an additional nine feet right-of-way to come from private property. Why is this data not published in the latest version? This option must be detailed publicly for any affected residents.

Planning staff predictions look at

the entire Maryland 355 corridor. We believe that ridership will be considerably less than the 1,440 predicted between Bradley and Friendship Heights in light of the lack of connectivity between Montgomery County bus service and D.C. bus service. Current Ride On volume here is small, partly because of infrequent service and unsafe bus stops. An advantage of BRT is supposed to be quicker boarding and access, but this won't happen if travelers must transfer from Montgomery County buses to either the Red Line or D.C. buses.

extend service from either jurisdiction to the other. This points up the problem in developing a one-size-fits-all proposal where standards and goals that are fine for one segment may not be appropriate for another. The standards laid out by the consultant IDTP for BRT should be carefully applied so that our residential neighborhoods can share wherever possible in the benefits of BRT, can

be protected from deleterious effects, and can have local mass transit alternatives, if endorsed by the community, developed simultaneously with BRT efforts.

To do this, communities along proposed BRT routes must be consulted and heard throughout the planning and implementation process. We, local residents, know some things that planners don't about traffic patterns and needs. Accordingly, we have the following suggestions for BRT planning:

Any Maryland 355 BRT first phase should go only to the Bethesda Metro stop as its southernmost point. Extensions southward from Bethesda should be dependent on and developed in conjunction with extension of WMATA bus line between D.C. and Maryland.

Drop-off issues between Somerset
Terrace and Willard Avenue should be dealt
with before designating a curb bus lane.

Local bus service between Bethesda

and Friendship Heights should be improved to enhance eventual BRT use on this stretch.

Crosswalks and appropriate traffic controls must be instituted before designating a bus lane to improve safe local bus and BRT access.

In and when bus lanes are extended between Maryland and D.C., two stops between Bradley and Western should be part of any BRT plan in accord with the general practice of stops every half mile to mile.

And finally, use of the median south of Bethesda Bradley for BRT should be rejected.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Can I just take one second? I was going to ask Larry, we got a lot of written correspondence that made a point similar to the one that this commenter just made about access in places where there's

-- not on the median, but you're taking the right lane. And my understanding is that one of the issues with that is that if you're in the right lane you actually can turn in and out or use that for right turns. So, you know, you don't have the same issues of blocking it.

So could you maybe just take 15 seconds to explain?

MR. COLE: Right, if a curb lane operation was put into effect, the most likely scenario is you would not restrict it from right-turning traffic. You would be able to make right turns from there. And we actually had a discussion about it probably even makes left turns out of the neighborhood easier because that bus lane is not always going to be occupied. So it makes it a easier to nose out into traffic.

MS. AKST: However, the other two lanes will have more traffic. So it will be harder to get across. So this is an ongoing

discussion and it's a concern of our neighborhood.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Ms. High?

MS. BIGGER: I'm Virginia Bigger and was given her spot to speak because she wasn't going to be here. So I'm not in her stead, I'm just -- so my name is Virginia Bigger and I live in the town of Somerset, which is at the very end of the proposed BRT that would run down Wisconsin. So it's really on my doorstep. I see Wisconsin, you know, from my front door.

I have children who attend
Westland Middle School and BCC High School.

I'm involved in our community, PTAs at
Somerset, Westland, BCC and I work in my home.

I also agree with the comments of a couple of the speakers who live in neighborhoods within the Beltway and also Elaine Akst.

I think that, you know, primarily

I feel that -- and I also grew up in the city

and I appreciate the suburban and urban feel

of Somerset, and that's part of why I'm there. But I feel that this plan treats this stretch of Wisconsin in particular from the Beltway to Friendship Heights more like a strip mall, when it is essentially a neighborhood. These are neighborhoods and Wisconsin is our Main Street. So I understand what a lot of the speakers have said who support this who really want to create more of a neighborhood feel maybe near White Flint or others.

that we have that and I feel that BRT going down Wisconsin, whether it's the curb lane or the removal of the median, would really ruin that, for a couple of reasons. I think that it increases traffic. I'm the next street down from Chevy Chase West. That traffic is going down my street and through Somerset.

And so I'd really urge you to consider a study of the traffic on secondary roads and how that would be affected.

Kids walk to school. You know, I

think they treat Wisconsin Avenue like it's, you know, just their street. And again I feel that, you know, that this entirely changes the neighborhood and really creates a barrier between ours and the neighborhood across -- you know, all up and down Wisconsin and just basically creates a dangerous situation for the kids. I think particularly at BCC, I can just add, that they're projected to have 2,400 kids, and they're building for that. And that more than a third of those kids walk to school, walk to and from school. And at lunch they all empty out.

And, you know, I think just looking at how people really use, how kids really use this space, not conceptually and not, you know, sort of, you know, as a futuristic plan, but how they really use it. You know, you go and watch those kids empty out onto Wisconsin and, you know, they're sort of looking, they're sort of not. But again, that's our Main Street and I just feel this

would really change the entire -- I feel it creates an unsafe situation and just really changes the nature, the feel of our neighborhood. So, thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Ms. Mitchem?

MS. MITCHEM: Okay. Thank you.

My comments represent the views of the Chevy
Chase Valley Citizens Association Board of
Directors. Chevy Chase Valley is a
neighborhood of some 50 homes located between
Connecticut Avenue, Jones Bridge Road, North
Chevy Chase Park. We are just south of the
Beltway exit ramp 33 and two blocks north of
Chevy Chase Lake.

For the past 18 months we have been heavily impacted by the widening of Connecticut Avenue to eight lanes between the Beltway and Jones Bridge Road in order to accommodate the increased traffic results from the BRAC changes at Walter Reed. We've experienced significant dislocations in our

neighborhood as a result of the Connecticut

Avenue project, and we're still experiencing

them. So we want to talk primarily about the

impact of any proposed BRT on neighborhoods.

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Connecticut Avenue is not one of the corridors selected, one of the 10 corridors selected for bus rapid transit due to low ridership, and that's fine with us. We're very eager and willing to have other corridors pioneer this, work out the kinks, and we figure by the time Chevy Chase Lake is developed and the Purple Line goes in, somebody will probably think we need a BRT line to connect all of that to the rest of the stuff, and hopefully it will be better worked out. But we do have a concern about -- our people will be using Ride On buses and Metro buses instead, so we have a concern that those be kept at a robust level for the corridors that are very busy like Connecticut Avenue that are not part of BRT.

We also recognize that traffic is

going to keep expanding and that we can't just keep our cars on the road and do nothing, so we applaud the State Highway Association and Montgomery County DOT for taking actions to try to develop bus rapid transit and other modalities that will help reduce the growth of traffic. However, we're concerned about the connection between bus rapid transit and neighborhoods. We're concerned about the impact of bus rapid transit on neighborhoods.

We're living in a case study of that and we feel in reviewing the plan that we see very little in the Master Plan Amendment, very little discussion, if any, about the impact of bus rapid transit on neighborhoods. There's a statement on page 19 in the Master Plan in the guiding principles that says essentially, minimizing construction of additional pavement to limit impacts on the environment and adjacent communities -- which is great. We agree with that. We've already lost land and lived through hell in the

Connecticut Avenue expansion. But we see nothing in the Master Plan that acknowledges that bus rapid transit itself can have impacts on existing neighborhoods and we feel that those impacts can be significant and they should be taken into consideration when BRT is planned.

Therefore, our association recommends that the Planning Board should direct planners to add an additional explicit guiding principle to the proposed Master Plan which requires bus rapid transit planners and implementers to assess potential negative impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods and implement mitigating measures to protect the quality of life and property values of neighborhoods adjacent to bus rapid transit.

Now I mentioned this to Larry

Cole. He said, oh, you don't do that at the

Master Plan stage. Take care of it somewhere

else. I think if it's not in the Master Plan,

it does not devolve down to somewhere else.

So it deserves some attention in the Master Plan. While I think Larry's great, I don't agree with him on take care of it sometime later somewhere else.

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With such a guiding principle in place, added to the guiding principles for this project in the Master Plan, planners would be required to conduct an adjacent neighborhood assessment and impact mitigation plan at the planning stages and as needed during the implementation process. The request for proposals should require contractors to propose mitigation measures to address issues that have been identified. Planners and contractors should be required to address specific criteria that might arise, or should arise, such as the use of quiet running, low-polluting, low-vibration buses where they will travel through residential areas.

No. 2, conduct of sound and vibration studies to assess decibel levels and

seismic vibrations on adjacent homes where bus rapid transit travels through residential areas and implementing mitigating measures where the sound or vibration levels exceed acceptable levels.

CHAIR CARRIER: That sound said that your time is up, so I need you to bring your remarks to a close.

MS. BIGGER: Okay. Did I get five minutes?

CHAIR CARRIER: Yes, you did.

MS. BIGGER: Okay. So having said that, I have submitted written comments and suggestions on these criteria. They're in my notes.

And I would just end by saying that we too have some misgivings about the proposal for Wisconsin Avenue, which is right next to us, for BRT because we believe that if you take two existing lanes out of operation, you're going to add to congestion on Wisconsin Avenue.

1 CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Ms.

Nicolescu?

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MS. NICOLESCU: Thanks. I'm testifying as an individual. I live in the Dunlop Hills neighborhood and I can monitor traffic on East-West Highway from the back of my house.

I'm testifying today as an resident of Montgomery County who's very grateful to have been able to live here for over seven years. My three-generation household has been so very well-served by the local schools, job opportunities, hospitals and other health care services for the young, the middle-aged and the elderly, and I have observed that our residential communities are woven together with these services by a formidable right-of-way network that already exists in Montgomery County. Not only do the members of my family enjoy access to these services, we also enjoy numerous alternatives and a multiplicity of options in all sectors.

So this would be for education, for work, for health care and for recreation.

I have put my own time in behind the wheel in order to accomplish the daily, often mundane tasks to help raise two schoolaged children and to care for my mother in my home. Imagine my joy when my two children took their first bus ride last year and got themselves from their school to downtown Bethesda all by themselves. That joy was equal to my relief --

CHAIR CARRIER: I know that feeling exactly.

(Laughter.)

MS. NICOLESCU: That joy was equal to my relief at seeing an ambulance that was able to pull into my driveway minutes after a call to 911 when my mother needed an emergency room visit to our neighborhood hospital.

I have realized recently that the necessity of the point-to-point driving -- so say home to day care to work back to day care,

you know, then to a supermarket and back home

-- it has a built-in time limit, which I'm

thrilled about. My children are becoming

young adults. They need as many transit

options as we can provide to them with all of

the wisdom and foresight that a Countywide

Transit Corridors Master Plan offers.

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Likewise, as I contemplate aging in place for myself or continuing to live in Montgomery County over the next few decades, I will need transit options which exclude, actually, the necessity of me being the driver of my own car while at the same time increasing the likelihood that my future caregivers will have access to me. neighborhood I am acquainted with hale and hearty octogenarians. The Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, if approved and adopted, will update the Master Plan of Highways which was created in 1955 and will bring Montgomery County out of the mid-20th Century into the new millennium.

My house --

2 CHAIR CARRIER: You can finish
3 your sentence.

MS. NICOLESCU: Okay. Thanks. I wrote this down anyway, provided written testimony.

I think that some of the maintenance and repairs needed over the years to one's house that was also built in the 1950s, as was the Master Plan for the Highways, are analogous to updating the right-of-way transit network. Thanks.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Ms. Ewing?

MS. EWING: I'm Elizabeth Ewing.

I live at 6510 Wisconsin on the corner of

Nottingham in the Chevy Chase West

neighborhood. I'm speaking as an adjacent

property owner and I live in a wonderful,

walkable neighborhood well-served by mass

transit, and I have a front-row seat to the

sidewalk in front of our home with people

pushing strollers, carrying their groceries home, running their daily errands and numerous children of all ages from elementary and younger who will go into the nursery school in Norwood Park all the way to BCC, a school from which both of my children graduated and to which they walked. I also have a front-row seat to all the people who make the mad dash across Wisconsin Avenue from Ride On bus stops going north that have no place for a pedestrian to stand, and have made that dash myself until I learned to just get out at St. John's Norwood.

I want to raise specifically now,
I strongly agree with the testimony of Marie
Park, Michele Riley of Bethesda Crest, Elaine
Akst of our neighborhood association. I echo
Virginia Bigger and also my colleague of the
Chevy Chase Valley, certainly, on the point of
having close and serious consultation with
those who live in the neighborhoods.

My front door is 25 feet from the

sidewalk along Wisconsin Avenue, so clearly right-of-way is a serious issue; even if the sidewalk is moved, the disruption that would cause along the way. We have a large Magnolia grandiflora in our yard. The entire area of the Green Mile, not just in the median, but along the sides has a wonderful tree canopy that basically any right-of-way, even for curbside BRT, would take away.

I also wanted to raise that

Nottingham is a dead-end street and right next
to a Bethesda Fire Department station, so we
can only get in and out on Wisconsin Avenue,
and the fire trucks do the same. And so I

would ask that anything that does happen that
way, certainly take this into account. We
live very close to the already-dangerous

Bradley and Wisconsin Avenue intersection and
I have not heard yet in this plan, you know,
how BRT deals with signals and additional
lanes, how that danger would be addressed.

I also witness so much congestion

going east-west. And if they lose a lane on both sides of Wisconsin Avenue, I see that congestion increasing. And I do not see anything that would work for further areas of West Bethesda or Potomac or anything along River Road that would help ease the congestion we already see on Wisconsin Avenue. A designated bus lane now would be otherwise.

So I wanted to say, yes, I agree with the recommendations of Elaine Akst. I would love right now to see improved frequency and improved safety of Ride On bus stops. I would hope that the BRT would stop just north of or at the Bethesda Metro and not interfere with what is working very well between that Metro stop and Friendship Heights. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, and thank you to this group of speakers. I'll call up the next group. David Winstead, Christopher Bradbury, Roberta Faul-Zeitler, K. Travis Ballie, James Russ, and James Zepp.

MR. COLE: Madam Chair, while

they're getting organized could I add a
comment?

3 CHAIR CARRIER: You may.

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MR. COLE: There seemed to be several comments in regard to a median busway both in the loss of a median and the loss of a pedestrian refuge. For the segments, the corridors that are recommended to have a median busway, they would all have a landscaped median. The width of that median depends on where you are in the section and the width of the section would determine, you know, whether you could have just grass or trees or shrubs in there. But there would be a continuous landscaped median that's at least six feet wide that would accommodate a safe pedestrian refuge.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you. That's helpful.

20 Mr. Winstead is not here, I see,
21 so I will turn to Mr. Bradbury.

MR. BRADBURY: Hello. Thank you,

1 Madam Chair, members of the Commission.

My name is Chris Bradbury. I'm a resident of Burtonsville. I live off of 29 north of New Hampshire just south of the Howard County line. So the Briggs Chaney area is where I live.

I also just want to point out I'm here as a citizen, but I do represent the area a few different ways. I sit on the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee for District 14, which encompasses Burtonsville. Also board member of the Montgomery County Young Democrats. And I am also an Impact Silver Spring non-profit worker. So I do impact -- I do work with the communities in Briggs Chaney and I work with the schools and the students there and people at the recreation center. So I have a real good sense as to what's going on in Burtonsville.

So what's happening -- I had some remarks, but some of it was a little tough, so I'm going to let that go. But what's

happening in Burtonsville, especially in Briggs Chaney, is it's suffering from isolation. If you look at that area, which there have already been three murders this year in that Castle Boulevard corridor, there's no real way to access jobs. really can't get to the grocery store that easy; you only have one choice of grocery store, or any of the other shopping centers even in that area. You really don't have a lot of options. And what ends up happening is again people start -- there's no equitable way, time or the quality of life is really bad for folks trying to travel down 29 on a bus, makes it very difficult, and a lot of folks in that area just give up.

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We did a plan for Impact Silver

Spring where we were going to -- well, we did

it for the county and we discovered that the

areas on the east of 29 make an average of

about \$29,000 a year versus the other side

which is making about \$74,000 a year. So I

sell cars as a living as my day job, at least I did for a while, and \$29,000 a year in a household is really not enough money to own a car, travel, pay for gas, that sort of thing. It's just super expensive even to live out there.

So when it comes down to rapid bus transit, it's really the one option that north of New Hampshire has for getting down in an equitable time frame with an inexpensive commute to get to job centers down there.

So we've already had three murders this year in Burtonsville and Briggs Chaney. If you add White Oak, you add three more, you can double that number. And, you know, I understand the quarrels with south of -- you know, at Four Corners. I've been to that intersection. It's bad. It's tough. But at least for north of New Hampshire, it really is a matter of life and death. So I ask that you guys please support rapid bus transit and anything you can do working with Four Corners,

1 or anything I can do to help to get rapid bus straight down into Silver Spring would be greatly appreciated by us. So thank you.

4 CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Mr.

5 Bradbury.

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Ms. Faul-Zeitler?

MS. FAUL-ZEITLER: Thank you for this opportunity to speak before the Planning Board.

My name is Bobbie Faul-Zeitler. I serve on the Committee of 100 on the Federal City in Washington, D.C., which addresses planning, zoning and transportation issues, however, tonight I'm here representing myself.

Our family has lived for 16 years at 8904 Colesville Road, just about one block north of Spring Street. For the record, I want to say that I strongly support public transit and have used it for over 40 years, both when I lived in the District and I commuted by bus and in the Metro era commuting into the city and throughout Montgomery

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Route 29, Colesville Road, is a dangerous and problematic road, and I can say that firsthand as a resident of 16 years. carries 35,000 vehicles daily past my house and what many people have not said tonight is it includes many heavy trucks, construction vehicles and commercial vehicles. The lower end of Colesville is a funnel. It has several F grade intersections and it has an LATR volume of 1,800 in the CBD. In other words, it's pretty hideous. There's not time to talk about Colesville Road at this hearing, so I will address that in additional comments that I will submit in writing.

I support bus rapid transit, but I have some severe concerns about the Route 29 setup. The two BRT studies don't really present current compelling data on the demographics, demand and marketability for the BRT on 29. We disagree with the rationale on page 57 of the study to move ahead with Route

29 as a high priority in implementing BRT
because it has, quote, "the highest current
bus ridership in Montgomery County," and will,
quote, "stimulate latent demand," whatever in
fact that means, and where lane, quote,
"repurposing is most easily achieved."

I'm going to urge the Planning
Board not to recommend Route 29 BRT as the
test bed that will be used to implement a
system-wide implementation. I believe that
traffic design and safety issues on Colesville
Road really need to take priority by both the
county and by the state.

Frankly, there's nothing rapid about a 13-mile ride with 11 stops that include jogs over to major business centers such as FDA and the White Oak Shopping Center. I can't tell whether this is an economic development --

CHAIR CARRIER: You may finish your thought.

MS. FAUL-ZEITLER: I can't tell if

whether or not I see a future in it. I only had the honor of being a Silver Spring, Montgomery County resident for three fantastic years, but I'm already infatuated and planning a life-long love affair with this county. I feel so good about MoCo because our county has a forward-looking vision about what a thriving community looks like. A core part of what keeps me here in MoCo is the knowledge that I can rely on my county government to make wise investments that can optimally integrate recent transplants like I and improve the lives of those life-long residents who made this county so appealing in the first place.

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Bus rapid transit with dedicated lanes is one of the wisest investments I've ever heard proposed by this Planning Board.

As a young Montgomery County resident I'm already planning my future here. That includes bus rapid transit with dedicated lanes. This transportation project will determine whether or not I want to raise a

family, spend more time and money and invest a home right here in Montgomery County.

I am a proud patron of Roundhouse
Theater, both in Bethesda and Silver Spring.
I love politics. This past year I even
canvassed all over the county for marriage
equality. I also appreciate so many events
like the Gaithersburg Book Festival. I'm able
to enjoy these MoCo venues and participate in
MoCo civic culture, primarily because I have
a public transit system in my county I can
rely on. And even if sometimes it doesn't
work at present as well as I would like, I
want to put down roots here.

I was never so passionate about buses before, but something happened this summer. My friend Tom married his long-time partner Matt in a beautiful ceremony that I will remember for the rest of my life. As a gay man, I for the first time witnessed with my own eyes that I can find happiness here, too, in Montgomery County because my friends

who also live here found it. The moment Tom and Matt took their wedding vows is an irreplaceable moment in my life.

I almost missed their wedding.

Their wedding took place in Montgomery County and I almost missed it because MoCo public transit could not be relied upon. I planned ahead and did everything and my bus got stuck in traffic. For me this is not about a bus system. This is about whether or not MoCo can invest in infrastructure needed for me and countless others to live our lives to the fullest, spend our time more with loved ones and less in traffic.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Russ?

MR. BALLIE: Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: And I'm glad you

made the wedding.

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MR. BALLIE: Thank you.

MR. RUSS: My name is Jim Russ. I

live at 9915 Maple Leaf Drive in Montgomery

Village, where I am served most directly by
two Ride On buses, the 58 and the 64. I am
also an automobile owner who is seriously and
intentionally committed to drastically
reducing my use of that form of
transportation. Currently about half of my
transportation is done by the use of mass
transit, walking, bicycling and ride-sharing.

I am testifying tonight not for a particular component of the rapid transit plan for our county, but to speak and to urge the county to make rapid transit development one of its central imperatives. I will limit my discussion to five reasons why the county needs to develop more rapid transit.

No. 1, beauty and a sense of spaciousness. We all flourish when we are surrounded by beauty. We think more gracious and harmonious thoughts when we see beauty. We are more friendly and neighborly when beauty is our inescapable companion. The words to the hymn "O Beautiful for Spacious

Skies" are not meant for a sorrowful recollection of a long-gone past, but as a present and future reality for the Montgomery County of the 21st Century, which can be ours if we decide to take rapid transit seriously. There can't be much beauty if all we see are cars and all we breathe is exhaust-choked air.

Reason No. 2, Earth care. Those who turn against their mothers don't get very far in life. That Earth is our mother is becoming more and more obvious even to the most wayward. Rapid transit uses the resources with which our mother supplies us far more judiciously and wisely.

Point No. 3, the common good.

That government which concerns itself with the common good and not with special interests will long endure. Rapid transit is available for all, whereas automobile is limited to those who have achieved a higher economic status.

No. 4, mental health. It is not

good for our people to be stressed out, infuriated, enraged, assaulted and demeaned every time they try to get from one place to another. Going somewhere should be the occasion for renewal and refreshment, not anguish and frustration. I rode the J9 yesterday from Lakeforest Mall to Bethesda Metro. We were in the HOV lane on I-270 and were sailing along at three times the speed of the other three express lanes and two local lanes of traffic. I could look around, breathe deeply and actually enjoy moving about.

Well, the fifth point was
neighborhood development. And I yearn for the
day when I can know my neighbors better than
I do their cars and when the neighborhood is
full of personal relationships rather than
trying to avoid other cars. Thank you very
much.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you very much. It's nice to have poetic testimony.

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(Laughter.)

2 CHAIR CARRIER: We had someone who was so articulate in another matter today that 3 I had to ask if she was a college professor, 4

and she was.

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(Laughter.)

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CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Mr. Zepp?

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MR. ZEPP: Good evening,

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Commissioners. My name is James Zepp and I've lived at 10602 Lockridge Drive, Silver Spring

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for 23 years.

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In considering this plan you must

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ask yourselves, if these BRT routes were

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implemented tomorrow, would it be enough for

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you to switch from your cars to get to work,

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shop and meet your daily commitments? Would

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it be enough to persuade your family,

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neighbors and friends to change their travel

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choices and stop using their cars? Would the

benefits justify the years of effort, billions

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of dollars in costs and disruption to

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businesses, residents and drivers? Rather

than being a hypothetical question, it is the choice that other residents will have to face and make; it will determine if there is sufficient ridership to support the BRT's construction and operations.

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With all levels of government continuing to face multimillion dollar budget deficits which are growing under mounting debt service for capital projects, the knowledge that the aging infrastructure of bridges, roadways, existing mass transit systems, water, sewer and public buildings will need major repairs or replacements in the coming years and that any success of the proposed BRT system will require an equal commitment to local bus service and other traffic congestion measures, are the gains made by approving this Master Plan enough to justify committing the county to what may be the Betamax of transit congestion solutions when there are less expensive and more immediate alternatives available and emerging transportation

1 technologies that may render BRT irrelevant?

Finally, as asserted by others and happening in other jurisdictions, how will BRT avoid the fate of other transit systems which have been continually cut back or failed to meet expectations because of shortcuts without being a drain on competing transportation systems or the local economy?

As the county's planning body, you cannot ignore these questions when committing our future to so massively one and only one transportation alternative.

Given my limited speaking time,

I'd like to shortcut some other concerns. It

is the BRT a viable alternative to other forms

of mass transit? A recent study by UC

Berkeley researchers have identified through

surveys the top eight reasons people give up

on mass transit, attachment 1. The proposed

BRT system would offer little to attract

potential riders that providing more frequent

service and better information would not do

with the existing transit services. This is borne out with the inability of the BRT systems to meet ridership expectations in Ottawa, Canada; Edinburgh, Scotland; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Los Angeles, California, to name a few. Even Arlington, Virginia, which is starting operation of a BRT between Crystal City and Potomac Yards, considers it to be merely a transition step to light rail. This opinion was echoed in the Greater Greater Washington blog when the current BRT proposal was first surfaced.

running express buses on the shoulders of interstates or managed lanes and HOV lanes. The Washington Council of Governments is currently conducting such a study. An express bus on an interstate will travel twice as fast as a BRT vehicle moving through an urbanized area with intersections, pedestrians and cross-traffic to contend with, even with a restricted right-of-way.

A recent regional map of managed toll and HOV lanes shows that Northern

Virginia is closer to achieving a network than Maryland is. These alternatives could provide less expensive, more immediate relief than waiting for the proposed BRT network to be built.

Are there other non-infrastructure options for reducing traffic congestion? Yes. Despite the popular perception that congestion is always increased, there is evidence of substantial nationwide reductions in congestion that have occurred recently.

Finally, I wanted to say that the future BRT transit is going to be challenged by emerging technologies, such as cars that are able to avoid accidents. Stanford University has a smart app on smartphones to give people incentives to take transportation or route alternatives to reduce traffic. The point is that you can have substantial reductions of traffic of up to 30 percent with

these kinds of measures that merely alter
about 3 to 4 percent of your ridership in peak

hours.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you,
Mr. Zepp. And thank you to this panel.

I will call up the next group of speakers. Brian Ditzler. Peter Gray. Evan Goldman. Francine Waters. Beth Daly.

Okay. Mr. Ditzler?

MR. DITZLER: Good evening. I am
Brian Ditzler, President of the Woodside Park
Civic Association here in Silver Spring, just
across the street, Spring Street. However, I'm
testifying here tonight as an individual
citizen, since our civic association has
discussed the proposed BRT, but has not taken
a formal position on it.

My view is that the Countywide

Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan makes

sense and should be adopted. Put simply, we

need to create the right-of-way and physical

space for a bus rapid transit system to handle

the growth in population both in our county and in adjacent counties, many of whose citizens travel through our county to get to their places of employment and other activities.

After my civic association received a presentation on the BRT at our last meeting, the comments that were heard ranged from: the BRT seems to be needed; it sure seems expensive, although I guess not when compared with the alternatives. The greatest concern expressed was: how can we afford to lose a lane or two of traffic to a BRT on our already congested roads? The answer to that question is easy: A BRT running on dedicated lanes would allow more efficient use of our existing roads and decrease congestion.

Another concern raised at our civic association meeting was that the more limited number of stops in the proposed system would make it more difficult for citizens to access the BRT. Once again, the answer is

easy: Limiting the number of stops makes the system faster and more likely to be used by more riders.

I commend the Planning staff for its detailed analysis and pragmatic approach in recommending a 79-mile system with only 10 corridors versus the approximately 160-mile system proposed by the County Executive's Transit Task Force. It's prudent to walk before attempting to run and the county first needs to prove to skeptics that dedicating lanes of traffic to a BRT will enable the speed of transit that's needed to attract riders while also decreasing overall traffic congestion.

One of the best ways to prove the effectiveness of the BRT would be to start implementing the BRT in two or three of the highest traffic corridors in the county as soon as practical versus waiting to roll out the full system all at one time. That could serve as a pilot test for the BRT while also

allowing the county to work out any
unanticipated problems that might arise.

In closing, let me repeat a phrase

4 often heard during the many years I worked for

5 a major corporation: Change is inevitable.

6 It's growth that's optional. For us in

7 Montgomery County that phrase should be:

8 change is inevitable. It's smart growth

9 that's optional. Taking the steps to enable

a BRT system in our county clearly would

11 facilitate smart growth. Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

13 Mr. Gray?

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MR. GRAY: Hi, my name is Peter Gray. I'm a member of the Board of Directors of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association and represent thousands of Montgomery County residents who are members of WABA and who bicycle as well as use other modes of transportation to get around the county.

A few point I want to make. No.

1, WABA endorses the Functional Master Plan

for BRT in that it will incent county
residents to get out of their cars and use
alternatives, including BRT.

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Second, we're happy that the Master Plan attempts to incorporate some accommodations for bikes in the form of the bicycle-pedestrian priority areas, but we do have some nits to pick with that. inclusion of signed roadways in counting up the miles for accommodations for bikes is somewhat misleading. I think that putting a sign on the side of the road does not do much of anything to make a road safer for cyclists or incent cyclists to use that road. point to the example of Strathmore and Knowles as a prime example of that misleading and mistaken approach.

I think that what needs to happen in order to incent more residents to get onto their bikes is to have more protected bike infrastructures such as cycle tracks and bike lanes and to try and achieve the same number

of miles, but to use those accommodations
where possible, or even share roads which at
least sign on the road itself to the cars that
bikes also use that roadway.

Finally, I just want to say that the overall concept is really good. I think that the Planning Board needs to do whatever it can to try and get MCDOT to fulfill the bike accommodations that are already in the local Master Plans in these corridors and to insist that more accommodations for cyclists in order to connect up to the bus rapid transit system be included in the plan. Thank you very much.

CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Goldman?

MR. GOLDMAN: Good evening. My name is Evan Goldman. I'm a Vice-President of Development for Federal Realty. Thank you for allowing me to speak about this important issue tonight.

If you think back in the

Washington region in the 50s and 60s, our predecessors had the foresight to look out into the future and envision a really wellconnected urban region. You know, and second to the fact would be the Federal Government If it weren't Metro, we'd be in a whole here. lot of trouble. It's probably been the number one -- had the most profound effect on the success and stability of your region. And our ability to attract, you know, a young, educated and talented work force, you know, the land value appreciation and stability we've seen in this region, the fact that we're consistently ranked as one of the best places to live in the country -- all of these are attributed at the end of the day to our transit system to Metro and the type of development patterns that have occurred because of that.

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You know, Montgomery County is at a crossroads. And I've lived in the D.C. area now for 10 years. As most of you probably

know, I live in D.C. I have three kids. I live in Adams Morgan, a very walkable place. And, you know, people can do it. I mean, you know, I've watched in dismay about -- I mean it's crazy how long it's taken to even get the Purple Line funded, let alone built. I mean it's crazy. I've been here 10 years and we're still talking about it. The CCT. these are major projects that have to happen to move this county forward. And, you know, we can't wait anymore. Enough is enough. We need to face the facts. Traffic is bad. It's likely to get worse unless we do something about it.

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And so, you know, first of all, appreciate the work that all of you have done. The Planning Board has really taken the lead in the county on this over the last five years and moved forward, you know, incredibly unique and forward-thinking Master Plans. And on top of that a new Zoning Code that's coming through that really could help propel this

county forward and really take care of how we develop our urban areas, the little bit of land we have left, to make sure that we're doing it in a right way.

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But doing that will mean nothing if we don't have a reliable dependable networks of transit. You know, young people these days and the type of residents we're trying to attract to keep our tax base going for the future are looking for connectivity. They're looking for places where they can walk out of their apartments, be right in the middle of it all and then jump on any sort of reliable transit and get to other places in the county. And part of the reliability is connectedness. You have to have the ability to go to other parts of the county, and so you need a system.

You know, we're also seeing amongst this generation an incredibly large drop on car ownership and dependence on autos because it's just not worth the money, it's

not worth the investment and they don't really need it as long as they live in places that are urban in character and connected by good transit.

So, you know, I don't see these people moving into garden-style apartments in the I-270 corridor where they have no ability to get to transit. Mostly what we're seeing is they're moving to places that have transit. And so we need to provide more of those locations with transit to attract these people going forward in the future and secure the future of the county.

You all hold incredible power. I know that you're hearing from a whole bunch of different constituencies and interest groups.

And while I understand and have witnessed over the last seven years in White Flint how hard change can be, I hope that you'll take advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity. You know, instead of thinking about the little nitpicky stuff now, we need

to deal with the engineering issues, we need to deal with the small stuff that we're -- and, you know, how things are going to impact neighborhoods.

Obviously that's huge, but we also need to think about 20, 30, 40 years out. I don't want to still be having this conversation in 20 or 30 years. We need to make the decision now and move forward so that we're actually securing our future economically and environmentally going forward. Thank you very much.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Mr. Goldman.

Ms. Waters?

MS. WATERS: Good evening. I'm speaking on behalf of the White Flint Partnership. We would very much like to convey our appreciation for the hard work that the Planning Board staff has done in preparing this public hearing of the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan.

The White Flint Partnership is comprised of Saul Centers, Inc., Federal Realty, Gables Residential. JBG, Lerner Enterprises and the Tower Companies. The partnership, as you well know, has been working very hard with the entire community, governmental, residential and commercial, in the implementation of the recently-approved White Flint Master Plan -- Sector Plan.

Key to the success of that plan is the proposed rapid transit system along Rockville Pike creating that 21st Century boulevard. The White Flint Partnership has been an active promoter of the surface rapid transportation system through White Flint within a dual dedicated center lane median connecting with our neighbors to the south, NIH, Walter Reed Medical Center and to the north through the city of Rockville and onto the Corridor Cities Transitway, part of a much larger system.

We applaud the public hearing

draft of the treatment suggested for corridor

4, Maryland 355 South, as it encompasses the

vision of the transformation of the White

Flint Sector with a focus on increasing

people-moving capacity rather than focusing on

moving cars. It is an embodiment of the White

Flint Alignment Study that was done in January

of 2011, and I've supplied a copy of that for

all of you who haven't seen it.

We believe, however, that a system is necessary for the county to meet its goals for encouraging economic development, enhancing mobility, improving environmental quality and improving our general quality of life. To maintain the effectiveness of that system we believe that full-time dedicated bus lanes should be implemented in the first step in locations where it can be accommodated and not as suggested in the public hearing draft as a mix of different treatments, including a high portion of operation of the system within mixed general traffic.

We must retain the necessary

flexibility to allow for the implementation of

the highest quality system possible using

whatever public right-of-ways available as

determined by the Planning Board and County

Council.

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The Rockville Pike White Flint rapid transit system segment is an important part of the White Flint transit and pedestrian urban design and only enhances the transitoriented development as envisioned by the county and the state, but we believe there will be an adverse impact on system performance of the rapid transit system vehicles operating in mixed general traffic which will directly impact the positive effects of the White Flint segment. The rapid transit system network should be built to a level of quality that achieves high performance objectives throughout.

With an ultimate 50 percent nonauto driver mode share goal in White Flint, our challenge will be to encourage riders of choice to shift from single-occupant vehicles to transit vehicles. If we fail to invest in needed high-quality transit, we will prevent the modal shift we need from occurring. A decision by the Planning Board to develop anything less than a high-performance approach to the physical characteristics of the designated corridors will have a ripple effect on the performance of the network and will prevent the success of achieving non-auto driver mode share goals in White Flint.

The goal should be to plan for and build the highest-performing system possible within those corridors selected for development so that an RTS system as built can maximize people-moving capacity and prove its value at the earliest possible time. If ridership growth is restrained because the initial rapid transit system lacks many of the features needed to entice riders of choice, then we will never get the ridership numbers

1 that support our upgraded system.

The White Flint Partnership

participated with the County Executive's

Transit Task Force and we're supportive of the recommendations and comments concerning the

Transit Corridor Functional Master Plan. We firmly believe that the best ridership model for the RTS Phase 1 in Montgomery County is reflected in the White Flint Sector Plan and our vision of rapid transit.

We congratulate you for your efforts to date and the White Flint Partnership is ready to make rapid transit a reality on Rockville Pike in the White Flint Sector. Thank you very much.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Ms. Water.

Ms. Daly?

MS. DALY: Good evening. My name is Beth Daly and I live in Dickerson. I think it's safe to say I probably live the farthest north of anyone that's testified so far.

For the past 14 years I've been commuting to work and running errands along Route 355 from Comus Road south through Clarksburg to Germantown and have seen firsthand the impact development without infrastructure improvements has had on our local roads, and I am concerned.

The Master Plan envisions a

Clarksburg of 40,000 residents located

squarely between two two-lane roads, Routes

355 and 27, with no plans for widening either

one in the next few years. These roads are

already bumper-to-bumper during a broad rush

hour period and two-thirds of the Clarksburg

homes have yet to be built. Add a destination

mall with 2,100 parking spaces and I fear

absolute traffic gridlock will ensue.

We need transit options to get
Upcounty residents and through commuters from
growing Frederick County and beyond off the
roads and to their work centers, social
destinations and beyond and back home. For

that reason I support the 355 north corridor of the BRT and urge that the line be extended in the CTC FMP to Clarksburg and not end at Germantown's Milestone. In fact, on page 22 of the Clarksburg Master Plan it states, "Transit is an essential feature of this plan. Without it the plan's vision cannot be realized."

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In order to be embraced by the upcounty community, the BRT system needs to get residents to Metro, work centers and other places as quickly, if not faster, than driving That means the system needs to have dedicated busways that don't add to the congestion on the local roads, express BRT routes to Shady Grove Metro with the hopes of extending those kind of routes north to Frederick County to capture the through commuters on our congested roads, traffic light control options to keep lights green for oncoming buses, platforms for safety, ease of use and for our neighbors who are physically

1 challenged.

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I also fully support the idea of a third track of the Brunswick MARC line which serves the Ag Reserve and points north. as well as high-density areas throughout county. Montgomery County's upcounty is the fastest growing region in the county and is home to its second largest community; sometimes people say it's the first, Germantown, with nearly 90,000 residents. Yet hundreds of thousands of upcounty residents are not served by a nearby Metro station or any comprehensive transit system. It is time for that to change. The CCT BRT system, if done right, and a third track on the MARC Brunswick line could ease traffic congestion and make the region more attractive to businesses, as was pointed out earlier.

Many thanks for your time and for serving our county.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you. We don't get thanked very much for that last

1 part.

2 (Laughter.)

CHAIR CARRIER: Natalie Goldberg,
Ben Ross, Mark Winston, and Pamela Lindstrom,
please. All regulars. And you are indeed
first, Ms. Goldberg. Go right ahead.

(Laughter.)

MS. GOLDBERG: Okay. Chairman
Carrier, members of the Planning Board, I'm
Natalie Goldberg and I thank you for the
opportunity to speak.

Tonight I wish to focus my support on two aspects of the BRT development:

Corridor 4, Maryland 355 South; and corridor 6, the North Bethesda Transitway. I choose these corridors having been actively involved in the evolution of the White Flint Sector

Plan. I recognize the necessity of planning for public transportation that is reasonable in cost, flexible in design and accessible to a variety of users in the county.

Neal R. Gross & Co., Inc. 202-234-4433

Implementing BRT on Route 355

South is a vital component in the White Flint Sector Plan, but my concern is the area south of I-495 on Route 355 where this Functional Plan proposes to replace two vehicular traffic lanes with two lanes for BRT. While I support the dedicated lanes philosophically I believe the reduction of existing lanes sets up conditions for permanent gridlock. I suggest it would be more prudent to begin with a mixed-traffic transitway south of I-495 and only after the ridership from BRT has reached a significant level mitigating some existing vehicular traffic should the plan consider reuse of existing lanes.

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My real motivation for coming tonight is to support corridor 6, the North Bethesda Transitway. I am especially pleased with the proposed routing to the White Flint Metro, which I suggested years ago. Moving the terminus from Grosvenor to White Flint will increase ridership and provide a much more direct link to an upcoming center of

1 activity.

I have one suggestion for improvement on this corridor. I believe there should be a BRT stop at the corner of Nicholson Lane and Old Georgetown Road adjacent to Wall Park. As you know, the Wall Park site is scheduled --

CHAIR CARRIER: I like that because I could walk there.

(Laughter.)

is scheduled for major changes under the Sector Plan, becoming a focal point for recreation and green space. With the additional planned activities for the green space, expanded use of the Shriver Aquatic Center and development of a recreation center on the same site, this park is designed to become a major community and countywide focal point. The planned stops on the North Bethesda Transitway Corridor require riders from the west to either walk from Edson Lane

1 or travel to the White Flint Metro station and 2 then walk back to the Wall Park Complex. 3 While this is doable, a direct stop at Wall 4 Park would encourage more transit ridership, 5 publicize the amenities at the site and benefit the general public.

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speak.

This plan does not address funding, but I would urge that as you endorse the plan you also stress the necessity of implementation time to mesh with new development occurring along both of these Thank you for the opportunity to corridors.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Ms. Goldberg.

Mr. Ross?

MR. ROSS: I'm Ben Ross of Bethesda speaking as an individual tonight.

We've already heard so many good explanations of the advantages of BRT that I'm not going to repeat any of that, and I want to make just one or two points that I don't think

have been made.

expansion, the third track. This morning the governor announced that he's spending \$60 million to increase service on the Penn Line and the Camden Line, including Saturday and Sunday service on the Penn Line, which will start this winter. There's no new service announced on the Brunswick Line.

To get that new service, we need that third track. And we have not heard -it's a much simpler and separate issue than the BRT. It does not have the complexities.
It's adding to an existing corridor with -and you don't have all of these complexities of interactions with the car traffic. So I would strongly recommend that you break that out from the rest of the plan, take care of it first; I think it can be taken care of quickly, and send it right to the Council so that we can get in line for improvements in service.

My second point has to do with the interaction of the BRT with the APFO. I think that the fundamental principle behind bus rapid transit in this county is a recognition of reality, which is that the highways are congested and they're going to stay congested. You know, there is no point to having a bus lane if the traffic on the regular lane is moving at the speed limit, because the bus can go on the regular lane. It won't be any faster on the bus lane. The reason you have a bus lane is that the traffic is congested on the regular lane.

And so once you've recognized that, you have recognized that our concept of traffic test has failed and it will continue to fail and there's nothing we can do about it. And we should stop throwing money at it, throwing developers' money at it and widening roads and making them more hostile to the pedestrian who is supposed to be getting on the BRT lane. So I think we have to recognize

that as part of the BRT or as a follow on
we're going to have to get rid of these
traffic tests, at least along those corridors.
Thank you.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you.

Mr. Winston?

MR. WINSTON: Madam Chair,
members of the Commission, I'm Mark Winston,
Chair of the County Executive's Transit Task
Force.

The task force applauds the work of the Planning Board staff in the public hearing draft of the Countywide Transit Corridors Master Plan. The staff's efforts to breathe life into the county's longstanding commitment to transit as an important element in our overall transportation system are evident in the public hearing draft.

Furthermore, its focus on increasing people-moving capacity rather than focusing only moving the most cars possible is an essential precondition for the county to

meet its goals for encouraging economic development, enhancing mobility, improving environmental quality and improving our general quality of life in the coming decades.

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Ironically, the development of an effective rapid transit system; and I think this is a critical point that is frequently lost in this discussion, with great person throughput capability would actually result in less overall automobile congestion, as well as less overall need to take property for future right-of-way in order to allow roadways to be built to meet the demands of single-occupancy vehicles. So not only does the bus rapid transit concept move a lot of individuals itself, but because it reduces the need to use cars, it actually increases capacity in the rest of the mixed general traffic.

The task force remains committed to the 160-mile system that was proposed in its report. However, we recognize that the corridors proposed in the public hearing draft

represent a realistic and meaningful step in the process of building such a system and we enthusiastically support the scope of the network reflected in the public hearing draft as a reasonable first step. The task force is confident that if this first phase is implemented at the appropriate level of quality, the first phase will prove the concept of the rapid transit system which will result in an enhanced corridor network in the near future.

While we appreciate the effort reflected in the public hearing draft, we nonetheless believe that it falls short in a number of material respects. During its deliberations the task force concluded that the RTS would require specific high-performance treatments in order to fulfill its potential as a high-quality efficient and cost-effective transportation alternative. We believe that when some version of the public hearing draft is ultimately adopted as the

Functional Plan, it must retain necessary

flexibility to allow for the implementation of

the highest quality system possible using

whatever public right-of-way is approved.

We recommend that the operative language of any recommended Functional Plan and associated maps and appendices that identify real property for acquisition of additional right-of-way for an RTS provide as follow:

(1) The designation of the corridors reflected in the public hearing draft without specifying treatments. In other words, the Planning Board should recommend right-of-way sufficient to provide treatments assumed by the draft, but avoid suggesting that these treatments represent a ceiling on the treatment or service level to be implemented when the relevant routes are designed, engineered and begin operation.

Every effort should be made to allow for the acquisition of right-of-way to enable

development of dedicated lanes to at least the minimal level of premium or high-performance service unless it's absolutely infeasible to do so.

indicated, if any, should be a floor not a ceiling. The Functional Plan should not dictate or limit the treatments to be built and level of service to be applied when implementation decisions are being made and should not foreclose the possibility of implementing a higher quality treatment when implementation decisions are made.

- (2) The short Cherry Hill segment in the Randolph Road corridor should be included so that the corridor extends from Rockville Pike to FDA Boulevard.
- (3) The recognition that the number of specific locations of stations, intersection modifications and ancillary facilities is approximate and can be modified during implementation based on additional

MR. WINSTON: This is very likely to have significant impact on ridership projections. The current ridership projections in your study do not include the potential impact of a reconfiguration of the Ride On network, which is very important.

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The recognition that a simple process needs to be promptly put in place to allow coordination between the county's planning agencies and those municipalities with planning authority to ensure a seamless outcome in implementing the RTS network is our fifth point. And finally, the recognition that due to the dynamic nature of the needs being addressed by the RTS, the Functional Plan should be updated on a shorter time horizon than similar plans to allow for (A) adjustments necessitated by a detailed design engineering and construction; (B) improvement of existing corridors; and b inclusion of additional corridors in the future.

The task force also urges that the

process for consideration of technical

amendments to the Functional Plan should be
expeditious and simple.

And regrettably, I have completed about 50 percent of what's here, but do ask that it be included in the record.

CHAIR CARRIER: It will absolutely, and it will even be read.

9 MR. WINSTON: Well, thank you very 10 much.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR CARRIER: Ms. Lindstrom?

MS. LINDSTROM: I am Pam Lindstrom speaking on behalf tonight of my fellow residents of the Route 355 corridor in Central Gaithersburg. The residents along this corridor -- well, I should start, Gaithersburg recently did an updated Land Use Plan for the whole city. My neighbors and I that live in the central part of Gaithersburg were extremely dissatisfied with the plan that the city came up with, therefore we decided to do

our own plan for that corridor. The main problem that we identified was that the plan had no vision, so we set out to provide a vision which I was happy to find also qualified as a system, because it has at least three separate mutually supporting parts.

One part is the establishment of a new downtown, actually the first downtown for the City of Gaithersburg, which is down there at the right-hand end just south of west of Frederick Avenue, Route 355, and just south of Quince Orchard Road. Part two was the need for BRT as the most feasible way to serve this new downtown and impact fact the corridor with transit. And item 3 was our desire to create an urban boulevard from our link of Frederick Avenue, Route 355.

We put these together in what we call the Citizens Plan for the Frederick

Avenue Corridor. And this is it. Obviously

I don't have time to present it to you

tonight, but we were pleased to find that the

ridership projections for this link of the BRT system were extremely high and we hope this will give it high priority for implementation.

One of the best ideas to come from the Citizens Plan; not my idea, so I can brag about it, was a modified route for BRT through this corridor. And my main purpose tonight is to ask you to attend to this proposal in your discussions of the route for the BRT along the Route 355 north corridor.

This section of Frederick Avenue itself, Route 355, has the most constrained right-of-way of any part of the north end and probably the whole of Route 355, and yet our Citizens Plan calls for this to become more pedestrian-friendly, obviously. It needs decent sidewalks. It needs crosswalks. It's almost impossible to cross here at present. It needs landscaping.

Members of our group proposed diverting the BRT off Frederick Avenue towards the Montgomery County Fairgrounds. It

1 includes redevelopment of the fairgrounds.

The BRT goes along -- it's this blue dotted

3 line, which I'm sure you can't really see.

4 But it goes south or west, whatever, of

5 Frederick Avenue to a hybrid road just on the

6 north edge of the fairgrounds serving the

7 central place of the new downtown, which is

8 down there in blue, and then goes back to

9 Route 355 just north of there.

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And the plan -- yes, that's -- it serves the new downtown. It has multiple advantages over continuing the BRT on Route 355 itself, avoids further crowding of the most constrained part of the right-of-way, has a potential to actually take some traffic off of Route 355 through that area, serves the proposed city center including redevelopment of the fairgrounds, allows redesigning of that section of Frederick Avenue as an urban boulevard with wide sidewalks, decent crosswalks, and even room for sidewalk cafes and other uses of the sidewalk.

called who weren't here have arrived.

depending on whether any of the people I first

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	Page 192
1	So Cherian Eapen, Jonathan Genn,
2	Stephen Poor, and Elizabeth Brenner-Leifer.
3	Mr. Eapen, you're also becoming a
4	frequent flyer holder.
5	(Laughter.)
6	MR. EAPEN: Well, I met Mr.
7	Dreyfuss on the Metro yesterday and he didn't
8	know I don't work here anymore.
9	(Laughter.)
10	CHAIR CARRIER: Oh, you're
11	really
12	MEMBER DREYFUSS: You were a very
13	silent departure.
14	MR. EAPEN: Actually, make sure
15	Commissioner Anderson heard that I was on the
16	Metro.
17	CHAIR CARRIER: It has to have
18	been a
19	(Laughter.)
20	MEMBER ANDERSON: Let me know when
21	you get on a bicycle.
22	(Laughter.)

1 CHAIR CARRIER: Go ahead, Mr.

2 Eapen.

MR. EAPEN: All right. Good
evening. My name is Cherian Eapen and I'm a
nine-year resident of Clarksburg, the town
that the page 1 overview of the Clarksburg
Master Plan describes as a transit and
pedestrian-oriented community ultimately to be
served by the Corridor Cities Transitway.

Now even after over 10 years there is no prospect of CCT ever coming to Clarksburg. The current MTA plans and federal funding request are expected to construct CCT only to Metropolitan Grove, which is in the phase 1 of the project. The funding possibilities for phases 2 and 3 of CCT are currently unknown. Additionally, MTA plans for CCT since 2005 do not include the phase 3 section or the east spur of CCT in Germantown.

The Countywide Transit Corridors

Functional Master Plan, in terminating the

Maryland 355 North Corridor or corridor 3 in

Germantown at the Milestone Shopping Center next to Wegmans, and assuming continued connection between Germantown and Clarksburg via transfer to phases 2 and 3 of CCT, is therefore limiting transit options for 40,000-plus future residents of Clarksburg.

As I noted, phases 2 and 3 of CCT has no immediate prospect of obtaining funding and becoming a reality. And the phase 3 section of CCT has not been in MTA plans for the last eight years or so. While I understand staff's rationale to terminate corridor 3 in the vicinity of Wegmans is a way to boost the viability of CCT phase 3, that rationale does not lend itself as a viable option, even reasons noted.

With no transportation staging restrictions to limit development in Clarksburg and local, state and federal transportation funding shortfalls, Clarksburg must have alternative transit options to CCT's to fulfill its mission in the Master Plan as

a transit-oriented community. Terminating corridor 3 in Germantown will be shortsighted especially when considering the fact that the public policy document that we are discussing today is a Functional Master Plan, which by is a Master Plan to address a system or a policy.

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Why then would a Functional Master Plan introduce supporting a transportation delivery function to identified transitoriented community's attempt to limit travel alternatives to these communities whose residents could benefit tremendously from the transitway. Corridor 3, instead of turning to Shakespeare Boulevard from 355 must continue north along Maryland 355, Maryland 27, Snowden Parkway and Stringtown Road and terminate either at the Clarksburg Town Center or in the vicinity of I-270 Exit 18 at Cabin Branch from where if needed could be extended to Frederick County. This almost mirrors a route that was supported by the Transit Task Force.

Though I recognize that it may not

be viable to extend corridor 3 to Clarksburg within the phase 1 time frame, not having the transitway terminate in the Clarksburg in the Functional Master Plan will forever take away the prospect of the transitway extending to Clarksburg in the future.

I therefore urge the Planning
Board to revise corridor 3 recommendation in
the Draft Functional Master Plan and have it
terminate in Clarksburg. Thank you very much.

CHAIR CARRIER: Thank you, Mr.

Eapen.

Mr. Genn?

MR. GENN: Good evening. For the record, I'm Jonathan Genn testifying as an individual and expressing views that are mine and mine alone and are not necessarily reflective of the views of any other person or organization with which I'm affiliated, so I'll take all the blame for everything that's said at this time.

I submitted a written testimony a

1 CHAIR CARRIER: -- because it

2 means the same thing in English and Spanish.

MR. GENN: Absolutely.

4 CHAIR CARRIER: And Mr. Genn said

5 let's do that.

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6 (Laughter.)

7 MR. GENN: I thought it was a 8 brilliant idea.

9 Okay. So but I'm glad you noticed that.

And I'm also going to take the Chair's suggestion that -- I'm not going to repeat some things that have been said in the past, so I can this much shorter.

The point being that in supporting a robust RTS Pronto system now we feel there's no more cost-effective alternative to maximize mobility, reduce gridlock, preserve great neighborhoods and promote prosperity for all, not just in 2013 or 2020 or 2040, 2060 or 2080 and beyond. And the point being that of the great people-moving capacity that can be

created with an effective RTS network operating in dedicated lanes.

And the significance of that is because really what this comes down to being cost-effective or efficient is how do we most efficiently use limited real estate within the right-of-way? Within a 10-foot lane for example, how can we use that most effectively? And this chart, which was really developed through analyses that was done in the Transit Task Force, is how many people can we get through an intersection in a 10-foot-wide or 11-foot-wide lane?

And by safe automotive movement we could get, depending on whether we have a -what is now more of a traditional 13-percent
non-auto driver mode share, we can get about
1,300 people through an intersection per hour.
Or if we were able to achieve much higher than
what our average is now, a 23- percent nonauto driver mode share, we might be able to
get 1,500 people through an intersection.

2 enable us to do is to meet demands of those
3 years out in the future, not just 2040, but

But what the RTS system would

4 2040 and beyond. Because if, for example, our

5 needs end up being we got to move 6,500 people

6 in that one lane, we can do so. The bottom

7 line becomes what is our alternative? What's

8 our way to make the most effective use? And

9 so when I hear a question of how does this

10 affect the surrounding neighborhood, our

11 investment in a few feet now could save us

12 many, many lanes that would have to be taken

for those who are sitting in your seats in

14 2040 or 2050. I know Mr. Anderson said he's

15 going to plan to be here in 2040.

I submit the rest of my testimony.

But the point being that this enables us to

18 say if we take one lane now, take a few feet

now, we can save many, many homes that would

20 have to be taken in the future. So thank you

very much for the opportunity to make this

22 presentation.

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1	CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you,
2	Mr. Genn.
3	Mr. Poor?
4	MEMBER ANDERSON: Actually said I
5	was going to outlast Edgar Gonzales. That was
6	my but
7	CHAIR CARRIER: I can't comment on
8	that.
9	Mr. Poor?
10	MR. POOR: Am I the last person
11	tonight?
12	CHAIR CARRIER: No.
13	MR. POOR: No.
14	CHAIR CARRIER: The young lady at
15	the end of our table
16	MR. POOR: My experience is people
17	really wait
18	CHAIR CARRIER: maybe.
19	MR. POOR: for the last person.
20	CHAIR CARRIER: Well, after you
21	two speak, I'm going to call there are six
22	people whom I called earlier who weren't here.

1 MR. POOR: Got you.

CHAIR CARRIER: I'm going to give them another chance.

MR. POOR: Well, good evening. My name is Stephen Poor. I live in Silver Spring. I'm here to talk tonight about the Route 29 Corridor Plan.

I ride the bus frequently into Silver Spring to catch the Metro and use the businesses in our area, and often I find it a difficult and annoying journey for reasons that the proposed BRT will do nothing to alleviate and I believe much to worsen.

I believe that the real way to
lessen car-generated congestion in the
downtown Silver Spring and South County area
is to make existing bus service more
accessible, more dependable and more connected
to Metro and other transportation operations.
Before beginning new projects the county
government has shown no ability to build or
manage.

Route 29 is already clogged and backed up from the Beltway entrance to nearly Randolph Road virtually every day of the week. This week every day it was backed up until just before 10:00 a.m. The fact that at least a third of this congestion leaves the road at the Beltway entrance shows that BRT would do nothing to alleviate most of this congestion.

These people are not riding to the Metro station or other places served by a bus on Route 29, but the proposed BRT plan will take away a full lane from New Hampshire Avenue to at least the University Boulevard intersection. With Beltway traffic taken another lane, this will leave a single lane for regular traffic in an already failing intersection.

Your first rule should be do no harm, and I think your proposal fails that test. But there are other alternatives that will assist future congestion issues.

(1) Make existing bus service in

the area to Silver Spring downtown frequent, accessible, reliable and useful even in bad weather. Bring feeder routes into the neighborhoods and take riders to safe and weather-resistant bus stops for the ride downtown. On Route 29 between New Hampshire and downtown there are two covered bus stops. Most of the stops are uncovered, unsafe and inaccessible during traffic.

south of New Hampshire and run it on New
Hampshire Avenue to the Takoma Park Metro
station with its large and underused bus lots.
The proposed BRT lines will be expresses that
would drive past riders between most of New
Hampshire and downtown Silver Spring on Route
29, yet they will take away a traffic lane
and, according to some reports, will force
local buses into heavier traffic in the
general traffic lanes left after the BRT
reserves this lane. Thus, bus customers will
see service decline if you actually live and

1 use the buses in that area.

Transit Center before starting or encumbering another major and complicated project. This should be obvious. I rode the bus here tonight, but your plan would make it less convenient, less regular and slower for me to continue to use the bus in the future. Your plan should make it easier for existing riders to depend on public transportation and enable them to recommend it to their neighbors in that congested area.

CHAIR CARRIER: Mr. Cole, am I remembering correctly that one of the questions that will be decided later is -- oh, now I've forgotten what it was -- oh, darn it. Well, I'll have to ask you later because I've lost it. It was one of the things that Mr. Poor suggested was a problem, but I thought it was something we don't even know yet whether it's a problem because the decision hasn't been made.

MR. COLE: Well, we had originally recommended a curb lane operation through Four Corners and we changed that to a mixed-traffic operation with a recommendation to consider dedicated lanes through Four Corners. It's a slightly softer recommendation with recognition of the fact that the traffic patterns are very complicated here, as Mr. Poor said, in getting on the Beltway. And it may be the curb lane, it may be a median lane, it may be some middle lane. It needs a more detailed operational analysis.

MR. POOR: We could beam them up, of course.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR CARRIER: That would be great. My son, when he was a little boy, promised that he would invent a machine to allow us to travel, you know, without any kind of vehicle. But now that he's 13, I believe he has abandoned that particular ambition.

Maybe he'll take it up again someday.

Neal R. Gross & Co., Inc. 202-234-4433

MR. POOR: Tell him not to go to school and spend his time working on that.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR CARRIER: Yes, well you know, his parents are sort of fond of him actually getting a degree of some kind. But you know, who knows, somebody might do it.

Yes, well his parents are way to fiscally conservative for him to become a Mark Zuckerburg. Very risk-averse.

All right. Ms. Brenner-Leifer.
Thank you, Mr. Poor.

MS. BRENNER-LEIFER: I want to thank the Board for adding me at the last minute. I came a bit at the last minute.

Drummond, which is in that corridor between
Bradley Road and Friendship Heights. There
have been several other people who testified
here tonight who live in Chevy Chase West or
Somerset, which are neighboring neighborhoods.

Drummond is unique. It is a dead-end street

on Wisconsin Avenue and like Chevy Chase West it is -- I don't want to use the word "landlocked," but Wisconsin Avenue is our only means of egress and ingress to our street.

So besides transportation issues that accompany the ingress and egress, we also have concerns about the safety of our schools. But I wanted to bring up a couple other things that I think are important for the -- I would like the Board to think about.

I just would like you to take a second look at the specific route of the 355 south corridor between Bethesda Avenue and Friendship Heights. There is one stop for the BRT in that interim. It is essentially duplicative of the Metro system and it's not apparent to me and it's not in this report what value that one stretch of the BRT serves other than the stop at Bradley, which seems to maybe permit residents easier access to one of the Metros or permits people from one of those Metros to get to those stores in that small

stretch between Wisconsin Avenue and Bradley.

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We live in this what is
essentially a 100-percent residential
neighborhood stretch for -- one mile stretch
between Friendship Heights and downtown
Bethesda. We are 100 percent residential. We
are bordered by two major commercial centers,
but we have unique residential concerns.

Now I think that everybody in our neighborhood loves where we live because of our proximity to these two wonderful residential centers. And I a card-carrying member of the SmarTrip. I took the SmarTrip to work today and I took the Metro here. I am looking forward to taking the Purple Line to Bethesda and somehow getting home at a future date. I am 100 percent in favor of public transportation, but I would like you to take a specific look at this one section that it is unclear where the advantages and the out -- it is unclear to me in my short tenure of looking at this information where the cost and

benefit analysis lays for this one small
stretch.

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CHAIR CARRIER: Okay. Thank you very much.

MEMBER ANDERSON: How do you get to the Metro right now?

MS. BRENNER-LEIFER: I walk.

MEMBER ANDERSON: To Bethesda or to Friendship Heights.

MS. BRENNER-LEIFER: I walk -it's one mile -- it's 0.9 miles from Drummond
to Metro, to Friendship Heights and it's
approximately maybe a mile-and-a-half at the
most between Bradley and Friendship Heights.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Yes. Okay.

MS. BRENNER-LEIFER: And with all the trains coming across Wisconsin we have the safety issues, we have the children issues and we just have -- don't know how -- it's going to be so complicated to get into and out of our neighborhoods.

MEMBER ANDERSON: Well, I was just

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1	remarks from Planning Board members?
2	(No audible response.)
3	CHAIR CARRIER: No? We are
4	adjourned. Thank you all very much.
5	(Whereupon, the meeting was
6	adjourned at 9:28 p.m.)
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<u>C E R T I F I C A T E</u>

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Countywide Transit Corridors
Functional Master Plan Hearing

Before: Maryland Park and Planning Commission

Date: 05-16-13

Place: Silver Spring, MD

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my direction; further, that said transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

Court Reporter

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