



Pleasant Plains Community Meeting Minutes March 23, 2022

Nestor Flores, Chief, Traffic Engineering Division, AACO

Debbie Russell - DPW Engineering, AACO

Pam Scarbro - Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler District 5 Legislative Aide, AACO

Amanda Fiedler - County Councilwoman, District 5

Reece Peake - Office of County Executive, AACO

Patricia Lynch - President, Broadneck Council

Peter Dixon - President, Burley Creek Community Association

David Wright - BGE, External Affairs

Nestor Flores

We spoke with the SHA and confirmed that one controller will operate the entire signal at Saint Margarets Road. It will be one, large signal as opposed to two, smaller signals.

They are still working on the right-of-way process at this intersection. It will be several months to see this process through.

SHA is going to fully cover the costs for the construction of the signal.

Discussed with David Wright the community concerns that there will be no funding from BGE for this project. Explained that this project is a public safety concern and not a choice without good reason.

The original scope of the project was to have the wires be overhead. Nestor believes that the overhead wires are the best option for this project.

Nestor will email Kim Tran with SHA to confirm exactly where in the right-of-way process the SHA is at this time.

Believes that the path of least resistance to move ahead would be to choose the overhead line option, however, this is going to be a community driven decision.

If we are already going through the environmental permits, regrading, etc., Nestor suggests that at the same time we investigate the possibility of creating a 4ft shoulder for Pleasant Plains.

Work orders have been created for the speed limit change. We will be using variable message boards to inform the community that the speed limit has changed and continue to use those boards from time to time to remind the community to watch their speed.

Debbie Russell

Discussed underground wires vs. overhead wires. Please see the below document for more information.

Debbie gives a full explanation and breakdown of the two options for wires - underground and overhead. This explanation starts at 4:47 in the recording of the meeting which can be found at:

<https://www.aacounty.org/departments/public-works/highways/pleasant-plains-road/index.html>

Please contact Debbie at 410-222-1340 or pwruss44@aacounty.org with any questions.

The document that was shared can be found on the last page of these meeting minutes.

Confirmed that, as of now, the utility companies are not contributing to the pole relocation. It will be 100% County funded.

David Wright

BGE does not pay for pole relocations. He can discuss the issue with BGE, but usually the cost is the responsibility of the requesting party.

He would appreciate any and all photographs, reports, etc. regarding safety on Pleasant Plains Rd. so that he may present it to BGE.

Councilwoman Fiedler

There is a spreadsheet that shows a threshold that BGE has which needs to be met in order for them to consider paying for the pole relocation. It involves fatalities/strikes per year over an X amount of years. She asks that Mr. Wright share that school buses, trash trucks, mail trucks and other public service vehicles use this portion of Pleasant Plains. The strikes are unique here as opposed to other parts of the County as this road is not a high traffic road, does not have a major intersection, it's not a highway, and yet these issues are still happening. She believes this should be considered by BGE as well regarding their participation in the funding of the pole relocation.

Regarding the budget process, it would fall upon her to advocate for this project to have the proper funding before the budget is approved. If the budget is approved before this project is considered, she can also advocate for the amendment of the budget to include it. This will occur around April 29th. It is frustrating for her to constantly cover the funding that lags at either the State or private level and she knows the community feels the same. For now, she will advocate with her colleagues and the County Executive.

Community Comments

This will be 4-6M of County money that will pay for the pole relocation? No other contributions?

Discussions were had back and forth regarding the funding of these issues. It was determined to our knowledge that no funding will be provided from another entity.

We are very concerned that BGE does not consider this issue a safety issue and is unwilling to pay for any part of this relocation. They request that the issue is discussed further with BGE. Nestor agrees and stated this is a highway safety project. He will provide any documentation that BGE may need to make their decision. **When will this meeting with BGE occur?** Mr. Wright will let us know when that meeting is scheduled for.

The community pointed out that many incidents involving the poles are never documented. If there was minor damage to a vehicle or the pole, or no one stops or reports it to BGE or the police, there is no way to include it with data that would support the position that the poles are in a dangerous location. The only documentation they may be able to provide is that of the police. This also would include pedestrians and bikers being forced off of the road due to the close proximity of the poles and the passing vehicles. These occurrences are usually never reported.

Debbie, the last time we met there was discussion of a 6ft clearance free of vegetation and trees from the side of the road. Today, you mentioned that it will be 12ft of clearance. If the wires are buried and we go with that option, will that same amount of vegetation/tree clearance still be provided. We were discussing having one utility on one side of the road and two on the other side to allow for more ROW on the sides of the road. These measurements are estimations as she does not have a design plan yet.

Are Verizon or Comcast sharing in the expense of the pole relocation? Debbie states to her knowledge neither are going to be contributing toward the expense. **Why is it that BGE shares the utility poles with those two providers and they are not considering contributing as well?** As of now, these poles are 50% owned by BGE and Verizon. This is a negotiation that they worked out on their own and she believes that the cable companies would also have a negotiated contract regarding their portion of the ownership as well.

David, do you have any input as to if this would be more cost effective if the cost is shared amongst BGE and the other utilities? This is something that David will need to address with BGE. He believes the idea originally was that the price would be split between themselves and Verizon if they go the route of sharing the cost of pole relocation versus the County **paying at 100%**.

Not sure that 15ft cleared on either side of the road is going to be acceptable to the residents of the area as it takes away from the aesthetics of the historic road and the fact that it is in a protected forestry area. Nestor and Debbie are going to have a meeting with the OPZ cultural resources office to discuss this issue. The definitions are still unclear of how much is going to need to be cleared, so this will be clarified and we will get back to you during the next meeting. MDE and the Critical Area Commission are also going to be involved in these discussions.

Maryann stated that as far as she is aware, any trees that are removed in the critical area that are not replanted are paid for by the homeowner and that money is allocated to having trees planted somewhere else to make up for the trees that were removed and not replanted.

The corner property across from the church on Saint Margarets has been purchased by a new owner. Has there been any progress on having the vegetation removed that is causing the sight distance issues for Pleasant Plains @ Saint Margarets? Debbie is aware of the property transfer and has noted to contact them to discuss this issue.

Is our understanding correct that because the first part of the overhead wires project has been approved that Debbie can move forward with plats and she cannot move forward with plats for underground wiring because nothing has yet been approved? Yes, correct. If overhead is decided, we can move forward in June. **Does this burn funds that would otherwise be able to be used for the underground?** Yes, but not enough that it would be a tangible amount.

What is the community's suggestion for sharing the information that Debbie presented and getting public opinion from the community on overhead or underground wires? Peter Dixon and Maryann Zaruba will be performing community outreach to share Debbie's document and discuss the financial aspects of overhead/buried wires.

Regarding clearing the brush in the S curve, is there any chance as the spring comes through that we can be on a regular brush clearing schedule? Yes. Nestor will discuss with Eric Tabacek to coordinate with road operations to have this work performed. Eric is going to create a map of problem areas that we will keep an eye on that we know have been overgrown in the past.

Will the County be able to do some sort of town hall discussion with the residents of Pleasant Plains to discuss the overhead/underground lighting debate? Or should we continue with Peter and Mary Ann as the community advocates? Considering the April 29th timeframe for the budget hearings, and this is a capital project, we would have to engage the public information office as well to attend. The format of the meeting would be straightforward and informational.

PLEASE NOTE: The tentative schedule shown in the document below is dependent on making the decision to proceed in this month. Adjustment must be made to the schedule as the decision to proceed is pushed back.



Christopher J. Phipps, P.E., Director

Pleasant Plains Community Meeting

Project: Pleasant Plains Rd Safety Improvements

Anne Arundel County Project / Contract Nos.: H583701

Date: Wednesday March 23, 2022, 3:00 pm via Virtual Meeting

Total Utility Cost:

Overhead – \$750,000

Underground: \$4 M - \$6 M

Total Right of Way Cost:

Overhead - \$810,000

Underground: \$1.6 M

Total Project Funding

FY 22 - \$307K (Design Funding)

FY 23 - \$810,000 (R/W Funding) - Proposed

FY 24 - \$2,209,000 (Construction) - Proposed

Schedule:

Overhead:

Issue Plats – July 2022

R/W Clear – July 2023

AD for Construction – July 2023- Oct 2023

Construction:

Safety Grading:

NTP – Nov 2023

Const Complete – June 2024

Utility Relocations

NTP – June 2024

Const Complete – June 2025

(1 year utility relocations)

Underground:

Utility Prelim Design – July – Dec 2022

Issue Plats – **July 2023**

(request FY 24 Funding)

R/W Clear – July 2024

AD for Construction – July – Oct 2024

NTP – Nov 2024

Const Complete – June 2025

NTP – June 2025

Const Complete – Dec 2027

(2.5 Year Utility Relocations)

*This schedule assumes 1 year for both R/W and Environmental Permits

*Assumes we can pay a Fee for Tree removal for Critical Area Permit

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