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Work to begin at Silver Spring Transit Center within a week

Leggett said county was cleared to begin work on concrete slabs Monday

By Kara Rose **Staff Writer**

County Executive Isiah Leggett said Monday night that he took full responsibility for the delayed opening of the troubled Silver Spring Transit Center, also announcing work to fix the center will start within a week.

The county was cleared Monday afternoon to begin fixing the concrete slabs at the facility, he told members of the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board at its monthly meeting at the Silver Spring Civic Building Monday. Leggett (D) said he anticipates permits for the remainder of the fixes will be released by the end of the month.

"As county executive, I take responsibility," Leggett said. "It ultimately falls on my shoulders."

Leggett said it was his decision to bring in consultants when he heard about the then-minor cracks in the structure instead of accepting the center as it was a year and a half ago. Those consultants spent months evaluating the structure ultimately releasing a remediation report in March.

The transit center at the corner of Colesville Road and Wayne Avenue in downtown Silver Spring was slated to open in 2011, but a series of cracks found in the structure and disparities in the thickness of the concrete have delayed the project's opening by two years so far. It is still unclear when the center will be open for business.

The remediation report said the transit center contains "serious design and construction defects" that compromise the center's structural integrity, longevity and safety. The report also included fixes for the problems, which a working group has been engineering since the report's release, including the work on the concrete slabs that lacked sufficient reinforcement.

"Through that review, I think we made the wise decision that this center is not going to open until it is safe for the public and that it is perfect for this community," Leggett said.

Among other concerns Leggett addressed at the meeting Monday were the influx of upcoming residential development in Silver Spring, pedestrian safety and access, businesses affected

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by upcoming Purple Line construction, lack of diverse programming at The Fillmore in Silver Spring, Bus Rapid Transit concerns from residents and board members, concerns about keeping the character of neighborhoods like Fenton Village in the midst of ongoing development and reservations from community members about park and planning moving to Wheaton.

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