



MINUTES

RUSTIC ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

November 25, 2008

Executive Office Building, Rockville

Members:

Eric Spates
Bob Goldberg
Kevin Foster
Jim Arnoult
Fred Lechlinder
Leslie Saville – MNCPPC
Sarah Navid - Staff
Jay Beatty - Staff

Guests:

Alan Migdal - MCBAG
Keith Compton - MCDOT
Randy Paugh - MCDOT
Katherine Sexton – Barnesville Oak Farms, LLC
Gail Tait-Nouri – MCDOT - MCBAG
Jeff Dunckel – MCDOT – PTSAC
Nancy Dunckel – interested citizen

The meeting began at 7:00 PM.

Asphalt Chip Seal– Keith Compton, Chief, Division of Highway Services and Randy Paugh, Chief, Pavement Management Section gave a presentation of the Asphalt Chip Seal (“tar and chip”) surfacing process currently used on rustic and other rural county roads. This pavement surfacing method was selected because it preserves the pavement structure as well as the rustic character of the road and does so in a cost-effective way. However, varying amounts of residual aggregate are an unavoidable part of the process, causing potentially hazardous conditions for bicyclists. Ideally, the roads are swept within 7 to 10 days after the resurfacing, but weather or other factors can lead to delays. Keith stated that DOT immediately will be implementing notification improvements including posting signs with a specific bicycle graphic seven days in advance of the surfacing and left in place until the final sweeping. Announcements of the roads to be resurfaced will be posted on the County website and will be e-mailed to bicycle groups. Keith also indicated that DOT will seek guidance from the RRAC on the continued use of chip seal and with respect to alternate materials.

Alan Migdal, a bicyclist, described his own close encounter going downhill on a road and suddenly hitting a patch of gravel. He was glad to hear that DOT was willing to inform the bicycling community but felt it might not be that effective in practice. He stated that the only way he would feel safe was with the use of a treatment that doesn’t leave loose gravel or if every area on the pavement that has loose gravel was marked. He questioned whether Keith could provide data on how much time actually elapsed before the roads

were swept. Keith indicated that he did not have that data but that he was making a commitment to try and sweep as quickly as possible and to keep data on that in the future.

RRAC members were interested in learning about the pros and cons of the various alternate pavement treatments available. Alan was curious what treatment was used in Williamsburg, the surface appears to have pebbles at the surface. The RRAC wanted to know how many rustic roads are re-surfaced annually. Keith indicated that only Comus Road was done this fiscal year; last year Hughes Road and White Ground Road were re-surfaced. Gail said a member of her MCBAG (Montgomery County Bicycle Action Group) had brought in photos of both of those roads showing remaining areas of gravel along the edge and center. Jeff, staff to the Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, said that bicycle safety was included under the committee purview and that notification appeared to be their primary concern.

Meeting Minutes October 28, 2008 – were not approved. The section on Barnesville Oak Farms needs to be revised to include the concerns expressed relative to how the proposed houses visible from Peach Tree Road may negatively affect the rustic character by creating more of a suburban looking environment.

Barnesville Oak Farms – The Committee continued its discussion from the October meeting. Issues that were raised included:

- MD 109 Beallsville Road appears inadvisable for additional driveways due to the high speeds and poor sight distances; also best farmland is in this area.
- The proposed plan with the two large farm lots is in accordance with preservation of farm land and in keeping with the purpose of the ag reserve.
- Views towards Sugarloaf are important; the first cluster of houses southwest of Peach Tree Road may obstruct the view.
- Can the four lots on the two driveways on the east side of Peach Tree Road be linked to the cul de sac?
- The buffer strip along Peach Tree Road appears too thin; need to ask for screening to create an edge.
- Density and number of entrances along Peach Tree Road seems to be the main issue.
- Can the cul de sac be connected through to the existing farm lane on White Store Road?

- The scope of the RRAC comments should include the views towards Sugarloaf and the forested area along the east side of Peach Tree Road, as both are called out in the Master Plan, as well as the access points.
- Entrances should be kept narrow.

The Committee felt that a letter expressing their general items of concern and recognizing the competing interests should be drafted to MNCPPC. A field trip will be set up prior to the next meeting.

Game Preserve Road

The Committee went through the criteria checklist for rustic and exceptional rustic designation and concluded that Game Preserve Road meets the criteria for exceptional rustic with the exception of its accident history. Watkins Mill Road, when completed, will provide a parallel direct alternate route between MD 355 and MD 177. With that in place, it is likely that “short-cut” traffic and accidents on Game Preserve Road will significantly decrease. Therefore, the Committee recommended that the current status of Game Preserve Road should remain (secondary) until Watkins Mill Road is operational and new accident data can be evaluated.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.