Area Advisory Committee Two Meeting #5 Summary
Wednesday, November 12, 2014, 6:30pm
Universities at Shady Grove
9630 Gudelsky Drive, Building 3, Room 3230
Rockville, MD 20850

Attendees:

Members	
Donna Baron	Tim Henderson
Wayne Berman	Jefferson Jex
John Brandt	Toby Lehman
Lisa Cline	Rosalind MacLennan
John Dunlop	David McDonough
Marilyn Fleetwood	Melanie Weerakoon
Apologies	
Kara Guthro	Tami Mensh
Sims Zhou	
Staff	
Project Manager – Rick Kiegel	**Public Involvement Task Lead** – Crystal Saunders
Facilitator – Cathy Smith	**Montgomery County DOT –** Gary Erenrich
Station Architecture – John Bull, Todd Connelly, Kyle Kramer	**M-NCPPC –** Patrick Butler, Tom Autrey
Traffic Engineer – Charles Freeman, Kevin Permisohn	**Logistics Staff** – Tori Leonard, Jordan Vann
Segment Engineer – Karen Kahl	

Handouts:

Meeting packets included: Meeting # 4 Summary; Meeting Agenda; Station Architecture Concepts; Surface Concept Comparison; Muddy Branch Road Alternatives Discussion; Map of CPOC Options; Map of Mission Hills Alternatives; CPOC Muddy Branch Road Concepts (Line and Grade, Option 1, Option 2, Option 3, and comparison table); Mission Hills Alternatives Concepts (Option 1, Option 2, Option 3, Option 4 and comparison table).

Welcome and Overview:

Cathy Smith welcomed attendees and asked if anyone objected to **Tori Leonard** recording the meeting for transcription purposes. There were no objections. Cathy announced that **Charles Freeman** would be leaving the technical team and was being replaced by **Jason Rashid**.

Topics being discussed tonight include Station Design—the Architecture team is seeking feedback on several conceptual designs. Also, more details will be shared regarding the evaluation of the Muddy Branch Road alignment options.

Update from Last Meeting

Cathy indicated that in response to her request for questions on open issues, the team received inquiries and feedback on the existing stormwater management facility under Great Seneca Highway, including the integrity of the system due to its age. According to Nimish Desai, the project's stormwater management lead engineer, the stormwater management structure does not meet the newer 2009 standards and those types of facilities tend to have a high failure rate. Stormwater management for the CCT, however, will include facilities that meet the higher standards. Another question was about the alignment shift from the 400 block of Upshire Circle. **Karen Kahl** said the project wanted to maximize the distance between the CCT and Upshire Circle and the CCT and The Vistas at Washingtonian Woods. The team had also received a letter about moving the bus stop in that location and is working with Ride On to address that issue.

Architecture Presentation/Discussion

John Bull referred to the large drawings on the table—copies of which were also included in the binders. John explained that the station locations were determined through a planning process that incorporated the county's Master Plan. The CCT ridership projections and operations studies provided further refinement. The architecture team studied the refined station area to determine building type uses and connections from an urban design perspective to place the station within a defined area, working with the roadway team and traffic engineers to locate primary and secondary entrances and crosswalks within the station neighborhoods served.

- Station Sizing–involved a review of transit codes, level of service standards, ADA requirements and a decision to allow for two buses at a time within the station. The section drawing includes a two foot detectable warning strip (a safety feature) along the side of the platform, a three foot lane for an ADA-required accessible route on both sides and an eight foot section in the middle for the amenities and queuing of passengers. The station is designed to allow for simultaneous flow of alighting and boarding passengers to ensure efficient operation. The level of service is based on ridership projections and a certain number of square feet per passenger on the platform. Tests have also been performed to ensure emergency egress within life safety standards. All of these factors determine the size of the platform and exits.
- Station Elements and Amenities –these exact elements (in the handouts) are not being proposed, but are shown as examples of what typical elements and amenities could look like and function, including seating, real-time passenger information, signage, interactive system maps, windscreens, ticket vending machines, trash/recycling bins and art-in-transit.
- Station Finishes–these could be brick pavers, porcelain tiles, granite or concrete. John explained that the stations would not be a 'sea of concrete', but would use a variety of materials. Input will be sought later in the presentation on the kinds of finishes preferred by the community.
- Station Safety–the project sought to create a wide-open, highly visible station to passengers and neighbors; well-lit, especially at night (with a balance between a solid level of light while reducing light pollution to neighbors); and includes a CCTV camera system with monitoring and emergency blue lights.

Gary Erenrich pointed out that, depending on the system operator, the cameras were not likely to be continually monitored, but they would be recording. An AAC member asked if arriving

buses would be announced on a loudspeaker. John responded that announcements may be considered if a bus was delayed, but it is early in the process for that decision. There would, however, be announcements made onboard the buses. **Rick Kiegel** also noted that there could be a digital "bus approaching" message. **Kevin Permisohn** pointed out that the signs in the station architecture drawings would include real-time travel information. The project is also considering a mobile app.

An AAC member asked whether current Metro Smart Cards would work on the CCT. Rick responded that the SmarTrip/CharmCard systems would all be integrated. An AAC member asked if the bus would stop at a particular place within the station. John responded that there would be primary and secondary bus locations. Due to the shorter headway during peak periods, bus bunching is likely and two buses may need to access the station at one time.

John continued with a station-wide architecture discussion. There are some elements that all stations would have in common such as canopy coverage, station approach, platform layout (location of ticket vending machines, benches, etc.), platform size, platform materials, station amenities/functionality and lighting level. The goal with the station architecture is to create an image and a brand for the system through a station wide architectural approach.

A question was asked about whether the stations were enclosed. John responded that all the stations would be open-air but equipped with windscreens for protection. John continued by pointing out that there are two concepts being shown for at-grade and aerial stations–one called the helix scheme and the other called the framework scheme. The areas where the station schemes take varying approaches to solving issues are where the project would like feedback from the committee.

The helix concept is more reserved and defined as more of an object in the station as opposed to a room. In the helix, there would be tree columns in the middle of the platform that hold up the helical canopy on top.

The framework concept is based on creating a framework around the station entrance with a rigid dimension that helps to create a strong sense of presence, sort of an urban room for the station, even though it would be open-air. In the framework, the columns are pulled off of the platform and out to the edge to create definition between the roadway and the transitway. The framework concept has a roughly 24 inch high barrier between the transitway and the roadway. This serves to protect the columns and also will help psychologically create a barrier to keep people from running across the transitway to the platform. An AAC member asked whether a barrier would separate the transitway from the vehicle lanes in other areas. John indicated that the project wanted the committees' feedback on preference for this element.

In the helix option, the only barrier proposed is the high platform edge. However, the barrier seen in the framework option might be feasible in the helix option. Many of the elements proposed as interchangeable. Gary asked if the purpose of the barrier is to delineate the station location and to discourage mid-block pedestrian crossings. John responded that those were a couple of the reasons, but also, in the framework concept, the barriers help to protect the columns. That means the travel lanes for the buses is now reduced from 14 feet down to 11 feet in the stations. To the AAC member's question, Rick noted that outside the station areas, the

inbound and outbound lanes are adjacent to one another, leaving a much wider green strip for stormwater management, grass, etc. meaning that the CCT would not need to have that sort of barrier between the transitway and the lanes due to a 10-15' width separating them.

Gary asked whether the framework was overdesigned and how it fits into the scale of the neighborhoods. John responded that the stations are in 14 different neighborhoods and to create a concept that works for the context of each individual station area could lead to a haphazard, disjointed approach to the stations designs that would hurt efforts to create an image, brand, and unified functionality for the stations. One of the issues the project team would like the committee's feedback on is whether the stations need a very strong presence or a more reserved approach such as the helix.

An AAC member asked why the framework approach had two separate canopies. John pointed out that actually both the framework and the helix had two separate canopies, based on two different bus locations in the stations to cover those boarding. An AAC member asked which one had more coverage from rain. **Todd Connelly** noted that the coverage would be the same. John pointed out that on the primary boarding side, the helix wraps around and goes over top of the primary entrance for the bus. An AAC member asked why that was not done for all of the concepts—he would like to be able to step from the canopy to the bus without getting wet. He also asked about a gutter system. John noted that the purpose of showing the differences was to generate discussion about preferences. Todd explained that trying to cover the buses in areas outside the platform becomes an issue of scale since the canopy is somewhat higher for the helix. As far as drainage—plans call for a stainless steel gutter running down the center of the platform, releasing stormwater onto the transitway.

An AAC member questioned whether the flat roofs of the canopies would be able to sustain snow accumulation. Todd explained that all the structures were designed for proper snow loading, so the weight of the snow was not an issue. The project is also looking at different glazing options for the panels.

An AAC member asked whether the designs were original and noted that they were very nice. She stated a preference for the framework structure, noting that she liked the barrier to the road and the greenery that it allows for. An AAC member expressed a concern about birds in the framework structure, specifically, nest-building and droppings. John noted that birds are always a concern, even for the helix design and that it would be a maintenance issue.

An AAC member commented that the helix had a really nice design function that overlaps the bus loading area, but although the height would need to be controlled, the framework would always be above the bus. He asked if the helix shape could be extended in an oblong shape to cover the bus. John responded that on the primary side, it could be extended. Kyle emphasized that the more discretionary elements were interchangeable.

An AAC member commented that in terms of providing continuity elsewhere, the helix design would lend itself more to a scaled-down version, especially for the very tightly-located DANAC station. Rick noted that the concepts were a center platform station in the median of a roadway. There are also center platform stations that are positioned on the left or right side of the roadway. Specifically at DANAC, because of the geometry, the station is a side platform meaning the

architectural elements and the styling of the canopy would be similar but there would still be two platforms.

An AAC member asked if one type of station would accommodate more people, whether one had larger columns than the other and if there were differences in security. John responded that the functionality of both types was the same, the columns were not significantly different in size and there were no differences in security elements.

An AAC member commented that in his experience at the University of Maryland College Park, preventing mid-block pedestrian crossings was a significant issue and it would be a good concept to apply to the CCT stations.

An AAC member asked if there would be open crosswalks on the roadway, which she perceived as a safety hazard. John responded that crosswalks would go from sidewalk to sidewalk across the transitway. AAC members asked whether the framework structure would require more maintenance, with falling leaves, graffiti, etc. John replied that could be addressed by selecting low-maintenance, graffiti-resistant materials.

Some members expressed a preference for the simplicity and functionality of the helix, others preferred the more sculptural and modern elements of the framework, which had more of a community feel within the enclosed space. No clear preference for either the helix or framework was decided as both presented advantages and disadvantages.

John also described how the helix and framework designs would look at the CCT's only aerial station at Kentlands. There are two major differences with the aerial station. The first is the larger canopy that extends and covers the vertical circulation elements on either side. The second is the modified columns from the helix design. The relocated columns increase the visibility of the station and provide stability against higher winds and elements. The underneath of the transitway has two differing approaches. The first is a green pathway connecting Great Seneca Highway up to the Kentlands level. The second is a concourse that provides a common space below the transitway at the Kentlands level. Both of these options could be used in a variety of ways by the community. Rick noted that the plan was to use existing parking in the bottom corner (nearest Great Seneca Highway) of the K-mart parking lot (beside the Lowe's). The City of Gaithersburg does have a master plan to build out that area, but those plans should work together with the CCT parking.

An AAC member noted the minimal number of parking spaces for bicycles and his desire to see that be increased significantly to accommodate 100-200 bikes. Rick pointed out that the spaces indicated were placeholders and that bike needs would be assessed. There will likely be a Capital BikeShare station and there would be plenty of room for bike storage in the area underneath the aerial station.

John continued by noting that with the framework design, expansion of the canopy would be simpler than with the helix. There are also differences in the canopy glazing–the framework design is translucent; the helix features transparent glass with a frosted striping. Rick again emphasized that these elements are interchangeable and that the committee's feedback was important to those decisions. Todd explained that even though choices would have to be vetted,

overall, glazing is an industry standard for canopy materials because of its transparency, which enhances visibility and is considered more safe.

An AAC member asked about solar options. John and Todd responded that the project was considering some technologies—either a film over the glass, or a fretted glass pattern, but those decisions would depend on proven technologies and the demand for electricity at the stations. An AAC member commented about the lack of perpendicular wind shelter. John explained that was a delicate balance because of passenger movement patterns, but the team would look at refining that. Gary noted that some Metro stations have a three-sided, enclosed shelter area under the canopy. Todd explained that the Metro platforms were somewhat wider, so fitting such an element into the CCT station would be a challenge, but the team would review it.

An AAC member asked if the framework design were more expensive to build. Todd responded that the costs were comparable. An AAC member asked if there were any data on whether one design was more durable than the other, and whether the designs become outdated over time. Kyle responded that the challenge is trying to develop an architecture dynamic enough to still make sense in 20 years.

John asked for feedback on the detectable warning strip at the edge of the platform next to the transitway. In the helix, the example was a yellow, detectable warning strip; in the framework, it was a contrasting color different than the material on the platform but still a detectable warning strip. Some members preferred the yellow since most people were familiar with that. Others pointed out that Metro uses red pavers. John noted that different municipalities had different standards. ADA only requires that it has a detectable surface and be a contrasting color. Some members liked the high contrast of the yellow color while others noted that it tends to fade over time. The question was raised if there was consensus among other AACs about the warning strips. John responded that these have only been presented to one other group and there did not seem to be a consensus for one style over the other. Kyle noted that the issue could be one of perception and familiarity. Members discussed the use of both yellow and red in the area and also suggested the project consider the durability of the materials used. An AAC member asked about the use of pervious materials. John mentioned that the project was considering this, but there were issues of maintenance to address (they tend to get clogged up) and whether they could be effective over the long term.

A member asked whether there could be lights in the crosswalk that would flash when a bus approached. Rick noted that those are used on college campuses but are not part of standard highway design. Kevin pointed out that pedestrians would not receive a ‘walk’ indication to cross unless the bus was stopped.

Cathy asked members to please send in their feedback and that materials would be posted on the website the next day. Rick emphasized that the AAC was not taking a vote, but that the team was seeking comments that would be taken into account in any decisions. Gary also pointed out that the project was at 15 percent design--not final design--and that a lot could change.

Muddy Branch Road Discussion

Cathy introduced segment engineer **Karen Kahl**, for a presentation on the Muddy Branch Road alignment alternatives. Karen pointed out that the charts and maps for each alternative were

included in the meeting handouts. Areas shown in blue are stormwater management systems; the CCT is shown in yellow.

Karen reminded members that this was a topic of discussion at the first AAC meeting. At that time, there were a couple of studies underway and the engineers committed to sharing the results with the committee. In July, the team presented the alternative that the MTA chose to proceed with and there were minimal comments. By contrast, at the AAC's September meeting, there was a great deal of discussion so the team decided to present more detailed information on the studies conducted this past spring and all of the alternatives considered.

In summary, the two studies that were conducted by the MTA were the Alternatives Analysis Report for the Commercial Property Owners Coalition (CPOC) and the Alternatives Analysis Report for Mission Hills. The purpose of the CPOC Alternatives study was to evaluate four alignment changes suggested by the commercial property owners to the County, in an attempt to reduce the costs of the project and expedite construction. The Mission Hills Study came about because the five percent design (the 'line and grade' completed in October 2013) showed the displacement of the first house in the community and the community asked MTA to evaluate options that would avoid the displacement.

Alternatives Analysis Report for the Commercial Property Owners Coalition

The alternatives considered for the CPOC were in four locations: along Quince Orchard Road, along Great Seneca Highway, along Muddy Branch Road and two crossings of Key West Avenue. This constituted a major multi-month study, but the focus of tonight's presentation would be the alternatives on Muddy Branch Road. The five percent line and grade alignment was on the east side of Muddy Branch Road and displaced the first residence in Mission Hills community. The CPOC requested the CCT alignment utilize the existing median of Muddy Branch Road, in an attempt to reduce costs and impacts on the east side.

Option 1 moved the CCT into the median and provided four lanes along Muddy Branch Road. This alternative shows two southbound lanes for Muddy Branch, two lanes for the transitway, two northbound lanes for Muddy Branch and stormwater management along the frontage of Belward. This alternative would avoid displacing the first residence in Mission Hills. Karen noted that the inset ('A-A') refers to a cross-section. All of the options include new signals at Mission Drive / Midsummer Drive and Belward Campus Drive / Midsummer Drive. The options also include the same number of turn lanes at the intersections as provided in the existing conditions.

Option 2 moved the alignment into the median but proposed widening Muddy Branch Road to six lanes on both sides of the road. Much of the roadway is reconstructed to add the CCT in the median. In this option, the first residence in Mission Hills would be displaced. This option also includes new signals at Mission Drive / Midsummer Drive and Belward Campus Drive / Midsummer Drive and the existing number of turn lanes at the intersections to match the existing conditions.

Option 3 moved the CCT to the median and provided six lanes along Muddy Branch Road but widened the road exclusively on the east side, leaving the west curb line in its current location. This option was developed to minimize impacts on the west side and utilize a portion of property

that Belward had committed to the CCT for right-of-way. In this option, the first residence in Mission Hills would be displaced. This option also includes new signals at Mission Drive / Midsummer Drive and Belward Campus Drive / Midsummer Drive and the existing number of turn lanes at the intersections to match the existing conditions.

Options 2 and 3 would be more expensive due to the two additional lanes along Muddy Branch Road and the displacement of the residence. However, all three options placing the CCT in the median would improve traffic operations. They would reduce delay by about 45 seconds for traffic on Muddy Branch Road because they would allow free right turns from Belward Campus Drive to Muddy Branch Road, from Mission Drive to Muddy Branch Road, and from Muddy Branch Road to Great Seneca Highway. The east side alignment (the line and grade alignment) on Muddy Branch Road would not allow these free right turns.

Karen noted that the MTA received a lengthy letter from a citizen asking how these decisions are made. She indicated there is no numerical formula. Rating and grading the elements is no longer used to reach decisions in the transportation industry because some elements, by default, would be rated more importantly than others. The table provided in the handouts shows some of the elements considered when choosing the alignment: the residential displacement, traffic impacts, CCT travel time impacts, and costs. The table shows a comparison of these elements relative to the line and grade.

An AAC member asked whether the chosen alignment reduced the total number of lanes. Karen responded that two lanes were being added for the CCT. Four general traffic lanes would be provided for Option 1 and six general traffic lanes would be provided for Option 2 and Option 3. Rick added that in the line and grade scenario, the CCT is built entirely outside the existing Muddy Branch Road footprint.

An AAC member asked if the six lanes included two left-turn lanes from Muddy Branch Road to Great Seneca Highway. Karen responded that the count does not consider turn lanes. At Great Seneca Highway, there would be one northbound left turn lane, three thru lanes and one northbound right turn lane. The member commented that in his observation, he has never seen more than seven cars get through a left turn signal cycle from Muddy Branch Road onto Great Seneca Highway and asked whether there were plans to change the signal configuration to allow more left turning traffic to clear the intersection.

Kevin agreed that those observations matched his own and said that although it seems bad that traffic may wait a couple of cycles for the turn, the county has optimized the traffic operations at the signal based on all of the movements that occur there, including the heavy volume of through traffic, However, the County could review those phases and make adjustments in the build conditions. In the build year, the project's goal is to optimize operations for the bus and general motorists and not add additional time for left turning traffic. However, if the situation worsens for the left turning traffic, the County could recommend that.

An AAC member commented that traffic conditions would likely worsen with the addition of the Belward development and the plan for only one left turn lane is shortsighted. She also asserted that the CCT plans left no room for additional left turn lanes. Kevin stated that it would be up to the developers to make any required traffic improvements that result from the increase in traffic

due to the development. Gary pointed out that there is a long-range plan for a grade-separated interchange at that location to resolve those issues, but the impact to residences would have to be assessed. Another AAC member commented that there were no plans to widen Muddy Branch Road north of Great Seneca Highway. Gary responded that, to the contrary, in the Master Plan, Muddy Branch Road is proposed to be six lanes the entire length to MD 117/ Clopper Road.

An AAC member commented that it seemed the design of the intersection was not being taken into consideration by the CCT project because the County is not ready to build the interchange. Gary replied that the goal of the master plan was to never need that interchange but to continue to evaluate conditions over time. He acknowledged that the interchange is not on the County's priority list for state highway funding. The AAC member asked whether the Johns Hopkins project was forcing the issue. Gary responded that the County requires the developer to conduct a traffic study for each phase of development and to plan mitigation for traffic generated by the project. The expectation was that the six lanes on Muddy Branch Road would provide more options for Johns Hopkins but there will be significant transportation improvements required as each phase of the development is reviewed.

Alternatives Analysis Report for Mission Hills

Karen continued with details of the Mission Hills Alternatives Study. Similar to the CPOC study, this study included four alternative options. On the maps, the blue line represents the five percent line and grade design (the same as for CPOC, two lanes for the CCT on the east side of Muddy Branch Road). **Option 1** was also the same four lane median option as the CPOC report with two lanes in the median of Muddy Branch Road, four existing travel lanes and stormwater management. The differences were three new alternatives along Great Seneca Highway. All alternatives cross Great Seneca Highway and pass Sam Eig Highway.

Karen explained that the drawings showed a dashed line representing a possible flyover from Great Seneca onto Sam Eig Highway but that has not been designed. The alternative stayed close to Great Seneca Highway in that area to minimize environmental impacts and also sought to avoid a large existing stormwater management pond. These alternatives cut out a hillside and forested area at the back of the Mission Hills community.

Option 2 would continue along Great Seneca Highway to the extension of Decoverly Drive then connect to proposed Belward Campus Drive. It would continue along a newly constructed portion of Belward Campus Drive, stop at the station, continue west to a roundabout and then return to the east past the station a second time and exit the area using Johns Hopkins Drive. This option created a rather circuitous route for a transit vehicle having to use the roundabout and backtrack on its

Option 3 would continue along Great Seneca Highway from Muddy Branch Road and turn southeast between the existing stormwater management facility and the back of the Mission Hills community. It would turn west then south toward Belward Farm and continue parallel to the farm along the east side. It would enter the median of proposed road 'Belward 3'. It would then turn east into the median of Belward Campus Drive, stop at the station, and exit the area using Johns Hopkins Drive.

Option 4 would would continue along Great Seneca Highway from Muddy Branch Road and turn southwest, just past the existing stormwater management facility. The alignment would continue south through a new station location near proposed road 'Belward 4', then travel in the median of Belward Campus Drive and exit the area using Johns Hopkins Drive.

The engineers compared the four options to the Line and Grade. The evaluation factors were slightly different due to more significant environmental impacts. The line and grade on the east side blocks a number of free right turns. With the CCT in the median, the free right turns described earlier would be allowed. The alternative chosen (Option 1) does add slightly more travel time and slightly more costs. However, Option 2 would be circuitous, thus adding two minutes more to the travel time, and have the most wetlands and stormwater impacts.

Option 3 goes between the stormwater management pond and the back of the houses and impacts six properties. The cost would be about $1 million more but does not add much to the travel time since the alignment is shorter. Option 4 splits the alignment between Options 2 and 3, impacts three properties, is about a minute shorter in travel time, but $1 million more in costs. It also impacts more forest conservation easements.

In some cases, the differentiator among the options compared to Option 1, was the impact to traffic. Continuing straight across the intersection of Muddy Branch Road and Great Seneca Highway as in Options 2, 3, and 4 delays general purpose traffic by not allowing traffic heading north on Muddy Branch Road to turn right freely onto Great Seneca Highway. Option 1 has a reduced delay of 45 seconds.

An AAC member commented that cars attempting to accelerate from northbound Muddy Branch Road onto eastbound Great Seneca Highway would queue up into the bus lane that would run parallel to Great Seneca Highway. Karen noted that they would not be allowed to turn right if a bus is in the area and Great Seneca Highway traffic has a green light. Kevin commented that traffic making a right onto Great Seneca Highway would have a red light when Great Seneca Highway through traffic is green or when a bus is in the Transitway approaching the intersection. When Great Seneca Highway is green and no bus is present, there will be a flashing sign to permit right turns.

Rick noted that the description on the handout table for Option 1 was incorrect. Members should refer to the description on the CPOC chart for Option 1.

An AAC member asked if walls would be installed to replace the trees that would be lost where the CCT would travel behind Mission Hills. Gary responded that where there are slopes, communities have a choice of adding a wall, but it is a question of costs and impacts. Rick pointed out that when a private property is impacted, a retaining wall is usually proposed to minimize the impacts. But in areas where the slope is in the public right-of-way, as is the case behind Mission Hills and along Great Seneca Highway, there is no cost incentive for the project to build a retaining wall.

An AAC member asked if assuming Options 2, 3 or 4 were constructed, could the County still widen Muddy Branch Road through this area? Gary responded that it would happen in the median where it was originally intended. The member further commented that Muddy Branch

Road is going to grow in the number of lanes regardless of where the CCT goes, but would hopefully include signals at both ends of Midsummer Drive. Karen responded that the level of traffic at those intersections in the future would warrant signals. The member suggested that the current plans should provide more accommodation for pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly for those going from his neighborhood to the Muddy Branch Road, Rio or Crown Farm shopping centers.

An AAC member asked if the project considered a flyover for the CCT at the Muddy Branch Road/Great Seneca Highway intersection. Karen pointed out that such a structure would be 25 feet in the air, at the roofline of a two-story house. Rick explained that the idea was rejected years ago because of proximity to The Vistas and the sight lines it would create for that community.

Rick also pointed out that the challenge is that there is not one, obvious option that all stakeholders agree with. An AAC member asked if Johns Hopkins had expressed an opinion on the matter one way or another. Karen stated that Hopkins was not involved in the decision-making. The Hopkins representative responded that Hopkins was in agreement with the Line and Grade alignment along Muddy Branch Road.

General Discussion

An AAC member asked Rick if there would be another impact study specifically for Washingtonian Woods as she had seen a request for it. Rick acknowledged that he had received a request from the community and that what she was referring to probably relates to the environmental assessment document that would be released in early 2015. That addresses impacts to all adjacent communities along the corridor and would include all the natural environmental, socioeconomic and noise impacts, etc. Karen explained that studying the impacts to the natural, cultural and human environment is part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process for planning the CCT. In the alignment options, the project had to consider how the alternatives would impact those elements in the communities that the alignment passes through. MTA will hold a public hearing a month after the document is released.

Cathy announced the upcoming meeting topics – the review of the environmental document is currently scheduled for the next AAC meeting on January 14th; hearings are planned for the February timeframe. Bicycles and pedestrians are scheduled for March. An additional committee meeting would be held in May. Cathy asked that members contact her with additional discussion suggestions.

An AAC member asked how they would know whether comments/suggestions were incorporated into design changes. Kyle said the architecture team would return in March with updates that would show how the comments have been addressed. Cathy pointed out that **Patrick Butler** would work with the team on the plans to accommodate bicyclists. One member suggested that the group receive an update on the construction schedule.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

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