

Tuesday, January 15, 2008

PURPLE LINE THAT DOESN'T GO TO PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PUSHED BY CHEVY CHASE INFLUENTIALS

Well-connected Chevy Chase residents and golfers have launched a renewed push for a Purple Line route that would avoid their affluent neighborhoods and an exclusive country club -- and wouldn't go to Prince George's County at all.

The aim is to revive a "Purple Line Loop" route proposed in 2003 and quickly rejected by Maryland transportation planners. Under this plan Purple Line trains would share the Red Line track through D.C. but cross from Medical Center to Silver Spring on elevated tracks built above the Beltway. From Silver Spring, the Purple Line trains would go back into D.C., bypassing Prince George's County entirely.

A letter-writing campaign aimed at Governor O'Malley, Lt. Gov. Brown, and Montgomery County officials began this past Saturday, January 12. Participants include J. Paul McNamara, a vice president of Columbia Country Club. The Purple Line route now under study follows old railroad tracks that adjoin Columbia Country Club's golf course.

"One of the great things about the Purple Line is how it will bring Montgomery and Prince George's Counties together," commented James Allen, co-chair of Prince George's Action for Community Transportation. "This project absolutely must serve both counties."

Ben Ross, president of the Montgomery-based Action Committee for Transit, joined Allen in denouncing the "Loop" plan. "Light rail will be an asset to all the communities it runs through," added Ross, who lives across the street from the future Purple Line station in Bethesda.

For more information:

<http://www.innerpurpleline.org/mediacalline.htm>