



**CHARLES STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT**  
**25<sup>th</sup> Street to University Parkway**  
**Baltimore City Office of Transportation**

**MEETING NOTES**  
**CITY - STAKEHOLDERS COMMITTEE COORDINATION**

**August 19, 2003**

**3:40 PM to 4:20 PM**

**Conference Room 528, Fifth Floor, Charles L. Benton Building**

Attendance:

- ◆ **Baltimore City**  
Al Foxx, Director, Office of Transportation  
Michael Rice, Deputy Director, Office of Transportation

- ◆ **Charles Street Reconstruction Stakeholders**

- Baltimore City**

- Kristin Smith, Community Planner
  - Frank Murphy, Traffic Planning Unit
  - Khalil Zaied, DOT Highway Design
  - Fred Shoken, DOT Highway Design
  - Wolde Ararsa, Traffic Planning Unit

- Baltimore Museum of Art**

- unable to attend due to conflicts

- Charles Village Community Association/North Charles Village Community Association / PUD**
  - Sandy Sparks

- Greenway Community Association, Inc.**

- Jere Hamill

- Friends of Wyman Park Dell**
  - Suzanne Rexing

- Johns Hopkins University**
  - Jim Miller

- Peabody Heights Resident Homeowners Alliance, Inc.**
  - Christian Wilson

- ◆ **RK&K Engineers**  
David Wallace

**DISCLAIMER**

The following summarizes the notes taken by David Wallace on August 19, 2003 during this meeting with Baltimore City and Stakeholder representatives. These notes do not represent the official position of Baltimore City or the Stakeholders, nor have they been reviewed or approved by them.



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◆ **SUMMARY**

This meeting was held for the purposes of updating the Charles Street Stakeholders on the City's progress on both the traffic simulation for the portion of Charles Street between 25<sup>th</sup> Street and University Parkway as well as the City's broader "two-way Charles Street study" between Lee Street in Federal Hill and 29<sup>th</sup> Street.

As a result of this meeting, City staff will continue work on the traffic simulation model; and, Dominick Murray will continue his role as Project Champion (although last minute scheduling conflicts precluded his participation in this meeting).

**NEXT MEETING ⇒**

**Tuesday October 21, 2003 from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm (Room 528)**

- Purposes:
1. Results of Traffic Counts/Simulation and Confirmation of previously agreed upon 2-3-2 lane arrangement
  2. Result of City's "Two-Way Charles Street Study"

- 1. Notes from June 10, 2003 Meeting**
- 2. Progress Report through June 30, 2003**

Notes from the June 10, 2003 Meeting and the Progress Report through June 30, 2003 (copies of both had been distributed prior to the meeting) were accepted.

**3. Effect of Re-opening Charles Street Bridge**

In addition to the convenience of the re-opened bridge, Stakeholders noted that traffic volumes on Charles Street north of 25<sup>th</sup> Street seemed generally unchanged following the re-opening; primarily due to the general lower level of summer traffic volumes. It was noted, however, that traffic speeds along Charles Street have increased following the opening (see note under topic 7).

City representatives noted that Maryland Avenue has been returned to its previous one-way operation, thus permitting additional parking during both peak and off-peak periods. The City's final action to return to "pre-closure" traffic operations will be to reinstitute 24-hour parking along the east side of Calvert Street north of Center Street (expected in the next several weeks).



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#### **4. Review City's progress on Traffic Simulation of Charles Street**

Frank Murphy reported that a consultant is assisting the City in setting up the traffic simulation model for Charles Street and is providing training to City staff for use of this model. Testing is being done using previously collected traffic volumes. Current traffic volumes will be collected in mid-September/early October to aid in this effort. Frank also noted that traffic simulation will take into account anticipated development projects, including the SBER project at 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. Jim Miller stated that Hopkins students are returning to campus next week, and that classes will be in full session the week of September 2, 2003.

Frank stated that the results of the traffic simulation (testing the original City concept vs. Stakeholder developed concepts from late 2003/early 2003) will be available at the October 21, 2003 meeting.

During a discussion of 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Khalil Zaied noted that the City will be replacing the median in 33<sup>rd</sup> Street between Ellerslie Avenue and Ednor Road. Jim Miller stated that Hopkins is also considering proposing a narrow median along 33<sup>rd</sup> Street between St. Paul Street and Charles Street.

#### **5. Two-Way Traffic on Charles Street**

Recent clippings from the Daily Record and Baltimore Sun (articles, op-ed pages, and letters to the editor) were distributed.

Director Al Foxx stated that the City has retained a consultant to assess several options for the provision of two-way traffic on the presently one-way portions of Charles Street. Results are expected late September/early October; at which time they will be shared with the Mayor. Frank Murphy noted that one option includes the provision of two-way traffic along the full length of Charles Street that is now presently one-way (i.e., from Lee Street to 29<sup>th</sup> Street), as well as selected portions of this route where a provision of two-way traffic may be beneficial. In response to a question concerning the factors that are being used to evaluate these options, he noted the following:

- An understanding of the desire/goals of what is to be achieved ... i.e., how best to address the problem.
- Traffic operations vs. parking.
- Narrow street width (for example, the 300 block of Charles Street is only 30-foot wide curb to curb).
- Traffic operations at Penn Station/I-83 on-ramp.

He noted that there are basically two camps on this issue, one requesting two-way traffic and another requesting increased parking: two mutually exclusive goals.

#### **6. Progress on Design Contract**

Khalil Zaied stated that the design contract has been finalized by the Federal Highway Administration and approval from the State Highway Administration is expected in the next several weeks. Notice to Proceed is anticipated in September, 2003. This nearly \$1 million contract is to be funded 80% federal 20% City.



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Director Foxx stated that although design activities are funded, construction funds are not in the current City CIP.

## **7. Stakeholders Updates**

**Jim Miller** ⇒ Noted that JHU's 600 bed student housing in the northeast corner of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Street and Charles Street intersection is moving forward. He enquired how best to address the 2,400 additional pedestrian crossings anticipated from this additional housing (600 students x 4 trips per day). Frank Murphy stated that as long as the pedestrians cross Charles Street on the north side of 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, this should not present a "capacity" problem.

**Sandy Sparks** ⇒ Expressed concern about the condition of the pavement on the west side of the Wyman Park Dell, as well as the volume of traffic using Art Museum Drive. These concerns were reinforced by Suzanne Rexing.

**Christian Wilson** (e-mail sent post-meeting) ⇒ *Just to set the record straight about traffic speed along North Charles Street - I took a taxi home, and between stop and go with tie ups caused by construction and buses, the driver alternated with speeds for three blocks at 50 mph. Let me assure you that the speed limits are not being observed along that corridor. To further qualify this statement, on North Charles Street and 25th there was an accident involving a number of cars and witnesses stated that one of the drivers was easily driving 50 mph. Something will have to be accomplished with better control of lights, and/or the placement of a few police along the route if it is going to be safe for the pedestrians. I feel sure that the accident can be verified by the local authorities. The car was speeding so fast that the front end was completely demolished and while I don't know if there were any fatalities, clearly the speed limit is not being followed.*

DWW/sms

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cc: All present  
+ Stakeholders not present  
Jim Burnett, RK&K  
John d'Epagnier, RK&K  
Hank Bishop, WRT