



Pleasant Plains Community Meeting Minutes April 26, 2023

Nestor Flores - Chief, Traffic Engineering Division, AACO
Eric Tabacek - Area Engineer, Traffic Engineering Division, AACO
Debbie Russell - DPW Engineering, AACO
Robert Fernandez - DPW Engineering, AACO
David Braun - DPW Engineering, AACO
Chris Murphy - DPW Utilities
Kimberly Tran, District 5, State Highway Administration
Mary Ann Zaruba - Whitehall
Anne Cobb - Resident
Ellen Weiss - Resident
Peter Dixon - President, Burley Creek Community Association
John Joynes - President, Beechwood on the Burley Community Association
John Gough - Resident

Nestor Flores

- Kingsberry Sightline Issues - *No updates at this time.*
- SHA Updates - *None at this time.*
- Partnership with Waze - *The County has partnered with Waze, the driving navigation mobile app. I want to set up a strategy that allows us to navigate travelers to stay on route 50 and not give them the option of taking side roads.*

Debbie Russell

- Ponding/Freezing Cherry Rd Update - *We amended the language and resubmitted the grading permit the week of April 10th. The next step is obtaining the right of way, creating the plat, and moving forward so that we can get the right away clear so that we can start construction. The 2 things that we need to clear on this project are the right of way permit and the grading permit, which is the environmental permit, that we need for this project. This is for just the drainage going across the road at Cherry Road which is at 1814 Pleasant Plains Rd. I sent a letter to that address which is the property whose support that I need to buy a perpetual easement. The drainage structure on the other side of the road belongs to Mr. Dixon, who is the sod farm owner. There's 2 different ways that we're proceeding with the right of way for Pleasant Plains Road property. We created a plat, and we're starting the process of reviewing the plat, and of starting the right away process to purchase the rights to the right away, so that we can install the drainage inlet and the pipe. On the other side of the road, there's a larger project that we've been talking about with the Severn Riverkeepers, and AACo water distribution. They are obtaining an MOU with Mr. Dixon. They're taking the lead on that, MOU will also include any work that I have on my project. This means that technically I only have to get one property, and then Severn Riverkeepers will come through with the other project. I just received today from the consultant the first draft of that plat. I am currently reviewing and then I will send it up to our right of way section so they can start their processes. We also held a coordination meeting with Eric Michelson just to make sure that both projects are being coordinated and developed at the same time, and make sure there's no overlap or any issues with the actual design. My design has to tie into his design, and we have to make sure it's all scheduled and programmed together. The next steps for Cherry Road after today will be for me to review that plat, revise it*

and submit it to our right of way office to start their process. We will also require further coordination with the storm water management project as well as the BGE pole relocation. Even though we are on what we call the 'critical path' to streamline and expedite all of the projects, the right of way project is the task that I believe will take the longest. I still also in this timeframe would be coordinating with our contractor. We have a contractor on board that's going to do both the sod farm stormwater management improvement as well as our project. I'm starting to coordinate this work with him and gave him a chance to review the plans for what's called a Constructability Review and provide comments. I have also hired a construction management inspection team that will be on site when it's actually built.

- Relocating Poles in the S-Curve Update - Within the last month we held the coordination meeting with BGE. BGE created preliminary design plans, putting the utility polls on the north side of the road. We had a very good meeting on 04/19 and we just got their updates from the meeting today. We reviewed each pole design, myself, the designer as well as Verizon and Comcast. We all made comments because we're looking for the best design for everybody. The polls are owned by BGE, but Verizon and Comcast are on the poles as well. We are in the preliminary design phase at this time, deciding where the pole locations will be as well as an approximate area for a "guide" pole so that I can set the right of way for that project. The next step will be for JMT to update their plans which they should have to me by May 30th. There will be a 2 week review period. Once I get an idea of what exactly all the impacts are going to be to each property owner, I will send letters to the affected property owners to start discussions. This is not a natural plat, this is just a letter. The plat on the north side belongs to Mr. Dixon and I've already tried to contact him. He has not called me back, but I'm hoping to get a reply from him this week. On the other side of the road there are 7 potential property owners to be affected and we have narrowed that down to 4-5, but this is still being decided. Just like the process with the Cherry Rd drainage, we'll submit the grading permit by mid August at the latest, submit the plats for review, and start the right away process this August. For the utility pole project, our critical path is the purchasing of the right of way.

Community Comments

I'm confused as to why it's taken so long to get the approvals that we need. Is there any conflict from the property owners near the traffic signal? How about the property owners near the utility poles we are trying to move? I know some of them were unhappy. *Debbie states that we can't officially approach them until we actually have a plat that's approved as well as the land appraisals.* (Mr. Dixon) I believe the reason we're at this stage is because this project was supposed to try to move forward with the underground burying of the utilities and so we asked for the additional budget, and if I'm reviewing my notes appropriately from the last couple of months, only in February did the oversight committee say additional funding would not be approved, which is why in March the project was then slated to go ahead with relocation on the north side, that's when that whole process restarted and that's why we're at where we are right now is because the communities out here elected to attempt to get funding for an underground option, and so we all understood that if we didn't get the funding, then we go ahead with the overhead wires, and we all understood at the time of that community vote that this would put a 6 month delay on the project, which is where we are today.

Is the traffic signal still slated for a 05/08 construction start date? *Nestor will double check with SHA.*

Regarding the triangle redesign requested by Mr. Dixon - Eric was fantastic and reached out to me directly by email. I met with my community board, and I am going to be reaching back out to Eric via Email. Eric had said he went out and he saw the triangle, and he said, what do we want to do? So I talked to the community. I talked to the surrounding property owners as to what people would like to do and our community would love it if the County would be able to flatten that strip of center island, and whether or not there's any ability to raise that, as in put a curb around it versus just flatten it and put grass across it. I was going to ask what the County thought about our community possibly making that a community beautification project, putting a tree or a bench, or something of that nature. *Nestor responds yes, this is possible, and we have done that in other communities as part of our neighborhood traffic calming. We have created devices called entry islands and the community is willing to maintain the center*

island, and just coordinate on the type of vegetation we want to use because, especially if the island is close to the intersection, we don't want to create a sightline issue coming in and out of the community. We can work either through road operations or we can get our own contractor to come in and do some type of curbing, which we have done before. (Mr. Joynes) I've been here for 54 years. and when I came here that triangle was a hole in the ground with car parts filling it. We dug it out, brought in topsoil and built it up and installed 3 bushes. The huge bush that is there now is one of the 3. One of my neighbors' wives felt that the bushes on the triangle were obscuring her view of oncoming traffic and her husband cut them down one evening. We've had flowers there. We just have to be very careful that whatever we do it doesn't interfere with visibility. Nestor agrees and states that he is open to suggestions and ideas. We'll work together with the community and see what we can accomplish. We've done that before as neighborhood traffic with other communities, so this is definitely possible.

Across from the church, there were cars parked on the Kingsberry side again. At this point, our strategy is enforcement. The signing is there. Something you can do to help us out with some documentation is taking some pictures when it takes place. Then, we can see what the issues are, and then that will help us out in developing a strategy. We keep missing it when we go out there, we do not see cars parking there even on the weeknd. We can also resort to a camera if we have to in order to find out when the cars are parking there.

Mr. Gough called earlier and said he wasn't going to make it to the meeting tonight. But he did bring to my attention that there is a no parking sign there that's missing. So we are aware of that. The work order has been generated, so you'll see that replaced in the next couple of days, barring any bad weather.

The other thing that we had talked about at the Kingsberry intersection was the ability to make a two-way notification system for you to see if there's any way to let the people coming out of Kingsberry know that there is traffic approaching, coming inbound on Pleasant Plains Road. *We are still working on a plan for this change. I have a vendor selected incidentally because I'm buying another technology from them for another crossing. I'll reach out to him and do it in reverse, and I'm pretty sure they will be able to accomplish that for us. We will provide an update at the next meeting.*

The number one question I keep getting asked is will the traffic signal be activated in time for the summertime Bay Bridge traffic? *I will tell you that from our experience as a County it takes about 9 months to get everything constructed. If we start in May as a tentative schedule, it won't be ready for the summer traffic.*

Regarding the ponding/freezing on Cherry Rd, as of a few days ago, the contractor that was to design it did not have a contract. No money has passed hands, he said. He's done nothing in the last month. You might remind Eric that he's got to push the Severn Riverkeepers to pay for it. That looks like a difficult design job to me. We're trying to make water run from one place to the other at essentially the same level and catch it in the basin adjacent to the road without any space for straining, etc., and strain it out before it goes into the creek. We're not doing anything. The owner of the land on the downwind side of the creek side has not been contacted. The designers have not been shown the end of Hidden Point Road, or the water from the Dixon farm that comes directly into the creek, or from Millville around and down to the creek. They have no idea what's going on. (Mary Ann Zaruba) I went to the Severn River Association meeting last night, and it was very interesting. They are actually working on Dudley Dixon's property right now for a storm water management system with the State grant, and so that should really help and be the beginning. There's lots of other Grant monies that I would like to talk to you about later to come up with some sort of partnership with their Severn Riverkeepers. They are the oldest River Association in the country. I talked to somebody else that lives on Kingsberry, and they used to walk down to where that big capital project was done, about a year or two ago, and they said they see clams and fish there that never were there. The water is completely clear. That storm water management project really made a huge difference in that area. Bringing ferries and recreational people from in the National Park along with that boat traffic into our tributary cannot happen, we have to shut down the great amount of fertilizer and nitrogen that's just going right in. We've lost a lot of feet in depth, and now we're talking about allowing ferries to use the waterway, and I don't want them to blow me and my kayak out of the water, and have all of our little tributaries filled in. They'll keep their boats all clear and dredged, but they don't care about Burley Creek or Minnow Creek. I think that we need to have some agreements that some

of the 2 million or 3 million, not the whole thing, goes to restoring the house right off the sloop, and the rest goes to the tributaries. (John Joynes) That's Mr. Pitman's idea. He was wanting to bring ferries down from Baltimore to bring tourists to Annapolis and Thomas Point. This is just an extension of his thinking. Now, when it came to Holly Beach Farm he endorsed that project, and then, when we took a close look at it, you realized no that doesn't make sense. We need to have some talks.

(John Joynes) They came up with \$450,000 to drain the puddle behind behind Mr. Dixon's house, down through his sod farm, through a poop pond from the sheep, and then through another pond into the creek right at his boat basin. The public very kindly put together 5 grants which paid \$450K to drain the puzzle behind his house. I think maybe we could find a few dollars to do something here. I sat in on a meeting Tuesday night regarding the White Hall project where they are considering turning Whitehall into a public park and open it up to the bay. They need about \$2-\$3M to restore the house. Tomorrow night there is a meeting at the clubhouse in the Cape at 7pm to talk about the amount of money being discussed, which is now \$30M. I hope that we can find half a million dollars for Burley Creek. I'm getting extremely annoyed with hearing how efficiently everybody else found things. Hearing Nestor have his private meetings with the erosion people. They promise to do this, this and this all of which they haven't done. We have to keep the pressure on all the way. Last night's meeting was for Whitehall Road with Charlie, the owner of the house and Pat Lynch. There was this feeling throughout the meeting that people thought the restoration of the house was wonderful and that they should do it, but my feeling is that I'm for preserving the house if Charlie gets his way,, but I don't see how you get them to give you so much money and not give away control, nor do all the people in Whitehall. (Pat Lynch) I've been involved with Charlie Scarlett for over a month. He is the owner of Whitehall, and we have 2 objectives, and one is to save Whitehall. If Whitehall goes you can have routes. You can have any developers who's going to cut through the easements that are protecting it now. It is up to us to negotiate something that is fair and reasonable. If I knew I lived in the community I live in, and I was going to have a national park open up next to my driveway, I'd be pretty furious and afraid also. We are working on this. The genesis of everything that is going on right now is the legislation proposed by Van Hollen and Sarbanes to open up the Chesapeake Bay waterfront properties to sites for public access, 98% of the properties that front the Chesapeake Bay are privately owned. Whitehall will not be able to be preserved if Charlie does not get some funding from some source. He has looked at every possible source, and according to what he has determined, the best source, and the one that seems to work, is going to be with the National Park Service. He cannot even speak to the Chesapeake National Recreation area. That's something that's come up in the press. We'll talk about that later on. We just want to level set everybody so that all these ideas and complaints can be documented. At this time no one has any answers, not even Charlie. We're just starting to approach him and the NPS. Please be aware that Charlie has gone beyond what he could to work with those of us who are engaged with him in trying to come to a satisfactory agreement. We have to preserve Whitehall, and we also have to protect Whitehall Road and those communities that live nearby. I will be there tomorrow night, and my whole board will be there, and we are going to try to get through a very reasonable, professional, controlled 2 hours where we'll get John Sarbanes to speak. We will ask the right questions, and Charlie is going to call in from Illinois and be on a Zoom call. But please don't act as if and tell people that there are resolutions. We're not there yet. It'll take over a year to just get the draft legislation that John and Chris have put together, but the one piece of good news is that they're asking for input and that's what we want to establish, a good relationship with good input and have this come out to be a positive solution. (John Joynes) The people on Whitehall Road are feeling that this went a long way before they got involved, and some of them are rather ticked, and they express that Tuesday night. (Pat Lynch) We are ticked too, because we here at the Broadneck Council have been around since 2007. But according to Charlie, he lives in Illinois. He never heard of us, and that's reasonable. I never heard of Charlie either. So we're getting beyond that. That's the way it is in every organization I work with. The main complaint is that you do not get the communities involved who know more about the adjacent properties that are subject to whatever change or development or purchasing land, or putting in a park. You don't ask us, and if you have to. We know more than you do. I've lived here for over 50 years. Doesn't mean that we're going to dictate anything. It just means that you've asked our opinion, and we've given you very valuable input. *Nestor explains that he can only comment and become involved in Traffic Engineering projects. He is willing to host and bring people into the meeting that the community needs to speak with.*