

Contact Crystal City Civic Association
Summary of Transit/Transportation Workshop
Tuesday July 29, 2014, 7-9 pm

Discussion focused on three major issues: Metro capacity; the Bus Transitway; and the plans for the Streetcar. (See also the one-page workshop sheet.)

1. Metro Capacity

CCCA Background: The opening of the Silver line has led to a noticeable reduction in service on the Blue Line, with cars running every 12 minutes even during rush hours. Some additional buses may help: Art Bus 43 from Crystal City to Rosslyn; a planned bus from Crystal City down Long Bridge Park Drive to the Pentagon when the Boeing Building opens this summer. We need to push for more buses to downtown and off peak.

Participant Comments and Discussion Points:

- We should make our concerns known to Mary Hynes who is both an Arlington County Commissioner and a member of the WMATA Metro Board.
- See 8carcoalition.com managed by the Chamber of Commerce which is pushing for 8 cars on Metro Blue line and ways to support Metro's long-term strategic plan Momentum: <http://www.wmata.com/Momentum/>
- A citizen site which has lots of "persuasion" information and a petition dealing with blue line service is www.bluelinedc.org
- Is there data from a survey of metro ridership? Yes, Arlington County has it. The CCCA needs to use data to support positions.
- WMATA should be held accountable for promises they make about the blue line; e.g., the next blue line train should always be listed on the message boards, but isn't.
- What do retailers think of the Blue line reduction, aren't they concerned? Arlington County has said not many will be affected, but this is a line the CCCA could pursue.
- Many of the retailers in Pentagon City Mall have a good number of patrons from DC that use the yellow line and are not affected by the Blue line reduction.
- Discussion about looking at the Metro ridership survey raw data to see if there is any bias in the interpretation.
- Data on bus transportation is not clear; you can't always tell where a bus will come or when. It should be investigated who could provide a multi-jurisdiction (ARC, Metro...) integrated transportation schedule.
- Could there be a circulator bus for going outside Crystal City? The 9S is internal and transportation to other areas is limited. Plus it is only daytime, and not on the weekend.

2. Transitway

CCCA Background: This a joint project between Alexandria and Arlington County for buses from Braddock Road to Crystal City, but only the first of two stages will open August 24, from Braddock Road to S. Glebe Road where the "Metroway" bus will follow the 9S bus route. Buses will travel on a bus-only transitway along Route 1 from Potomac Avenue to E. Glebe Rd, then East to Potomac Avenue and north to S. Glebe Road. The second stage, projected to open in 2015, is under construction at 33rd Street, for a dedicated lane to go up Crystal Drive to 15th Street to the metro and back down Clark Street to Potomac Yard. According to Metro, Metroway buses will operate for the next year every 12 minutes along the

full route. During rush hour, buses will operate every six minutes between the Crystal City Metro station and South Glebe. During weekday off-peak hours, buses will run every 12 minutes and on weekends, every 20 minutes. The Transitway has some implications to be considered. First, the bike lane on Crystal Drive will be moved to Clark Street, but bikers are likely to continue to ride in a dangerous situation on Crystal Drive along with other transit or even move illegally to the sidewalks. Second, all traffic will be squeezed down to one passing lane on Crystal Drive since the curb lane will become the dedicated bus lane.

Participant Comments and Discussion Points:

- There is already a dangerous situation with limousines lined up in front of the Waterpark in the curb lane, forcing bikers and cars into the passing lane. What will happen when the dedicated lane is installed at the curb?
- Did Arlington County do a poll for what riders wanted? If this is an express bus, why are there more than two stops on the route?
- The proposed eventual move of the Transitway and Streetcar from 15th Street to 12th Street is dangerous: buses can't get around the corner in a single lane as it is. Plans call for the streetcar to continue down 12th Street when the new 12th Street extension between Eads and Fern Streets is opened soon in Pentagon City.
- The new bus stops will have electronic displays to indicate when buses are coming.

3. Streetcar

CCCA Background: Arlington County miscalculated by treating the Streetcar as two separate areas: Crystal City and Colombia Pike. The Crystal City streetcar section was approved in the 2010 Crystal City Sector Plan. At the time, it was not controversial and the plan was for a continuation for Duke Street westward to Route 7 and Skyline. Now Alexandria has postponed any consideration of the streetcar for years and the Colombia Pike section is in chaos, so we may be facing a "streetcar to nowhere." There are two organizations working on the issue: one is against the streetcar and one is for it, but both focus on the Colombia Pike section exclusively and do not want to deal with Crystal City, so Arlington County does not want a dialogue on any streetcar issues for Crystal City. The issues in Crystal City are different than those for Colombia Pike however--primarily noise, overhead wires blighting the view, and security concerns for the corner on 12th Street and Crystal Drive. We need to come up with very substantive arguments, as local 'environmental' arguments are not the ones that will carry weight with Arlington County.

Participant Comments and Discussion Points:

- Who will use the streetcar? The developers say "choice riders"—i.e., those who have a choice of transportation.
- Arlington County and the developers are much more interested in the commuting population and looking for ways to keep people from parking in single family homes areas.
- If the streetcar makes Crystal City a more desirable and upscale location, this could be beneficial.
- The lack of any Alexandria planning for the streetcar extending from Potomac Yard to Skyline is concerning.
- The transit merger of traffic and streetcar into Crystal City and Potomac Yard could become a bottleneck. The County should be looking at the streetcar as part of an entire system including the Metro.

- Residents should review the project information at <http://www.crystalcitystreetcar.com>. Members were encouraged to look particularly at the presentation and display boards for the two public meetings held on the streetcar [Under "Materials and Resources.]
- Several participants stated they would take the streetcar over the bus.