

July 18, 2017

Maryland Department of Transportation
Bradley Smith, Director of Office of Freight and Multimodalism
7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, MD 21076

SCMAGLEV Project, c/o John G. Trueschler
Maryland Transit Administration
6 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202

RE: SCMAGLEV – Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

Dear Mssrs. Smith and Trueschler,

As there has been grossly insufficient public notice about the MAGLEV project, we are formally requesting that the scoping process be reopened, that appropriate public notice be sent to all citizens along all of the potential alternative alignments, and that citizens, as required under the National Environmental Policy Act, be afforded the opportunity to comment on the purpose and need for the project, the alternatives to be considered, and the scope of environmental studies and impact analyses.

In addition, the FRA and MTA have failed to publicize citizens' rights to participate under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. We request that we be included as consulting parties under Section 106 and be informed of all Section 106 activities and meetings associated with this project.

Despite the fact that the MAGLEV project will require the demolition of homes and destroy greenspace, parks, and historic sites within our community, we nor anyone in our community have been notified in any manner of the proposed project or the scoping and alternatives meetings that have taken place. We have spoken to residents in communities along the existing Amtrak line and along the WB&A trail. We have spoken to stakeholders such as the Washington Area Bicycle Association. No one we have spoken with has been provided any notice of the project or the public meetings. Rather than hearing from MTA, we learned about the MAGLEV project from a neighbor who learned about it from a friend. Citizen word of mouth has been the only outreach on this project.

Other agencies including the Maryland State Highway Administration routinely send thousands of post cards to all affected citizens prior to scoping and alternatives meetings. MTA has failed to adequately notify citizens in this manner.

In addition, the copy of the post card shown on the MAGLEV website makes no mention of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act nor notify citizens that they will be able to comment on historic resource issues as part of the scoping process.

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According to the May 2017 scoping report (issued 6 months after the meetings and AFTER alternatives meetings were held), a cumulative total of 117 people attended the 5 scoping meetings that were held. Only 7 people attended the one meeting held in Prince George's County. This poor attendance for a project that will affect literally thousands of residents is proof that outreach for these meetings was utterly insufficient. Had we or our neighbors been notified about the meetings and that our community was in the cross hairs of this project, we would have been present and very vocal. Instead, the meetings were held without adequate notice during the holiday season resulting in MTA failing to hear the issues and concerns of the affected public.

The sparse attendance at Prince George's County public meeting is further evidence that low-income and minority populations located along the rail lines affected have been particularly excluded from the NEPA/EIS process.

Prince George's County has a whole has been largely ignored in the MAGLEV NEPA/EIS process. The May 2017 scoping report, pages 20 and 21, lists the agencies that were invited to participate in the project and invited to the agency scoping meeting. Not a single Prince George's County agency is included (though the Howard County Planning Department was included, but the project does not affect Howard County). In addition, there is no mention of the Prince George's County Council, local city councils or departments, or other stakeholder groups that must be given an adequate voice in the project.

- Flyer locations listed in the May 2017 scoping report do not include any locations in Bowie or Glen Dale, Crofton, Severn, Odenton, or other affected communities
- No notices were placed in newspapers serving much of the project area including the Washington Post, the Bowie Blade, the Capital Gazette, or the Sentinel
- Post cards were not distributed to communities directly affected by the proposed action including, but not limited to, Old Bowie, Rockledge, Northridge, Saddlebrook, Saddlebrook West, Two Rivers, Piney Orchard, Jason's Landing, Andorick Acres, or Pioneer City.

Close to 200 people attended the Bowie City Council meeting on July 10th to hear from MTA (a meeting MTA failed to show up to). The public outcry demonstrated at this meeting is further evidence that the public's concerns have not been heard by MTA. The overriding sentiment at this meeting was that citizens vehemently oppose the MAGLEV project and that the citizens of our communities have not received notices about this project from MTA nor been provided the opportunity to comment on the scope of the alternatives and the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement being prepared.

Public involvement is the cornerstone of the National Environmental Policy Act, and MTA has completely failed to provide notice of this project and the opportunities to comment on the scope of the project. Specifically:

- 40 CFR §1500.2, Policy (d) states that agencies must: "**Encourage and facilitate public involvement in decisions** which affect the quality of the human environment."

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- 40 CFR §1501.7, Scoping states that “There shall be an early **and open process** for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action.”
- 40 CFR §1506.6, Public involvement states that “Agencies shall: (a) Make **diligent efforts to involve the public** in preparing and implementing their NEPA procedures. (b) **Provide public notice of NEPA-related hearings, public meetings, and the availability of environmental documents** so as to inform those persons and agencies who may be interested or affected.
- The Council on Environmental Quality 40 Most Asked Questions (Q13) states “The regulations state that the scoping process is to be preceded by a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS. **But that is only the minimum requirement...**” and scoping must have “**appropriate public notice** and enough information available on the proposal so that the public and relevant agencies can participate effectively.”

In closing, for your failure to properly notify the public that will be the most affected by this action, resulting in loss of homes, greenspace, and parks; and the destruction of our quality of life, we formally request the FRA and MTA reopen the public scoping process to allow for public comment as afforded under the National Environmental Policy Act, so that FRA and MTA are able to make informed decisions regarding the MAGLEV project. In addition, we request that we be included as consulting parties under Section 106 and be informed of all Section 106 activities and meetings associated with this project.

We await your response to these requests.

Regards,

William and M. Joan Glynn
Saddlebrook West
8102 Red Farm Lane
Bowie, MD 20715

CC:

EPA Region 3
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Council on Environmental Quality
MD Historical Trust
US Senator Chris Van Hollen
US Senator Ben Cardin
Congressman Steny Hoyer
Governor Larry Hogan
State Senator Doug Peters
Delegate Geraldine Valentino-Smith
Prince George’s County Executive Rushern
Baker

Prince George’s County Councilman Todd
Turner
Bowie City Mayor Fred Robinson
Bowie Councilman James Marcos (At Large)
Bowie Councilman Henri Gardner (At Large)
Bowie Councilman Michael Estève (District 1)
Bowie Councilwoman Diane Polangin (District 2)
Bowie Councilwoman Courtney Glass (District 3)
Bowie Councilman Ike Trouth (District 4)