

**Prince George's Advocates for Community-based Transit, Minutes of the Meeting of Dec. 12, 2011, Hyattsville City Hall, 5:00-6:30 p.m.**

Present: Karren Pope-Onwukwe, presiding; Cheryl Cort, Bill Orleans, Joel Ryerson, and Bill Wilson.

1. The Minutes of the meeting of Nov. 14 were accepted as distributed.
2. Wilson reported that dual checking/savings accounts were set up at SECU, and the balance of the checking account from SunTrust was transferred. There will be a permanent required \$10 balance in the savings account. The balance in the checking account was \$111.04, which included a gift of \$20 from Wilson.
3. Karren and Cheryl talked about the fact that Dru Schmidt-Perkins of 1,000 Friends of Maryland wants organizations like ours to support Plan Maryland. The email from Cheryl to Karren apparently went astray. There was a Senate Hearing the morning of Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>, while outside there were rallies both supporting the Plan and opposing it.

Orleans said that he had talked with Secretary Hall of the Planning Dept. two weeks ago. Hall had said that Smart Growth policies had been successfully applied in both Cumberland and Cambridge. Cheryl also said that Worcester County had done some good planning. Cheryl said that the State needs to focus on the use of State money to support existing communities, but that could include some new development as infill, e.g. along Route 1 in Hyattsville.

4. In regard to the Cafritz property along Route 1, the developer wants to be on a fast track. University Park wants assurance that there will be a bridge over the railroad tracks to give access from the east. Riverdale Park wants the Planning Board to go slowly until the Riverdale Park Council decides what it wants. Hyattsville was planning a meeting on the topic for the evening of Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>.

Wilson raised the question whether the Board should take any action at this point. Karren said that it was too soon. The County Executive does want the Cafritz Project to go forward. Cheryl said that Riverdale Park is being constructive about how to proceed. She also said that this Cafritz Project was not our highest priority. The Project does involve rezoning the big parcel of land. Orleans asked why it is assumed that owners have the right to develop their property. Karren explained why there are lots of constraints on property owners. Karren explained that PG ACT emphasizes an affordable transportation system in the county so folks can get about effectively. This is part of what makes communities livable.

5. Before this meeting Karren had circulated several pictures taken at the Nov. 1 Press Conference on the Purple Line at the University. Karren planned to also forward them to Laura DeSantis to mount on our website.

6. In regard to public meetings recently held on the Purple Line, Joel said that he had attended the one in Silver Spring, where the audience was mixed in its support. Cheryl said that Casa is concerned about the impact of the alignment on small businesses. Cheryl suggested that the Board send a letter to the County Executive in regard to our concern for managing to keep affordable housing in the face of the Purple Line in Langley Park and Lewisdale. Some seniors want to “age in place” and do not want to be forced out of their homes. There is also concern that Route 1 be kept green—not like Rockville Pike—but with manageable levels of traffic. In the Arts District in Hyattsville the only affordable housing will be apartments for artists.

Karren said that the Aging Advisory Council is concerned about aging in place, and it plans to have a program helped by AARP and HUD in early 2012. Recently a 240-family complex was closed in Glenarden. Loss of housing leads to close of businesses, as Cheryl noted on Route 1 as one crosses the line from DC into Prince George’s County

Cheryl will draft a letter on this topic for Karren to send.

There was to be a public meeting on the Purple Line on Tues., Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Park and Planning office on Kenilworth Ave. Ryerson and Orleans planned to attend.

Karren asked re the results of the WMATA meeting in Hyattsville on Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> in regard to changes in bus service. [See no. 8 in the minutes of our meeting of Nov. 14<sup>th</sup>.] Orleans said that WMATA presented a fait accompli of changes: some cuts and some enhancements. Orleans also said that WMATA is a fine system, but “service stinks”. He referred to a recent column in the “Washington Post” in which Dr. Gridlock said the WMATA has a 75% on time service record.

7. The meeting schedule for the first six months of 2012, all on Mondays in the Prangley Room of the Hyattsville City Hall from 5 to 7 p.m., is as follows:  
Jan. 9, Feb. 13, March 12, April 16 (the third Mon. to avoid Easter Mon.),  
May 14, and June 11

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON Mon., Jan. 9, 2012, at 5 p.m. at the Hyattsville City Hall.

Notes prepared by Bill Wilson on Dec. 16, 2011