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MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC HEARING

SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

Baltimore County Public Library - North Point Branch

1716 Merritt Boulevard

Dundalk, MD 21222

* * * * *

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. BING: Good evening. I am Andrew Bing, and I will be the facilitator for tonight’s public hearing. A few quick announcements. This hearing is for the rebuild of the Francis Scott Key Bridge. The demolition of the remaining Francis Scott Key Bridge structures was reviewed under two separate tidal wetlands license numbers.

Comments relating to the demolition were received during the August 1, 2024, public hearing, and during the notice period which ended August 15th, 2024. Just for reference, if anyone needs to use the restroom, they are out in the lobby over by the staircase, and there is staff that can help you locate the restroom if you, if you need to use the restroom.

Please make sure you have signed in tonight. This will make sure that everyone is provided updates as this process moves forward. If you would like to sign up to provide a public comment, you need to let the person at the sign-up table know.

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This hearing is being live streamed and recorded. If you are here for informational purposes and do not wish to comment, or you are unable to stay for the entire hearing, you have the opportunity to livestream this vide from home or watch a recording at a later time. The comment sheets, located at the front desk, have information to locate the livestream and the recording of this hearing.

We will start with a welcome and some introductory comments by the Maryland Department of the Environment. We will then have a brief presentation from the applicant, the Maryland Transportation Authority, and finally I will review the ground rules for this hearing. At that point, we will start taking public comments.

I would now like to introduce Tammy Roberson, Deputy Program Manager, Wetlands and Waterways Protection Program of the Maryland Department of the Environment.

MS. ROBERSON: Good evening. My name is Tammy Roberson, and I’m the Deputy Program Manager of the Wetlands and Waterways program within the Water and Science Administration at the Maryland Department of the

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Environment. I will be the hearing officer for tonight’s public informational hearing.

Also in attendance from the department are, sorry, Jay Apperson, Deputy Director, Office of Communications, Heather Nelson, Program Manager, Wetlands and Waterways Protection Program, Heather Hepburn, Tidal Wetlands, Western Region Chief, Matt Wallach, Tidal Wetlands Division Project Manager, Amina Lipscomb, Communications Specialist.

I would like to welcome everyone here this evening, and thank the Community College of Baltimore County, Dundalk Campus, for use of the Dundalk Theatre at the Lloyd College Center tonight.

At this time, I would like to acknowledge any elected officials or their representatives who may be present here this evening. If you are an elected official or representing an elected official, please raise your hand and make your way to one of the mics.

MR. GARBARK: Good evening. I’m Matt Garbark, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Infrastructure Development representing Mayor Brandon Scott.

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MS. ROBERSON: Thank you for attending this hearing, and we will be hearing your testimony shortly if you do plan to speak.

If there is anyone who has not signed the attendance sheet, please do so before you leave tonight. These sheets will be used to notify you of MDE’s final decision and provide you with a copy of the hearing report and will also be used to identify those of you who wish to make a statement at tonight’s hearing.

Those statements will be heard at the conclusion of the applicant’s presentation. The attendance sheets will also be provided to the Board of Public Works for use in its review process. As a courtesy, please turn off all communication devices, or place them in silent mode.

We are conducting a public informational hearing pursuant to Subsection 5-204 of the Environment Article, Code of Maryland Regulations, (COMAR) 26.24.01.05, and COMAR 26.08.0210F(2). The purpose of this public informational hearing is for the applicant to present the proposed project and tidal wetlands impacts that may be

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1 associated with the proposed activity, as well as any
 2 impact to water quality.

3 In addition, the hearing provides the
 4 Department with an opportunity to solicit additional
 5 information from interested persons. This hearing is not
 6 a contested case hearing under Maryland’s Administrative
 7 Procedure Act.

8 While I want to stress the fact that we are
 9 here to share information, we will have some structure to
 10 the hearing in terms of the order and length of the
 11 various presentations. Please be advised that it is not
 12 necessary to read a statement to make it part of the
 13 official record. Written comments will also be accepted
 14 and receive the same consideration as an oral statement.
 15 In fact, for accuracy, if you have written comments to
 16 read into the record, please provide a copy of those
 17 comments before you leave. This hearing is being
 18 recorded.

19 The statutory authority for issuance of a Tidal
 20 Wetlands License is Title 16 of the Environment Article,
 21 Annotated Code of Maryland, as implemented under COMAR

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1 Section 23.02.04, and Subtitle 26.24. A State Tidal
 2 Wetlands License is issued by the Board of Public Works,
 3 consisting of the Governor, State Treasurer, and
 4 Comptroller of the State of Maryland, based upon a Report
 5 and Recommendation submitted to the Board by the
 6 Department.

7 In accordance with the Maryland Constitution,
 8 the Board is the sole body with authority over state
 9 property, including state tidal wetlands. In its
 10 proprietary authority, the Board has the right to grant a
 11 third party a license to construct or conduct an activity
 12 in state tidal wetlands.

13 According to Section 16-202 of the Environment
 14 Article, the Secretary of the Department shall assist the
 15 Board in determining whether to issue a license to dredge
 16 or fill State wetlands. The Secretary shall submit a
 17 report indicating whether the license should be granted,
 18 including any recommended terms, conditions and
 19 consideration, after consultation with applicable
 20 federal, state and local entities, issuance of sufficient
 21 public notice, and conducting any requested hearing,

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1 consideration of any public comments received, and
 2 consideration of any other information the Secretary
 3 thinks advisable.

4 In making its decision, the Board is guided by
 5 the public policy of the State, considering applicable
 6 ecological, economic, developmental, recreational and
 7 aesthetic values to preserve tidal wetlands and prevent
 8 their destruction.

9 I will now read briefly from the regulations so
 10 that it is clear how we are going to proceed.

11 An applicant and any interested person shall be
 12 given an opportunity at the informational hearing to
 13 present facts and make statements supporting or opposing
 14 the license. Questions may be asked of and directed to
 15 the hearing officer, but cross examination may not be
 16 conducted.

17 The hearing is not a contested case hearing.
 18 The order of the presentation is determined by the
 19 hearing officer and may be conducted as follows.

20 Introduction of the activity and participants
 21 by the hearing officer, presentation of the proposed

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1 project by the applicant, questions about the activity,
 2 statements by public officials, statements in opposition,
 3 statements in support, and closing the public
 4 informational hearing by the hearing officer.

5 The hearing officer has the authority and duty
 6 to conduct a full and fair public informational hearing,
 7 act to avoid unnecessary delay, and to maintain order,
 8 regulate the course of the hearing and conduct the
 9 participants, extend the time period for providing
 10 supplemental written comments or information for
 11 inclusion in the hearing record, and rule upon a request
 12 for a continuance of the hearing.

13 At the close of the public comment period, the
 14 hearing officer shall prepare an official record of the
 15 public informational hearing and comments.

16 It is also the responsibility of my office to
 17 evaluate requests for water quality certifications under
 18 Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, which requires
 19 Maryland as a certifying authority to determine whether
 20 the discharge associated with US Army Corps of Engineers
 21 permit application NAB-2024-61017 M46 and a United States

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1 Coast Guard permit complies with the State’s water
 2 quality standards.

3 The Department’s authority is found in Subtitle
 4 9 of the Environment Article. Each certification request
 5 received through our regulatory program has specific and
 6 unique issues and impacts that must be considered with
 7 regard to Maryland’s water quality standards. The
 8 Department is neither proponent or opponent of any
 9 project.

10 In summary, the Maryland Department of the
 11 Environment is conducting a public informational hearing
 12 for State Tidal Wetlands application number 24-WL-0757,
 13 submitted on July 18th, 2024, and Clean Water Act,
 14 Section 401 Water Quality Certification request 24-WQC-
 15 0028, which was requested July 2nd, 2024.

16 The applicant has applied for the construction
 17 of a new bridge to replace the Francis Scott Key Bridge.
 18 The rebuild project will include the construction of a
 19 new bridge, which will incorporate updated design
 20 standards, and will tie the new bridge into the existing
 21 roadway on both sides of the river.

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1 The project location will be the same as the
 2 original bridge, following the existing centerline across
 3 the Patapsco River. The new bridge will remain within
 4 MDTA’s existing right-of-way. The bridge will consist of
 5 four, 12-foot-wide lanes with two, 10-foot-wide outside
 6 shoulders and two, 4-foot wide inside shoulders.

7 The entire bridge will be approximately 2.4
 8 miles, including approximately one mile over the Patapsco
 9 River. The proposed bridge will have an air draft of 230
 10 feet over the 800-foot-wide authorized Fort McHenry
 11 Navigation Channel.

12 The applicant has contracted with a progressive
 13 design build firm, which is currently designing the
 14 specifics of the bridge. For the purposes of this Tidal
 15 Wetlands License and this hearing, the Department is
 16 reviewing the potential maximum impacts of the proposed
 17 bridge. The maximum impacts include the following: The
 18 bridge towers will have a maximum height of 550 feet. The
 19 tidal impacts will be both temporary and permanent. The
 20 total maximum combined impacts are 554,527 square feet,
 21 or 12.73 acres, to tidal water. Mitigation for impacts

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1 to the Patapsco resulting in loss of open water will be
 2 assessed.

3 A Water Quality Certification, 24-WQC-0028, has
 4 been requested. In addition to the proposed work listed
 5 above, the WQC request includes temporary impacts to
 6 nontidal wetlands and their buffers due to construction
 7 access and permanent impacts due to grading the modified
 8 roadway approaches to the replacement bridge.

9 The total combined temporary and permanent
 10 impacts are 10,964 square feet of nontidal wetlands,
 11 46,601 square feet of 25-foot nontidal wetlands buffer,
 12 and 272 linear feet of stream impacts, totaling 845
 13 square feet.

14 There may be additional concerns related to
 15 issues that are beyond the scope of this particular
 16 hearing. I ask that this hearing remain focused on issues
 17 associated with the Tidal Wetlands License application
 18 and request for the Water Quality Certification for the
 19 maximum impact for the rebuild of the Francis Scott Key
 20 Bridge.

21 MR. BING: Okay. Thank you, Tammy. Before I

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1 go on, I do want to just recognize Bart Kennedy,
 2 representing Senator Van Hollen who joined us tonight,
 3 and I believe we’ll be hearing from Bart shortly.

4 Next we’ll hear from Brian Wolfe, Director of
 5 Project Development at the Maryland Transportation
 6 Authority. Brian will provide a short presentation of the
 7 project, and after this we will begin with your public
 8 comments. Brian?

9 MR. WOLFE: Thank you, Andrew. The I-695
 10 Francis Scott Key Bridge was a 1.6-mile-long steel truss
 11 bridge built between 1972 and 1977 over the lower
 12 Patapsco River in the Baltimore/Dundalk area of Maryland.

13 The Maryland Transportation Authority has
 14 submitted permit applications to authorize impacts
 15 associated with rebuilding the Key Bridge.

16 The project proposes to construct a 2.4-mile-
 17 long bridge to carry I-695 over the Patapsco River. The
 18 bridge will carry two lanes of traffic in each direction,
 19 and will have 4-foot wide inside shoulders, and 10-foot-
 20 wide outside shoulders to meet current interstate
 21 standards.

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1 The bridge will be higher than the original
 2 structure to accommodate current and future commercial
 3 vessels calling on the Port of Baltimore. This will have
 4 a 230-foot vertical clearance over the federal navigation
 5 channel. The proposed bridge will have a 1,100-foot
 6 horizontal clearance centered on the federal navigational
 7 channel. The specific type of bridge has not been
 8 selected and will be identified by MDTA working in
 9 collaboration with the progressive design builder.

10 The bridge will result in 12.71 acres of
 11 permanent impact to tidal waters shown in the light blue
 12 on the slide. Bridge construction will also result in
 13 0.02 acres of temporary impacts to tidal waters.

14 Bridge construction and approach roadway
 15 modifications will result in 0.05 acres of permanent
 16 nontidal wetland impacts, and 0.21 acres of temporary
 17 nontidal wetland impacts. These activities will also
 18 result in 0.21 acres of permanent nontidal wetland buffer
 19 impacts, and 0.89 acres of temporary nontidal wetland
 20 buffer impacts, as well as 0.02 acres of temporary stream
 21 impacts. Andrew?

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1 MR. BING: Thank you, Brian. So the purpose of
 2 this public hearing is to allow interested parties to
 3 provide public comments related to the rebuild of the
 4 Francis Scott Key Bridge.

5 My role as the hearing facilitator is to run a
 6 professional and orderly public hearing. I understand how
 7 important these issues are, and I take my role as hearing
 8 facilitator seriously. I am committed to providing
 9 members of the public an opportunity to provide comments
 10 in an organized, fair, professional, and orderly manner.
 11 We look forward to hearing your perspectives, but please
 12 be courteous of all speakers and understand that
 13 offensive or profane language will not be allowed.

14 We are interested in hearing comments related
 15 to the rebuild of the Francis Scott Key Bridge from all
 16 interested individuals. Again, neither I nor the
 17 panelists will respond to any questions or comments. We
 18 are here to listen. Please remember that we are
 19 recording this hearing. Speak directly and clearly into
 20 the microphone and provide your full name, address, and
 21 any organization you may be representing.

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1 To ensure all will be heard, there will be a 3-
 2 minute time limit for public testimony, and a 5-minute
 3 time limit for elected officials and anyone representing
 4 an organization or community. The time will start after
 5 you introduce yourself.

6 I will remind you when you have 30 seconds
 7 remaining so you can begin to wrap up your testimony, and
 8 as the hearing facilitator, if you are unable to conclude
 9 your comments at the end of your time period, I will
 10 again remind you to wrap up, and then I will end your
 11 testimony and move onto the next person.

12 Also, the hearing is being livestreamed and
 13 recorded. If you are here for informational purposes and
 14 do not wish to comment, or you are unable to stay for the
 15 entire hearing, you have the opportunity to livestream
 16 this video from home or watch the recording at a later
 17 time. The comment sheets, located at the front desk,
 18 have information to locate the livestream and the
 19 recording of the hearing.

20 So we're going to start our testimony. I'm
 21 going to start first with the elected officials. I'm just

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1 going to go in the order that they were provided to me.
 2 So first up we're going to hear from Matthew Garbark,
 3 representing Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott. If you'll
 4 come over there. So again, you'll have four minutes, and
 5 if you could just introduce yourself, spell your name
 6 just for the court reporter that's taking this, and then
 7 you can begin.

8 MR. GARBARK: Good evening. I'm Matthew
 9 Garback, G-A-R-B-A-R-K. I'm the Director for the Mayor's
 10 Office of Infrastructure Development representing the
 11 Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

12 We are in strong support of this rebuild. We,
 13 I want to thank the state and our federal partners for
 14 how expeditiously they have moved this project along.
 15 This is a critical project for Baltimore City.
 16 Specifically the other two Patapsco Crossings are within
 17 city limits.

18 We have seen a significant increase in traffic,
 19 especially truck traffic as well as other vehicle traffic
 20 that has really impacted many of our streets and our
 21 neighborhoods in Baltimore City.

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1 The other thing I'd like to point out is
 2 immediately adjacent to the bridge, where the bridge was
 3 located, is a 60-inch water main that is owned and
 4 operated by Baltimore City's Department of Public Works,
 5 as well as a gas main that is owned and operated by BG&E.
 6 I just ask that those be accounted for during this
 7 project so that there is no disturbance, or that
 8 disturbance is minimal for that. With that, I conclude
 9 my testimony. Thank you.

10 MR. BING: Thank you. Next up we'll hear from
 11 Bart Kennedy, representing Senator Van Hollen. Again, if
 12 you could just introduce yourself and spell your name.

13 MR. KENNEDY: Sure. Thank you. My name is Bart
 14 Kennedy, B-A-R-T, last name is Kennedy, K-E-N-N-E-D-Y.
 15 I'm just here to thank the MDE and state for holding this
 16 hearing. As you know, Senator Van Hollen, your
 17 congressional delegation here in Maryland, continuing to
 18 fight for 100 percent funding of the Key Bridge Rebuild.
 19 It's very important that we get that funded, and that's
 20 all I have to say. Thank you so much for holding this
 21 hearing. It's very important. Thank you.

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1 MR. BING: Okay. Thank you. Are there any
 2 other elected officials or someone representing an
 3 elected official here that I didn't have a chance to see?
 4 And if you are here and if you'd like to provide any
 5 comments, please let me know. Okay. I'm not seeing any
 6 hands being raised, so we're going to go onto members of
 7 our public who have signed up to provide testimony. The
 8 first person is Christopher Barnes. Mr. Barnes, if you
 9 could come up to the microphone. If you could state your
 10 name and then spell your name and provide the zip code
 11 where you live.

12 MR. BARNES: Yes. Yes, sir. Christopher
 13 Barnes.

14 MR. BING: Mr. Barnes, just sort of tilt the
 15 microphone up a little bit. There you go. Oh, it's okay.

16 MR. BARNES: Christopher Barnes, B-A-R-N-E-S.
 17 I'm in zip code 21217, Baltimore City. I did, well,
 18 again, I would like to thank everyone who responded to
 19 the Key Bridge incident, and the mitigation and efforts,
 20 and my sympathy goes out to those impacted by this
 21 incident. At this time I would like to say as in the

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1 previous meeting, I am in support of the Key Bridge being
 2 rebuilt, because this is having a major impact on traffic
 3 throughout the city.

4 Traffic has been very heavy throughout the
 5 city, and this is, I do feel that this is extremely
 6 important to our transportation infrastructure, as well,
 7 as well as being able to get services and goods shipped
 8 just domestically and internationally.

9 This is, and I do, I have reviewed the
 10 information the state of Maryland has provided, and I see
 11 that a lot of the environmental impacts have been
 12 considered, and I do feel that this can be, the bridge
 13 can be reconstructed with, with minimal environmental
 14 impact, and I also do fee that it is extremely important
 15 that the bridge be designed with today's modern safety
 16 standards.

17 We're not just talking about a roadway, this is
 18 a major transportation infrastructure. We're talking 1.6
 19 miles of our interstate system. This is, this is very,
 20 very important for, for the Baltimore community, and also
 21 this is extremely important to, to the communities that

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1 do surround the Patapsco River, Dundalk, Essex, Middle
 2 River and the other communities.

3 So with that being said, I would again like to
 4 thank Maryland Department of Transportation for their
 5 efforts to restore our transportation infrastructure.
 6 And again, I do feel that this project is and will be a
 7 success. Thank you very much.

8 MR. BING: Thank you. Next up we're going to
 9 hear from Meredith Chaiken, representing the Greater
 10 Baybrook Alliance.

11 MS. CHAIKEN: Hi, I'm Meredith Chaiken. Do you
 12 want me to spell it?

13 MR. BING: Yes, please spell it and, and just
 14 the zip code where, where your office is.

15 MS. CHAIKEN: Meredith is M-E-R-E-D-I-T-H,
 16 Chaiken is C-H-A-I-K-E-N. I'm the CEO of the Greater
 17 Baybrook Alliance, which is located in 21225 in Brooklyn,
 18 Maryland.

19 So I just wanted to note that I appreciate that
 20 the design for the bridge is taking all these
 21 environmental justice issues into consideration. I

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1 wanted to make sure that that also extends to the
 2 communities that are adjacent to the bridge terminus on
 3 both sides of the river I guess.
 4 I represent Brooklyn, Curtis Bay and Brooklyn
 5 Park. I also have colleagues that represent the Dundalk
 6 side that we've been in conversations about the
 7 opportunity to mitigate the impact of truck traffic on
 8 our communities. Since the bridge collapsed, we, our
 9 communities have already have a disproportionate amount
 10 of truck traffic in our area, and then since the bridge
 11 collapsed, that has just doubled or tripled the impact on
 12 our communities, it's really, we're bearing quite a bit
 13 of the cost of the truck traffic being diverted at this
 14 point, and I think there's a huge opportunity now to
 15 think creatively and proactively about how to make it
 16 appropriate for the neighborhoods where there's
 17 residences and small businesses and schools and libraries
 18 that share the road right now with trucks to be creative
 19 and solution-oriented about how the designs go forward.
 20 So that's my request of the state in this process. Thank
 21 you.

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1 MR. BING: Thank you. Okay. At this point,
 2 everyone who has indicated an interest in providing
 3 comments, testimony, I've received their cards, but I do
 4 want to just see if there's anyone else who maybe has had
 5 a change of heart. They came here thinking they weren't
 6 going to provide comments, and now they said, you know
 7 what? I'd like to. If you'd like to provide a comment,
 8 please let me know.
 9 Okay. I'm not seeing anyone's hands raised
 10 right now. So what we're going to do right now is we are
 11 going to go into recess. We understand that there may be
 12 some people who are trying to get here and maybe they are
 13 because of the weather or there's traffic, so we are
 14 going to go into recess, and then we will reconvene at
 15 some point to end the hearing, but for right now, it is
 16 5:54 and we are in recess. Thank you.
 17 (Whereupon the proceedings stood in recess.)
 18 MR. BING: -- has shown up who has expressed an
 19 interest in providing testimony, so we're going to hear
 20 that testimony at this point. So that is Steve Frank. Mr.
 21 Frank, if you could, you can come up to that microphone

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1 right in front of you over there, and if you could just
 2 state your name, spell your name and a zip code, please.
 3 MR. FRANK: Okay. One second, please. You're
 4 very quick.
 5 MR. BING: Take your time.
 6 MR. FRANK: Thank you. Please can you do
 7 something for two minutes?
 8 MR. BING: That's okay. And I also, while
 9 you're doing that, I want to remind people here as well
 10 as anyone listening through the livestream that in
 11 addition to providing oral testimony like we're hearing
 12 tonight, you can submit written comments, and those
 13 comments, you know, are, have the same impact and same
 14 effect as if you were providing them here tonight, and
 15 you have until October 1st, 2024 to provide those
 16 comments. So just as a reminder to those maybe who are
 17 listening into the livestream, or who are able to see the
 18 recording after the fact.
 19 MR. FRANK: Okay. You did well with your time.
 20 MR. BING: Okay. Again, Mr. Frank, if you could
 21 state your name, spell your name and your zip code.

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1 MR. FRANK: Okay. My name is Steve Frank, S-T-
 2 E-V-E, last name Frank, F-R-A-N-K, and my zip code is
 3 21209.
 4 Thank you for the opportunity to present design
 5 and operational recommendations to the proposed
 6 replacement of the Francis Scott Key Bridge. These
 7 suggestions are aimed at enhancing safety and maintaining
 8 steady traffic flow. The goal is to prevent incidents
 9 and congestion under irregular conditions.
 10 I believe that alleviating damage and injury in
 11 fish and traffic management are crucial for the public
 12 and MDTA. These factors may be significant when
 13 evaluating the bridge's overall success.
 14 I will describe these recommendations by
 15 narrating a fictional crossing of the new bridge in 2028,
 16 having incorporated three of my recommendations. They are
 17 designed to improve safety and traffic management on the
 18 new bridge. Okay. This is my narration.
 19 The first recommendation is called the
 20 automated towing system. As I drove from Annapolis to
 21 Dundalk, I breezed through the electronic tolling

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1 facility on the new FSK bridge, however I soon
 2 encountered a traffic jam due to a right lane closure
 3 caused by an accident ahead.

4 From the left lane, I saw authorities hitching
 5 the damaged car to the automated towing system. This
 6 system featured a moving track embedded in the right
 7 lane. It tows at normal speed the car across the bridge
 8 and off the roadway. The system is intended to prevent
 9 ensuing accidents and ease congestion. So I continued on.

10 Emergency safety station. Continuing my
 11 journey, I experienced a flat tire near the bridge's
 12 halfway point. Fortunately I was able to drive up and
 13 pull into an emergency safety station, a designated bump
 14 out adjoined to the right lane, this station was similar
 15 to a highway shoulder, but much shorter.

16 The station covered on three sides allowed me
 17 to safely change my tire without disrupting traffic, like
 18 a highway shoulder. I got through that one, that was the
 19 second incident. Of course there will be one more.

20 Emergency parking lot. As I neared the end of
 21 the bridge, I encountered a cluster of emergency vehicles

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1 blocking both lanes. I don't know why. The authorities
 2 started diverting traffic to the emergency parking lot.
 3 This was a paved, off-street area designated for official
 4 and emergency use only. It allowed authorities to safely
 5 get vehicles off of the bridge, having the lot also
 6 reduce congestion and cleared the way for emergency
 7 vehicles to reach incidents on the bridge.

8 So I wanted to mention I think that these three
 9 features, and there's things that I've thought of that
 10 I'm sure may be things that have, that already are out
 11 there somewhere or somebody has thought of, but just kind
 12 of came to mind. The automated towing system, emergency
 13 safety system and emergency parking lot help to ensure
 14 safety, efficient traffic flow, addressing potential
 15 issues before they escalate.

16 They reflect a deep consideration for the needs
 17 of drivers, passengers, and emergency personnel,
 18 emphasizing strategy, planning and action. I encourage
 19 you to explore these recommendations in consultation with
 20 the Maryland Transportation Police. It is their mission
 21 to provide safety, security and service in partnership

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1 with the community to all who use and work on MDTA.
 2 Finally, I believe it is important to study
 3 best practices for safety and traffic flow in existing
 4 bridges, aviation, rail transport, maritime operations,
 5 and any entity that transports people or cargo. I would
 6 like to think, I would like there to be many proven
 7 measures that would apply to the bridge. So that's my
 8 statement, and I gave a copy of the complete document
 9 with diagrams to the front, asking to give to Mr. Wolfe,
 10 and I can also, I would like to send another one on, onto
 11 yourself.

12 MR. BING: I think we have received that. So --
 13 MR. FRANK: Okay.
 14 MR. BING: Thank you.
 15 MR. FRANK: All right. Thank you.
 16 MR. BING: Okay. Thank you for your comments.
 17 I let you go a little over, just because we don't have
 18 anyone else after you right now. So we are going to, and
 19 again, I don't know, maybe someone came in as Mr. Frank
 20 was talking. If there is anyone else who would like to
 21 provide comments, you could raise your hand, and I will

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1 bring you up.
 2 Okay. I don't see any hands being raised, so
 3 again, we don't have anyone right now looking to make
 4 comments. So what we're going to do is we are going to go
 5 back into recess. It is 6:23 right now. We are going to
 6 come back at 6:30. We will come back sooner if we have
 7 anyone who shows up who wants to provide any comments,
 8 but at 6:30 if we have not received any indication of
 9 anyone else wanting to provide testimony, we are going to
 10 conclude the hearing. I'll come back on at 6:30. I'll
 11 then turn it over to MDE, and they will have their
 12 concluding comments, and then we will end the hearing.
 13 But for right now, it is 6:23, and we will be in recess
 14 until 6:30. Thank you.

15 (Whereupon the proceedings stood in recess.)
 16 MR. BING: Okay. It is now 6:30 p.m. At this
 17 point, we have not had anyone else come in who has
 18 indicated an interest in providing testimony, so we are
 19 going to wrap up the hearing. I am going to turn the,
 20 turn it over to Tammy Roberson who is going to close out
 21 the hearing.

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1 MS. ROBERSON: All right. The formal hearing
 2 record will remain open until Tuesday, October 1st, 2024.
 3 All correspondence must be postmarked or emailed by this
 4 date. I have with me a number of sheets explaining how
 5 to submit additional comments. Those are located out in
 6 the lobby.
 7 Please forward any additional comments that you
 8 would like to make for the record to, by email,
 9 Matthew.wallach@maryland.gov, or by mail at Maryland
 10 Department of the Environment, c/o Matt Wallach, Tidal
 11 Wetlands Division, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 430,
 12 Baltimore, Maryland 21230.
 13 After the hearing record closes, the Department
 14 will review and consider all of the comments it received
 15 during the comment period. If necessary, the Department
 16 may request additional information from the applicant to
 17 address certain comments. After all relevant issues have
 18 been resolved, the Department will make its decision and
 19 final report and recommendation to the wetland
 20 administrator for the board who shall then present the
 21 proposed project for decision at a public meeting of the

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1 board.
 2 In accordance with COMAR Chapter 23.02.04, the
 3 board's decision will be final, and there will be no
 4 further opportunity for administrative review. Any person
 5 with standing may petition for judicial review of the
 6 board's decision in the Circuit Court of their respective
 7 jurisdiction, City of Baltimore, Anne Arundel County, or
 8 Baltimore County.
 9 The petition for judicial review must be filed
 10 within 30 days of the board's decision. The public
 11 comments received will also be considered by the
 12 Department when rendering a decision on certification
 13 request number 24-WQC-0028. The Department is obligated
 14 to issue, deny or waive certification of the project by
 15 July 2nd, 2025.
 16 The Department's decision and accompanying
 17 information will be sent to the interested person list,
 18 the applicant, the Corps, and the United States Coast
 19 Guard. Any person who is aggrieved by the Department's
 20 decision may appeal the decision by filing a request
 21 within 30 days of the publication of the WQC decision in

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1 accordance with COMAR 26.08.02.10F(4).
 2 If you're unsure if you are on the interested
 3 persons list, please be sure your name is added to the
 4 signature sheets at the front desk, and your name will be
 5 added to that list. We appreciate your interest in this
 6 project, and thank you for attending the hearing. The
 7 time is 6:33, and this hearing is now adjourned.
 8 (Whereupon, the public hearing was concluded.)
 9
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1 **TRANSCRIBER CERTIFICATE**
 2 I, Dana Dezarn, hereby certify that I
 3 transcribed from audio file the proceedings to the best
 4 of my ability in the foregoing-entitled matter; and I
 5 further certify that the foregoing is a full, true and
 6 correct transcript of the audio files produced.
 7 IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have subscribed my name
 8 on the 25th day of September 2024.
 9
 10
 11 Dana Dezarn
 12 Transcriber
 13
 14
 15
 16
 17
 18
 19
 20
 21

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