

The TLUC conducted a community meeting on the subject of the I-395 Express Lanes project and sound walls on September 12th in lieu of its regular September meeting. Guests included the VDOT Mega Projects Manager for the Express Lanes, Mr. Paul Nishimoto, and representatives from Transurban, Lane Construction and Civil Walls along with two VDOT landscape architects.

It must be noted that in early 2018, eligible residents and owners were given the opportunity to vote for or against construction of sound walls F1 (Shirlington Circle northward) and F2 (Shirlington Circle southward along N. Quaker Lane). Despite a low turnout, the majority of ballots cast were in support of building both walls, and they are being built. Wall F1 is being built atop existing structure, whereas F2 is being anchored in the ground and was the primary focus of the 12 September meeting. Mr. Brent McKenzie, Transurban, provided information regarding the wall design, color, construction method and schedule. Originally envisioned as being 850 feet in length, wall F2 was shortened to 700 feet to reduce its impact on landscaping and interference with utilities.

Mr. McKenzie advised that full overnight closure of northbound N. Quaker Lane from Preston Road to the Shirlington Circle would begin on 16 September and last approximately 3 weeks, depending on the weather. The detour via Preston Road and Martha Custis drive will be from 10PM to 5AM weeknights and 10PM to 6AM weekend nights. Mr. McKenzie also advised that VDOT had adopted my suggestion to post a primary detour south of King St./Braddock Rd. such that northbound traffic along N. Quaker Lane coming from Duke St. or Seminary Rd. would be advised to turn left at King St. to reach I-395. That should reduce the volume of traffic using the Parkfairfax detour somewhat.

Noise was a concern of some residents and it was pointed out that an auger will be used in lieu of a jackhammer for drilling purposes. While not silent, this method is believed to create the least disturbance to residents during the construction phase of sound wall F2.

There was considerable discussion regarding the temporary and permanent easement necessary for sound wall construction and maintenance. The size (area), encroachment on backyard tranquility, erosion, etc. were addressed.

The landscape architects explained the general methodology being pursued to restore the landscape on the community facing side of the sound wall and committed to presenting a "concept plan" to Parkfairfax later this fall with more specifics. Planting will occur in the fall of 2020. While VDOT will coordinate the planting with us, future maintenance of the landscape inside the wall will remain a Parkfairfax responsibility.

Participating residents and members of the VDOT team enjoyed a TLUC reception following the formal presentations and discussions.

A copy of the presentation is attached.

v/r

Bob Gronenberg, TLUC Chair