

Transportation Services Advisory Council
Minutes of January 15, 2021 Meeting
Via Web Ex

Members/Ex-Officio Present: Jaime McKay, Neil Fay, Tim Davis, Maria Lorenzana-Castro, Dianne Lewis, Alan Feinberg, Alderman Kelly Russell, David Edmondson, Fred Punturiero, Wilfred Plumley, Vaughn Ripley, and Roman Steichen.

Staff and Guests: Darren Bean, Cherian Eapen, Shayne Boucher, Mark Mishler, Joe Kelley, Monica Bearden, Joey Celtnieks, Joel Eisenfeld, David Johnson, Emilee Blackburn, Carrie Anderson-Watters, Kendall Tiffany, and Sandy Ruark.

Call to Order: Jaime McKay called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Introductions: Attendees confirmed their attendance in the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the July and October 2020 meetings were approved as presented.

Elected Officials Report: Alderman Russell reported that the City of Frederick Comprehensive Plan is 95% complete. The City may hold one additional meeting before the Plan is finalized. Anyone interest in reviewing the Plan in its entirety can review it on the City of Frederick's website.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Frederick County Transit Development Plan, Technical Memo #2: Joey Celtnieks and Joel Eisenfeld presented a slideshow on the Frederick County Needs Assessment, Technical Memo #2 which identifies Frederick County's transit needs based upon current demographics and land use.

The presentation can be viewed in its entirety at:

<https://www.frederickcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/331180/Frederick-TransIT-TDP-TSAC-Meeting-1-15-21>.

MARC Train Service Overview: Jaime McKay introduced David Johnson, MARC Chief Transportation Officer. David presented a slideshow overview of MARC service. Highlights included:

- MARC Train Service Statistics
- MARC Train Line Routes
- History of MARC
- MARC Current Ridership

The complete report can be viewed at:

<https://www.frederickcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/331182/TSAC-MARC-101-presentation>.

Bus Stop ADA Improvements Funding: Joe Kelly conducted a slideshow presentation on the TransIT Bus Stop Study. The study was conducted by Sabra and Associates for the Frederick County Planning and Permitting Division. The study looked at every bus stop on TransIT's Connector routes. The shuttle routes were not reviewed but will be included in a separate report. Highlights included:

- Ranking System of Each Bus Stop
- Ridership Data
- Needed Improvements Based on Scoring System

The Division of Planning and Permitting will be working with County and City of Frederick DPW Divisions to coordinate and prioritize needed improvements. Additionally, they will also work with TransIT and County GIS to analyze data to provide riders with related information to familiarize them with existing bus stop conditions. Funding for the study was provided through the MDOT/MTA Statewide Transit Innovation Grant.

The report can be reviewed in its entirety at:

<https://www.frederickcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/331181/TransIT-Bus-Stop-Study>.

Planning Commission Update: Carol Sepe not present; no report.

Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Update: Jaime McKay provided updates on several MTA items:

- Statewide Transit Plan – The public is invited to view additional documents on the website. The public survey summary is now also available on the website and all can be viewed at [Statewide Transit Plan | Maryland Transit Administration](#).
- The Kim Lamphier Bikeway Network Program grant cycle has begun.
- There are also other opportunities to consider applying for through the grant cycle, including the Transportation Alternatives Program which is run by MDOT State Highway Administration. Additionally, there are also Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) projects which will be issued earlier and are due by March 12, 2021. The MHSO grants are designated for law enforcement and general highway safety activities.

SHA Update: Darren Bean provided an update on a couple major Frederick County projects:

- MD 85 Phase I – Median work is continuing on I-270 as well as water and storm drain work on MD 85. Utility work is also continuing. Work recently began on traffic signal installation on MD 85 as well as lighting and new signage at MD 85 and I-270.
- US 15 Mt. Zion Park & Ride – The project's Notice to Proceed continues to be delayed.

FCPS Update: Fred Punturiero reported that FCPS is continuing to provide transportation service to small groups, i.e., special needs, non-public school students, and those students without internet access. FCPS Transportation is awaiting the Superintendent of Schools' decision on when hybrid learning will begin, either on February 16 or March 1 based on existing metrics. Fred said they are working closely with schools to prepare for transporting students when a decision is made on the date hybrid learning will begin.

Fred reported that FCPS' electric infrastructure work is half complete.

Ft. Detrick Update: Wilfred Plumley stated he had no new information to report. COVID-19 protocols are still in place with 75-80% of staff teleworking. Gates remain operating as they have been with manpower shortages:

- The Veterans' Gate on 7th Street is now open from 6:00 am to 2:00 pm, Monday through Friday only.
- Old Farm Gate has adjusted hours and closes at 6:00 pm daily.
- Nallin Gate is open 24/7.

MML Update: Councilman Ripley had no report.

TransIT Update: Roman Steichen expressed thanks to Joel Eisenfeld and Joey Celtnieks for providing the update on the TDP. Roman said that both Joel and Joey will be invited to the next TSAC meeting to provide another update as work on the plan progresses.

Roman then reported:

- The TransIT facility renovation work is beginning. TransIT staff moved out of the main building yesterday and into temporary trailers on the bus parking lot.
- TransIT continues to operate with COVID-19 protocols in place, including zero fares.
- Hand sanitizers have been installed in every vehicle in the TransIT fleet.
- Fare collection to resume when driver barriers have been installed throughout the fleet. Concurrence requests have been submitted to MTA and we are awaiting their response. Barriers will be funded 100% by the CARES Act.
- TransIT employees have been designated in Group 1c to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The Frederick County Health Department is working on its vaccination schedule and it appears that Group 1c will be scheduled in early March.
- Ridership is currently at 70% of pre-pandemic levels but is slowly rising. Roman stated TransIT is not sure when ridership will return to 100% but as vaccines begin to be administered, more people will begin moving about and ridership should increase.
- Roman reported that TSAC is experiencing a membership shortage and asked for ideas for recruiting more members. Kendall Tiffany reviewed past efforts and suggested reaching out to local agencies who may not be aware of all of the available transportation options, i.e., the Religious Coalition and the Rescue Mission, and who might be willing to become members. Kendall also suggested that when existing members resign before the end of their term that they attempt to recruit a replacement from their agency or approach someone they know who would be a suitable candidate to finish the remainder of their term. Jaime McKay suggested reaching out to The Freedom Center, School of the Deaf, and Hood or Frederick Community College for possible members. Joel Eisenfeld suggested contacting Nancy Huggins at MTA for a list of 5310 Fund recipients who may be interested in joining.
- TransIT Services is currently preparing its FY22 grant application to MTA. TransIT is only requesting operating funds as there are no capital requests this year. TransIT has learned that there will be a 20% reduction in the State's share of its operating budget and also no State match for its preventive maintenance grants. TransIT has enough of its local match portion and CARES funding to cover the State share shortage without cutting service. Part I of the grant is due in late January. Roman requested a letter of support from TSAC to be

included in the grant application. Jaime McKay made a motion to provide the letter of support and the motion was seconded by Tim Davis. Remaining members approved the motion with no members opposed. Roman thanked the membership for their support.

Next Meeting: The next TSAC Meeting will be April 16, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. via Web Ex.

Adjourn - The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra J. Ruark".

Coordinator