



**MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
DRAFT MINUTES January 13, 2020 7:00pm**

Members

Present: Larry Schoen, Vice Chair
Ted Cochran
David Zinner

Staff: Bruce Gartner, Executive Secretary
Rashidi Jackson, Office of Transportation
David Cookson, Office of Transportation
Chris Eatough, Office of Transportation
Jason Quan, Office of Transportation
Kimberly Woods, Office of Transportation

Members N/A Currently 2
Excused: Vacancies

Members Joel Hurewitz
of the
Public:

1. Review of unofficial minutes from December 3, 2019 (audio 4:10)

Due to the lack of a quorum official business couldn't take place. Minutes were unable to be approved.

2. Public/Board Comments (audio 5:12)

Joel Hurewitz briefly expressed his concerns and suggestions regarding the CB3 (Electric Scooter Sharing Permit) Bill. Larry suggested that since CB3 was on the agenda for the evening that Joel should hold his comments until then (Item 5-3).

3. Announcements/Updates

i. Complete Streets Resolution and Implementation (audio 7:01)

Chris Eatough reported that the first Complete Street Implementation meeting was held January 8th, as well an orientation session for the new team members. Chris

Eatough briefly went over the two-page “Scope Summary” handout. Chris informed the group that the design manual is expected to be completed by March 2021.

ii. Recommendation of Monica Simon appointment to MTB (audio 15:31)

Bruce Gartner announced that Monica Simon is being proposed to the County Council. Bruce briefly went over Monica’s qualifications. Larry questioned whether Monica would be on board for the next meeting, to which Bruce replied yes.

iii. Final letter to MTA Administrator regard Commuter Bus Service (audio 16:35)

Bruce Gartner informed the group that the MTB letter was sent to the MTA Administrator. While Kevin Quinn, the MTA Administrator acknowledged receipt of the letter, his response did not include a time frame for feedback.

iv. Other updates

Bruce announced to the group that Albert Engel is no longer a Howard County Government employee. Bruce acknowledged that Albert’s departure from the County is a big loss to the Transportation Department. The job vacancy is expected to be posted on the Howard County website soon.

David Zinner asked for a ridership comparison for the free RTA bus promotion to previous years. Due to how data was recorded from previous years Bruce believed that while there was an increase in ridership he was unable to verify it. Bruce acknowledged that the December promotion was a great marketing opportunity and positive feedback was received from riders. David then inquired about the financial impact that the promotion had on the RTA. Bruce informed David that the overall cost to the RTA was about \$20,000 in lost revenue which also included some of the marketing expenses.

4. Development Reviews Updates (audio 21:50)

David Cookson went over the “Plan Review Updates” handout. David mentioned that there were only two significant projects. The first project David discussed was project ‘High School 13”. Under this project Howard County has requested that the road in front of the school provide areas for a future transit stops. He explained that the primary takeaway from the “High School 13” project is to provide an accessible path from the high school to Rose Lane. A brief discussion ensued about future walkway and crosswalk projects for that area.

David then discussed “Bethany Glen”. Under the “Bethany Glen” project, the developer will be providing road improvements and sidewalk extensions along Bethany Lane and Longwood Drive. A brief discussion followed about the housing projects underway in that area. Larry questioned whether by right developments required a transportation study. David answered yes but noted pedestrian and bicycle data isn’t a requirement of the study. Larry suggested that Bethany Lane is a tough road for bicycling and should be widened before any other developments are approved, Chris mentioned that there are alternative biking routes. Ted questioned whether the people North of 70 would have a way to get to Mount Hebron. David indicated that was one of the topics that would be discussed with the developers.

5. New Business/Ongoing Business

i. Endorsement of Walk Howard Plan- Chris Eatough (audio 42:02)

Larry informed everyone that due to the lack of a quorum the present MTB members were unable to take official action on the Walk Howard Plan. Bruce informed the members that he would send a letter out via email to all the MTB members to sign. Chris informed the group that the Council Hearing for the Walk Howard Plan is scheduled for January 21st, and the vote is scheduled for February 3rd. Chris then suggested that if the MTB planned on submitting a letter of support for the Walk Howard Plan that it should be submitted in time for the Council Hearing. It was agreed that the MTB board would submit testimony to the County Council.

ii. 2020 Priority Letter Process- David Cookson (audio 48:10)

David Cookson went over the “Priority Letter Schedule” handout. The priority letter is due to MDOT by April 1st. Upcoming key dates for the priority letter: January 18th a public survey which will be available online until the end of February, on February 20th a Public Meeting will be held, and on February 25th an MTB work session is scheduled. David explained the priority letter process will be very similar to last year. March will be considered crunch time with discussing public and MTB comments, talking to county council and state legislators, developing a final draft of the priority letter, and finalizing draft letter for circulation. David voiced that while it’s anticipated that there will not be a ton of changes made, OoT will have to address the lack of funding MDOT provided last year.

iii. E-scooter Proposed Legislation-Bruce Gartner (audio 52:24)

Bruce Gartner and Chris Eatough provided an update on proposed legislation. The E-scooter legislation has already been prefiled and is currently before council, the hearing is scheduled for Tuesday. Joel Hurewitz had the opportunity to voice his opinions and concerns regarding items that he believed should be covered in the scooter legislation/permit. Joel suggested coordination with Columbia Association and updated definitions (bicycle, scooter, etc). Joel expressed concerns that the E-scooter legislation excluded significant features such as consumer protections, age restrictions, and helmet requirements. Due to being short on time Larry voiced to Joel that the Board unfortunately was unable to consider each suggestion. Larry informed Joel that the deadline had already past for MTB to review CB3, which was now in the hands of the County Council. Bruce explained that the enabling legislation is purposely wide to enable the OoT to include details in the permit process to avoid having to go to the Council each time a modification is made. It was agreed that Bruce would consult with the MTB regarding the permitting process.

iv. Transit Development Plan- Phase Two Update (audio 1:15:32)

Bruce Gartner briefly went a few key points from the 9-page “Howard County Transit Expansion” handout. Bruce mentioned that there has been a strong push for transit to service the HCPSS Central Office, and the County is inclined to provide

the requested service to the Central Office. The county is currently working with the school system to figure out the scheduling for the requested route. Bruce then went on to discuss the Ellicott City to Catonsville service. Bruce informed the group that the Route 40 corridor was listed on the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan as one of the highest priority corridors. Bruce also announced that feedback is needed within the next couple of weeks and that more information will be posted on the MTB section of the website.

v. Bus Stop Improvements (audio 1:22:29)

A handout summarizing Howard County Stop Improvements was provided. The group briefly discussed a recent front-page news article that featured art pieces that could be found at one of the bus stops in Howard County. David Zinner believed that the article was good publicity and suggested that more art should be displayed at the stops. Jason Quan informed David that the artwork was grant funded. Bruce suggested that comments and suggestions about the funding of additional artwork should be directed to the Council and Executive in terms of capital budget. Bruce indicated that while the County is focused on the budget for stop and shelter improvements the County was open to working with advocates like the Horizon Foundation if they continue to come up with grants for those type of projects for priority locations (possibly one per route as a start). Larry believes that the artwork was a great idea and suggested that the artwork normalizes and brings public transportation in Howard County to the mainstream.

6. Adjournment (audio 1:31:20)

Larry Schoen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. It should be noted that there was not a quorum at this meeting.

7. Next Meeting

The next MTB meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2020.

_____/2020
Bruce Gartner Date
Executive Secretary

_____/2020
Kimberly Woods Date
Office of Transportation