



Greater Lyttonsville/Woodside CAT Meeting #7 Online presentation – November 5, 2020 Questions & Responses

Below is the list of questions and responses discussed during the November 5, 2020, online CAT presentation.

Question: Do you expect any portions of the project design to change now that the P3 agreement has ended?

Response: The status of the P3 agreement is in dispute and a part of pending litigation. Regardless of the outcome of litigation, the Purple Line does not expect any significant design changes.

Question: Is it possible to accelerate completion of certain infrastructure in and around the project that is disruptive to the community, such as the Talbot Avenue Bridge?

Response: The State is evaluating construction across the alignment, including areas of local community priority when resequencing of the work provides a positive return to the community and project. MDOT MTA is actively working with design, construction and manufacturing contractors to keep the project moving forward. Our focus is on completing the design, remaining permitting and unfinished work such as paving, stormwater drainage and other utility projects now underway along the Purple Line corridor. We remain committed to working with the community and local businesses to collaborate and find opportunities to minimize impacts to the best of our ability. If the State is able to reasonably advance work beyond utilities using the available pool of contractors, the State will do so.

Question: What new general timelines can we expect for completion of various aspects of the project from what PLTC planned?

Response: The State will manage Purple Line construction until the new design-build contractor is on board. We do not yet have a new timeline.

Question: Is there a contingency plan for if funding runs out to finish the project? How would the work sites be closed down/restored so they don't remain an open sore in our community?

Response: The State fully intends to complete the Purple Line project.

Question: What is the prospect for seeking additional federal assistance, should there be a change in executive leadership at the federal level?

Response: Federal participation in the Purple Line project includes the \$900 million Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) and access to Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loans. The State is not anticipating additional Federal assistance for the Purple Line project.

Question: What is the agreement with the school system regarding construction during the school year?

Response: The Purple Line has construction activities near Rosemary Hills Elementary, Silver Spring International Middle and Sligo Creek Elementary schools. The Purple Line will not conduct loud, disruptive construction activities while children are at school.

Question: Will the Talbot Avenue Bridge closing and the Spring Street Bridge closing overlap? As you know if they do overlap, this will make it very difficult for people to attend religious services. What steps are you taking to avoid this problem?

Response: The Purple Line project does not intend for the Spring Street Bridge to be closed while the Talbot Avenue Bridge is closed.

Question: Is there any coordination/collaboration with CSX, MARC and other rail services to determine and control noise levels once the Purple Line is operational? Trains generally sound their horns at least six times when approaching rail crossings and stations. Will the same hold for the Lyttonville Purple Line station? Currently, there is not much noise from train horns but we are concerned that this will change once there is a new station. There are many homes with windows directly facing the tracks.

Response: The Purple Line is coordinating with CSX in monthly meetings and working through numerous issues as they relate to the Lyttonville corridor and continuing along toward 16th Street. Interface with MARC is a little easier since we are all a part of MDOT MTA, but that coordination also is ongoing.

The issue is safety involving highway and rail intersections. The Federal Railroad Administration prescribes the level of activity regarding the sounding of the horn - two longs, a short and a long, sounding of the horn at a level of 90 decibels. That is the standard practice in the railroad business; however, we have been able to work with certain grade crossings, to have some alternative approaches to this application with the sounding of the horn. As the Purple Line becomes operational, we will examine every opportunity to address the noise issues and procedure for how the horns will be sounded at the grade crossings that traverse communities such as Lyttonville. Please consider that the sounding of the horn in general is a safety measure. Although these grade crossings will be automatic gated crossings with warning lights and a bell, every measure of safety will be employed to protect the public from moving trains. We will work to minimize these impacts as much as possible while maintaining safety.

Question: There is a new short third track in the CSX right of way from the Talbot Avenue bridge to the Lyttonsville Place bridge. What is that about?

Response: The third track is a storage track that has been constructed to allow CSX to have flexibility for their operations. If they have a maintenance concern and need to get a train off the main line, they can move it onto the storage track.

Question: The Talbot Avenue Bridge is significantly elevated from the adjacent street on the north side of the bridge. Can someone comment on the construction changes that will be needed on the street to manage drainage and smooth the drop-off from the bridge for vehicles?

Response: Design and construction of the new Talbot Avenue Bridge is progressing well. The turn on the new bridge will not be as sharp as it was previously, and it will connect down to the street level at a reasonable distance from Rosemary Hills Elementary. Once retaining walls have been built on both sides of the road, the road and drainage system will be built up in order to meet the bridge. Before wall construction, utility poles and water line relocations must be completed.

Question: The Barrington Apartments have experienced damage due to trees being cut down. We have experienced mud sliding into the pool and light spillage into a nearby community. Who is the best person to reach out to for assistance?

Response: Please email Gary Witherspoon at GWitherspoon1@mdot.maryland.gov or outreach@purplelinemd.com.

Question: Will the walls be above the road on the trackside? How will water drainage work for the homeowners on 4th Avenue where their property adjoins the road?

Response: Typically, all designs will direct water toward drains away from the community. All designs account for the impervious surface and do not allow for drainage without direction.

Question: Will the stormwater connection beneath the CSX tracks near Ballard be completed anytime soon?

Response: This work is not anticipated to be complete in the near-term.

Question: Many students use student IDs to get free rides on RideOn buses. Does the same policy apply for the Purple Line?

Response: MDOT MTA has not determined the fare policy for the Purple Line, nor the manner for the reduced fares. Within one year of starting revenue service, we will know more.

Question: Park Sutton has experienced light spillage due to the removal of trees near the Barrington Apartments.

Response: Unfortunately, trees had to be removed to take the alignment through the area. We are never happy to remove a tree; however, it was done in accordance with environmental compliance; and reforestation is a part of the overall project. Unfortunately, reforestation does not result in one-for-one tree replacement. The county also has a program that can supply trees for areas that do not impact the alignment (<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/green/trees/tree-montgomery.html>).

If the lights are caused by our construction activities, then absolutely we want to know about it and mitigate it right away to the extent that we can. If the lights are being caused by equipment outside of the Purple Line, certainly let us know, and we will try to see if we can coordinate to get you help.

Question: Do you see any difficulties in the eventual conversion of the land between Michigan and Kansas avenues bordering the tracks from construction storage area to Park? When will this happen? Can we meet with your arborist and representative together with representatives from MCDOT and the Parks Department to discuss the placement of trees along the trail and in the new park?

Response: We do not anticipate any difficulties in the conversion of the land between Michigan and Kansas Avenues bordering the tracks from construction storage area to a park. The conversion will happen as the construction draws to a close and the light rail system is up and running. The facility plan for this new neighborhood park will be developed by the Montgomery County Department of Parks (<https://www.montgomeryparks.org/projects/directory/lyttonsville-area-future-neighborhood-park-project/>)

Question: Is it possible to change the design of the Stewart Avenue stormwater management facility? Residents would like to see it used as a community park, simply landscaped to be an amenity to the neighborhood.

Response: The Purple Line does not expect any design changes. The Stewart Avenue stormwater management facility was contemplated as a surface level facility, but the design was shifted to be an underground facility in order to comply with Maryland 378 pond code regulatory requirements. The designs show that most of the area will be comprised of underground water containment vaults and sand filters. There will only be two feet of earth between the ground and the underground structures, providing insufficient space for tree roots. The area will be nicely landscaped with grasses and shrubbery; and it will not in any way be used as a storage location.