



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION

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TRANSIT AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY GROUP (TPAG) MINUTES

January 21, 2020 3:00 p.m.

Members Present: Marlene Hendler, Chair
Karina Fisher (for Liz Walsh)
Phil Dulany
Jackie Eng
Paul Walsky
Marian Vessels

Staff: Bruce Gartner, Office of Transportation
Chris Eatough, Office of Transportation
Jason Quan, Office of Transportation
Kimberly Woods, Office of Transportation

Non-Members Present: Cole Mccarren

1. Approval of September 17, 2019 Minutes

Marlene Hendler moved to approve minutes with corrections.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Announcements/Updates

i. Review of March 2020 Service and Schedule Changes for RTA

Cole McCarren announced that there have been no drastic changes since the last service update in November. The routing of the 404 bus will be changed so that they are servicing the Hickory Ridge Village Center a little quicker. The signage will be clearer and easier to understand. The RTA is currently adjusting layover times for Route 409 and 501.

Prioritizing the transfer of people from Elkridge to Columbia will help the buses overlap better, minimizing wait time.

ii. Status of Transit Bus Orders and Deliveries

Jason Quan announced that an order has been placed for 3 big transit buses which are expected to arrive by the end of the summer. The buses are from a new vendor equipped with USB ports between the chairs in case riders need to charge their electronics. The new buses

are clean diesel buses which are easier to maintain and last longer. Vans will be used to supplement when buses breakdown. The Office of Transportation hopes to get more new buses with grants from the state for the upcoming fiscal year.

iii. Presentation on Real Time Bus Information Project to be initiated in Spring 2020

Cole went over the Real Time Information and Mobile Payment hand out. The RTA plans on making Real Time Bus Arrival Information more accessible to third parties so that riders can have multiple app options. Jason informed the group that smart phones aren't necessarily needed to get ETA. Customers will be able to simply text the bus stop ID to a special number that will provide customers with bus ETA. Jason announced that service alerts are now available on Twitter and the Transit app.

Jason briefly went over the mobile fare payment handout. The current goal of the OoT and RTA is to find a vendor that can integrate with the real time app to eliminate customers from having to use multiple apps. Customers creating an account would put a credit card on file so that they can make fare purchases on their phone similar to the MTA's Charm Pass. RTA customers using mobile fare would have a 30-minute window to use the ticket before it expires, and tickets are only good for fixed routes.

iv. Bus Shelters

Jason briefly updated the group on bus stop shelter improvements. The OoT has spent close to \$700,000 on bus stop improvements since 2017. The improvements range from providing landing pads, sidewalk connections, refurbishing old shelters, and installing new shelters. A new vendor has been secured for the installation of the new shelter designs. The new shelters are glass tempered, with solar lighting, and has a smaller footprint. There are currently 5 new shelters ready to install, 4 of the 5 will be placed at the mall, while the 5th is TBD.

4. **Status of Council Bills and Resolutions relating to Transportation**

Bruce Gartner announced that the Walk Howard Plan has been recently updated to include over 43 structured projects, bus stop improvements, crosswalk improvements, etc. Chris Eatough informed the group that the Plan takes the old projects from the 2017 Pedestrian Master Plan and implements them into the new plan. Bruce announced that everyone has been on board with the Walk Howard Plan and believes that it will do well at council tonight.

Bruce announced that the OoT is currently in the process of getting approval to allow the use of E-scooters in Downtown Columbia through a permit and regulatory process. Under the proposed bill the County would collect a licensing fee of \$10,000. OoT has so far received four companies to request for a permit but is considering scaling it down to just two. The E-scooters will be installed with no ride zones and low speed zones via geofencing to reduce concerns of speed limits and use on pathways. OoT is hopeful that the Council will endorse it.

5. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be a joint meeting with Bicycle Advisory Group. The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 7th at 3:00 p.m.

6. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm.

Bruce Gartner
Executive Secretary

Date

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