

Summary Minutes MARC Advisory Council Meeting
Thursday September 18, 2008, 4:30 p.m.
Quincy Hotel
Farragut North Conference Room
1823 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-3832

Attendees:

MARC Advisory Council:

Carol Oberdorfer, Brunswick – Present
Chikwe Njoku, Penn & Camden – Present
Christopher Field, Penn – Absent – schedule conflict
David Frederick, Brunswick - Present
Hameed Ahmed, Camden – Absent
Josh Friedman, Camden - Absent
Juan Calvo, Penn – Absent
Laurence Gross, Brunswick – Present
Lynda Clarke, Penn – Absent - travel
Makeda Scott – Penn – Absent – schedule conflict
Mark Dysart, Brunswick - Absent – schedule conflict
Rafael Guroian, Penn & Camden – Absent – schedule conflict
Scott Minos, Brunswick – Absent
Steve Chan, Penn – Present

Staff:

John Hovatter – MTA Director of MARC Train & Commuter Bus Services
Jim Knighton - MTA Director of External Affairs
Ira Silverman – MTA Director of Operations Initiatives

Guests:

Harry J. Romano II – Project Planner – Office of Planning hromano@mtamaryland.com 410-767-3756=office
Michael Ditkoff – Guest
Arthur Shulman – Guest - arthur@wisconsinproject.org

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 PM by Vice-Chairman Larry Gross.

Harry Romano – Project Planner for the MTA Office of Planning – discussed the Aberdeen MARC Station Parking Expansion Project. There are currently 188 officially marked parking spaces. The project will expand parking to about 300 total spaces, which is about a 50% increase. This new total includes about 90-98 additional parking spots along APG Road, which is under the jurisdiction of Aberdeen Proving Grounds. The MTA is working with the developer to resolve storm water management concerns.

Currently, the preliminary engineering is just about complete. The environmental study is due in the October/November timeframe. The environmental study should go to the MTA Engineering Department around November 2008. The contract should be released around the end of 2009, with construction starting early in 2010. The total cost is around \$2.6 Million.

Ira Silverman – MTA Director of Operations Initiatives – discussed the changes in the Transportation Revenue situation. The revenues from the gasoline tax are down, since less gasoline is being sold, due to the high gas prices. The title fees are down, due to fewer cars being sold. The reduction in revenue has resulted in cuts to

the capital budget to the MTA as a whole. For the MARC train system, the six year total capital budget is still \$520 million for the MARC train system. There has been roughly \$261 million for equipment, \$125 million for station improvements, \$41 million for support facilities, \$17 million for new diesel locomotives and \$4 million for parking improvements. Thirteen passenger cars were bought from VRE for \$18-22 million. The \$64 million for additional passenger cars was delayed about 3 years – roughly until fiscal 2014, which starts July 2013.

Regarding station and parking improvements, there is \$4 million for parking improvements. The MTA will be upgrading the public address system and the LED message display panels. The Halethope Station improvements will still go forward. There will be improvements to the parking area at the Seabrook and Germantown Stations.

Regarding support facilities – there is about \$40 million for the Wedge Yard, which will be a six-track yard that can store about 45 cars in DC. A new MARC maintenance facility, which will cost an estimated \$60-\$120 million, will be built on a site near Edgewood Station on Aberdeen Proving Grounds. At present, only \$1.2 million has been budgeted for engineering. This project will take about 10 years.

Currently, the MTA is contracting out work to CSX. CSX diesel maintenance is being done in Baltimore.

Over a twenty-year period, it is hoped that we will be able put in a fourth track on the Penn line and a third track for the CSX lines. However, all construction money has been removed from the current budget. Over a five year period, we are still putting in about \$35 million to both AMTRAK and CSX for capital improvements. The CSX signal system is about 15 years old, and needs replacement. With AMTRAK, the money is being put into the Interlocking.

Currently, MARC is recovering only about 50% of it's cost from ticket sales. The diesel locomotives get about 2 gallons per mile. A round trip is about 150 miles, and the locomotives pick up about 650-700 gallons of diesel at Martinsburg, West Virginia.

The electric locomotives that are being repaired in Wilmington, Delaware are expected to be returned soon. They have been completely rebuilt, which has taken about 1 year. It has cost roughly \$1.6 million to rebuild each locomotive, versus about \$4.5 to \$5 million for a new electric AEM7 locomotive.

Some emails that were received by the MARC Riders Advisory Council were discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM Thursday September 18, 2008, with 5 out of 14 council members present.