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Pleasant Plains Community Meeting Minutes
Minutes recorded by: Ashley Twigg
April 16, 2021

Nestor Flores - Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works (DPW) Traffic Engineering Division (TED)

Ashley Twigg - Secretary, TED

Kimberly Tran - Deputy District Engineer for State Highway Administration, District 5

David Braun - Engineer Administrator, AACo DPW

Amanda Fiedler - Councilwoman District 5, AACo

Pam Scarbro - Assistant to Amanda Fiedler

Marcus Tadros - Project Manager for DPW

Dan Anderson - Engineering, DPW

Aaron Hottenstein - Designer of traffic signal, KCI Technologies

Anne Cobb - Hidden Point Rd Citizen

John Joynes - Broadneck Council of Communities

Christa Ditmar - Old Mill Bottom Rd

Gwenann Manseau - Hollywood Farm, Pleasant Plains Rd

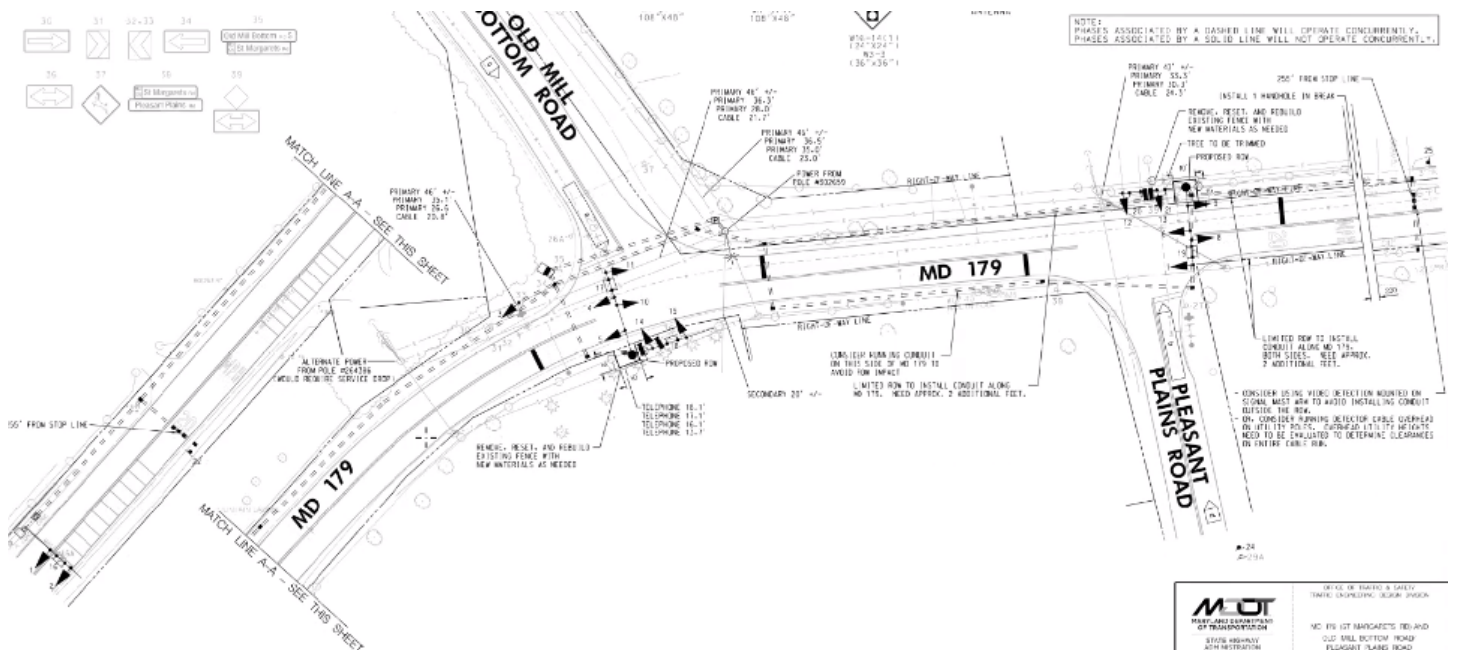
Patricia Lynch - President of the Broadneck Council

Matthew Balwand - Pleasant Plains neighborhood

John Gough - Saint Margarets Farm - Kingsbury Dr

Signal Design Status - Kimberly Tran, State Highway Administration (SHA)

- The State (SHA) began the process initially by looking at MD179 @ Pleasant Plains Rd and have gone on to add Old Mill Bottom Road so that they can treat this area as one large intersection.
- SHA got approval in Feb 2020 to proceed with the design and construction of the signal. SHA has heard over the years of sight distance concerns coming off of Pleasant Plains Rd and added additional signage/pavement markings to slow down Annapolis traffic on MD179. It was decided that a signal was the best way to proceed with handling the various issues at this intersection.
- Currently, the signal is being designed. The County is designing the signal for the SHA due to limited State funding. The design process is far enough along that the first draft has already been submitted. SHA received it this week to review and are currently getting together comments. SHA will be meeting in May with the County and engineering firm KCI, who is designing the signal, to evaluate components.
- SHA explained that the signal will operate as a three phase signal. Traffic patterns on MD179 will operate as they usually do, however, when the signal goes red for those coming out of Annapolis, you will stop for traffic on Old Mill Bottom Rd. This will also stop the traffic on MD179 at Pleasant Plains Rd to allow for vehicles on Pleasant Plains Rd to turn out onto MD179. This same process is true for vehicles attempting to turn left onto MD179 from Old Mill Bottom Rd.



- The 20MPH curve warning sign that is currently in place on MD179 when coming from Annapolis will be replaced with a sign that states SIGNAL AHEAD - PREPARE TO STOP WHEN FLASHING. This will be tied into the signal timing based on research performed that collected actual speeds of drivers.
- There will be another signal head on the side of the road that the driver will see when approaching the actual signal at MD179 at Old Mill Bottom Rd due to the limited sight distance in this area.
- There will be cameras that will detect vehicles waiting for their phase of the light.
- The State Right of Way (ROW) and the amount of power and utilities overhead will factor into where the poles will be placed. The SHA is planning on placing the poles where there is already utility clearance so that utilities do not need to be relocated.
- Intersection lighting will also be added to make the signal and markings easier to see at night.
- SHA understands the volume of traffic that occurs in the summer with beach traffic. This signal will help mitigate the timeliness of traffic.

Schedule and funding of the signal installation:

- Feb 2020 - Approval given for design and construction for the signal
- Because this signal is not associated with a larger project, it is funded out of mostly State money. SHA can design the light and designate a contractor in about 18 months.
- Due to restrictions in the area of the signal, the design process is estimated to take 24 months IF proper funding is available. The ROW in this area is small and difficult to maneuver as far as installing poles, etc. The SHA may need to purchase small pieces of land from private citizens in order to fulfill the design standards of the signal. This process can be lengthy in nature and thus hinder the expediency of the signal being installed.
- March 2020 - The pandemic begins in the US. SHA staff is attempting to quickly organize to work remotely, etc. so most projects slowed down until staff got settled into at home roles to then continue to work safely.

- Funding became affected as State dollars became limited due to the pandemic. SHA is informed that most signal projects will be put on hiatus until funding will be available.
- SHA meets with the County. The County is able to move forward with the design of the signal on behalf of the SHA in order to expedite the design of the signal. It is yet to be determined if the County or State will be paying for the construction due to limited funding due to the pandemic.
- The current design schedule is on time to be complete in August.
- At this time, we know enough about where the poles are going to be installed that the SHA will investigate the ROW process to determine where the poles can and cannot be placed. This ROW process is also funded by a general fund via State money. It is still being determined from where the ROW process funding will be derived.
- The upcoming SHA fiscal year is anticipated to be significantly less than normal due to limited funding due to the pandemic. Most of the money allotted will need to be budgeted for upkeep of current traffic control. This means that new signal construction will not likely occur until 2-3 years from now, including this signal.
- If the State is not able to fund the signal, it will most likely not be built until 2023.

Community Questions

Will it be a smart light, sensing traffic presence?

Yes, there will be detection. Usually, SHA uses video detection. It will detect if someone is sitting at Pleasant Plains Rd as well as on Old Mill Bottom Rd. There are call loops on the signals on MD179 to ensure that vehicles are able to stop in the appropriate amount of time.

Will Old Mill traffic be able to be right on red?

Yes, as there is enough sight distance to safely turn right on red.

If there is video detection, will the video record?

SHA does not use cameras to record, only to detect a vehicles' presence.

What consideration is being made for emergency vehicles?

Emergency vehicles will be able to cross the center line and go around traffic, or use a side street if there are more cars than usual at the signal. This is the same at other similar signal locations in the County, so it is not a new procedure.

How do you handle Friday afternoon beach traffic?

Once the signal is installed, it will be a work in progress. The signal will create gaps for Pleasant Plains Rd to get out onto MD179 which will be an improvement. The SHA will be monitoring this signal to make adjustments to assist with any traffic backups.

Will SHA consider placing a sign at RT50 @ Old Mill Bottom Rd that says beach traffic must stay on RT50?

SHA did have a program in the past where messages were put out over RT50 that stated BEACH TRAFFIC STAY ON RT50. This is an instructional sign, however, meaning that it is not mandatory. SHA does not plan on installing any static signs for this purpose. Once the signal is installed, this will hopefully be less of an issue in the summer.

Can a sign stating do not block the intersection heading out of Annapolis from Old Mill Bottom?

SHA says that once the signal is operational this may not be an issue anymore, but in the meanwhile they will investigate installing a sign similar to this.

Will the County be able to fund the signal?

The County is still in the process of evaluating if funding is available for the signal. The current funding is being allocated for County maintained roads and projects which will need to be prioritized before funding can be given toward a State project.

Misc. Agenda Items

- Ponding/freezing near Cherry Rd
 - Bureau of Watershed Protection and Restoration (BWPR) taking the lead - Contact Rob Savidge at 410-222-7973.

- Looking into an in-house project to install a culvert. All depends on obtaining a right to discharge.
- If an in-house project is not feasible, then a capital project will be initiated. A presentation for a capital project is not always a guarantee of a grant.
- *Which way do they want to discharge the water?* Please reach out to Rob Savidge for more information on this project.
- Kingsberry Drive Sightline Concerns
 - Traffic Engineering Division will take the lead to develop alternatives. When an in-house study occurs, TED starts with short term strategies such as signing improvement, and a mid-term improvement of dynamic signs that can be activated with lights. TED can also do a traffic calming strategy such as islands or chokers. This intersection is currently being evaluated. Eric Tabacek and Ace Kirchner will be working with Nestor on an implementation that will be shared with the group.
 - Is signage the only option here or are there other options? *Yes, there are other options. TED can also investigate regulatory signs (aka police can ticket for violation of the sign). This could mean a multi-way stop or a mini-roundabout if there is room. There are several strategies that TED will consider the benefit or impact of. Every step of the way the community and the district will be informed.*
 - During the winter, across the front the church, there is a property that flows and goes down to the intersection of St. Margarets Rd @ Pleasant Plains. What can be done here for drainage? *TED will make Road Operations aware of this issue. The difficulty of drainage in open section roads must be considered. WPRP will also be made aware of the issue.*
 - Short Term - Signage improvement
 - Mid Term - Dynamic signing (potential)
- Relocation of poles in S-curve, Nestor Flores/David Braun
 - The relocation of the poles is in progress. There are many County entities involved in this process, but hopefully a capital project will be granted to relocate the poles.
 - David Braun states that the pole removal will extend from Cherry Dr to about 500ft north of Milvale Rd. All poles will be removed.

- Alternative 1 Implementation, Nestor Flores

- This alternative was primarily to be paid for by TED's operating budget. Due to the pandemic, this amount has lessened. This implementation will be for some dynamic signing alerting drivers to pedestrians and bicyclists, as seen below. These signs are solar powered.

Anne Arundel County, MD- Pleasant Plains Rd (Jogger/Cyclist Warning)



Jim Lampe- Control Technologies Inc.

- Traffic Engineering will develop implementation plan
 - 1st location the s-curve - see sample strategy
 - Pleasant Plains Rd @ Milvale Rd in the sharp curve in the road there is vegetation too high to see over. Reach out to Road Ops for vegetation trimming. Tabacek can also send a letter to the farmer to have the vegetation trimmed ACTION ITEM
 - In addition to the S curve, the problem area should extend from Milvale to Hidden Point. The road dips down and makes sharp turn to the left. Will the sensor area benefit from including that additional space? The sight line when looking at the brush on the north side of Pleasant Plains gets very overgrown. Both sides of this road should be trimmed back on a regular basis. *Nestor will take this into consideration.*

- What is the legal aspect of where a pole can be placed? Looking at the poles along the road, the new poles are up against the road, the older poles are back away from the road. *It is not necessarily a law but it is a design standard. Federal manuals have standards of design for County and State entities. There is also no clear definition of right of way on this road. Pleasant Plains is an older road and BGE needs to be engaged about why the poles are closer than before.*
- Nestor will speak with David as we do have good contacts with BGE and obtain the right of way information. Nestor will also share the incident with the septic truck overturning due to another car swerving away from a pole.
- An issue with historic roads is that they need to follow the same path, the same centerline. The alignment of Pleasant Plains must be maintained as it has been since the 1700's and denoted as a scenic, historic road. If the changes are needed for safety reasons, the County Code will allow TED to do so.
- Brush in the S-curve, Nestor Flores
 - Brush clearing could be included in the pole relocation project
- Discussion on what alternative from study to include next as a capital project request
 - The Pleasant plains study identified 5 spot improvements
 - Alternative 1 will come out of the operation budget for TED and the community will not need to be concerned about its funding. The other projects - Davidson Cole Rd, Harmony Acres, Milvale Rd, Hidden Point Rd and Cherry Rd will need to be prioritized by the community.
 - Does the community want to proceed one request at a time?
 - The community overall agreed that the approach of choosing problem locations over time will be more likely to be improved as the funding is available.

TED will schedule a bi-monthly meeting to discuss developing changes for all of the above information. (Ashley has already scheduled the meeting as a standing bi-monthly meeting with this same group).