

Arlington Transit Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
May 10, 2022
7:00 PM
Microsoft Teams Meeting

TAC Members Present:

John Carten
James Davenport
Alexa Mavroidis
Richard Price
Laura MacNeil
Alexander Cumana
Andrew McAllister
Erika Chiang
Harvey Berlin

Attendees Present:

Lynn Rivers (staff)
Pierre Holloman (staff)
William Jones (staff)
Robin McElhenny (staff)
Kirk Dand (staff)
Paul Mounier (staff)
Akram Ahmed (staff)
Andre Stafford
Antoine Buie
Kent Keyser
Francis Krol
Suzette Risacher
Sue Gutierrez
Doris Ray
Jon Harris

Call to Order

- John Carten opened the meeting at 7:03 pm.

Introductions

- John Carten led roll call of TAC members present, Arlington staff, and others present.

Public Comment

Kent Keyser provided the following public comments on the proposed changes to STAR policy:

- Consider other jurisdictions such as Alexandria and their partnership with the National League of Cities to help staff better understand how to make STAR work more efficiently for residents and guide improvements by not degrading service
- STAR customers were promised a RFP 5 to 6 years ago but nothing has been changed

- Staff needs to understand the needs of STAR users before suggesting the proposed policy changes.

Doris Ray provided the following public comments on the proposed changes to STAR policy:

- There has not been enough public engagement on the proposed changes.
- Staff has not been well informed and not taken into consideration peer systems in the region such as Alexandria's DOT.
- The proposed policy changes are confusing such as aligning operating hours of STAR with days and times of bus service; however, MetroAccess users are grandfathered in – why should STAR riders get less than those grandfathered into MetroAccess?
- The proposed STAR policy changes need more time for discussion and public engagement.
- Hope that the TAC opposes making any changes to the STAR program until there are many more public engagement opportunities.

Approval of Minutes from the March 8, 2022 Meeting

- The amended meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Crystal City East Entrance Project Update

- Robin McElhenny provided an overview of the process up to May 2022 for this project. In March 2022, the County Board approved amendment to an Interim Agreement with JBG Smith for development of 30% design documents for the new entrance. In April 2022, JBG Smith submitted refined at-grade alternative. It is anticipated that the County Board will consider a minor JBG Smit site plan amendment to provide necessary easements for new entrance independent of timeline for retail development in the June or July 2022 timeframe. The at-grade alternative will be like the layout at the Rosslyn Metrorail Station entrance. The station manager kiosk, faregates, fare vending, restrooms, and service rooms are proposed to be at-grade. There is a proposed smaller underground mezzanine and three elevators between the levels. This approach reduces construction risks with less underground work and avoiding utilities along Crystal Drive. It is estimated that this would reduce cost by \$13 million.
- Doris Ray noted that this project has not been brought to the attention of the WMATA Accessibility Advisory Committee nor through the Arlington Disability Advisory Commission. It was noted that navigating 15th Street and Crystal Drive is a challenge. It was asked if the new entrance will have redundant elevators in accordance with WMATA's accessible design standards. It was noted by Mrs. McElhenny that the new entrance will have redundant elevators in accordance with WMATA's accessible design standards. It was also asked if there would be a replacement of the existing single elevator at the western entrance. Mrs. McElhenny stated that this project will not replace the existing single elevator at the western entrance. It was noted the TAC will receive another update at their September 2022 meeting on the project and the schedule for future outreach.

Floating Bus Stop Islands Concept

- Paul Mounier provided an update of Arlington's floating bus stop island concept. Floating bus stops are separated from the sidewalk by a bike channel, eliminating conflicts between transit vehicles and bikes at stops. For buses, boarding islands allow the creation of accessible in-lane stops. In terms of outreach, it was noted there have been presentations and feedback has been received on this topic from the WMATA Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Arlington Disability Advisory Commission, the Arlington Transit Advisory Committee Accessibility Subcommittee, the Arlington Commission on Aging, the Bicycle

Advisory Committee, and the Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Feedback received included but was not limited to:

- Need for mitigation of conflicts between pedestrians and bicycles
- Wayfinding for individuals with low-vision
- Regional standards for construction of floating bus stop islands
- Arlington Transit is currently working on updating its Bus Stop Guidelines and Standards Manual to include more information on floating bus stop islands. Mr. Mounier provided an overview of the additional language which is being included as part of this update. It was noted that finalizing this update will hopefully coincide with the adoption of the WMATA / Regional standards in the fall of 2022.

Transit Signal Priority (TSP) Update

- William Jones explained that TSP is a technology that can enhance traditional transit services by facilitating bus movements through intersections controlled by traffic signals. Mr. Jones noted the goals for Arlington Transit's TSP implementation included:
 - Maintaining reliable transit service and increase on-time performance,
 - Achieve overall corridor transit travel time savings; and,
 - Reduce delay and emissions at intersections.
- Feasibility Study began in the summer of 2021 and the study team reviewed current signal operations on Langston Blvd, Glebe Road, Washington Blvd, Columbia Pike, and the Crystal City/Pentagon City Corridor between 33rd Street to 12th Street S to determine how best to accommodate bus travel while maintain traffic flows. This study determined if bus stop locations need adjustment to support TSP and which intersections within each of the corridors are eligible for TSP. As a result, the study recommended moving forward with TSP implementation on Langston Blvd, Columbia Pike, Glebe Road, and the Crystal City/Pentagon City corridor. Currently, Arlington Transit is moving forward with the plan development for design and implementation of TSP within these corridors by using a phased approach. Equipment is expected to be installed on Arlington Transit buses in the fall of 2022 and testing/acceptance phase for the Langston Blvd Corridor is expected to take place in the winter 2022/2023.

WMATA Silver Line Update

- Kirk Dand provided an update on WMATA's proposed Silver Line opening in the fall of 2022. It was noted that WMATA has been undertaking testing and related operational readiness activities. Until WMATA completes and accepts the operational readiness activities, the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority will retain custody of the project. It was mentioned that many of the operations positions for the Silver Line Phase 2 have been filled. Mr. Dand also noted that WMATA's new General Manager/CEO, Randy Clarke, will take the position in the summer of 2022. Andy Off will serve as the interim General Manager/CEO until Mr. Clarke takes such position. The TAC requested an update on the pending Yellow Line bridge shutdown at an upcoming TAC meeting.

Report from Accessibility Subcommittee

- Alexa Mavroidis stated there were many public comments in opposition to the proposed STAR policy changes. There were many comments regarding no longer having will calls for medical trips and picking someone up from local airports. There were also concerns expressed about trips which do not start nor end in Arlington and how such would be handled under the proposed policy changes. It was noted that Arlington Transit staff will provide more opportunities for public comments and feedback by bringing the proposed

changes to Arlington Disability Advisory Commission as well as other Commissions and Committees in the coming months.

Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff

Pierre Holloman encouraged the TAC to continue to send him feedback on topics which they would like to receive more information. It was noted that it has been requested that the TAC receive updates on the following for upcoming meetings:

- Transit Strategic Plan
- Arlington Transit's public interface for data
- Arlington Transit's fare pilot
- WMATA's pending budget deficit
- Capital Projects: Ballston Multimodal Completion, Crystal City East Entrance, and Zero Emissions Buses

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be the annual TAC Transit Capital Projects Tour which will take place on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm.