

June 24, 2016

Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett  
Executive Office Building  
101 Monroe St. – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett,

The community meeting that was convened by the Maryland Department of Transportation at the Silver Spring Civic Building on May 26, 2016, in conjunction with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP) was a flawed and sometimes insulting process that left more questions than it answered. Little new information was presented, many questions were not answered directly and follow-up questions were not permitted. Please see attached letters from State Senator Jamie Raskin and County Councilmember Marc Elrich whose staff witnessed the debacle and whose letters aptly describe MTA's treatment of engaged tax-paying citizens.

The Wayne Working Group, who stand ready to work with the Concessionaire and County, request a meeting with your office before August 1, 2016 that follows up on the one convened October 7, 2015 and addresses the following issues:

- Narrowing the intersection at Wayne Avenue and Dale Drive;
- Lowering the height and improving the appearance of the 13-foot retaining wall at Dale Drive;
- Formulating a pedestrian/bicycle circulation plan for Wayne Avenue, especially at Dale, as well as plan for creating a "certified green street" along the length of the corridor;
- Devising mitigations for noise -- wheel squeal, warning bells, train horns, station announcements -- that will be excessive for a residential area;
- Working with the community to assure tree protection and mandating that on-site tree replacement occur in the immediate neighborhood of where tree has been removed.
- Examining the station area plan for the Dale Drive stop as a community, to improve its design and place in the neighborhood.
- Protecting the Wayne Avenue corridor, Sligo Creek and Long Branch Creek from daily dust and sediment pollution during construction; and limiting stormwater runoff with low-impact natural site design, visually sensitive for our streetscape.

Residents would greatly benefit from having these issues addressed forthrightly and communicated broadly – particularly given MTA's lack of transparency – so as to help ensure that the Purple Line project benefits from having important input from key stakeholders.

Please support our request to Secretary Rahn and MTA to make public in a timely way and on the Purplelinemd.com website three documents: 1) the execution agreement, 2) MTA's quarterly reports on the Concessionaire's work, and 3) the Wayne Avenue transportation study.

We are the eyes on the ground, the people who know the area best, and can provide valuable input to MTA.

Very truly yours,

Chris Richardson  
Park Hills Civic Association

[list names/affiliations of signatories here]

May 31, 2016

Secretary Pete Rahn

Department of Transportation

P. O. Box 548 7201

Corporate Center Drive,

Hanover, MD 21076

Dear Secretary Rahn:

Greetings. I want to thank you and the Maryland Transportation Authority (MTA) for providing the opportunity for the Wayne Avenue community and Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP) to begin meeting and exploring the details of the Purple Line alignment along Wayne Avenue. As you are aware, the Wayne Avenue community has been deeply interested in the planning process and heavily engaged in the Purple Line project since its very earliest stages. Local residents—many of whom are parents of children who go to Sligo Creek Elementary and Silver Spring International Middle School (I am father of an alum)—and school administrators have engaged with MTA, Montgomery County and elected officials for several years to provide their input. I am pleased that MTA and PLTP have continued to provide opportunities for the public to be involved in the various aspects of planning and implementing this project.

However, I am sorry to write now that I am dismayed by the number of complaints and disturbing reports I have received about the latest community meeting which was held on Thursday, May 26. Although I was not present that night, I sent my Chief of Staff, Alice Wilkerson, who was present for the entire duration of the meeting and confirmed the accuracy of these complaints and reports about a flawed and sometimes insulting process and numerous matters of substance left unaddressed.

Although the meeting was framed as an update on the project, the first hour dealt with subject matter previously presented to the community and no new information was offered until well into the presentation. As if this were not frustrating enough, I also understand that officials repeatedly dismissed as out of order straightforward factual questions from the audience designed to clarify information being presented during the slide show. Furthermore, several people reported to me that, during the Q&A session, many questions were not answered directly and follow-up questions were not permitted. When an obviously frustrated community member spoke out of turn, an MTA official dismissed her with an insulting comment (“someone get that woman a cookie”) which did not help the communications process and inflamed a lot of people in the community. Many in attendance walked out after hearing that comment and have since written me to say they feel it indicates MTA is not truly interested in hearing the concerns of the community. I know that you are in fact interested in public input and this kind of response

reflects poorly on the administration.

On matters of substance, there are many valid concerns that the Wayne Avenue community has raised and I trust that MTA will work diligently to answer them. Meantime, there are two issues which I believe need to be addressed immediately:

1) Can you please confirm that there are no plans, either at this time or in the future, to change the one-way traffic restrictions in force on Cedar Avenue and Dartmouth Avenue in Silver Spring? The power point and maps presented at the meeting apparently showed two-way traffic operating on these roads and the MTA and PLTP representatives could not definitively confirm that this depiction of two-way traffic reflected a typo or a planning error as opposed to a glimpse of a future operating decision. Can you also reassure us by confirming that, if MTA or PLTP wished to open these roads up to twoway traffic, it would be a decision made by Montgomery County itself?

2) The community has posed significant questions regarding pedestrian safety at the intersection of Dale Drive and Wayne Avenue, especially relating to the safety of school children both during the construction process and once the Purple Line is completed. The safety of our school children is obviously of utmost concern to our community and I would like to know what MTA and PLTP's detailed plans are for protecting pedestrians, especially the smallest ones, during both the construction process and upon completion. If these plans have not been developed yet, can you please specify which official local parents and school administrators can contact with their concerns going forward and what opportunities we will have to provide constructive input? Will MTA move forward with a pedestrian safety plan if school administrators have not seen or endorsed it first? Please also provide me with a timeline of when these plans will be developed and if and when they will be presented to the community.

I appreciate your attention. A timely response to these questions would allow me to share your answers with interested members of the community so important questions lingering from Thursday night are not left unattended. I also recommend that MTA develop or reinforce protocols for successful community meetings and work on ways to meaningfully address community concerns. As you know, tensions are running high regarding this project and the more we can improve communication and interactions between state officials and the community, the better the process and results will be for everyone involved.

Thank you for taking the time to hear and address these concerns and please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss any of these issues in further detail.

Very truly yours,

Jamie Raskin

Attachment #2

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**From:** Elrich's Office, Councilmember

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 7, 2016 4:36 PM

**To:** [secretary@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:secretary@mdot.state.md.us)

**Cc:** Roshdiah, Al; Berliner's Office, Councilmember; Hucker's Office, Councilmember; Kirkland, Bonnie; Tibbitts, Dale; Spielberg, Debbie

**Subject:** Community Purple Line meeting

Dear Secretary Rahn:

My staff attended the recent public meeting at the SS Civic Center regarding the Purple Line. During that meeting numerous questions were asked, but complete answers were not available. I am aware that Senator Jamie Raskin has contacted you about two of the questions. Below are many more of the questions raised that need responses. I also heard about the disrespectful manner Mike Madden treated a resident who was upset ("can someone please give her a cookie?"). The residents deserve respect and answers, and I know you agree.

Below are the questions, but first I wanted to convey that one of the greatest concerns expressed was about the widening of Wayne Avenue at Dale Drive. It was stated that it is necessary to add left turn lanes in both directions, which will make the intersection quite wide. I am aware that some alternatives have been reviewed; I'd like to offer another alternative to review: rather than additional lanes, is there a signal solution similar to the one for the traffic on Columbia Blvd. (continuation of Dale Drive) at the Georgia Avenue intersection in Silver Spring? There may also be other solutions to consider, and I urge your staff to continue reviewing possible alternatives to adding two additional lanes at the intersection of Dale Drive and Wayne Avenue.

I look forward to hearing from you and appreciate your attention to this.

Sincerely,

Marc

Marc Elrich

Montgomery County Councilmember (At-large)

Many (but not all) of the questions that were raised at the meeting:

Where will the slides that were presented be posted?

What is the current width of Dale Drive at Wayne Avenue? What will be the width after the construction? Someone (from MTA?) said it would be five 11-foot lanes plus a 15-foot platform plus 13-feet of something else. And it was guessed that currently there are two 11-foot and two 12-foot lanes. Please clarify.

The presentation said that all crosswalks will have pedestrian walk signals? What does that include?

What will the environmental site design for storm water management be? Mike Madden announced that there would be ESD for storm water management on the street. What will that look like? How much of it will there be?

Where are the wires in all the renderings? Why don't the renderings show where wires will be?

If utility wires and poles will be relocated, why can't they be placed underground?

MTA will be making quarterly reports about the public-private partnership; will the public have access to those reports? If so, how and when?

How can the public get a copy of the execution agreement?

Replacement of trees. It was explained that if a tree with a 10-foot circumference were taken down, the total circumference would be replaced but it could be done with 10 one-foot trees or five two-foot trees or some other combination. How will the public know what the plan is - what types of trees will be put in and where?

What is the budget for landscaping along Wayne Avenue? (It was stated that the residents want a tree-lined street or boulevard.)

Will Dartmouth be changed to two-way? The map indicated yes, but it was stated that that was a "typo". Can that be confirmed in writing?

In response to a question of whether the noise will be audible from the Traction Power Substation (TPSS), Mike Madden said that the noise cannot exceed 60 decibels, which "is the same as my conversation." Please confirm.

What would a tunnel under Wayne have cost? What will all the construction on Wayne cost? How do the two compare?

What bus service will continue? What bus service will be discontinued? Will the J2, J3 and J4 continue to run? If so, will the schedule be reduced and by how much?

Is it correct that the SS Green Trail will be an 8-foot wide asphalt trail on the north side of Wayne?

Where are the renderings of the planned tunnel? It was stated to contact MTA if they could not be found on the webpage. They are not easily found on the webpage.

What happens if there are cost overruns and the construction schedule is delayed? Will the concessionaire always be the one to pay the cost overruns? Is there a chance there could be problems like the SS Transit Center - weren't at least some of those cost overruns a result of change orders? Would the government (state, local) have to pay for some cost overruns?

Will the pictures of the PL be what is actually built? Mike Madden answered that there is a legal contract that will be carried out. Does that differ from the pictures?

Better renderings were requested - ones that clearly show where new pavement/widening will be added.

Are there cost savings (even short-term) if the Dale Drive station is not constructed now?

How was it decided to have a Dale Drive station?

Would a TPSS be required at the middle school (Silver Spring International Middle School) even if there were no station at Dale Drive?

What will be done for cut-through traffic for neighborhood streets? How long will it take to have solutions in place?

This last question is for the county, but I have included it since it was asked at the meeting.

Is the speed camera on Wayne Avenue currently decommissioned? If so, why and will it be recommissioned?