



MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION held Wednesday, September 25, 2002, for the purpose of receiving a briefing on the Purple Line and continuing the review of the new evaluation tool for the City Manager.

Mayor Davis started the meeting at 8:10 p.m. It was held in the Senior Classroom/Gallery of the Community Center.

PRESENT WERE: Council members Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, Alan Turnbull, Thomas X. White, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael P. McLaughlin, City Manager; Kristen Ward, Community Planner; and Kathleen Gallagher, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Andy Scott, Director, Washington Area Transit Programs, MTA; George Cardwell, WMATA; Sheldon Goldberg, Advisory Planning Board; Doug Love, Greenbelt Greens; Virginia Beauchamp, Greenbelt News Review.

Purple Line Briefing

Mr. Scott gave some background on the evolution of the proposed light-rail Purple Line, which would run inside the beltway from the New Carrollton to Bethesda Metro stations. The current proposal is for a line of 14 miles, with 10 stations. The goal is to take cars off the beltway and other roads and to serve populations who are heavily dependent on public transportation. He noted that one in five people in this area have no access to use of an automobile, and one in 10 live under the poverty level. A major goal of this project is to make University of Maryland-College Park accessible, both for local commuting by employees and students and also to connect resident students with the MARC train at New Carrollton. Mr. Scott emphasized they are just at the beginning of this process and will do many briefings in the local areas.

In response to questions from Mr. Roberts, Mr. Scott said that since these stations would be in already densely developed areas, they will not likely inspire any major new development, as the Metro station did. He said the stations would have a smaller footprint and would vary in size; most will probably have some parking but will be intended to serve walking populations. Mr. Cardwell added that they need to do more research on the potential ridership at each location to make these decisions; they will be much further forward on these plans by next year.

Mr. White asked if it was definite that this line would be Metro-operated. Mr. Scott said it is in the Metro Board's CIP.

There was discussion of how the routes and stops would be fine-tuned. In response to a question from Mr. Turnbull regarding the apparent sparseness of the eastern end, Mr. Cardwell said the diagram represented only a baseline, that they were looking for

suggestions for station opportunities, and that it would be relatively easy to add stations later. Mr. Turnbull supported Mr. Roberts' emphasis on not encouraging car parking and added that the stations should make good and safe linkages with existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle paths, as well as with bus routes, and let the private sector take care of the cars.

Mayor Davis said she was also supportive of encouraging non-auto connections and limiting parking but added that she also recognized that Metro would have to be responsive to the needs and priorities of the local communities involved.

Mr. Putens also encouraged as little parking as possible; he said to make this system work, people needed to be able to be picked up in their own neighborhoods. He asked if the Purple Line was poised to travel to Virginia west of Bethesda. Mr. Scott said although the hope is that the Purple Line will eventually be circumferential, that would be quite far in the future, and the orientation of the Atechway@ that has been discussed would be farther out.

Mr. White asked if the four Metro stations were necessarily Agivens@ as the hubs of the Purple Line or whether, for example, College Park access could be the starting point. He commented that there were major engineering challenges to connecting the one line to these four stations. Mr. Cardwell acknowledged that this was an interesting perspective, though he said connecting with their own system was important to Metro.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Scott and Mr. Cardwell. This part of the meeting ended at 9:15 p.m.

Evaluation Tool

The City Council, Mr. McLaughlin, and Ms. Gallagher were present for this part of the meeting.

Mr. Putens described revisions that had been made to the evaluation form, including the scale added for the management objectives (MOs). There was discussion of how Council could agree on which objectives were the most critical to be achieved over the year. It was agreed that everyone would select up to 15 objectives on the basis of importance and pass them on to Mr. Putens for collation. Mr. McLaughlin said he was in general agreement with the setting up of the MOs.

Other Business

It was agreed to reschedule to October 30 the work session on the skateboard park. Mr. White will submit any suggestions in advance. Mr. McLaughlin and Ms. Gallagher may need to be present at an Employee Relations Board hearing that night.

Mr. Turnbull suggested moving the first regular meeting in November from November 12 to November 4 so four Council members could be present. There were no objections stated. This will be added to the AMeetings@ section of the October 7 agenda.

The meeting ended at about 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen Gallagher
City Clerk