

Alan Doran (00:03)

If we'd like to start 6:02.

Gary Blazinsky (00:06)

Okay, Alan. Thank you. Good evening, everyone. I'm Gary Blazinsky, the administrator of Harford Transit Link. I'd like to welcome you to our Title VI site selection plan public meeting. Next slide. Actually, we can go to another one. Again, this is a public meeting information for our Title VI hearing for a potential site selection. The session is being recorded. Please sign in, typing your name, first and last, City/Town community into the chat box. During the presentation, you may type questions comments into the chat box. Please type your name again, first and last, City/Town - reference a slide number if applicable. Comments must be relevant to today's presentation and pertain to this specific topic. The public comment portion will be at the end of the presentation. There will be no responses to your comments today questions, comments will be categorized. Responses will be posted on our website harfordtransitlink.org no later than April 1, 2022. And we will provide information again prior to the official public comment section. Public notice for this hearing were posted in the Aegis newspaper on Friday, the 23rd of this year. Also in Hartford County, the Office of Community and Government Relations Hartford Transit Link on our buses, website and calendar.

Gary Blazinsky (01:39)

Harford Transit Link City System February 23 and March 16. Economic development, economic development, Facebook postings, Harford Commute Smart Facebook postings. And then, of course, at our new electronic display boards at the Aberdeen train station and the Edgewood Harper Freight Transfer station. Next slide. Our agenda pretty much to welcome. I'll tell you a little bit about Harford Transit, about our mission, our operational overview, the site selection location review. Again, we'll do our public comments and we'll have some closing, a little bit of our Department overview. Len Parish is a director of our Department of Community and Economic Development. Karen Holt is the Deputy Director. I am the administrator of Harford Transit and that top line, Jodi Glock, our administrative supervisor. Alan Doran, our community development person. Ken Weldon, our transit supervisor. They are all on the line and we are here to represent Harford Transit. And of course, the listing of all the other personnel within our organization of just under 60 associates. And again, this information will be posted on our website with the comments. Harford Transit Link will provide the public with safe and efficient transportation system that increases access and mobility, reduces congestion, improves the environment and supports economic development, thereby enhancing the quality of life in Harford County.

Gary Blazinsky (03:17)

Our operations and fixed route services. Currently, we operate out of a 14,000 square foot facility. And if I would ask please that if you are online, if you would go on mute until you would have something to say and then we will unmute you again. A 14,000 square foot facility, 2.75 acres. We have a two bus

maintenance shop and a bus wash and we have currently 56 employees. We operate seven fixed routes with twelve buses on the a. m. And ten on the p. m. Our fixed route services are Monday through Friday, 05:00 a.m. to 09:00 p.m.. And of course we serve Aberdeen, Abington, Bel Air, Belcamp, Churchville, Edgewood, Havre de Grace, Joppatowne, Riverside, Perryman and Perryville. Our Demand Response and ADA Paratransit service which we also operate between ten and 15 buses per day. It is service for pre-approved clients over 60 or persons with disabilities under 60. It is a curb-to-curb origin and destination service. Examples of this service include transport from home to senior centers, medical appointments, shopping, employment, etc. For our ADA complimentary service runs Monday through Friday, 4:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.. And that is made to mirror our fixed route service.

Gary Blazinsky (04:42)

Our Demand Response services are Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to around 3:30 p.m. And again riders must be preregistered seven to ten days in advance. Forms and availability information is available on www.Hartfordtransitlink.org. A little bit information about our ridership and prior to the Pandemic, we were actually exploding in our service levels. To the citizens of Harford County. If you look up to the left there, in 2018, we had a total of just under 334,000 passengers that year. Fiscal year 2019 we were at 365,000, and then FY 20, when we did our major fixed route overhaul, we just were short of or exceeded 445,000 passengers for that particular year. I think in that center area it's a big surprise to most people that when we are at full service we run just under 1.3 million miles in the county and that supplies the transportation for all the services we provide. Again, our passenger trips FY 18 to 19 were up 9% and of course 19 to FY 20, we were up 20% with our passenger count which was quite impressive with the changes we made to our fixed rate. Next slide, Alan. And then of course the Pandemic came along and certainly that has affected all of us and no different in our transit organization, similar to all transit related across the country.

Gary Blazinsky (06:18)

But in FY 21 our passenger count dropped to just around 113,000 this year. We are hoping and we projected it out that we should go back to around 250,000. I'm looking at the last month or so, I believe we will exceed that, but I think we'll end up somewhere between 250,000 and 300,000 passengers which for us is a nice rebound and again this year will run approximately 1.1 million miles. Next slide. The purpose of this is for future potential growth. Looking at the next 25 to 30 years, one of the reasons we are looking is the land we're currently on has its limitations. There is no real ability to expand in our existing parcel of land. Our current excuse me site limitations. We are 38 employee parking spaces short and very difficult turning radius for our vehicles. And then most importantly in our current bus maintenance facility which is next to our office operations. After our buses are serviced, we actually have to back them out onto Abingdon Road and block traffic to get them out of the maintenance facility. Next slide. The purpose of course, aging facility and the cost of maintenance and upkeep the office space is very limited.

Gary Blazinsky (07:44)

We have no room for expansion and we are currently at maximum capacity. Ground level compliance issues will limit our federal funding due to the age of the building and how it was structured and future potential conversion to compressed natural gas. One of the things we are working to is to transition our entire fleet to compressed natural gas. And if we make that objective, we would meet Harford County government's entire carbon neutral requirement for the Harford Next Plan. Next slide. And then the site selection project study team. Of course, representing MDOT and the MTA is Jason Keppel. Our WSP consultant is Holly Stark. And then of course, I'm the project manager with Harford Transit Link. And then, of course, all final decisions get run through the Harford County administration. Overview. This started quite a while ago. In June 28 of 2021, WSP made a study of Harford County site analysis and development with a parcel shortlist memo which proposed four parcels for further analysis. Actually, prior to that, they did a complete search of the county and we started out with around 20 particular locations. Some of the things that we have to factor in is where our buses are parked and how long it takes to get to our service area and are they a good fit?

Gary Blazinsky (09:19)

And we narrowed it down to four, which is now actually narrowed down to two. On July 22 of 2021, again, we discussed the situation, our findings, and we came up with two locations. Parcel 23, which is in Aberdeen. And I'll show you the exact location. And then parcel 24, which is in our current location with acquisition of land around us to see if we could make that work. And then again, today is our actual Title VI site selection virtual public hearing. Next slide. There are the two locations. Parcel 23 in Aberdeen is on Chesapeake Road. It's actually right at the foot of the Aberdeen Proving Grounds off of Route 22. And then parcel 24 is our current location. And of course, what is outlined in red is the area of the additional land that we would try to procure if we could make that work. And also on the Aberdeen one, the red area would be the designated area for construction of a new location. Next slide. Here's a better picture. Currently, you can see our current operations to the left are very limited parking and of course, all of our buses. And currently what we're doing are when drivers come in, they grab their necessary paperwork and information, drive down into the bus parking lot, pull out their bus and park in that particular location, and then head out on the road to do their trips for the day off to the right that is the location in Aberdeen.

Gary Blazinsky (11:03)

It would be a great location for us again right off 22 very close to the Aberdeen train station, which is our largest transfer point and in the good area that we could reach all of our destinations that our people need to get to to pick up our clients. But that is a nice flat piece of land that is prepped and ready to go if we could make that happen. Next Slide. Detailed Analysis and the Site Layout Considerations. So our intent is to maximize efficiency and make the site as compact as possible while maintaining safety and turn radii considerations. The following slides show a high level site layout and circulation diagrams for each parcel, including the building area, administration, operations, maintenance and repair, fueling and bus wash, bus parking slots and non revenue vehicle slots, personal vehicle slots which will be noted as POVs, and then of course water retention area to make sure we also comply with the environmental needs for those areas. Next Slide. This is the first one located in Aberdeen and again this will be posted on our website

along with the comments and everything else. But if you read down the legend, it has a clear explanation of what the preliminary plan is to make that site work as a potential operation center for Harford Transit.

Gary Blazinsky (12:39)

And then if there's any questions for this particular thing when it comes to the comments section, if there is a particular number question, I will address it at that time instead of going through, but you can see where it has efficient office operations, maintenance facility, bus parking, employee parking, fueling situation and everything that we have in line to move towards our updating or a new operation site. Next Slide. This is our current location and that is where up in the area mark number two and number three is part of our current location. You could see down in the lower lot area that we buy additional land where that would become a brand new maintenance facility. Off to the left would be where the bus parking would be and then all the other things that will be needed in that particular location. Also part of the purchase would be that area mark number 14 which would become the water pond retention area for this particular location if we're able to procure the land and possibly expand in our current location. Next Slide. For the side-by-side comparison, of course Parcel 23 is the one in Aberdeen and the one all the way to the right is our current but the bus and personnel vehicle of course in Aberdeen separate entry and exit for buses which is prime in our current location.

Gary Blazinsky (14:19)

All the upgrades would be only one entrance and exit would be from the same gate parking and lot configuration of course in the Aberdeen 45 degree angle and that is to help compact the area and get all of our vehicles in there. And of course at the current location, it would be a 90 degree angle bus flow. Bus arrives and parks in the parking slots for the Aberdeen one, and of course very the same thing in the current situation. And then of course in the Aberdeen one, the bus would have to make a Uturn to the fuel lane and get the fuel and then leave the facility or when it comes in. And then of course at the Abingdon one, although there is information in there for fueling, we probably would continue to fuel at our current Sam Hill location, which is about a quarter mile up the street, but that will be determined. And then, along with that, since the transition to potential CNG fueling, that may become part of the fueling structure and if we stay at Abingdon and it certainly will become part of the fueling structure for diesel, gas and CNG if we do the Aberdeen location, if that would be selected. Total pavement in Aberdeen would be 8.4 acres of pavement, in our current it would be 6.2. Water retention would be 1.7 acres in Aberdeen and 1.3 in Abingdon.

Gary Blazinsky (15:53)

And then of course, the other considerations are the maintenance building. Its in the north of the bus parking lot in the fuel wash area to the south side and then our existing one. The building would be in the back or here what they call the I guess it would be the north side of the lot and then the maintenance facility, as I said, would be down in the bottom and that would operate solely on a building by itself. Next Slide. The layout advantages - for the site layout advantage the separate entry and exit for the Aberdeen

location would be much better than the current one entrance/exit location for the Aberdeen site. The disadvantage is the narrow site creates flow constraints which require bus parking slots to be spread out and then the commercial buildings in the surrounding area may raise community issues regarding the bus maintenance facility in the area and an extension would be difficult because of the size of the lot and we'd be pretty much locked in there. But again, looking at our current plan for both locations, we are actually looking for growth into the next 25 to 30 years, so that certainly would be a long time down the road if that would come into play.

Gary Blazinsky (17:18)

Next Slide. And again, this is our current location. The advantage is that, of course, it's an established location with known routes of how we get to our existing services. The use of exit the building could avoid additional capital expenses. I'm sorry, the existing building could reduce capital expenses. The disadvantages are again, it's difficult to develop the new layout while the facility is in operation and then here again due to space, provides fewer personal vehicle slots, 72 versus 84 and new one identified in the basis, and then of course, the one thing that's not going to list would be the single entry exit versus the other. Next slide. Along with this study, both sites have had hazardous material evaluations. The goal was identified potential soil, groundwater, or debris impacted potential site of concern, such as leaking underground storage tanks, dry cleaners, and landfill around the site, and determine if any environmental impacts are potentially present. It considered all the information identified and reviewed during these evaluations, as well as a local topographic hydraulic gradient, and sites were assigned an overall risk classifications of high, moderate, or low based on the potential for environmental impacts to be present within the boundaries of each of the two sites.

Gary Blazinsky (18:57)

Parcel 23. One in Aberdeen, is believed to have been utilized as an agricultural field up until approximately 2007, when the parcel and adjoining parcels to the south southwest were developed on the Northgate Business Park. The only improvements within the boundary of the parcel of Stormwater Management Pond at the northeast corner portion of Research Boulevard. Based on a review of available information, it's not believed that any environmental conditions, both on site and or offsite have impacted that particular location. Onto Parcel 24, which is our current [site] several active and former underground storage tanks were identified on and off site of the parcel that had the potential to have impacted Parcel 24. The former 4,000 gallon heating oil underground storage tank was removed from the Abingdon Volunteer Fire Department. Currently our Harfort Transit Link Facility. In 1993, underground storage were reported to have potentially impacted subsurface material. A former general store, approximately 25ft south upgrading, had 2,500 gallon gasoline underground storage tanks and they were removed in 2015. Records did not indicate that any impacted material was identified during the removal. Next slide. Again on Parcel 24, residual structure on 1313 Abingdon Road was observed to have been demolished and parsed regraded.

Gary Blazinsky (20:36)

In 2017, two residential structures on 1321 Abingdon Road were observed to have been demolished in 1992,019. Further information on former structures that were once present is needed to determine if any subsurface features may have been present, such as heating oil, underground storage tanks, and receptacle systems, and whether they were properly abandoned or removed, and that is the areas that we would look to procure of what they're talking about in this particular slide. Further information from the Maryland Department of Environment is needed to confirm whether or not Parcel 24 has been impacted with underground storage sites. Next slide. So, as I said earlier, this is our Title VI public hearing for implementations and in accordance to the Federal Transit Administration Title VI, Circular 4702.1B Harford Transit Link is soliciting public input regarding disparate impacts of possible locations to have future transit facilities in Harford County, Maryland prior to site selection. To understand the communities that would be impacted by a new or expanding transit facility, the project team determines a percentage of minority population and the percentage of the population living below the poverty line near each of the two locations. Neither of the sites have surrounding minority populations greater than 50% or a surrounding population living below the poverty line greater than 25%.

Gary Blazinsky (22:10)

So you can see Parcel 23 for Aberdeen total population around that location is 5,640, 44% minority population and 20% living below the poverty line. In Abingdon, 5,845 population in the surrounding area, 35% minority population and 2% are living below the poverty line. Analysis results are set. Layout considerations for Aberdeen separate entry and exit for the buses. Narrow site creates flow constraints. Of course, the hazardous material status is very low risk. Title VI implementation that's to be determined. Cost of the operation, minimal impact and cost of construction, of course, is to be determined. Our current location, parcel 23. Again, use of existing business building could avoid additional capital expense. It's difficult to develop a new layout while the facility is open. The hazardous material status, there is a moderate risk. Again, Title VI implementations will be to be determined again. Cost of operation, minimal impact and then the cost of the construction or the upgrade would be determined. The next steps after this, are we collate the comments and post to the website. The second step is separate and review pertinent Title VI comments. Third step will complete the Title VI equity analysis. Number four will be subject to the FTA, MDOT MTA review, which, by the way, is because we are a sub-recipient of MDOT MTA.

Gary Blazinsky (23:58)

Everything we do not only has to meet the requirements of the county, we have to also go through and meet the requirements of not only FTA, but also MDOT and the MTA. And then five. Again, we would have a formal discussion. And then Six. Everything would be subject to Harford County administration review and approvals. Next slide. We'll open up our public comment section. Again, I'll go over the guidelines. This session is being recorded. Comments must be relevant to today's presentation and pertaining to the topic. Again, our Title VI review. Please be prepared. When your name is called, reference a slide number, if applicable. Start your comments with your name and your address. You'll have two minutes for your comments. There will be no responses to your comments today. The only

exception would be if we would have to go back to one of the maps. We certainly would go back and answer a simplistic question about if something needed to be located or you have a question about a specific area and then questions. Comments will be categorized. Responses will be posted on our website, harfordtransitlink.org, again, no later than April 1. All right, next slide.

Gary Blazinsky (25:24)

Okay, we'll hold off on this one. Yeah. Backup one, reset. Backup one around.

Alan Doran (25:34)

Here we go.

Gary Blazinsky (25:36)

All right. Okay, Alan, if there's anyone for public comment, if you call their name.

Alan Doran (25:43)

I'm watching the chat. If anybody has a question and if anybody would like to unmute and speak, you're more than welcome, too.

Speaker 2 (26:04)

Hi, this is Kim Wakes. Can you guys hear me? Yes, I just have a question. I live in Hidden Stream, which is not that far from the current location, and I'm just wondering how the expansion is going to affect traffic in the area considering both Abingdon Road and Route 7 are two-lane highways.

Gary Blazinsky (26:49)

So although we would address that in our notes, I will say that the additional traffic would not be much different than what we currently do. And it would probably flow better because one of the prime thing of the change, if we would be in our existing location, we would no longer have to back vehicles out onto Abingdon Road to block traffic. Currently, when we finish servicing one of our vehicles, one or two persons go out with a stop sign and, of course, lighted vest and actually stop traffic. So that would all be eliminated. Okay.

Speaker 2 (27:32)

Thank you.

Alan Doran (27:35)

Gary. We have Phyllis made a comment. Phyllis Grover of Aberdeen Parcel 23 and Aberdeen is owned by three highway, commercial and transit bus stations would be permitted.

Gary Blazinsky (27:53)

Phyllis, do you have any questions that you would like to ask?

Speaker 3 (27:56)

Just like to add another comment as well, instead of typing the chat. 1st, 23 does have easy access off Maryland 22 to Route 40, and it would serve a very large population of Aberdeen that uses those transit facilities at the train station and other bus stops. I would agree that Parcel 23 is a very desirable location for the New Harford Transit station.

Gary Blazinsky (28:30)

Thank you. Thank you.

Speaker 2 (28:33)

This is Kim Weeks. Again, I'm sorry. I used to be President of the Hidden Stream Homeowners Association, and our Hidden Stream development is not that far from you. But my biggest question I should have asked you before was related to runoff. Our stormwater management facility also gets the runoff from, I guess, the neighborhood, the new neighborhood behind Avenue Reserve and the other one. And I guess I'm just wondering what Harford County plans to do about any effect on our stormwater management area because what they have currently provided to date has been minimal. So is this expansion of this facility going to have any effect on our stormwater management facility?

Gary Blazinsky (29:26)

And I'll give a preliminary answer looking at the drawings for a potential site. And again, we'll go into more detail with the answer and the size of the stormwater pond that we will maintain. I would say it would have zero impact in your area even though you are located close to us. Okay.

Speaker 2 (29:48)

Well, I guess I would appreciate if you guys did look into that further because that's the exact same response that they told us about the other neighborhoods that flow into ours. And there was a tremendous effect on our stormwater management facility from those additional neighborhoods, even though there wasn't supposed to be. So I would greatly appreciate that. And if you need the name of our HOA President I can provide that also.

Gary Blazinsky (30:14)

So thank you. Thank you.

Speaker 4 (30:19)

Hi. Hello. This is Dalisai Nicols. I live around the existing facility in Cokesbury Manor and I would like to recommend to transfer the facility, considering the location, the traffic in that area. And also I have one question. If the Harford County government is required to come up with a match for the capital expenditure. Thank you.

Gary Blazinsky (31:04)

And we'll have that answered for you in our comments section for Jodi, do you want to respond just a little bit with that?

Jodi Glock (31:17)

So we do go after federal and state grants. Depending on the grant, we go after a match could be anywhere from 10% of the cost to potentially 15% of the cost. There are other ways to do match, which could be in-kind. So if it's property or some other resource that we can use to provide match, it may not have to be cash. So we'll get the information again, depending on the grant, we can get you the correct value.

Speaker 4 (31:55)

Thank you.

Speaker 2 (32:02)

Hi, this is Kim Weeks. Again, I'm sorry, I'm not opposed to the expansion or anything. I just would like to ask a question that you say that you are limited in parking spaces. However, a lot of times when we drive by, we see that there is at least one boat parked there and at least one camper. So I'm not sure what that has to do with Harford County government and why it's there.

Gary Blazinsky (32:30)

Kim, that is not our property. That's Boyle Buick.

Speaker 2 (32:35)

Okay. All right. So there's two different properties there, correct?

Gary Blazinsky (32:40)

Yeah. If you look at our property when you go by to the south side, I guess it would be where the gate is and the wall. That is what ends our property.

Alan Doran (32:53)

There's a map that shows Boyle property, right.

Speaker 2 (32:57)

I did not know that. I thought it was all part of that same facility.

Gary Blazinsky (33:01)

So where does yours end on this slide where all those cars are lined up? That is Boyle.

Speaker 2 (33:12)

We never knew that because we thought that this facility was much larger than we. Wow. Thank you. That explains a lot, doesn't it? Yeah.

Jodi Glock (33:23)

So where you see the bus is at the back of the property. That's it. That is the extent of it. So drivers pull their bus out and that center row, they have parking buddies where the morning shift will pair up with an evening shift driver and share that middle row of parking spaces to get everyone in.

Gary Blazinsky (33:43)

Wow. I'm sorry. We just thought it was larger. So we did. We just thought that whole thing was part of it. So thank you.

Jodi Glock (33:51)

Yes, you're welcome.

Speaker 2 (33:53)

That explains that. It does. Sorry.

Gary Blazinsky (34:08)

Anything else?

Alan Doran (34:14)

If anybody wants to write in chat or have a question, please ask or type.

Gary Blazinsky (34:22)

And then we'll move on. Alan.

Alan Doran (34:23)

To the next slide.

Gary Blazinsky (34:25)

And I would like to say that I'm very proud of our organization. In 2014, 2017, 2019 and 2021. We actually were awarded the Transportation Association of Maryland's Outstanding Transit Agency of the year. And again that is something we are very proud of. We compete against 24 other locally operated transit systems in the state and to be recognized that many times in that few amount of years is very prestigious and it's something we are very proud of. Next slide. And again, everything we talked about will be posted on our website. Here is what our website looks like. It is very updated and very modern. Of course the information for this situation will be posted on the top like I said where the blue transportation part is and then on the bottom if you are looking for any particular information about Harford Transit you click on any of those route numbers. It is set up. It's called flipbooks like a catalog so if you flip or click on route one it will automatically flip the pages and take you to all the information and the schedules for route one. If you click on the ride guide it will flip the pages and take you to the ride guide.

Gary Blazinsky (35:52)

But everything and anything you need to know about Harford Transit is listed at this location and everything is set up very easily, either one or two clicks. You will get to exactly what you need next slide. And before we finish, Alan, is there any other comments or anything?

Lisa (36:16)

You were muted, Alan.

Alan Doran (36:20)

Sorry about that, Gary. Everything is good on my end. I don't see anything in chat.

Gary Blazinsky (36:25)

Okay. So we want to thank you for your time today and appreciate everything and certainly we're proud of what we do and it's all the people there in the picture that really make Harford Transit what they are and I am proud to be associated with each and every one of them. So again, we thank you for your time. If you need anything, my contact information is there or if you go to the website, there is an email address there that you can send something to and I will get that and again our website www.harfordtransitlink.org. Again, thank you so much and you all have a great evening. Bye.