



Pleasant Plains Community Meeting Minutes February 28, 2024

Nestor Flores - Chief, Traffic Engineering Division, AACO
Karen Henry - Director, Department of Public Works
Eric Tabacek - Area Engineer, Traffic Engineering Division, AACO
Debbie Russell - DPW Engineering, AACO
Robert Fernandez - DPW Engineering, AACO
David Braun - DPW Engineering, AACO
Erik Michelsen, Deputy Director Bureau of Watershed Protection and Restoration, AACO DPW
Amanda Fiedler - Councilwoman, District 5
Mary Ann Zaruba - Whitehall
Ellen Weiss - Millvale Rd
John Joynes - President, Beechwood on the Burley Community Association
Beau Breeden - President, Broadneck Council, Vice President, Cape Saint Claire
Patricia Lynch - Vice President, Broadneck Council
Anne Cobb - Hidden Point
Nicky Deasey - Hidden Point
Stephan von Schilcher - President, Beechwood on the Burley Community Association

Karen Henry

- Discussed the DPW Leadership Team Flow Chart for Pleasant Plains - see below
- Requested that the group please have realistic expectations about the attendance of all of the staff on the flow chart - they will attend when needed and if available as they have several other projects happening as well
- Robert and Debbie will be in attendance at all meetings as a default unless pressing circumstances arise
- Clarified that PayDirt is going to be working with Underwood on where the 2 projects connect together. Underwood is installing the stormwater wetland.

Nestor Flores

- **Kingsberry Dr** - Last time we met I told you we were going to have to wait until July before we can do the installation. However, I found some money to cover it, and I was able to purchase the equipment, so we have it at the shop. I need to have the vendor come and meet with us, though, and I have to coordinate it with another project that I'm doing - the Robinson Rd crossing in the Severna Park area - it might be late March early April, where we would be able to do the 2 projects together.
 - A recap for those that are unaware - Currently, we have a device at Kingsberry Drive, where, if you're sitting at the stop sign waiting to make a left turn or a right turn, it activates at an advance warning sign, letting people know that there's somebody waiting to make a left turn. We wanted to do something to warn the driver who's sitting at the stop sign, so we are going to have a 2 way communication where if the sensor detects a vehicle approaching, the stop sign lights up. There will be 2 different sensors working.
 - Once we have this set up, I will work with the residents of Kingsberry to develop an informational flier to be distributed to the community

- **Traffic Signal - Old Mill Bottom @ Saint Margarets Rd** - Work has been initiated. Flier was distributed giving some information to drivers and everybody local to the area, to be aware that there'd be some flagging operations as they build the infrastructure. The tentative schedule for completion is end of May, weather permitting.
- **Alternative 1 Implementation** - As a recap, when we started this project a few years ago, there were alternative options that we had money set aside for to improve the safety of the road - we have added flashing beacons, additional signage, etc. and we feel at this point we have done as many improvements as we can, so there is no update on this topic
- Nestor will reach out to SHA to attend the March meeting to explain how the signal works

Debbie Russell (A copy of Debbie's notes presentation can be viewed at the end of these minutes)

- **Ponding/freezing Cherry Rd** - At the last meeting we went over the 4 steps that we need to resolve before we start the construction. *Clarified that Underwood is designing Erik Michelsen's project and is also involved in the construction oversight and inspection, PayDirt is the construction firm that is going to do the actual labor.*
- Step 1 was working with the property owner on the opposite side of the farm, the residential property. Our right-of-way agents have made contact, and they are negotiating that property. We do not yet have a resolution.
 - Step 2 is after the right away acquisition is finalized, we can submit for the final grading permit and get the approvals. We've already put step 3 and 4 in place. We've hired the construction management firm EBA Engineering, that will be on site as inspectors, and the contractor will be PayDirt, the same contractor that Eric Michaelson is using. They have copies of the plans, and they've already given us estimates, and we're working on getting the procurement in place for the contract.
- **Relocation of poles in S-surve** - We're at 60% design right now.
 - Issue #1 - We are looking at purchasing right of way; that's our next step. Plats were submitted. They are under review by Anne Arundel County right now. After this review we will begin the right of way process which are independent appraisals, and then we would make offers to property owners. At this time, there are 7 properties.
 - Clarified the right of way timeline of one year is contingent on the property owners. We cannot control the schedule once we enter negotiations. The sooner the property owners make a decision, the sooner we can move forward.
 - Issue #2 is environmental permits. Refer to the chart in the last meeting minutes. We are still in the same place as we were last meeting - waiting for commitments from property owners for tree/shrub planting. We are still looking for volunteers to please let us know if you know of any. We are looking for one acre of trees and 18 trees in an easement.
 - We are starting the mitigation plan which is required for the Wetland Permit (#2). It's also required under #1 for the Critical Area Commission.

Erik Michelsen

- Responsible for the storm water project on the Dixon side
- Work that his group is doing will be a component of the drainage relief project that Debbie's working on, so that the culvert that will be installed under Pleasant Plains Road will ultimately drain into this stormwater wetland that's being created on the sod farm property.
- The creation of this stormwater wetland there is going to do some significant sediment and nutrient reductions from the sod farm itself into Burley Creek
- The Severn Riverkeeper has been working with several farmers in the area, including the Dixons and the adjacent landowners, and has gotten them conceptually and in practice to agree to a number of practices, including this one.

- Just today, we got notice that our access agreement with the land owner had been finalized. We also have our approvals in hand from the Soil Conservation District, which is the entity that regulates fields on agricultural properties.
- We also received confirmation from Debbie's engineers that the practice that the culvert that they have designed meshes with the practice that we're proposing to install.
- The next step for us is to get on our contractor scheduled. My hope is that we will be able to initiate construction on this part of the project by the end of March. It will probably take us some time in April in terms of that work.
- Will do his best to be available for the March meeting
- See plans below for more details regarding this portion of the project

Community Comments

Mary Ann Zaruba - For Erik Michelson - I was right past Cherry Road, past the culvert that you're talking about replacing. 100-150ft past there, going to the end of Pleasant Plains Road, on the right hand side, the Dixon farm also had an erosion for which they put hay bales down for a long time when he moved in, (the erosion) was running from that area into Minnow Creek, where there exists one of the tributaries at the end which belong to the Whitehall Beach, and I live on Minnow Creek, and I've sent pictures years ago before I ever met you, and it's a separate conversation, I know, but the land runoff that we are witnessing is really severe, and rainstorms and the water depth has filled in, and I've been here 16 years and it's filled in probably 3-4ft. We're at some point going to have to address a dredging event whether the County pays for it or it is a shared cost. But that's another spot that needs to be looked at. Maybe after you get the culvert looked at that'll alleviate some of that runoff that's coming a little further down, which is Whitehall Beach Road. *Erik appreciated the information and will begin researching how to help.*

Mary Ann Zaruba - for Debbie - Is there anything that we can do to help the one property owner that doesn't want to participate? Or is it a money issue, or is it a privacy issue? Is there a way that we could move that pole to another spot that wouldn't upset them? I don't know the specifics, but if there's something we could do? *Right now, we are working to come to an agreement and unfortunately there is nothing that you the citizens can do at this time. I will let you know if there is something that you could help with in the future. I am still confident that we will come to an agreement.*

Mary Ann Zaruba - for Debbie - I've been going through a renovation with the permit process. with critical areas and how you have to replace trees and had to spend close to \$4K to have trees planted. Is there a way that we could hook that up with another government agency to have a database of all of the trees that need to be replanted for people who are looking for trees to be planted?

Mary Ann Zaruba - for Debbie - In Whitehall Beach alone we have 3 easements that are county-owned properties. One at the end where we have steps and all the trees actually have fallen down. There's another county access on Red Cedar Road which may be a paper road. Burley Rd has one as well. We can help find locations if that is a roadblock. I will get the information for the gentleman that I worked with who was in charge of the tree index and pass it along to you as well. We can probably get them planted pretty quick, there's a lot of new houses under construction on Hidden Point and Millville and they have big properties, and I'm sure it would cost a ton to replant what they're probably going to be required to replant. *Debbie will reach out to Mary Ann to pull up these locations on the map to determine if they are viable.*

John Joynes - I spoke with Kim Tran's office today. They tell me that the foundations for these poles are in. There will be no digging across the road. They're going underground. How they do that I don't know, and next time they will have a visual to show us. This is a smarter than usual system by a long shot. It will adapt to the traffic loads and minimize our wait times. *Nestor confirmed that it will work the way the County signals work - green for the main road always unless there is a vehicle waiting on the side streets. Please keep an eye on the function of the signal and let us or SHA know ASAP of any changes you think should be made.*

John Joynes - We've been asking for about a half a year now of David Wright with BGE to let us know who paid for putting the electrical cable down the hill from the Davidson farm to Harmony Acres? *David Wright replies via email - The cost for us to underground was negligible when compared to the work required from an overhead perspective so the design went that route. As to the red posts, those are installed to indicate underground electric and yellow indicating gas mains. Having said that, they aren't always used and now I'm curious as to why and will reach out to our Damage Prevention group to see if I can't get an answer to that for the group for next meeting*

Mary Ann Zaruba - There are little red poles in the location John describes above. They are on the curve. They have been knocked out about 5 times now, and they keep putting them back up. They are flexible poles. They start at the Davidson farm and are knocked over as much as the yellow poles are on St Margarets. These should be moved back along with the poles. *Nestor believes they are markers for the underground line. Stephan notes that this is where they were putting their electric lines starting a few weeks ago. Nestor states that he does not know if there's a regulation associated with the underground utilities to see if these need to be placed at this location but he agrees that if it is possible the poles should be moved back a few feet to give drivers the space to recover on a turn. It looks like these are flex posts; they're designed to flex and break as not to cause damage or an issue with a driver or vehicle running off the road. Per highway design, anything that is put within this "clear zone" needs to be breakaway. I will ask David to join the next meeting for clarification.*

John Joynes - It says that they will put the dirt that comes out of the hole in a pile and a place is not needed on the farm for that. Anybody have any feel for what that's going to look like and how much we're going to have to deal with? This area that (Erik) is working on goes from 18 feet high to 12 feet high and in the course of that step down there will be 2 trenches put in the bank and I am unsure what the dimensions of the trenches are or what they are going to put in the bottom but it's going to take a bunch of digging. Fortunately the plans do say that every day when you dig you must be able to stabilize that area that evening before you leave. They'll need to put wood chips or straw on it and there is some kind of machine that's a stabilizer that I think punches holes through it and makes it go into the ground so it doesn't blow away. All that's got to be done every day. *Erik states there is a temporary stockpile area shown on the site for the construction phase of the work. There will not be a mound left in place at the end of the construction period. Any excess material will be spread on the farm portion of the property as additional topsoil and stabilized.*

Stephan von Schilcher - Are the SHA shutting down the exits again this summer or not? *Nestor believes that they are, but he will get an answer from SHA or hopefully they come to the next meeting and it can be discussed*

Pat Lynch - I communicate directly with Will Pines, who is the Director of State Highway and the decision has been made to reduce the number of exit ramps in the days that we are going to have the ramp as an adjunct to flow traffic on and off of route 50 to the service roads on the south side. It was 4 days last year, but it is 2 days this year (Friday and Saturday) because the complaints from Grumman, because their employees were having trouble negotiating the turns to get on their road into their building, and also the businesses up at the shopping area right near the Bay bridge, so we're only going to have ramps 30 and 32 open, 31 is permanently closed. Offered to discuss Thursday again with the SHA but feels that Grumman holds a lot of weight when it comes to these decisions. *Mary Ann asks how many employees are there? Pat responds that there are more than you'd think and she would have to refer to her notes for an exact number.*

Pat Lynch - I've worked with the county for many years and have been involved in some tree replantings. They usually plant seedlings. I don't understand \$1,000 a tree. No one seems concerned about that. *Debbie responds at this time the actual planting cost is unknown until details of each permit requirement are identified, addressed, and approved. The cost mentioned in the meeting is the total cost per tree for all of the materials, transportation, labor and 1 year maintenance requirements regarding the upkeep of each tree. The trees typically required to address these permitting requirements are not seedlings, but at least 1-1/2"-2" caliper replacement trees, and sometimes even larger depending on the trees being removed.*

Nicky Deasey - For Debbie - We're one of the properties affected by this and we've offered a place to plant some trees. We just have not heard back from Debbie, I believe. They offered one place on our property, and we said, that's not really going to work, but offered another place on our property instead. The first time we offered that was months ago. *Debbie responds that she does have an email from Nicky 01/28 and she responded that she had to perform a change order with her consulting firm because she has to bring on a landscape architect and tree arborist to consider the location and will have an answer hopefully next week.*

H583701 – Pleasant Plains Rd Safety Improvements - Corridor Utility Project

We are at 60% design. Here are the outstanding issues and next steps in the process:

1. Purchasing Right of Way is our next steps. Plats will be complete by the end of January, then submitted for review by AA County DPW. After this review, we will begin the right of way process which will then include independent appraisals, R/W offers to property owners. This process can take up to one year. There are 7 property takes that need to be negotiated.
2. Environmental Permits: Attached is a chart outlining the permits needed for this project, broken down as to when we submit each phase. Items 1 – 4 are actual permits, items 5 – 11 are sub-sections that are required for the Anne Arundel County Grading Permit. We do not have any commitments from the public regarding tree and shrub plantings. We are still looking for volunteers to plant a tree/ shrub on their property as part of the mitigation needed for permitting.

H583702 – Cherry Rd Drainage Project

We are close to finishing this project, there are 4 steps we need to take as follows:

1. Plats were submitted to R/W to make the final offer to the property owner, were sent by Mid-December with follow up beginning of January.
2. After the R/W is purchased, we can submit the updated plans with the R/W clear statement and receive final approval on the County Grading permit. We will need BWPR's project in place before the county will issue the grading permit.
3. CMI (EBA) have prepared manhours estimates for the project, should have Purchase Order in place by end of Jan 2024.
4. Contractor (Paydirt) are preparing bidding estimates through the use of BWPR existing contract. Should have their Purchase Order in place by end of Jan 2024.

If all goes as planned, should be able to start construction in the Spring 2024, (March/ April 2024)

Severn Riverkeepers SWM Project/ AA county Bureau of Watershed Protection

1. Design is underway
2. A purchase order for the construction work has been cut.
3. We're currently in the process of executing the access MOU with Mr. Dixon.
4. Expectation for the construction is to begin in late March 2024.

