

October 2023 Shared Use Path Liaison Committee Report to Mayor

Following the 8-21-23 meeting with Council member Katz and staff members, his office arranged a videoconference between the participants on that call (Barbara Raimondo, Jay Everhart and John Compton, Sidney Katz, Laurie Edberg and Sharon Ledner) for 9-21-23 with Christopher Conklin, director of Department of Transportation (DOT) and members of his staff.

At the 9-21 meeting, Maricela Cordova was on the call instead of Conklin. She is the Acting Transportation Policy Director. Rebecca Park is leaving the project, being replaced by new hire Jean Anne Kapusnick, who was also on the call. Her supervisor Dan Sheridan also attended.

We had hoped to obtain a commitment by DOT to timely completion of the WG Connector. That did not happen. Contrary to our desire to proceed with the Connector independently of planning for a road, DOT has continued to link the two. In fact, no work had taken place since the Planning Board update on July 20th, including the choice of a route between Brown St and Crabbs Branch Way. We suggested a route for the WG Connector that would result in the least amount of rebuilding if the road were eventually built. It did not appear that DOT had evaluated this or the other 2 options that we had offered.

DOT said that clearance of the project by Montgomery County Parks and granting of a right of way by WSSC were necessary to proceed. Mr. Katz asked that DOT proceed with the design of the WG connector concurrently with obtaining the clearance and right of way. DOT again noted that additional funds will be needed for construction. However, county council cannot appropriate those funds until a proper cost estimate is prepared based on the design.

A follow-up call to review progress is scheduled for the 11th of December.