

INTERSECT!

A NEWS BULLETIN

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BETTER ACCESS, TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT CRITICAL TO SUCCESS OF NEW YORK AVENUE METRO STATION

On June 27th, WRN testified in favor of the proposed New York Avenue Metrorail station before the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The proposed station would be located a half-mile north of Union Station on the Red Line close to the intersection of Florida and New York Avenues, NE.

WRN and community leaders expressed enthusiasm about the opportunities for the surrounding neighborhoods, local and new businesses, and redevelopment of underutilized lands and buildings. The New York Avenue station supports the tenets of smarter growth by concentrating resources in an area ripe for urban revitalization. WRN cautioned, however, that in order to fulfill the promise of the new station, WMATA and the District of Columbia must commit to high quality pedestrian, bike, and bus access; transit-oriented development; and to working closely with local residents, the business community, and ongoing planning initiatives in nearby neighborhoods.

WRN commended the station design for de-emphasizing parking and special bus bays (as opposed to curbside pull-in areas for buses), putting the needs of people over vehicles. However, WRN expressed concern that overall little attention has been paid to improved pedestrian, bike and bus access. For example, the current station design sets the entrance back off the street and creates long, potentially

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“MAKING THE MOST OF METRO: COMMUNITY BUILDING THROUGH TRANSIT” - A NEW BROCHURE FROM WRN

Now available from WRN is the new brochure: “Making the Most of Metro: Community-Building Through Transit.” This four-page public information brochure provides a clear explanation and visual examples of the opportunity transit-oriented development provides our growing region. The brochure explains and illustrates transit-oriented development principles, why transit-oriented benefits local communities, and how residents can get involved so they can ensure that nearby Metrorail stations are used to create neighborhood-enhancing development. For a copy, contact WRN, 202-667-5445, or e-mail: debkatz@megsinet.net. Specify whether you want a hard copy or a PDF file. For the latter you will need Adobe Reader software, which can be downloaded from <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

MARYLAND’S LARGEST LATINO GROUP ENDORSES INNER PURPLE LINE

CASA of Maryland, the largest Latino organization in the state, recently endorsed the inner light rail line known as the “Purple Line.” CASA’s Executive Director Gustavo Torres cited better access to jobs and community reinvestment in the New Hampshire/ University Avenue corridors of Prince George’s County as important reasons to support the proposed light rail route. “Time required to get to work will be reduced for residents of our communities, many of

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1777 CHURCH STREET, NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20036

Phone: (202) 667-5445 Fax: (202) 667-4491

WRN advocates transportation investments, land use policies, and community designs that enhance existing communities and the environment of the National Capital Region.

Deborah Katz, Managing Editor, debkatz@megsinet.net.
Comments and articles welcome.
Views expressed are not necessarily those of WRN.

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whom do not have automobiles," Torres stated in a July 3rd letter to Maryland Department of Transportation Secretary John Porcari.

CASA further cited pedestrian safety as a major concern in the area. Wide intersections, four and six lanes of traffic, and heavy, fast-moving vehicles on University Boulevard result in dangerous journeys for local residents walking to buy groceries, bring their children to school, or reach bus stops. "We hope that the light rail might be accompanied by efforts to ensure that growth in speed and volume of automobile traffic is moderated," Torres said.

CASA expressed concern that locating the rail line in the outer rather than inner suburbs would accelerate the outward movement of jobs and retailers, further sapping the economic vitality of inner beltway communities.

The Purple Line is a proposed circumferential rail line that would essentially parallel the Capital Beltway, linking Metrorail stations. The State of Maryland is currently studying a number of routes for a Purple Line as part of a study of strategies for alleviating Beltway congestion or providing new transportation alternatives.

CASA's mission is to improve the economic and social well being of the low-income Latino community by facilitating the self-development, organization and mobilization of its members. For further information, contact CASA of Maryland at (301) 270-0442 or email casamd@clark.net.

SETTLEMENT REACHED TO CURB SMOG IN DC REGION

During the summer of 1997, smog pollution was associated with an estimated 50,000 respiratory-related hospital admissions, over 150,000 emergency room visits, and over 6 million asthma attacks in the Eastern United States. Smog not only affects people with impaired respiratory systems, such as asthmatics, but harms healthy adults and children as well, damaging lung tissue, reducing lung function, and making the lungs susceptible to other irritants. Smog pollution forms on hot days from exhaust from motor vehicles.

It should therefore come as a relief to residents of the Washington, DC region, which suffers from smog pollution, that the federal government has approved an agreement to control harmful smog in the region by no later than 2002. The agreement settles a case brought by Environmental Defense and five other groups that requires clean air plans to protect public health by setting firm deadlines for progress in controlling pollution.

The settlement allows communities to craft solutions first by giving states additional time to correct deficiencies and adopt sound smog control plans. If states fail to create adequate air pollution cleanup plans by deadlines set in the Clean Air Act, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) becomes responsible for creating smog control plans for these areas.

"This settlement is an important public health victory," said Environmental Defense transportation director Michael Replogle. "Now, the states must step up to the plate with real plans to protect our families, our children and our nation's elderly from the dangerous effects of air pollution. State and local governments should help to quickly replace dirty old technologies with new and cleaner ones for transportation, energy, industry, and consumer products, and work to slow sprawl and the growth of dependence on motor vehicles."

For further information, contact Environmental Defense, (212) 505-1219.

NATION'S LARGEST PUBLIC REAL ESTATE ORGANIZATION OPENS LIVABILITY CENTER

The federal government's General Services Administration (GSA) has unveiled the Center for Urban Development and Livability, whose mission is "to leverage GSA's federal real estate actions in ways that bolster community efforts to encourage smart growth, economic vitality, and cultural vibrancy." GSA is the nation's largest public real estate organization, providing over 330 million square feet of space for over 1 million federal workers. Due to its enormous size, its facility citing decisions have a

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significant impact on the surrounding community, for example, where to put the courthouse; what will it look like; will it attract other neighborhood amenities; and will it be accessible by transit. Visit <http://goodneighbor.gsa.gov/goodnb/aboutcenter> for more information.

Editor's Note: One way to combine efforts to reduce smog and enhance Uncle Sam's role in community revitalization would be to eliminate free and heavily subsidized parking for federal employees in the region. Subsidized parking creates traffic and smog by auto commuters who, in the absence of the subsidy, would take carpools or ride transit.

WMATA appears to have no plans for a joint development strategy for lands adjoining the station. WRN indicated that this is a missed opportunity, especially in light of the ongoing North of Massachusetts Avenue ("NoMa") planning process. Civic spaces and small parks at the station and in the surrounding half-mile radius should be incorporated into a broader station area planning effort. WRN recommended that WMATA take advantage of the NoMa planning process to provide guidance for design and placement of public spaces.

Lastly, WRN noted that while the station is likely to be a great benefit to the surrounding low-income community, potentially significant increases in nearby real estate values could cause the displacement of low-income residents. WRN recommended that WMATA and the District coordinate housing policies and provide affordable housing development resources to ensure that the station's influence on the residential area is a positive, stabilizing one, rather than a gentrifying one. WMATA should develop system-wide requirements for affordable housing in its joint development projects.

WRN, community leaders, and businesses remain hopeful that the New York Avenue station can be constructed soon and designed to serve the needs of both residents and businesses. Recent reports indicate, however, that the station may be in jeopardy if a Congressional subcommittee provides only \$3 million

(New York Avenue Metro, Continued from page 1)

isolated pedestrian paths. WRN joined with other groups in pointing out the lack of linkage with the Metropolitan Branch Trail, a major bike route in the area. Current station designs would also create major disruptions for the Greyhound Bus terminal. WRN asked WMATA to conduct an assessment using "crime prevention through environmental design" to ensure that the station fosters an attractive, safe pedestrian environment, day and night.

WRN also underscored the importance of building quality transit-oriented development around the site, creating a mix of jobs, housing, services, and public spaces in a human-scale, walkable environment.

WRN Contribution Form

*** Add \$20/person for Intersect to be faxed long-distance or mailed (to cover costs).

Individual Contribution Categories:

- ___ Low Income \$15
- ___ Basic Individual \$35*
- ___ Supporter \$80* (includes WRN mug, \$7 value)
- ___ Sustainer \$120 (includes WRN mug & a copy of WRN's vision *A New Approach*, \$12 value)

Organizational Contribution Categories:

- ___ Small \$60*
- ___ Basic \$200 (Intersect sent to up to 3 individuals* & recognition in Intersect 2x/year)
- ___ Sustaining \$500
 - Intersect sent to up to 15 individuals by email or local fax*
 - Recognition in Intersect 4x/year
 - Constant recognition on WRN's website with link (starting 2/99; email 200 word description & your web address to debkatz@megsinet.net)

Please attach separate sheet for additional persons:

Salutation: Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss

Name:

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Affiliation(s):

Send WRN updates via:

___ email ___ regular mail

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___ Interested in volunteering. Please contact me.

___ Please keep my name/information confidential.

Please return this form with a check payable to WRN, 1777 Church St, NW, Washington DC, 20036. WRN is a 501 c(3) non-profit organization and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Thank you!

Thurs, July 20, 6:30 – 8 pm - "Setting the Standard for Creating Livable Communities." U.S. Representatives Farr and Blumenauer and Randall Yim, Undersecretary of Defense For Installations, discuss DOD's role in creating livable communities. National Building Museum. Free. 401 F Street, NW, Judiciary Square metro. Info: (202) 272-2448 or visit www.nbm.org.

UPCOMING

Thurs, July 20, 7:30 - 9:30 pm - Columbia Pike Transportation Forum. Discuss transit options for the Columbia Pike corridor as well as current transportation problems and possible short-term improvements. Arlington Career Center, 816 South Walter Reed Drive. Contact: Richard Hartman, Arlington Co. Public Works, (703) 228-4019.

Fri, July 21, 7:30 pm - Fairfax Coalition For Smarter Growth Summer Celebration to honor volunteers and recent news of VDOT's agreement to do a full environmental impact statement (EIS) on the Beltway. Citizens had advocated strongly for an EIS rather than a much more limited study of the environmental effects of widening the Beltway. Bring an hors d'oeuvres or dessert to share. 8929 Colesbury Pl, Fairfax. RSVP: Paul Hughes, (703) 280-1719, pshughes@starpower.com

Mon, July 24, 6:30 pm - Anacostia Indicators Project Task Force meeting to gather citizen input on "what to look for to see if our waterways are healthy." Anacostia Indicators is a project of the Washington Council of Governments, the Summit Fund and various watershed organizations. Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland. Contact: Kate Spencer, (301) 513-5747 or lizard@katespencer.com.

Tues, July 25, 12:30 - 2 pm - Potomac Yard: Model of Smart Growth. Lee Quill, principal with Cunningham + Quill Architects PLLC, will present the master plan for Potomac Yard in Alexandria, Virginia, which will be implemented over the next two decades. The plan's orthogonal grid, which connects to the adjacent streetscapes of surrounding neighborhoods, will create a pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented environment of streets, parks, and mixed-use development. 401 F Street, NW, Judiciary Square metro. Info: (202) 272-2448 or visit www.nbm.org.

Tues, July 25 6:30 pm – Lecture and Walk DC Benefit - National Building Museum. Management and real estate consultant J.H. Crawford will speak on his new book, Carfree Cities, and discuss how removing cars and trucks from cities can improve mobility, enhance community life, save energy, and reduce transportation costs. A benefit reception will follow in the Museum's Great Hall for Walk DC, newly formed to promote walking and improve pedestrian environments in the Washington D.C. region. Activities of the new group will include walkability evaluations, promoting traffic calming projects, and working to ensure all children can walk to school safe from auto traffic. Registration/fee (\$8 members, \$12 non-members) required for lecture. 401 F Street, NW, Judiciary Square metro. Call (202) 272-2448 or visit www.nbm.org.

Wed, July 26, 10 am - Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board will hear local input on transportation funding priorities for the next six years. Sign-up at the door. Elected officials 10-12, citizens, 1 pm - (5 min. limit each). Fairfax City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax VA (just north of George Mason University between Rte 123 and University Drive). Contact: Joan Morris, VDOT Public Affairs, (703) 383-2477.

Wed, July 26, 6 pm – MD Office of Planning hearing on developing models and guidelines to implement smart code and infill legislation approved this past spring, in particular suggestions on workable solutions and incentives for infill, redevelopment, and compact mixed-use. Kirk Stieff Building, 800 Wyman Park Drive, Baltimore. Contact: Steven Allen, (410) 767-4611 or visit www.op.state.md.us.

Wed, July 26, 6:30 pm - Anacostia Riverwalk and Trail Planning meeting. Learn about the Riverwalk planning process and schedule. Identify important neighborhood concerns about open space. Share your ideas for increased access to the river. Get updated on the overall Anacostia Waterfront Initiative. Earth Conservation Corps Center, 1st St. & Potomac, SE, Navy Yard Station-Green Line. Contact: DC Office of Planning (202) 442-8965.

July 25, 26, and 27 – Dulles Corridor Rail Public Meetings on scope of the environmental impact statement. Suggested topics for public comment are possible transit technology alternatives and locations of fixed guideways, stations, and ancillary facilities. Contact: Leonard Alfredson, Project Manager, WMATA, (888) 566-7245, email dullescorridor@aol.com.

Tues, Aug. 1, 6:30 pm – Balancing Historic Preservation and New Construction. National Building Museum, \$8 members, \$12 non-members. Registration required. 401 F Street, NW, Judiciary Square metro. Call (202) 272-2448.