



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Montgomery County tells Foulger-Pratt to proceed with transit center fixes

Company stands by claim that repair plan is no good

By Krista Brick **Staff Writer**

County officials are pressing on with work at the Silver Spring Transit Center, even while the project's main contractor on the job disagrees with the fixes to the transportation hub.

The county is filing for permits Friday that will allow them to get started preparing the center for a latex-modified concrete overlay that is touted by the county and its ad hoc working group as the fix for the center's concrete problems.

The county sent a formal notice to Foulger-Pratt Contracting LLC on Thursday, directing that company to hire a subcontractor to follow the remediation plan to fix the transit center's cracking concrete.

"This Notice-to-Proceed with the LMC overlay is a directive to Foulger-Pratt to Proceed immediately with the subcontracting of all the Work associated with the LMC overlay to a properly and highly qualified and experienced LMC subcontractor with comparable project expertise within the State of Maryland," Ernest Lunsford Jr., contract administrator for the Division of Building Design and Construction, stated in a letter to Foulger-Pratt's John Barron.

Foulger-Pratt has publicly called the remediation approach "ill-advised" and "ill-conceived."

On Tuesday, the company's Managing Principal Bryant Foulger released the following statement to The Gazette about the notice: "We and our subcontractor Facchina are actively reviewing the county's directive. We have not completed our review. We stand by our previous statements and letters regarding this matter."

The county's notice specifically directs Foulger-Pratt to complete the latex-modified concrete work by the end of December.

The \$120 million facility, 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.

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Latex-modified concrete is a durable, fast-curing system that will be used to address areas where

the concrete thicknesses vary too much, said David Dise, director of the county's Division of General Services.

The cracks will be repaired and the modified concrete will be used as a uniform overlay. Dise told the council the concrete needed to be poured when temperatures are 40 degrees or higher.

Whether the December deadline can be met is a gamble on weather and lining up the work that needs to be done.

"I don't know if this is too aggressive a schedule. We will have to see," Lunsford said.

First Foulger-Pratt will have to find a subcontractor skilled in latex-modified concrete to do the work. Lunsford said Wagman — a York, Pa., company that specializes in latex modified concrete — has consulted with the ad hoc working group on the project.

The weekly meeting of that working group has been canceled for Thursday because many members of the group are heading to Chicago to visit the lab KCE used to perform testing on the project's concrete. That testing determined the compression strength of the concrete used in the project, Lunsford said.

Washington, D.C.-based KCE Structural Engineers, hired by the county to review the project, found serious problems with the design, construction, concrete strength, concrete testing accuracy and adherence to fire codes at the center.

This week the working group would have discussed the Notice to Proceed.

Lunsford said the issue will become a legal matter if Foulger-Pratt refuses to comply with the county's notice.

"Our position is the work as currently configured is unsatisfactory and therefore they would be in a state of default," Lunsford said.

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