

Stop the Metro Meeting Synopsis 6/14/2023

The meeting was brought to order at 7:10 pm with 63 attendees who live or work on Niagara Falls Blvd, Allenhurst Rd., Capen Blvd and Windemere Blvd. The majority of the attendees were present as a result of flyers announcing the meeting being distributed in their neighborhoods.

INTRODUCTION/CURRENT NFTA PROPOSAL

The proposed route of the light rail was presented with the use of maps created by the NFTA as part of the public documentation found on agency's website. The maps showed that the NFTA initially proposed the light rail run underground from the University Station down Bailey Avenue. The NFTA then determined that this route was too costly and settled on the current proposed route that would run underground from the University Station down Kenmore Avenue to Niagara Falls Blvd. The light rail would go above ground through the use of a portal in the vicinity of Decatur and Niagara Falls Blvd. The cost savings with the latter route would be approximately \$200,000 and would use a "cut and cover" approach to create a tunnel for the light rail.

Discussion was held about the current work being done on Kenmore Ave. and Niagara Falls Blvd including pink markings representing the placement of utilities and a geological survey to test the soil.

Attendee comments were made regarding the age of some of the structures on Niagara Falls Blvd and the potential damage to them due to construction, eminent domain issues, traffic patterns on Niagara Falls Blvd during and after construction and an alternate route down Millersport Highway.

PETITION

Attendees were reminded that a petition could be found on Change.org and all were encouraged to sign it if they had not done so, and to ask friends and family to sign as well. A link to the petition also can be found on <http://stopthemetrometro.com>. The petition currently has under 200 signatures.

One attendee suggested that a hard copy of the petition be taken door-to-door for those persons who cannot get to the meetings or who do not have access to an electronic device.

VIRTUAL SCOPING MEETING 9/15/2021

The NFTA held a virtual public meeting on September 15, 2021 regarding the extension and recordings of the comments of 4 attendees were played. The first was Joseph Lane, current president of the Audubon Homeowners Association, who

expressed the concerns of those living in the Walton Woods development regarding the proposed route of the light rail down Audubon Parkway as well as the creation of a NFTA maintenance facility as the end point of the route. These concerns included noise pollution, vibration and environmental impacts, among others.

Mr. Lane also attended this 6/14 meeting. He spoke about potential arguments to be raised to oppose the extension now including attacking NFTA assumptions about the need for the extension as well as addressing any criteria that the Federal Transit Administration may need the NFTA to meet in order to be entitled to federal funds.

The second recording was of comments made by Robert Schober. He is a business owner on Niagara Falls Blvd and was concerned about traffic being reduced to a single lane in both directions on Niagara Falls Blvd due to the light rail running down the middle of the road. He was also concerned about residents' access to their driveways on the north and south sides of Niagara Falls Blvd, the distance allotted for moving traffic vis-à-vis the houses on the Boulevard and the effect on the fire district's operations. In short, he felt the extension could destroy the neighborhoods adjacent to the extension.

The third recording was of comments made by David Grek. He indicated he had grown up near the current LaSalle station and was familiar with the impact the extension's construction would have on neighborhoods including the debris left behind during and after construction. He also had concerns about the environmental impacts of the construction and its aftermath, the potential release of radon gas due to underground construction efforts, crime in the train stations and the possibility the businesses along the route being "choked out" by the construction.

The fourth recording was of comments made by Jeanne Vinal, a current legislator in the Town of Amherst. While she stated that she was in favor of public transportation which allowed people easy access to work and education, she had concerns about the light rail being an outmoded method of transportation by the time it is up and running given the change to electric vehicles and the lack of flexibility associated with the light rail. Ms. Vinal believed that more buses and more bus routes were the answer, not an extension of the light rail.

TELEGRAM GROUP

Attendees were encouraged to download the Telegram app on their electronic devices and to click on the link on the stopthemetrol.com sidebar to join thereby facilitating communication among those opposing the extension.

ROAD SIGNS

Road signs were made available to the attendees to be placed on their property. Donations to offset the \$322 cost to obtain the signs were requested.

LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN

Attendees were asked to take 30 minutes and draft letters to local politicians particularly Representative Brian Higgins. A template for the letter along with paper and envelopes were provided to the attendees. The letters were then collected to be mailed out.

Comments were made about the difficulty emergency vehicles may have to the adjacent neighborhoods during and after construction.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.