Work Begins on Systems to Tie-In Silver Line Phase 2

Crews have started work on train control systems that will connect Phase 2 of the Metrorail Silver Line to the rest of the rail system, a key step in moving Phase 2 toward completion.

This tie-in work at the Wiehle-Reston East Metrorail station, which connects Phase 2’s computerized control systems to Phase 1 and the rest of the Metrorail system, is being executed by Capital Rail Constructors and its subcontractors with oversight from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and the cooperation of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

Months of preparation and coordination between Capital Rail Constructors, WMATA and the Airports Authority led to the initiation of the tie-in work, to ensure that software and other controls on both sections of the Silver Line will be compatible. The tie-in work is being completed during WMATA’s maintenance-related summer shutdown of stations along the Orange Line.

“The tie-in project is critical and complicated work that requires close cooperation and coordination among contractors and WMATA,” said Charles Stark, MWAA senior vice president and head of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

News and Tidbits

Construction of Phase 2 of the Silver Line is now in the completion and commissioning phase, according to project officials.

But much work remains, according the project officials who highlighted some of the ongoing efforts during a meeting with project partners in late June. Here are some examples:

1. Completion of the windscreen wall at the Dulles Airport Station.
2. Dynamic Testing.
3. Working with Capital Rail Constructors to develop an acceptable solution to tighten its completion schedule for the main part of the system—the tracks, the system, stations etc.
4. Replacement of selected rail ties.
5. Responding to the upcoming results of inspections by a consultant brought in by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to inspect 1,700 precast concrete panels in the five at-grade stations. Those inspections began in June.
6. Completion of the Phase 2 tie-in to Phase 1 at the Wiehle-Station. (See details in related story at left)
The Airports Authority and Capital Rail Constructors have a goal of completing the tie-in work by the end of July. Completion of Phase 2 will add six new stations along 11.5 miles of track from Wiehle Avenue to Ashburn with stops at Herndon, Innovation Center, Dulles Airport and Loudoun Gateway. Once construction is completed and WMATA takes ownership of Phase 2, WMATA will conduct additional testing and then set a date for passenger service.

7. Starting in July remediation work in several areas of the 90-acre rail yard being built by Hensel Phelps on Dulles Airport property along Route 606.

8. Replacement of surge arrestors and resolving issues with hoists in the train wash facility, both in the rail yard.

9. Replace fouled ballast in the yard.

Meanwhile, Phase 2 is sticking to its goal of reaching completion by the end of this year, according to project leaders. When construction and testing are complete, it will be turned over to WMATA, which will set the date for the start of revenue service.

Glass Installation to Begin on Windscreen at Dulles Airport

It won’t be long before 95,000 pounds of glass will be erected along the south side of the new Metrorail station facing the terminal at Washington Dulles International Airport.

All of the 162 glass panels needed for the project have arrived at the airport and will be assembled to create a 300-foot wide, 30-foot tall windscreen for the new station, creating a façade that will resemble the iconic architecture of the Eero Saarinen-designed airport terminal.

Final welding of the structural steel supporting framing is nearing completion, according to Stephen Barna, manager of the windscreen project in his role with the Airports Authority’s Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project’s Phase 2 of the Silver Line.

This week crews began putting a three-coat gray epoxy finish on the structure supporting the windscreen. The paint color, of course, is Dulles gray, the traditional color used at Dulles.

Preparation for installation of the glass included the construction of 10 steel support columns and 63 intermediate purlins during the past 4 months.

Phase 2 project director Charles Stark said installation of the Dulles Station glass windscreen panels marks a major milestone for Phase 2 work. Construction is being done by W.M. Schlosser Company of Maryland.

Erection of the glass will not require any new lane closings at the airport. All work can be done behind the jersey barriers that have been in place during construction of the steel support structure. Completion of the windscreen is expected in September.