

Transportation & Transit Listening Session Notes

10/14/15

Bus

- Dedicated bus lanes are the second priority for space on W North Ave (sidewalks/crosswalks/ped safety is first, bike lanes are third)
- Need later operating hours
- Lack of bus service in Upton West/Heritage Crossing areas
- Need more buses equipped with bike racks
- Consider using old #54 bus route, turning around on Cumberland rather than on Fulton/Druid Hill Ave
- Snow plows put giant mounds of snow onto the sidewalk at bus stops, and that snow is often not cleared, making it very difficult to board the bus
- Need more buses equipped with bike racks
- Need more free buses (expand the Circulator)
- Need night time shuttle, especially for seniors who don't feel safe taking public transportation at night
- Convert one-way streets into two-way for better bus access

Metro

- Additional sanitation services and cleaning needed in station and platform areas for Penn North, Upton-Avenue Market, and Mondawmin stations
- Kids are stopping the escalators at Charles Center and Mondawmin on a regular basis, making them ADA inaccessible
- Need better wayfinding signage in stations (esp for track numbers)
- Need real time info displays
- Railing to Mondawmin station ices over in winter and is a safety hazard
- Public urination in elevators is a frequent problem

Walking

- Sidewalks/crosswalks/pedestrian safety is the number one priority for space on North Ave (dedicated bus lanes are seconds, bikes lanes are third)
- Lots of loitering and drug dealing on the sidewalk around the Penn/North intersection limits movement and makes people feel unsafe
- Intersection at Penn/North is so unsafe (speeding, failure to yield to pedestrians, unpredictable movements, drug activity) that some people prefer to use the subway station to go underneath the intersection or drive
- Speeding on Madison Ave (2200-2500 blocks) – need traffic calming
- Speeding on Druid Hill Ave (2200-2500 blocks, esp Whitelock intersection) – need traffic calming
- Speeding on Pennsylvania (2700-2500 blocks) – need traffic calming. Lots of accidents at Clifton & Pennsylvania. DOT did a report stating there is a problem but now can't find the report
- Speeding, illegal turns, and difficult crossings near schools, recreation, and senior facilities – need traffic calming (esp on 900-1400 blocks of Pennsylvania)

- People in wheelchairs and scooters are forced to use the streets since the sidewalks are in such poor condition (esp. 2200-2500 Pennsylvania and 2200-2500 Druid Hill Ave)
- Concern about jaywalking

Biking

- Bike lanes are the third priority for space on W North Ave (after sidewalks/crosswalks/ped safety and dedicated bus lanes)
- Need bike lanes on Druid Hill Ave (cyclist has been hit twice)
- Put a bike share station at Penn North Metro station stop
- Concern about enforcement of bike lanes and dirt bikes

Driving/Parking

- Protected left hand turn from Pennsylvania onto North Ave is too short and sometimes doesn't work
- Want more readily accessible on-street parking (manage pricing to create open spaces, keep revenue in neighborhood?)
- Would be good to have some dedicated parking around Metro stops for transit users
- Investigate re-allowing parking area on 2412-2416 Pennsylvania Ave for handicapped/physically challenged

Plazas/Public Spaces

- Drug activity dominates these spaces and blocks out and discourages other people and uses. Need to remove negative activity to make room for positive things
- Bring in entertainment and history into the plazas (maybe partner with Arch Social Club?)
- Educate people about taking advantage of the space for communities
- Repurpose small triangle parks on W North Ave to discourage drug dealing

Public Safety/Crime

- Pervasive drug dealing and using at Penn/North intersection and small parks on W North Ave
- Need to review deployment plan – not enough officers for the high number of people and demonstrated public safety issues
- Security cameras, additional lighting, security guards on foot, more police foot patrols, and drug education might help reduce crime
- Perception (and reality) of crime prevents business expansion and attraction
- People feel safer when there are more people around, as long as they aren't drug dealers/users
- Seeing people they know makes people feel safer
- People feel most unsafe at the Penn/North intersection, 1600 block of W North Ave, Pennsylvania from W North Ave to Laurens St, Cumberland St
- Most people feel unsafe walking on the corridors, esp after 5 pm
- Mondawmin and Penn North stations have a different MTA police district than Upton and State Center
- Drug dealing happening out of businesses and parked cars
- New Subway franchise operator sells straws to people looking to snort drugs in the area

- Businesses are selling loose cigarettes
- Artists and children couldn't even finish the mural on the Pennsylvania side of the Library due to the high volume of drug traffic at that bus stop
- Library area should be a drug free zone - drug dealing and use immediately in front of and around the Library discourages patrons and Library expansion/investment
- Add a police kiosk at Penn/North that is staffed from 9-5, daily
- After the riots, seems like police aren't coming into the area as much and criminals are more confrontational with police officers
- Use infiltrative tactics to combat drug activity
- Invest in drug treatment programs and drug education to take customers away from the dealers

Economic Development

- Designate Pennsylvania Ave a Maryland State Arts & Entertainment district
- Special shuttle from Mondawmin and Downtown to Arch Social Club during night operating hours
- With so many people in the area it's ripe for development
- Need to combat stigma of Penn and North which scares away people and investment
- Need more stores and restaurants than just fast food and corner stores
- Need anchors or destinations – sit down restaurants, shops, Starbucks, Chipotle, movie theatre, Office Depot, market
- Need a larger entertainment venue – like the Royal Theater and Sphinx Club concepts
- Get residents and people passing through to spend money in the neighborhood
- Capitalize on the African-American arts and entertainment history of the area to revitalize the corridors
- If Mondawmin area can improve, then Pennsylvania and W North Ave can revitalize, too
- Improve Pennsylvania Ave Main Street program and expand to West North Ave

Housing/Sanitation

- Vacant houses are holding the neighborhoods back
- Penn/North intersection has a depressed look that physical beautification alone will not solve
- Illegal dumping (esp 1700 block N Carey)

Recreation

- Promotions that get kids out of the neighborhoods to visit museums, parks, Inner Harbor attractions, etc
- Drug dealing and use immediately in front of and around the Library discourages patrons and Library expansion/investment