

August 14, 2023, Community Meeting Q&A

Meeting Summary:

The Summer 2023 community meeting for the Northern Bus Garage Reconstruction Project was hosted virtually and in person at the Petworth Neighborhood Library on August 14, 2023. The project team shared project updates and answered questions from the community. The topics covered included: team introductions/project overview and updates, MTPD update, environmental management update, Metro's Zero Emission Bus Update, a look ahead, and what to expect next quarter.

Project Overview and Updates

Q: Will Saturday work be ongoing?

A: Yes, Saturday work will be ongoing.

Q: What percentage of DBE/CBE businesses are working on the project? How much of the demolition construction has been spent and of that, how much has been allocated to those DBE/CBE businesses?

A: We're working under [WMATA's DBE program](#) so the participating firms have to be registered in that program. Our construction phase has a 20% DBE/CBE participation goal, and we have identified scopes of work of over \$80 million for those minority partners. We are currently on target to meet our goal.

The prime demolition contractor is not a DBE, but nearly 100% of the trucking support for the hauling is being performed by DBE trucking companies. The value of that DBE demolition work is currently estimated at \$450,000.

Q: Could parking be located at Carter Barron Amphitheatre with shuttle service provided for employees?

A: We have available parking at the Western Bus Garage facility for our bus operators, and they are encouraged to park there and then take the bus down to meet the reliefs at Colorado and 14th Streets NW. We have been working with the union to promote this plan, and garage superintendents have been out at Colorado and 14th Streets NW meeting with the operators to continue encouraging operators to take advantage of this plan.

Q: Is there going to be a community room in the new garage?

A: Yes, a community room will be available.

MTPD Update:

Q: Why is the Transit Police Department going to have space in the new facility?

A: The department will only be located at the facility for administrative purposes. Transit police will provide training to bus operators to ensure safety while working. Because the department is a 24-hour operation, officers will use the facility to complete administrative tasks.

Q: What is MTPD doing to engage the community, specifically minority children?

A: We host monthly Youth Advisory Council meetings for DC students. The meeting is held at 307th Street SW. We also visit DC schools and meet with DC school administrators to strengthen relationships in the community. On August 19, we're hosting a [back-to-school event](#) from 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. at the Fort Totten metro station.

Environmental Management Update:

Q: Where was the asbestos located?

A: Asbestos was identified in mastic (or glue) under a portion of the floor tile in the former NBG administrative office. Asbestos was not found in any other area of the garage.

Q: How was the asbestos removed from the building?

A: The asbestos was removed from the former NBG building and disposed of in accordance with the District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) regulations. Specifically, a negative pressure environment was created to ensure that air was not escaping. Trained crews with protective equipment collected the asbestos material in double-wrapped, secured bags. The bags were put in drums and transported to an off-site disposal facility licensed for asbestos management.

Q: Can you coordinate rodent control beyond your borders with the DC Government?

A: We will continue to coordinate with DOEE and other District agencies.

Q: What water control methods were being used to manage dust?

A: WMATA complies with DOEE standards and industry best practices for dust control, including using water to limit dust dispersion, washing construction vehicle wheels when muddy, and using street sweepers.

Q: Can you provide more specifics on what the prior protocol was for dust management and what the new/increased protocol will be?

A: All demolition operations used for the project directed water streams to manage dust produced during demolition operations. As demolition operations wind down, we will continue to implement DOEE-guided mitigation measures for other construction operations. During excavation, the majority of the soil we've encountered on-site is moist enough that it doesn't produce dust during excavation and loading operations. We monitor to determine when to continue to use water to wet the soil and to suppress dust generated from vehicle traffic inside the job site. As excavation is completed, we'll make sure that we keep inactive work areas stabilized with a suitable cover to minimize any windblown dust until the new concrete floor slabs are in place.

Q: Can we get access to the current air monitoring readings?

A: Yes, the project team has posted the monthly reports for March 2023 through July 2023 [to the project site online](#) and will continue to post monthly reports moving forward.

Q: Can we have government agencies present at these meetings?

A: Yes, we encourage our partners to join the meetings. Two DOEE representatives were present online for this meeting.

Q: Can we have the contact information of the DOEE representative with us today?

A: The DOEE representatives who joined this meeting are Hannah Ashenafi and Apurva Patil. Their email addresses are Hannah.ashenafi@dc.gov and Apurva.patil@dc.gov, respectively.

Q: How do you define soil sampling, contaminated soil, documents Petro-impact, and groundwater contamination?

A: WMATA applies DOEE and EPA regulations and guidance to determine whether and when the presence of certain chemicals in the soil on site require testing, monitoring, remediation, and/or removal.

Q: Is there zero tolerance or regulatory levels that the community can learn about?

A: Yes, there are regulatory limits for soil contamination, noise, and dust.

For petroleum, we've been directed by DOEE to use what are called Tier One remediation levels. For non-petroleum compounds, we're using the Industrial Risk Screening Levels that are prescribed by EPA.

DOEE has established noise levels.

WMATA has set levels for vibration.

The District of Columbia has established regulations for dust management at construction sites.

Q: Will soil sampling take place off site, given the issues with dust migrating off site that have been raised?

A: We need to consult with DOEE about how to approach that issue due to limited access to private property for sample collection.

Q: Where are the dust monitors located?

A: The first monitor is located near the intersection of Iowa Avenue and Decatur Street. The second monitor is located near the intersection of Arkansas Avenue and Buchanan Street. The third monitor is located midblock on Fourteenth Street. All monitors are within the perimeter of the site.

Q: Are the noise levels expected to continue at the current levels?

A: Yes, they are expected to remain similar. As noted in the meeting, our noise monitoring equipment is showing that the noise levels after hours and on weekends are generally comparable to what we are seeing during working hours on the jobsite.

Q: How long we can expect the current noise levels to continue, and will they be increasing as we move from demolition into construction?

A: The noise levels are not expected to change dramatically as we move between the various construction operations in the near term.

Q: What are the health risks of this new bus barn? What emergency procedures will take place if there is an explosion of the new site?

A: WMATA will follow industry-accepted practices for the design, construction, and operation of the reconstructed bus garage.

Metro's Zero-Emission Bus Update:

Q: Are you able to share any of the initial fire hazard analysis with respect to choice of battery? Additionally, can you share the DC Fire review?

A: As Metro deploys battery-electric buses, it is carefully assessing and mitigating the risks associated with this new technology. Metro is currently undertaking a study to assess the risks of a fire event, and the best way to mitigate the risk. This study will help inform the way Metro designs facilities for battery-electric buses to provide safe operations.

What to Expect in 2023:

Q: Is there a link to the slides we can take a look at if we joined late?

A: Yes, today's community event presentation is available on the [project updates page](#).

Q: Is there a way the project team can provide more updates at a greater frequency to keep us informed?

A: Yes, there is a project newsletter available for the community to sign up and receive consistent project updates. Visit our [webpage](#) to sign up.