

City Council Public Hearing – May 15, 2010

David Kaplay  
#2 2K  
5-15-10

Good morning Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Members of Council. I want to extend my congratulations and appreciation to the Council for passing an FY 2011 budget that maintains our City's commitment to transit service. Amidst one of the most challenging budget years in many decades, this Council made a clear statement affirming the vital role of transit service in keeping our City vibrant, attractive to new residents and businesses, and in supporting job creation and economic growth. You've helped to keep residents in their homes and able to live independently and travel with dignity.

The \$1.6 million you committed for additional WMATA subsidy helped to prod Maryland and the District of Columbia to bring more money to the table, so the WMATA Board would not have to depend on massive service cuts to balance its budget. Next year's WMATA budget will require riders to pay significantly more to use the service, but I believe we will avert a death spiral, which would have created gridlock like we've never seen before and undercut the viability of transit-oriented development.

I want to spotlight this today as you prepare to vote on the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan. This plan lays out the vision for a new mixed-use, walkable neighborhood with a Metrorail station at its heart. If done right, this neighborhood will be one of the most attractive places to live, work, and play in the entire region. The Council's insistence that a new Metrorail station be included is not without risk, but it is the right decision as we will not get the quality urban development and sense of place we seek without it. Coupled with the Council's vote last month to develop the Hoffman property surrounding the Eisenhower Avenue Station, there is a lot of momentum for finally maximizing our investment in Metro.

However, as we look to FY 2012, there is more work to be done to maintain the City's commitment to transit. I hope the City will hold a public meeting in the fall to present the findings of a consultant study that was done last year on bus service efficiencies. I have not seen the study, but I understand that recommendations were made to make adjustments in how DASH and Metrobus service are deployed in order to maximize their ability to meet growing demand and changing commuting patterns.

For the last two years, the City's operating budget has included only proposals to eliminate bus service and take away options. Transit riders will never support this, and I don't think that comes as a surprise. But, with an understanding that the City values transit and will provide the funding necessary to maintain a certain baseline level of service throughout the City, I think bus riders can engage in the study's findings and offer good feedback on how to adjust service to make improvements with only a modest amount of additional resources.

There also needs to be community discussion about the capital needs for DASH. DOD and the City will partner to encourage transit use at Mark Center. But we need to start procuring additional buses now, or those vehicles won't be here when the workers start coming.

I think the Council understands the need for new sources of revenue to fund transit as our neighbors in Arlington and Fairfax did with a commercial add on tax. As you engage all Alexandrians in a discussion of our transportation future, please find a way to make the case for how this additional revenue is necessary to sustain our City's future growth, vitality, and livability.

Thank you again for your vision and commitment to transit.

## SPEAKER'S FORM

DOCKET ITEM NO. 2

2K

**PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND GIVE IT TO THE CITY CLERK  
BEFORE YOU SPEAK ON A DOCKET ITEM**

PLEASE ANNOUNCE THE INFORMATION SPECIFIED BELOW PRIOR TO SPEAKING.

1. NAME: David Kaplan
2. ADDRESS: 418 Queen Street Alexandria, VA 22314
- TELEPHONE NO. 703-535-384 E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_
3. WHOM DO YOU REPRESENT, IF OTHER THAN YOURSELF? NIA
4. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION ON THE ITEM?  
FOR: \_\_\_\_\_ AGAINST: \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_
5. NATURE OF YOUR INTEREST IN ITEM (PROPERTY OWNER, ATTORNEY, LOBBYIST, CIVIC INTEREST, ETC.): \_\_\_\_\_
6. ARE YOU RECEIVING COMPENSATION FOR THIS APPEARANCE BEFORE COUNCIL?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO X

This form shall be kept as a part of the permanent record in those instances where financial interest or compensation is indicated by the speaker.

A maximum of three minutes will be allowed for your presentation, except that one officer or other designated member speaking on behalf of each *bona fide* neighborhood civic association or unit owners' association desiring to be heard on a docket item shall be allowed five minutes. In order to obtain five minutes, you must identify yourself as a designated speaker, and identify the neighborhood civic association or unit owners' association you represent, at the start of your presentation. If you have a prepared statement, please leave a copy with the Clerk.

Additional time not to exceed 15 minutes may be obtained with the consent of the majority of the council present; provided notice requesting additional time with reasons stated is filed with the City Clerk in writing before 5:00 p.m. of the day preceding the meeting.

The public normally may speak on docket items only at public hearing meetings, and not at regular legislative meetings. Public hearing meetings are usually held on the Saturday following the second Tuesday in each month; regular legislative meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays in each month. The rule with respect to when a person may speak to a docket item at a legislative meeting can be waived by a majority vote of council members present but such a waiver is not normal practice. When a speaker is recognized, the rules of procedures for speakers at public hearing meetings shall apply. If an item is docketed *for public hearing* at a regular legislative meeting, the public may speak to that item, and the rules of procedures for speakers at public hearing meetings shall apply.

In addition, the public may speak on matters which are not on the docket during the Public Discussion Period at public hearing meetings. The mayor may grant permission to a person, who is unable to participate in public discussion at a public hearing meeting for medical, religious, family emergency or other similarly substantial reasons, to speak at a regular legislative meeting. When such permission is granted, the rules of procedures for public discussion at public hearing meetings shall apply.

## Guidelines for the Public Discussion Period

(a) All speaker request forms for the public discussion period must be submitted by the time the item is called by the city clerk.

(b) No speaker will be allowed more than three minutes; except that one officer or other designated member speaking on behalf of each *bona fide* neighborhood civic association or unit owners' association desiring to be heard during the public discussion period shall be allowed five minutes. In order to obtain five minutes, you must identify yourself as a designated speaker, and identify the neighborhood civic association or unit owners' association you represent, at the start of your presentation.

(c) If more speakers are signed up than would be allotted for in 30 minutes, the mayor will organize speaker requests by subject or position, and allocated appropriate times, trying to ensure that speakers on unrelated subjects will also be allowed to speak during the 30 minute public discussion period.

(d) If speakers seeking to address council on the same subject cannot agree on a particular order or method that they would like the speakers to be called on, the speakers shall be called in the chronological order of their request forms' submission.

(e) Any speakers not called during the public discussion period will have the option to speak at the conclusion of the meeting, after all docketed items have been heard.