

The Residential Wayne Avenue Working Group for Purple Line Design

The residential stretch of Wayne Avenue deserves special attention in this critical stage of Purple Line planning since Wayne Avenue is a gateway to downtown Silver Spring, the gateway to miles of neighborhoods and a cherished residential area in its own right. This is the only place on the Purple Line where trains will travel close to front doors of homes in a long-established neighborhood while sharing lanes with cars on a county road.

The Residential Wayne Avenue Working Group for Purple Line Design was formed to bring co-ordinated focus to the unique situation that Wayne Avenue presents to Purple Line designers. The Working Group represents four adjacent civic associations whose boundaries run along Wayne Avenue: Park Hills Civic Association, Seven Oaks-Evanswood Citizens Association, East Silver Civic Association and Sligo Branview Community Association. The overall goal of the Working Group is to help ensure that the Purple Line will serve as a showcase for future light rail projects in sensitive and established residential neighborhoods, thus the efforts of the Residential Wayne Avenue Working Group are directed at the following core issue areas:

1. **“Visual Impact” on Wayne**

Objective: Discuss what special considerations MTA has made for the moderate-to-severe “visual impact” of the Purple Line on Wayne Avenues. Examine what models MTA use as a guide for similar situations where Light Rail is introduced to a sensitive residential area.

2. **Traction Power Sub Station Relocation**

Objective: Present formal community objections to location as planned by MTA of Traction Power Sub Station amid front yards on Wayne Avenue. Receive MTA data on alternatives it would look into including burying it and/or relocating it. Make clear action plan and timetable for follow up.

3. **Proposed Dale Drive Station**

Objective: Identify the process and timeline MTA is using to determine when and whether a Dale Drive station will be built. Identify the process MTA is using to solicit community input about community desire for a station. Discuss how the community can provide input to MTA. Discuss the potential impact a Dale Dr. station might have on the community, e.g. property values, potential for upzoning, parking & noise impacts, crime. Take protective measures to retain residential character of the area around the proposed Dale station.

4. **Paved Silver Spring “Green Trail”**

Objective: Establish partnership with the County’s Parks & Planning Department to explore alternate design considerations for the county’s “Green Trail” so as to minimize negative impacts along Wayne Avenue, particularly with regard to associated road widening and loss of tree canopy. Advocate for early action on replacement of loss to mature tree canopy.

5. **Pedestrian & Traffic Safety Challenges**

Objective: Establish close working relationship with the County’s Department of Transportation to address the unique design challenges of planning for (1) car & bus traffic sharing road space with a light rail, and (2) extra measures to ensure that pedestrians crossing and interacting with

Wayne Avenue do not come into contact with a large train, particularly where the Purple Line runs alongside the combined campus of two public schools.

6. Parity Issues in Purple Line Investment

Objective: Ascertain support from elected representatives and financial commitments at the county and state level to address the unique needs of the communities along the Wayne Avenue corridor and ensure that local impacts specific to Silver Spring are being treated with the same consideration as in other Purple Line communities.

7. Public-Private Partnership Concerns

Objective: Identify costs/benefits of public-private partnerships in other transit systems to determine the degree to which this arrangement benefits the tax-paying public. Share lessons learned from prior P3 experiences in mass transit, particularly with communities directly impacted by the Purple Line. Advocate strongly for community representatives, along with elected officials, to be part of the negotiation process, should the State elect to enter into a public-private partnership. Urge the County and State to mandate that (1) private contractors need to guarantee their work backed by significant punitive fines to minimize the threat of poor product, performance, and maintenance and (2) contracts with private firms need to ensure viable path of recourse for the State in the event of failed outcomes.

The Purple Line FEIS & Park Hills/Wayne Avenue

MTA's Final Environmental Impact Statement identifies the following issues of concern that are specific to the Park Hills community:

[Chapter 2.0 Alternatives Considered]

With respect to **Montgomery County's Recommendations on Alternatives Considered in the AA/DEIS** (Alternatives Analysis/Draft Environmental Impact Statement), the FEIS says the following:

"The Montgomery County Planning Board held public hearings on the project in January 2009 and recommended the adoption of the Medium Investment LRT Alternative with several modifications, by a vote of 5 to 1. The Montgomery County Council voted unanimously to concur with their recommendation. Subsequently, the County Council and the County Executive issued a joint letter on February 2, 2009, endorsing the Medium Investment LRT Alternative with the inclusion of the Capital Crescent Trail through the underpass. The joint letter also recommended postponing the construction of the Dale Drive station with the recommendation that the project be designed so the station easily could be added in the future. Light rail was identified as the "more viable long-term option" because of its consistency with the Georgetown Branch Master Plan, its higher projected ridership, its shorter travel times, and because the County Council believed it would better support transit-oriented development (TOD). On January 27, 2009 the Montgomery County Council asked MTA to conduct additional analysis of the feasibility of the 3 specific proposals prior to the selection of the LPA by the Governor, including a **longer tunnel under Wayne Avenue from the SS Transit Center to Mansfield Road**. These studies were completed, presented to the County Council, and made available to the public on the website (see *Supporting Documentation on Alternatives Development* (2013))." With respect to the longer tunnel under Wayne Avenue in downtown Silver Spring, the FEIS states, "The longer tunnel under Wayne Avenue was not carried forward due to cost, and community and environmental impacts."

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the *Supporting Documentation on Alternatives Development* technical report points out that “The tunnel to Mansfield Road would provide a travel time shorter than the Low, Medium, and High Investment LRT.”

Of Note: With regard to the **proposed Dale Drive station**, the FEIS states the following:

“The LPA [Locally-Preferred Alternative] included a commitment to further study of a Dale Drive station at the request of Montgomery County. Based on further study and community input, MTA has decided to include the Dale Drive station in the Preferred Alternative primarily to provide improved transit access for the East Silver Spring communities. Without the station, the communities would lack convenient access to the Purple Line. Therefore, the FEIS includes analysis of the benefits and impacts of the Dale Drive station. MTA continues to assess community input regarding the timing of building the Dale Drive station. The design provides the space for the station platform. If construction of this station is deferred, the initial construction would include right-of-way acquisition, track layout and subsurface infrastructure to accommodate the station; the elements that would be deferred are the station platform, canopy and fare equipment.” The FEIS goes on to state that “the Preferred Alternative would have a station in the center of Wayne Avenue east of Dale Drive.”

Of Note: With regard to “**The Preferred Alternative**” that term, when used in the FEIS refers to “MTA’s current proposal, which is a refined version of the Locally-Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative is a 16.2-mile east-west LRT line that would extend from the Bethesda Metro station in Montgomery County to the New Carrollton Metro station in Prince George’s County. The Preferred Alternative would be at grade except for one short tunnel section and three sections elevated on structures. *The Preferred Alternative would operate mainly in dedicated or exclusive lanes, providing fast, reliable transit operations*” – **except in Silver Spring along the Wayne Avenue corridor where car & bus traffic will share road space with a light-rail train that runs alongside the combined campus of two public schools.**

Of Note: With regard to the **Capital Crescent Trail / Paved Green Trail in Silver Spring**, the FEIS states that, in the course of crossing the CSX train tracks, “The trail would then parallel the CSX corridor, passing under the Talbot Avenue, 16th Street, and Spring Street bridges, continuing directly into the Silver Spring Transit Center over Colesville Road on an *aerial structure that would be below the level of the transitway, but above the top level of the Silver Spring Transit Center.*”

Question for MTA: Given the height of the Trail where it crosses the SS Transit Center over Colesville Road – i.e., “above the top level of the Silver Spring Transit Center” – could this particular portion of the Trail be a potential safety concern?

[Chapter 3.0 Transportation Effects]

Impact/Mitigation: With respect to **road widening for additional left-turn lanes** at signalized intersections along Wayne Avenue, the FEIS says the following – “There are three segments of the Preferred Alternative that operate in mixed-use lanes: Wayne Avenue, Paint Branch Parkway, and Ellin Road. On Wayne Avenue traffic analysis showed that the addition of left turn lanes at the signalized intersections (proposed as part of the Preferred Alternative) would actually improve traffic operations in 2040.”

Impact/Mitigation: To mitigate the impacts of “**future traffic and Purple Line operations,**” new signals are proposed for the following unsignalized intersections, including (1) Wayne Avenue at Manchester Road and (2) Wayne Avenue at Plymouth Tunnel

Impact/Mitigation: With respect to **pedestrian and bicyclist safety issues,** “The Preferred Alternative Includes the following location-specific changes to bicycle and pedestrian facilities: New signalized pedestrian crosswalks across, among other streets, Wayne Avenue.”

Impact: With regard to the issue of **parking issues along Wayne Avenue,** “Wayne is a four-lane roadway with on-street parking during off-peak hours. Parking on the north (i.e., school) side is restricted during the morning peak period, Monday through Friday and the south side is restricted during the evening peak period, Monday through Friday. 61 parking spaces along Wayne Avenue would be temporarily unavailable during construction on Wayne Avenue. The other 8 spaces are scattered throughout the corridor and would thus have a minimal impact on parking availability.”

[Chapter 4.0 Environmental Resources, Impacts, and Mitigations]

Impact: “An **extensive change to visual character** constituting a high visual effect would occur along the Georgetown Branch right-of-way, **along Wayne Avenue,** and as a result of the aerial structure and Riverdale Park Station across the intersection of Kenilworth Avenue and Riverdale Road.”

Response: “(1) MTA will continue to coordinate and consult with affected communities regarding the aesthetic treatments of the transitway elements; (2) MTA will require that the construction contractor utilize best management practices to maintain an orderly appearance of active work zones and staging areas; (3) MTA will use the state-funded Art-In-Transit program to enhance key elements of the project as appropriate; (4) MTA will build traction power substations with landscaping or appropriate architectural treatments to be compatible with adjacent land uses in areas of moderate or high visual sensitivity.” (*repeated in Executive Summary)

Impact: “**Relocate Sligo Creek north of Wayne Avenue.**”

Response: “(1) MTA will restore Sligo Creek approximately 180 feet upstream and 180 feet downstream of the project bridge to provide long-term benefits and enhance its inherent characteristics; (2) MTA will submit project plans to MDNR for evaluation in compliance with the Maryland Scenic and Wild Rivers Act to assure that the project will not jeopardize the scenic value of the designated rivers; (3) MTA will perform hydraulic and hydrologic studies. If these studies find that flood elevation would change, floodplain storage mitigation will be implemented, if required; (4) MTA will submit project plans to MDE for approval of structural evaluations, fill volumes, proposed grading elevations, structural flood-proofing, and flood protection measures in compliance with FEMA requirements, USDOT Order 5650.2 ‘Floodplain Management and Protection,’ and Executive Order 11988.” (*repeated in Executive Summary)

Impact: **Traction Power Substation** proposed for “Wayne Avenue just past Cloverfield Road” with adjacent land use being “Single-family residential units and Springvale Terrace Retirement Community.”

Response: FEIS says that “the Preferred Alternative would introduce several other ancillary elements to the study area, including signal bungalows, catenary poles and wires, and traction power substations. The latter must be spaced at approximately one-mile intervals along the transitway. Because these facilities are small and located generally along existing transportation rights-of-way, it is not expected that surrounding land uses would be affected.” Acknowledging the unique situation around the location

of a TPSS on a prominent and valued piece of green space alongside Wayne Avenue, an MTA representative sent the following message to the Residential Wayne Avenue Working Group: “Outcomes related to TPSS placement in your area are not contingent upon the FEIS public comment period. The comment period is designed to identify and acknowledge potential impacts. Determining how we decide to address the impacts often extends beyond the comment period. We will absolutely continue to work with you, your neighbors and other stakeholders on TPSS-related concerns after the FEIS comment period ends.”

Impact: With respect to **zoning and land use impacts**, the FEIS says the following:

Response: “MTA will continue to meet with M-NCPPC, planning departments, and developers to facilitate effective incorporation of the Preferred Alternative into corridor communities and to avoid or minimize negative land use effects.”

Impact: With respect to **pedestrian safety along Wayne Avenue**, the FEIS says the following:

Response: “Light rail is typically compatible with pedestrian environments and likely would not have an adverse impact on neighborhood quality or community cohesion. The Preferred Alternative would not result in a major change in community cohesion or neighborhood quality, as it would operate in or adjacent to existing roadways along most of its alignment. The major arterials in the corridor, such as University Boulevard or Veterans Parkway, currently constrain pedestrians to formal crossing points at intersections. The addition of the Preferred Alternative in or adjacent to these roadways and others of similar scale would not change this condition. On smaller roadways, such as Wayne Avenue, the Preferred Alternative would function as an additional type of vehicle in the existing roadway. As today, pedestrians would cross at pedestrian crosswalks.”

[Chapter 6.0 Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation]

Impact: With respect to **Sligo Stream Valley Park / Sligo Creek National Recreation Trail and “De Minimis Use of Section 4(f) Property”**, the FEIS says, “Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park is 543 acres in size, consists of seven different units, and encompasses the Sligo Creek floodplain. Units 1 and 2 of the park are within the project study area. Unit 1 is 36.7 acres in size and extends from Chaney Drive northwest to Piney Branch Road in Takoma Park. Unit 2 is 39.4 acres in size and extends from Piney Branch Road northwest to MD 29 in Four Corners. It includes Sligo Cabin Neighborhood Park, which is located directly north of Dale Drive. Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park was acquired in 1932 and is one of the oldest parks owned and maintained by M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks. This park includes playgrounds, softball fields, tennis courts, a picnic area, natural areas, and the Sligo Creek National Recreational Trails. Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail is a paved shared use trail that follows the Sligo Creek floodplain through Prince George’s and Montgomery Counties. The trail is approximately 10 miles long and is one of the oldest in Montgomery County. The trail is connected to a countywide trail system. The trail is the most heavily used facility within Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park system. Within the project area, the trail parallels the north side of Wayne Avenue for approximately 200 feet before crossing over Wayne to continue southbound between Sligo Creek and the Parkway.”

Of Note: “Use of Section 4(f) Property — De Minimis Use: The Preferred Alternative would share the two center lanes of Wayne Avenue where the roadway crosses Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park.”

Mitigation: “MTA would **replace the existing Wayne Avenue bridge with a wider, single span structure to accommodate the transitway**. As part of the Purple Line project and in coordination with the MNCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks and NCPC, **MTA would make stream channel and floodplain improvements in the immediate vicinity of the bridge to alleviate the existing tendency for**

flooding and overtopping the roadway at the crossing.” Additionally, the FEIS states that “Specifically, the Sligo Creek stream channel would be realigned to provide a more perpendicular crossing at the roadway. This change, in conjunction with removing the existing, skewed bridge pier, would eliminate existing constrictions to creek water flow. As part of this work, a portion of an existing drainage pipe currently conveying stormwater from Wayne Avenue in the vicinity of Silver Spring International Middle School to Sligo Creek would be replaced with a new, larger pipe to increase drainage capacity in the immediate area. The floodplain in the bridge area would be re-graded to improve its ability to manage flood water volume, stabilize slopes, and install permanent vegetation. MTA would permanently use 0.25 acre of park property to implement these project-related elements. The Preferred Alternative would not use or affect other developed recreational facilities associated with the park or affect the retaining walls along Sligo Creek Parkway. No use of the Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail would occur. MTA is coordinating with the M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks to develop plans that minimize harm to the park and trail. The decision to operate the transitway in mixed-traffic lanes on Wayne Avenue was done to minimize impacts to the community, including the use of park property. Further, as part of the project, MTA will address pre-existing drainage issues associated with Sligo Creek. MTA has also committed a number of other strategies to minimize park impacts. These include constructing retaining walls to limit the land area required for grading and vegetation removal, selective tree clearing to minimize tree loss, and stream bank stabilization. While MTA intends to minimize tree removal during construction and implement selective clearing techniques, trees within the proposed work area would be impacted. Trees will be planted within Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, where practical, to mitigate tree loss that occurs as a result of the proposed project. Upon completion of the Purple Line, approximately 0.03 acre of property currently owned by Montgomery County Department of Public Works will be conveyed to M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks for inclusion in the park. The property to be conveyed to M-NCPPC-Montgomery County Department of Parks is located directly south of Wayne Avenue within the existing roadway right-of-way and is currently used for transportation purposes; it is not Section 4(f)-protected property.”

Impact/Mitigation: With respect to **Sligo Creek Parkway impacts**, the FEIS says the following: “Section 4(f) Property Description - Sligo Creek Parkway, located within Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park - is approximately five miles long with an average right-of-way width of 30 feet. The roadway commences at University Boulevard near Silver Spring in the north and winds southeastward to New Hampshire Avenue in Takoma Park. The parkway was a project conceived by planning officials and developers to complement the boom in the construction of the Washington DC suburbs during 1929. With regard to Use of Section 4(f) Property—De minimis Use - the Preferred Alternative would be located on Wayne Avenue across Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, crossing the Sligo Creek Parkway at grade at the Wayne Avenue intersection. The Preferred Alternative elements in the parkway vicinity include the transitway and overhead contact system. The current setting of the parkway/Wayne Avenue intersection includes the two roadways and the park, consisting of mature trees, shrubs and the creek. The bridge carrying Wayne Avenue over Sligo Creek, upon which the transitway would run, was reconstructed in 2004 and is not a contributing element to the parkway. The Wayne Avenue bridge in this location would be widened to accommodate the transitway. As part of the construction of the new Wayne Avenue bridge, the stream would be realigned for a short distance. FTA is coordinating with MHT and other consulting parties to complete Section 106 consultation; FTA is proposing a no adverse effect determination regarding the Sligo Creek Parkway. In addition, FTA, MTA and the MHT are preparing a Section 106 Programmatic Agreement that outlines commitments and mitigation concerning the Sligo Creek Parkway. MTA will implement the project in accordance with the signed Section 106 Programmatic Agreement. In terms of Section 4(f), MTA would permanently use 0.24 acre and

temporarily use 1.91 acres of the Sligo Creek Parkway. A Section 106 no adverse effect finding would automatically yield a de minimis use determination under Section 4(f). The proposed permanent and temporary uses by the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect the features, attributes or activities — historic parkway — that qualify the Sligo Creek Parkway for Section 4(f) protection.

Impact: With respect to **light rail track infrastructure**, the FEIS says, “Embedded track would be used where the Purple Line operates in mixed-use lanes on Wayne Avenue and Paint Branch Parkway and where vehicles would cross or drive on the tracks. Embedded track is track structure that is completely covered, except for the top of the rails, with pavement. Embedded track can typically be found where light rail transit routes are constructed within public streets, pedestrian or transit malls, or any area where rubber-tired vehicles must operate.”

Of Note: “The [Paved] **Green Trail** along Wayne Avenue is not part of the Purple Line and also would be funded separately by Montgomery County, but likely would be built with the Purple Line.”

Of Note: With respect to **connecting transit services** at the proposed Dale Drive station, the FEIS lists 3 bus lines: Ride On 3, 12 & 19.

[Chapter 7.0 Indirect and Cumulative Effects]

Impact: With respect to the **proposed Dale station and the potential for changes in zoning**, the FEIS says, “The East Silver Spring Master Plan (M-NCPPC 2000) does not call for changes in the existing development character or uses in the Dale Drive station area. The community surrounding the station is largely a residential neighborhood zoned for single-family residences with a school campus. Indirect effects are anticipated in the Dale Drive station area. As the neighborhood is fully-developed and stable, no additional development would be anticipated under either the Preferred Alternative or the No Build Alternative.” Elsewhere the FEIS says, “In station areas where no changes are foreseen in existing land use and zoning, such as Dale Drive & Manchester Place, or where future redevelopment has been planned independent of the Purple Line, stations would not be expected to induce changes in development patterns.”

Of Note: With respect to “present and reasonably foreseeable future projects within the indirect and cumulative effects study area” in and around the Dale Drive area, “Old Blair Auditorium” is listed as a “renovation” project.

[Appendix I Section 4(f) Evaluation Materials]

Of Note: With respect to **impacts on Sligo Creek Valley Stream Park**, the FEIS adds the following, “The proposed project is aligned through the median of Wayne Avenue in the vicinity of Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park. In addition, the proposed Green Trail would be constructed from Silver Spring to Sligo Creek Parkway in this area, abutting Wayne Avenue to the north. Anticipated impacts to Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park were discussed with M-NCPPC. As currently designed, the proposed project would result in 0.25 acre of permanent impacts, as well as 1.48 acre of temporary impacts. In addition, a 0.03 acre sliver of land currently owned by Montgomery County that abuts Wayne Avenue to the south would be conveyed to M-NCPPC for use as park. Not only will the bridge on Wayne Avenue need to be reconstructed to accommodate the transit way, it would be moved slightly to the west to

accommodate the realignment of Sligo Creek. **Flooding is an issue within the proposed project area at this location. Realigning the existing stream would be beneficial to the park and the surrounding area, as it would alleviate these flooding issues.** Full access to the park and facilities would be maintained at all times during construction. No park facilities would be affected by the proposed project. Tree loss is proposed in the vicinity of the proposed project as a result of roadway widening, bridge reconstruction, and stream realignment. Mapping was presented at the meeting to illustrate proposed tree removal. Tree removal was determined as a combined result of aerial photography, engineering, and site reconnaissance to determine where trees currently exist that would need to be removed. It was determined during the meeting that WSSC is completing a lot of work within Sligo Creek. M-NCPPC will attempt to provide mapping of the stream upgrades. The proposed access road located to the south of Wayne Avenue is currently a utility easement. This area was also used as an access road for WSSC to complete work in January 2012. Tree removal to the south of Wayne Avenue could potentially be further minimized. To the north of Wayne Avenue, parking within the park would be reconfigured and replaced as a result of the proposed project. There were concerns about potential impacts to Sligo Creek Parkway as a result of the roadway tie-ins. This had already been considered by the team, and the proposed tie-ins are relatively short. M-NCPPC will have an internal meeting to discuss the proposed project and anticipated impacts. There will be further discussions between M-NCPPC and the Purple Line Team to discuss a potential de minimis impact finding. [For documentation purposes, "Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park" includes Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park, Sligo Cabin Neighborhood Park, and Sligo Creek National Recreational Trail. The Purple Line Team verified that this would be acceptable to M-NCPPC. The park is 543 acres in size, consists of seven different units, and encompasses the Sligo Creek floodplain.]

[Technical Report: Section 106 Assessment of Effects for Historic Properties]

Of Note: With regard to **Sligo Creek Parkway as an "historic property,"** the FEIS makes the following assessment, "Sligo Creek Parkway encompasses a long, linear area along both the parkway itself and the surrounding viewshed. As recorded in 2000, the 5-mile long, 300-foot wide property runs from University Boulevard in Silver Spring on the north to its confluence with Northwest Branch on the south. Designed in the 1920s, the parkway included a two-lane road and access to several recreational sites planned along the meandering road, including a golf course, playgrounds, pedestrian paths, and Sligo Creek. Sligo Creek winds through the historic property boundary. Trails and bridges cross the creek at several spots. Although the general area surrounding the parkway has been developed over the past century, the original recreational components — as well as a host of bridges, culverts, roads, and paths that help usher visitors throughout the park — are still intact. Due to its connection with the 1920s/1930s government initiatives to craft public landscapes, the parkway was determined to be eligible under Criterion A. The many contributing resources that remain within the parkway boundary have good integrity, and the property is eligible under Criterion C. The Area of Potential Effects (APE) intersects only 2.5 acres of this 450-acre historic property, while the Preferred Alternative Limits of Disturbance (LOD) covers less than 0.5 acres. As aforementioned, the Preferred Alternative would be built down the center of Wayne Avenue, an existing transportation corridor with extensive modern intrusions in this area. Sligo Creek Parkway intersects Wayne Avenue, with approximately half of the acreage north of the corridor and half to the south. Current plans include adding catenary wires along Wayne Avenue, but no additional above-ground elements, such as stations or traction power substations, would be visible from the parkway. While addition of the wires may alter the parkway's setting and feeling, the minor change would not diminish the character-defining features of this historic

property. The Preferred Alternative would not diminish the integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association. As such, **the project would have No Adverse Effect on this property.**

Of Note: With regard to **the former Montgomery Blair High School (on Wayne Avenue) as an historic property**, the FEIS makes the following assessment, “Montgomery Blair High School, located at 313 Wayne Avenue, is east of downtown Silver Spring on the north side of the roadway. The original portion of the school was built in 1934 and designed by Washington, DC architect Howard Wright Cutler. Using the tenets of the popular Colonial Revival style, Cutler modeled the high school after the Wren Building at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The two-and-a-half story, twenty-nine-bay building exhibits brick-clad walls, a hipped roof, a projecting pediment, and a central cupola. Several large additions were appended to the rear (north) elevation of the school, one in 1951 and another in the 2000s, and all windows and doors were replaced in 1984. Despite these modifications, the school is eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C as a good example of an academic building embodying the Colonial Revival style. Based on clarification from the MHT on May 17, 2012, the NRHP boundary for this historic property encompasses only the footprint of the original building. The surrounding additions, landscape modifications, and parking areas are not included. The Preferred Alternative would run down the center of Wayne Avenue in this area. The surrounding viewshed of the school has already been modified by the noncontributing elements on the school grounds (notably the additions and parking lots). Although a set of catenary wires would be added along the alignment, the transportation corridor currently includes modern buildings, and a swath of land is extant between the building and the project area. As such, this project would not diminish the integrity of the characteristics that render the original school building eligible for the NRHP. Its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association will not be altered. **The project would have No Adverse Effect on this historic property.**

[Technical Report: Social Effects and Land Use Planning]

Of Note: With regard to **relocation of Sligo Creek north of Wayne Avenue**, the report states, “Sligo Creek, which has been channelized as it flows through a highly developed road network, would be restored 180 feet upstream and 180 feet downstream of Wayne Avenue to provide long-term benefits by improving access to its floodplain, decreasing sediment loads, and reestablishing natural flow patterns.

Impact/Mitigation: With regard to **impacts on the property of Silver Spring International Middle School**, the report states, “Partial acquisition of property for widening of Wayne Avenue; driveway would be shifted approximately 400 feet east to accommodate future station; the parking lot would be reconfigured.”

Impacts/Mitigations: With respect to **avoidance and minimization of negative impacts relative to the community’s concerns**, the report states that “MTA worked throughout the alternatives development process to address community concerns by refining the Wayne Avenue surface alignment to include key design elements. Under the Preferred Alternative, the transitway would share the center lanes with vehicular traffic, which would allow on-street parking to continue during off-peak periods in most areas. In addition, by adding left turn lanes at key intersections, overall traffic operations would improve along the corridor, even with the addition of the Purple Line. Further, allowing the light rail vehicles to share the center lanes with vehicular traffic minimizes the taking of private property, with most of the acquisitions being near the intersections due to the addition of turn lanes. The Preferred Alternative incorporates measures to minimize the impacts on neighborhoods, including the shifting and design of

the alignment to reduce property and community impacts. Enhanced pedestrian crosswalks, particularly where Purple Line stations are in or on the sides of busy arterial roadways, have been designed to improve pedestrian safety both for Purple Line passengers and for all pedestrians who use them.

Of Note: With regard to **current zoning and land use in the Dale Drive area**, the report states, “The Dale Drive station is planned for future construction on Wayne Avenue at Dale Drive. Single-family residences make up the majority of the surrounding land uses. There are also a number of schools including the adjacent Sligo Creek Elementary School and Silver Spring International Middle School, as well as East Silver Spring Elementary School. Eritters Market, a super market with a 12-space parking lot, is located nearby to the north of Schuyler Road. Zoning designations surrounding the proposed Dale Drive station area is almost completely single-family detached housing with a minimum lot area of 6,000 square feet for each dwelling (R-60). There is a small sliver of convenience commercial zoning (C-1) where Eritters Market is located.

Impact: With regard to the **potential zoning impacts of the proposed Dale Drive station**, the report states, “The Dale Drive station would eventually be constructed in the median of Wayne Avenue. Although **the proposed station** would not require any direct land use or zoning changes, it **would add a new** transportation element to the residential/educational land uses and **residential zoning designations on either side of Wayne Avenue.**

Impact: With regard to **limited driveway access/traffic diversion on Wayne Avenue**, the report asserts the following within the context of Neighborhood Quality and Community Cohesion: “Along some roadways, **access from private driveways or unsignalized side-street intersections would be limited to right-in/right-out only, such as along Wayne Avenue** and Piney Branch Road. In these locations, U-turns would be provided at nearby signalized intersections. While this would have an effect on existing traffic patterns, it would not have an effect on community cohesion or quality.”

[Technical Report: Traffic Analysis]

Impact: With respect to **impacts of mixed-used (train/car/bus) traffic on Wayne Avenue**, the report states that with “Mixed-Use Traffic Lanes, train vehicles would operate similarly to other vehicular traffic in the same traffic lanes, subject to the same queuing and intersection delays as all other traffic. However, since the Purple Line purpose is to provide faster, more reliable transit service in the study area, the **MTA is considering geometric changes to lane configurations at some heavily congested intersections to reduce delay and enable priority movements by the LRT vehicles.** An example of an enabling change is the provision of a queue jump phase, allowing trains to bypass a queue of roadway vehicles to clear the intersection in advance of an upcoming red signal phase. The MTA proposes queue jump phases at three intersections, including westbound Wayne Avenue at Dale Drive.

Impact: With respect to the issue of **new traffic signals along Wayne Avenue**, the report states that “New signals are proposed to be added to 18 intersections that are not currently signalized. The new proposed signalized intersections include Wayne Avenue at Manchester Road & Wayne Avenue at Plymouth Tunnel.”

Impact: With respect to **traffic diversion on Wayne Avenue at Whole Foods**, the reports states that westbound traffic on Wayne Avenue wanting to turn left into the Whole Foods parking lot will instead

be diverted to Cedar Street, where drivers will utilize the new dedicated left-turn lane – “right in, right out” policy once the Purple Line is built.

[Technical Report: Supporting Documentation for Alternatives Development]

Impact: With regard to **limited driveway access/traffic diversion on Wayne Avenue**, the report states that “access to residences and business along the entire length of Wayne Avenue will be impacted to varying degrees under both a surface and tunnel alignment. As the project progresses, MTA will continue to address a number of access issues which have been identified for the Wayne Avenue alignment. Several issues have already been addressed under a surface alignment. MTA has modified its original concept, which did not include an eastbound left-turn lane into the Whole Foods parking lot, to include a left-turn lane. This left-turn lane will allow through traffic, including the light rail, to travel unimpeded by traffic attempting to turn left into the Whole Foods parking lot. This modification was in response to community concerns and a meeting with the property manager of the facility. It should be noted that this modification did result in increased right-of-way needs in the area. MTA will also continue to work with Montgomery County to address access issues at both the Wayne Avenue Garage and Sligo Creek Elementary School. MTA and the County do not believe that either of these issues are fatal flaws to a surface route alignment. Under the tunnel option to Mansfield Road, the additional area needed for the tunnel portal would also result in changes of access for some of the driveways of the houses along the south side of Wayne Avenue. Access to and from the driveways of the three houses immediately east of Mansfield Road would be limited to a right-in/right-out only. This restricted access to homes would be considered a substantial adverse impact to these residential properties.”

Of Note: With regard to the **proposed tunnels underneath downtown Silver Spring**, the report states (within the context of a proposed tunnel option under Sligo Avenue, a route that was considered early then dropped), “Tunnel segments of shorter lengths and less cost could be used more effectively on the Wayne Avenue or Silver Spring/Thayer alignments. The report later adds a more detailed account of their decision making on two tunnel options below downtown Silver Spring that would connect to Wayne Avenue, “Communities members concerned about the impacts of a tunnel portal on Wayne Avenue near Dale Drive requested that the MTA evaluate a longer tunnel. Two tunnels were considered, both alignments descending into tunnel from Silver Spring Avenue west of Georgia Avenue. The first tunnel considered would have passed under Sligo Creek. However, because of the depth required to tunnel under the creek, and the rapidly rising topography east of the creek, this tunnel would not have been able to return to the surface until the alignment was on Piney Branch Road, at Barron Street. This would have been extremely expensive and would not have provided meaningful travel time benefits, therefore would have had substantial negative impacts to the cost-effectiveness of the project. The cost of underground stations is likewise very high, further escalating the cost of this option. For this reason this option was dropped. A second, shorter tunnel with a portal on Wayne Avenue between Sligo Creek and Mansfield Street was evaluated in an effort to find a more financially feasible option. This option, while less costly, would have had major adverse impacts to the residences on the south side of Wayne Avenue. These houses are above the grade of the roadway, with short steep driveways. The street widening required for a tunnel portal would have required property acquisitions from the front yards and driveways of these houses, and retaining walls in these yards. This option also required property from Sligo Creek Park. This tunnel did not provide any travel time benefits, and added to the project cost. For both tunnel options the addition of stations was an issue. The high cost of underground stations weighed against their inclusion, but if stations were not included in these alignments the communities would not benefit from the project, and ridership would be lower.

It was determined that these tunnels did not provide sufficient benefit and had such a detrimental effect on the cost of the project that further study was not justified.

Of Note: Here is the blow-by-blow sequence of a “medium-investment” light rail train as it travels from the Silver Spring Transit Center to Long Branch:

“From the Silver Spring Transit Center the Medium Investment LRT Alternative would turn onto Bonifant Street where it would operate at grade in dedicated transit lanes on the north side of Bonifant Street. Under this alternative, Bonifant Street, between Ramsey Street and Fenton Street, would be converted from two-way operation to one-way operation (either eastbound or westbound). On-street parking would remain along the south curb. The very low volume of westbound or eastbound traffic currently using Bonifant Street between Fenton Street and Georgia Avenue would be diverted to Thayer Avenue, one block to the south. Some minor widening of Bonifant Street is expected between Ramsey Street and Georgia Avenue, where these alternatives would cross at grade using the existing traffic signal. The slight modification would accommodate the conversion of Bonifant Street to one-way operation. Approaching Fenton Street, these alternatives would turn left and tie into the existing signalized intersection of Fenton Street and Wayne Avenue as a new approach. The traffic signal would be modified to incorporate a new signal phase to accommodate transit movements. This alternative would then continue east, passing through Cedar Street on Wayne Avenue. Wayne Avenue would be widened by one lane between Cedar Street and Fenton Street to accommodate an exclusive westbound left-turn lane for transit vehicles at Fenton Street and a new eastbound left-turn bay for automobile traffic at Cedar Street. The LRT would function as a streetcar east of Cedar Street; the tracks would be constructed in the existing inside travel lane in each direction along Wayne Avenue; two travel lanes would be maintained in each direction: the outside travel lanes would carry regular traffic and the inside travel lanes would carry mixed traffic (LRT and autos). At the existing signalized intersection at Dale Drive, a new left-turn lane for automobile traffic would be provided in the eastbound and westbound directions. If a station is provided to the east of Dale Drive, then a westbound left-turn lane would not be provided due to engineering constraints. Instead, a dedicated pedestrian pathway would be constructed in the median to allow pedestrians to safely access the station using the signalized crossings at Dale Drive. For the Medium LRT Alternative, new eastbound and westbound left turn lanes would be provided at Sligo Creek Parkway. East of Sligo Creek Parkway, Wayne Avenue would be widened by two lanes to provide two dedicated transit lanes in the median. At a point approximately 900 feet east of Sligo Creek Parkway, the alternative would turn off of Wayne Avenue into a tunnel section beneath Plymouth Street. A new traffic signal would be required along Wayne Avenue at this location to permit light rail transit vehicles to enter and exit Wayne Avenue. It would return to grade along Arliss Street, just east of Flower Avenue and continue in dedicated lanes on Piney Branch Road as described for High Investment BRT.

Impact: With respect to **property displacements and right-of-way acquisition on Wayne**, the report states, “All of the alternatives require some widening of the public right-of-way along Wayne Avenue. However, for much of Wayne Avenue the public right-of-way is actually quite wide, so the additional turn lanes for the Medium Investment alternative would not require much private property. However, many residents may not be aware that some of the property they consider as their front yard is actually public right-of-way. The tunnel portal at Mansfield Road would make Wayne Avenue wider than the other alternatives in this segment because; two traffic lanes in both directions are maintained due to its proximity to the Plymouth tunnel required for all light rail options, the required additional widening (approximately 10 feet) for the tunnel portal, and the additional dedicated transit lanes. In the eastbound direction, two lanes were assumed to match the current configuration of Wayne Avenue, where two lanes approach Sligo Creek, with one lane becoming a left-turn only lane at Sligo Creek

Parkway, and the second lane functioning as a through/right-turn lane. The widening extends on both sides of Wayne Avenue into private residential property and parklands. Neither side is well suited for widening. The houses on the south side of Wayne Avenue sit above the roadway, meaning retaining walls would be needed where the roadway is widened, and the presence of parkland on the north raises the issue of impacts under Section 4 (f) of the US DOT Act of 1966. The amount of property required from three or four houses on Wayne Avenue is so great that it would result in the displacement of those residents. In addition, the remaining three houses on Wayne Avenue, east of Mansfield Road would be limited to right-in and right-out access. As noted above, all alternatives would require strip acquisitions of residential property. The amount of property taken from parcels along Wayne Avenue for the alternatives evaluated in the AA/DEIS varies. Low Investment LRT, for which no turning lanes would be added, would require the smallest property acquisitions on Wayne Avenue. Medium Investment LRT requires property acquisition from those locations where the roadway is widened to add left-turn lanes. Approximately 40% (2,110 feet) of Wayne Avenue between Fenton Street and the Plymouth portal is widened, at least to some extent, in varying widths to account for tapering of the roadway, for the left-turn lanes.

Impact: With respect to **service reliability of the Purple Line along Wayne Avenue**, in a section entitled *Service Reliability Impacts*, the report states, "East of Silver Spring, the Purple Line is an approximately 12-mile long, at-grade route almost all of which is subject to traffic signal and other traffic-related impacts. Several segments of the alignment in particular have the potential to be sources of delay and uncertainty in the schedule. These areas include Wayne Avenue - in this one-mile segment the LRT is in shared lanes with added left turn lanes; while traffic analyses indicate that this segment would operate well despite the shared lanes, there nonetheless exists the potential for delay."

Of Note: Executive summary – **LRT Options between the Silver Spring Transit Center and Mansfield Road:**

"Since the initiation of the Purple Line, the MTA has evaluated many alignments for this area, including surface and tunnel alignments. In considering these alternatives, the MTA, in consultation with Montgomery County and the Maryland - National Capital Park and Planning Commission, assessed the alignments for reasonableness and relevance to the project's purpose and need. Options were also presented to the public throughout the alternatives development process and the alternatives were modified based on agency and public input. The segment of the Purple Line corridor between the Silver Spring Transit Center and Long Branch presents a number of challenges. The topography of the area includes a stream valley with steep grades which the Purple Line must cross. There is no major east-west commercial roadway in this area. Wayne Avenue is a county-classified arterial roadway, but it is more residential in character than other roads in the corridor that serve the same transportation function. Some of the residents along Wayne Avenue have opposed a surface alignment because of concerns about adverse effects to the neighborhood. They expressed a broad range of concerns including vehicular traffic, pedestrian safety (particularly for school children), and diversion of traffic on to local streets. Noise, community disruption, and concerns regarding roadway widening have also been mentioned. The Montgomery County Council and County Executive Isiah Leggett, while endorsing the Purple Line and supporting the Medium Investment Light Rail (LRT) alternative (which includes a surface alignment on Wayne Avenue), have requested, along with community members, a study of a tunnel from the Silver Spring Transit Center to Mansfield Road, primarily running under Wayne Avenue, prior to the selection of the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA). MTA conducted the study and presented the results at a community meeting on May 20, 2009. A summary of the meeting and other

Purple Line public involvement efforts in Silver Spring area are included later in this report. Although the findings and conclusions of this analysis were completed prior to the selection of the LPA, MTA continued to refine this report based on input from the community and Montgomery County. MTA has conducted a detailed evaluation of all the alignment options in this corridor in order to identify the most desirable option to carry forward in the LPA. The options, both in the AA/DEIS and subsequent studies, were evaluated and compared in several key areas: engineering feasibility, traffic operations, transit reliability, property impacts, and potential environmental impacts including impacts to natural/cultural resources, parklands, air quality and noise quality. The options were also analyzed in other areas including property access, construction impacts, capital costs and cost effectiveness. The results of this evaluation are summarized in this report.”

The report later adds, “The MTA will consider deferring the construction of the Dale Drive station.”