

Joint Kent-Queen Anne's Task Force

January 20, 2017

Members Present: Bernadette Bowman, Jack Brosius, Foster Beach, Wayne Darrell, Commissioner Ronald H. Fithian, Ken Fry, Shelley Heller, and Greg Todd

Member Absent: Margo Bailey, Commissioner Jack Wilson, Mayor Chris Cerino, Mark Glass, Paul Hanley, Greg Holsey, Joe Holt, Commissioner William A. Short, and Greg Roby

Also in attendance: David A. Bramble, President, David A. Bramble, Inc., Bob Rager, Community Liaison, Maryland State Highway Administration; Jamie Williams, Coordinator, Economic Development, and Jerry Roderick, Director of Public Safety, Washington College, on behalf of Joe Holt.

At 9:00 a.m. the meeting convened. Commissioner Fithian gave opening remarks.

Mr. Rager reported that the maintenance and painting work on the Chester River Bridge is complete. Mr. Beach commended the Maryland State Highway Association and the contractor for completing the work with minimal disruption but expressed his dismay that the bridge parapets and the light lenses were not cleaned and that the light posts were not painted.

The Task Force discussed whether to continue meeting to discuss the possibility of a Chester River Boulevard. Commissioner Fithian stated that the Boulevard has been a topic of conversation since 1994. Mr. Beach outlined the importance of the project, explaining that as traffic continues to grow some thought should be given to restudying the Boulevard Concept. Mr. Beach stated that he would like to see the Maryland Department of Transportation and the State Highway Administration provide what the impact on Rt. 213 may be as a result of the widening of Rt. 301 to Rt. 95 and whether Chestertown will see any diminishing of traffic once the project is complete. Secondly, Mr. Beach requested for the State Highway Administration to provide an impact study for the Bay Bridge.

Mr. Brosius provided the history of the Boulevard Concept as it pertains to Chester Harbor. Mr. Brosius stated that he believes Kent County needs to determine a long-term future plan as to how it would like to grow, economically. He does not believe that a Chester River Boulevard would impact economic development in Queen Anne's County. Ms. Williams stated that as a Queen Anne's County resident, and a resident of Chester Harbor, she would like to see the Boulevard Concept brought back and stated that a lot has changed since the last study was conducted. Commissioner Fithian stated that the Maryland State Highway Administration should be invited to brief the Task Force on the previous studies and include the options, problems and recommendations. Mr. Bramble expressed his concern that bridges do fall down and the Boulevard Concept should be considered given the age of the current bridge.

Mr. Beach inquired as to whether Queen Anne's County supported the Chester River Boulevard. Queen Anne's County sent a letter dated July 26, 2016, to the Honorable Pete K. Rahn, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation, supporting an alternative crossing of the Chester River.

Ms. Williams stated that the first step to considering the Chester River Boulevard is to get the project on the Priority Project Funding List. The priority letter is due in April and stated that it would be beneficial for Kent and Queen Anne's to include the project on both priority lists.

Mr. Rager informed the Task Force that the Governor has a Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG), which meets quarterly on Wednesday evenings. Meetings are open to the public. For more information please visit:

http://www.mdt.maryland.gov/Meeting_Schedules/BBRAG_Meeting_Schedule.html.

Mr. Rager also stated that the Delaware Department of Transportation conducted a Toll Diversion Study in 2006 which shows traffic patterns and how much additional traffic could be generated. Mr. Rager will provide the Task Force with a copy of the study.

The Task Force agreed not to continue to meet monthly, but to reconvene when the Maryland Department of Transportation is available to present an overview of the Chester River Boulevard. Ms. Williams stated that members from the Bay Bridge Monitoring Committee should be invited to attend.

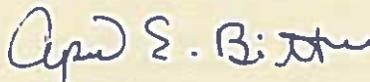
Mr. Bramble stressed the importance of the priority funding letter and stated that perhaps the State Highway Administration could discuss the procedure for submissions when they give an overview of the Chester River Boulevard studies.

Commissioner Fithian thanked the members of the Task Force and the citizens of Kent and Queen Anne's Counties for their participation in the maintenance and painting project. Mr. Brosius stated that Emergency Services should keep record of the emergency plans developed for the closure for future use.

On motion by Mr. Brosius, seconded by Mr. Fry, the Task Force agreed to adjourn the meeting.

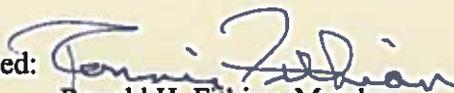
The meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



April E. Bitter, Deputy Clerk

Approved:



Ronald H. Fithian, Member
The County Commissioners
Of Kent County, Maryland