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<http://tbd.com/blogs/tbd-neighborhoods/2010/10/purple-line-what-a-dale-drive-stop-could-create-3116.html>

[Purple Line: Predictions vary around potential Dale Drive station \(video\)](#)

By [Elahe Izadi](#) (October, 2010)



A rendering of what a Purple Line Station at Wayne Avenue and Dale Drive could look like (Image: Courtesy MTA)

For all the [uncertainties](#) surrounding the [Purple Line](#) — chief among them is the question of whether it will get funded — some things about its design are clear.

If constructed, light rail would run from Bethesda and eventually stop in the new [Silver Spring Transit Center](#), a level above the [Red Line train](#). It would then follow along Bonifant Street and stop practically *in* the new [Silver Spring Library](#) building on Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street.

What comes next hasn't been settled; the train will either continue along Wayne Avenue and run for a mile without stopping, or it would stop at Dale Drive, adjacent to the Silver Spring International Middle School.

So what happens if MTA does build a Purple Line station at Dale Drive?

Montgomery County hasn't given the green light on the stop and would [prefer to examine it after the line is built](#), but the way project manager Mike Madden tells it, building the stop won't be a major construction project. And the road alignment will be the same with or without it, because MTA is building the light rail tracks along Wayne Avenue with enough room to accommodate a stop.

Video courtesy of MTA

So, regardless of a Dale Drive station, the light rail train would run on the same road as cars. MTA will move the parking lot entrance for the Silver Spring International Middle School by 400 feet to the east on Wayne Avenue, and MTA will take .13 acres from the school. Wayne Avenue's intersections with Sligo Creek Parkway, Cedar Street, and Dale Drive will get dedicated left-hand turn lanes, and a similar lane will be added to the Wayne Avenue entrance to the Whole Foods parking lot (much-needed, to say the least).

But what kind of impact on crime might a Dale Drive station have on the surrounding neighborhood? At a [Park Hills Civic Association](#) meeting Wednesday night, Lt. Bob Carter with Montgomery County Police offered some predictions as to what could happen if commuters are able to board and exit at Dale Drive. By way of comparison, he examined what happened to the Forest Glen neighborhood when a [Red Line station](#) opened there in 1990.

"At the end of the day, crime around Forest Glen didn't change much. It didn't increase, it didn't decrease. It stayed status quo," he said. "There's actually less theft from auto now than when the station opened. I'd say the impact for crime based on a stop here built at Dale and Wayne, it would be much the same that if you opened a new bus stop along Wayne Avenue."

But Carter also said that he is expecting a slight increase in crime in the Downtown Silver Spring area with major stops planned there since the area is already crowded and "mass transit brings everybody to an area," the good and the bad, so "you're going to get a little bit more of everything."

As for noise, if the Dale Drive station has video or scrolling marquee with transit information (not yet decided), it will also need to have audible announcements. Sound engineer Mike Staiano said Wednesday night that "whether it's annoying or not, well, how people respond to noise really depends on the individual." Meaning if you're very sensitive to sound, you may be really, really annoyed.

Staiano also made an argument that a stop could actually reduce noise by slowing the trains since light rail cars are louder the faster they travel. But he also said that he expects the sound impact to be a little higher than MTA originally predicted, and engineers will have to work on ways to avoid potential wheel squealing problems.

Melissa Williams, senior planner with the Montgomery County Planning Board, said Wednesday night that there are no plans to develop a new sector plan around the proposed Dale Drive station since it wouldn't be a major transit hub, which could go some way to assuage [fears of major development](#). But Williams also cautioned that as the county goes about rewriting land use codes, "protecting the neighborhood from the pressures of increased development" will mean residents "will have to be at the table when the planning process is happening."

The likelihood of MTA building the station is still up in the air (Madden responded to that question Wednesday night by saying "we intend to hear what the county and what the community and everybody else has to say over the next couple of years.") MTA wants it, but county has to still agree to it, and many neighbors still have to be won over.

L Williams

Oct 16, 2010 - 03:55:06 PM

As a resident of Bethesda-Chevy Chase, my experience is that Mike Madden of the MTA and County Council members Leventhal, Berliner and Floreen, and secretary Orlin, gave complete lip service to our neighborhood and our residential needs and concerns. (example: during one of the last hearings, before the council confirmed the choice of the PL, instead of speaking to our concerns, Floreen leaned toward a widow of a PL advocate and said her husband was a great community member and they would name a station after her husband). All members of the County Council noted that our neighborhood would be the most negatively impacted by the proposed Purple Line, but made no recommendations for how they will (possibly) mitigate the problems. Melissa Williams suggesting that neighborhoods would be protected with residents at the planning table is an illusion. Please bear with me and listen to this: they want to put a 45 MPH in a 25 MPH neighborhood, every three minutes, \$100 MILLION PER MILE light rail straight through the middle of a quiet, established residential neighborhood and knock 17 acres of mature trees down, destroying the most popular family-friendly hiker/biker Trail in Southern Montgomery County - which is already BELOW state standards for green space - meanwhile TAKING FEW CARS OFF THE ROAD (according to Mike Madden, MTA and current Gov. O'Malley) and call it Smart Growth.

Chris B.

Oct 14, 2010 - 03:22:27 PM

Awesome video. It looks like cars in the future will yield to pedestrians. What a great day it will be... that future.