

Report of the Transportation Committee for July, 2005

The Committee met on July 19, 2005, at the McLean Community Center, to hear first hand information and exchange views with respect to the ongoing negotiations between the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and its contractor for preliminary engineering, the Dulles Transit Partners (composed of Bechtel and the Washington Group). Presentations were made by Marcia McAllister of DRPT and Jennifer Aument of DTP.

The urgency was sparked by a surprise report by DTP that costs of Phase I could rise to an amount as high as \$2.4 billion dollars. Intensive work has been underway on a crash basis to refine the proposal to meet both cost constraints and design needs. There was exploration of potential cost-saving adjustments in the Locally Preferred Alternative of rail through the heart of the Tysons business area adopted by the Commonwealth Transportation Board, WMATA, Fairfax County, and Loudoun County. Included among them were the possible elimination of the 5,000-foot tunnel and its replacement by an elevated structure and simplifications in station design.

Also discussed were the various legal and financial constraints on planning and questions were aired concerning alternatives to the Locally Preferred Alternative. The adequacy of the contractual arrangements between DRPT and DTP and the possibility of competitive bidding were also discussed.

The need to meet Federal Transit Administration deadline is forcing a tight schedule for the negotiation and it is expected that it will take substantial form in August. Marcia McAllister has agreed to meet again with the Transportation Committee when that point is reached.

Submitted by Bill Byrnes, Chairman