

With the emphasis on transit in today's world, my guess is that a well-planned, community-supported transit line would have a good chance of receiving state and federal funding. And we have a fully functional Transportation Department and transit system already.

So why does Montgomery County need an Independent Transit Authority that can fund unsupported transit lines by going over the tax cap...one reason is the poorly planned Corridor Cities Transitway with its long convoluted alignment that is unlikely to attract riders.

Montgomery County is hell-bent on building the CCT because, I suspect, it may be part of the support required by the deal cooked up by Johns Hopkins and Montgomery County back in the 1980's when they put together their plan to snooker Elizabeth Banks out of her family's land called Belward Farm. Johns Hopkins has no plans to build the academic campus on Belward, despite repeated promises to Ms. Banks. Ms. Banks was adamant that she did not want commercial development on her farm but soon after her death, the county at the request of Johns Hopkins rezoned the property for a commercial office complex for 15,000 people.

Belward Farm is adjacent to four established residential neighborhoods and is 5 miles from the nearest Metro Station so Hopkins needs a marketing tool to try to entice companies to lease property on Belward Farm...thus far without success. Hence, the urgency for construction of the Corridor Cities Transitway. Apparently the InterCounty Connector (ICC) was not enough and the University still has its hand out.

State and county officials have said, in private, that nobody is expected to ride the CCT. A gentleman from the Clarksburg Chamber of Commerce said that the people of Clarksburg won't ride it. The CEO of Medimmune declined to have a CCT station or a pedestrian bridge because his employees said they prefer to drive. With minimal or no parking at the stations, we've been told the CCT is not being built for commuters, aka the residents.

This billion dollar boondoggle is simply a very expensive marketing tool for Johns Hopkins which is a very well-funded organization. The University can well-afford to fund its own shuttle just like many corporations and universities instead of expecting the taxpayers of Montgomery County to foot the bill. If Hopkins steps up to fund its own shuttle, the CCT would not be necessary. Those funds would then be available for a well-planned, community-supported transportation system in our area or elsewhere in the County.

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