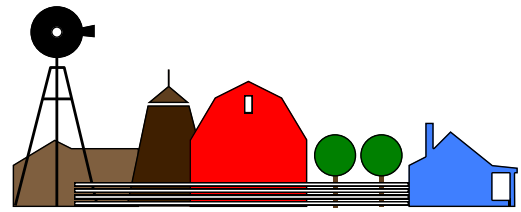


## RUSTIC ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month

7-9 PM Executive Office Building, Rockville

15<sup>th</sup> floor conference room



Meeting of April 23, 2013

### **Members present:**

Angela Butler  
Marc Miller  
Christopher Marston  
Bob Goldberg  
Greg Deaver  
Eric Spates  
Greg Glenn

**M-NCPPC member:** Leslie Saville

**Staff coordinator:** Jay Beatty

### **Guests:**

Bob Tworkowski, Batchellors Forest Rd resident  
Dee Nelson, Batchellors Forest Rd resident  
John and Ann Wylie, Batchellors Forest Rd residents  
Caroline Taylor, Montgomery Countryside Alliance  
Steve Crum, Macris, Hendricks & Glascock  
Patrick Williams, Pulte Homes  
Tom Mateya, Toll Bros., Trotters Glen  
Michael Clay, Gutschick, Little & Weber  
Kevin Foster, Gutschick, Little & Weber

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The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

### **Minutes**

The March 26, 2013 minutes were approved with minor corrections. Members commented on the usefulness of the action items.

### **Correspondence**

The Longacres Preserve and Darby Store letters were sent out since the last meeting, and copies distributed to members via email.

### **Member Replacement**

The announcement for Bob's replacement closed on March 29, with no applications received. Jay asked that the position be re-announced, and he forwarded the announcement to members shortly before the meeting for circulation to potential members. Greg Deaver's re-application will go through at the same time as the new member's application.

### **Annual Meeting with the County Executive**

Greg Deaver, Marc and Jay went to the annual meeting with the County Executive on April 4. The meeting format changed to a discussion with the Executive and other groups (the Sign Review Board and the Electrical Examiners). A question was asked about foliage maintenance—the committee explained that maintenance to assure safe passage by emergency and farm equipment is a priority for the committee. Members mentioned the draft Design Guidelines, which was of interest to one of the other groups.

### **Rustic Roads Guidelines**

Everyone is needed to help work on a list on images. Comments can still be provided, also. Christopher suggests two-to-three images of good examples per page. Bob suggested we include photos of monumental vs rustic entry feature examples. If we'd like to include it, there is an example of a non-breakaway mailbox on MD28 north of Whites Ferry Road.

Christopher will type up (currently handwritten) his thoughts about images by close of business Thursday. Everyone else should send comments by next Tuesday.

### **Sign Requests**

Bob updated the committee on the two roadway safety sign requests:

- West Old Baltimore warning signs for the ford have been placed. DOT considers them safe and adequate. They are located a short distance before the ford, and past the last turn around.
- No response has been received yet on the Huntmaster Road bridge. Several contacts have been made.

### **Batchellors Forest Road Residents-presentation # 1**

Bob Twortkowski, Dee Nelson and John and Ann Wylie live on Batchellors Forest Road. They wish to protect the neighborhood and the road. Currently, properties consist of 15-20 acre lots with goats and cows.

The residents would like to get to know and work with the committee. How is Batchellors Forest Road being maintained? How does encroachment by developers impact the road? How is the Trotters Glen proposal going to impact the road? Will it become a cut through?

There will be 70 new houses on Batchellors Forest Road. The residents believe there should be an exit onto Emory Church Road since drivers cannot turn left onto Georgia Avenue at BF Rd, so they will cut through the Olney Manor Rec Park. Fire and Rescue will have an emergency entrance onto Emory Church Road—this should be a connection for everyone. (Members pointed out that the committee is advisory only, and cannot override safety improvements and that they are not traffic planning engineers.)

Currently, traffic from MD108 “cuts the corner” to Georgia Avenue by using Old Baltimore Road. The applicant indicates that this traffic will instead use Batchellors Forest and Emory Church Roads, if a connection is made through the Trotters Glen subdivision; the applicant had stated previously that opening this connection will attract 600 new cut-through trips per day.

The residents have hired a traffic consultant who doesn't agree with the applicant's engineer, and indicates that the current estimate of 600 trips is not documented. The residents would like support from the committee for another study. They believe the connection will attract fewer trips, and that the new residents of Trotters Glen will be likely to use Emory Church Road, so the impact to the rustic road will in fact be reduced, if a new road connects Batchellors Forest

and Emory Church Roads through the Trotters Glen subdivision. Residents are also concerned about the proposed widening of the road over the one-lane bridge.

The residents requested support for a delay to enable them to get an actual engineering study on trips likely to be generated by a connection through Trotters Glen. They would also like to attend a future meeting to more broadly discuss development impacts to rustic roads, since development on other rustic roads are likely to raise similar concerns as the current ones. They would also like to further discuss the widening of the bridge. And last, they would like to discuss the traffic confusion with unfamiliar visitors to Washington Christian Academy and the cemetery at the south end of the road.

### **Share The Road Signs-presentation #2**

Caroline Taylor, executive director of Montgomery Countryside Alliance and a resident of the Ag Reserve, would like to work with the RRAC on signs to promote safety in the Ag Reserve and on Rustic Roads.

Last year, she witnessed visitors traveling to ultimate Frisbee and soccer events yelling at farmers with farm equipment on the roads. She also sees conflicts between drivers and cyclists and equestrians. Caroline brought several examples of Share the Road signs the symbols for tractors, bikes, horses and hikers. She offered to help with grant applications, if the cost of signs was a barrier.

The committee discussed options for placing signs on existing poles, such as Ag Reserve or bikeway signs.

The committee would like to see a full-sized mock up of a sign to assure that it would be legible, and Caroline will help to identify hot spots.

### **Entrance Features, Batchellors Forest Subdivision-presentation #3** (On Batchellors Forest Road at Old Vic Blvd and Victoria Place intersections)

Patrick Williams (Pulte Homes) and Steve Crum (Macris, Hendricks & Glascock) presented a scaled back proposal for entry features, with two now proposed flanking Old Vic Blvd, and one proposed at Victoria Place. The features will provide a presence for the community from the road.

The visitors propose two stone columns (about 18 feet apart, center-to-center, and 5 feet 6 inches high), landscaped behind and with ornamental grasses in front. No signs or lighting was proposed. They will be 34-37 feet from the edge of pavement (this distance is out of the right of way, but partially within the public improvement easement). Columns would be made of concrete masonry units with a natural stone veneer. The fence between the pillars would be about four feet high, and the fence at the ends would angle down into the ground.

The visitors requested that the committee provide some indication of whether the request would be supported, so they excused themselves to permit the committee to discuss the proposal.

The committee agreed that the more modest entry features would have a minimal impact on the character of the road in the proposed locations. The visitors were asked to provide details, including materials, dimensions, and specifications, so that the committee could clearly indicate what was being recommended.

#### **Trotters Glen-presentation #4**

Tom Mateya (Toll Bros.), Michael Clay (Gutschick, Little & Weber) and Kevin Foster (also GLW) indicated that they are working toward a June 13 Planning Board date.

On the fence issue, liability has become a concern if it is within the right of way. At site plan, the fence comes under review by the Department of Permitting Services, and they believe it may be a safety hazard. Opposing a safety concern could place the applicant in a position of liability. An alternative—to allow the fence to remain in the current location until it fell down—was not what the applicant wants..

As a compromise, a reduced right of way (from 70 to 50 feet) is now being proposed, with the fence located as close to the edge of the right of way as possible. (The proposed 50-foot right of way is a standard tertiary width.) This moves the fence back about 10 feet, and the changed right of way becomes a “paper change.”

The fence is a long term maintenance and HOA liability. They prefer to keep what is on the site currently, including the cart paths. This puts the fence into the path. Instead, they propose keeping the fence down to the stream, and then putting in a hedgerow on the southern end. For the landscape, keep the existing trees and add natives such as cedars, crabapples, redosier dogwoods. (DOT will allow plantings but not a fence in the right of way.)

The proposed fence will be four-board wood horse fencing. The public utility easement will be behind it, and it will be 12 feet wide. Alternatively, the fence can be taken down completely.

For the proposed entrance features, they propose something more like a “stone fence” than an entry feature. They are common in Montgomery County, but not pervasive. They are more agrarian, less suburban. The wall is proposed to be about 2 ½ feet tall, 1 ½ feet wide, and also with the 12-foot PUE behind. It would be about 150 feet long on the side going into the new subdivision, and 70-80 feet long on the other, at Batchellors Forest Road. At the cul de sac, one pier and fencing is proposed. They are trying to keep the character of the road. They haven’t picked the stone yet, but it will have a dry-laid appearance. Comments are due to Ben Berbert, the M-NCPPC packager, within a week.

## **Public Awareness**

Angela has been investigating what we might be able to do to promote public awareness on the rustic roads:

- The Explore document that Caroline Taylor distributed should be on the RRAC site.
- Does anyone coordinate events in the Ag Reserve?
- Can coordination be done through the office that issues event permits?

Action item: Link the Explore document to the website, if it isn't already linked [the day after the meeting, the link was confirmed.]

## **REVIEW OF REQUESTS FROM VISITORS :**

### **Signage (Share the Road -Presentation #2)**

New bicyclist warning signs have been added on Barnesville Road. Are they useful? Safe?

Caroline will help to identify hot spots. We should ask the Ag Advisory Committee to also help identify hot spots. A joint letter with them would be preferred.

To avoid visual clutter, can we cross-use signs? Or posts? We should ask in our letter to DOT that signs should be used judiciously.

First, we should mock up a sign and review it. Is it legible? Do alternatives.

If a legible sign is feasible, then we would like to:

- Write a letter jointly with the AAC to DOT requesting Share the Road signs
- The goal of the signs is to improve safety and courtesy
- All modes of locomotion are welcome on the roads

### **Batchellors Forest Road Residents-(presentation #1)**

The committee doesn't have the technical capacity to assess competing engineering studies, so as it stands currently, we have to assume the information presented is in accordance with the best professional standards. If those standards have not been met, we have to assume that DOT or M-NCPPC will be advising the Planning Board on that.

The residents may be returning at the next meeting to continue the broader discussion about development on Rustic Roads. Meanwhile we will write a letter to the residents and also provide them with a copy of our letter to the applicant.

### **Trotters Glen-(presentation #4)**

Write a letter to the applicant with a cc to the Planning Board:

- We trust that the traffic study has been done in accordance with the best professional standards
- On the proposed 50-foot right of way, we would like to see a section showing the existing and proposed rights of way and fence location alternatives. The AASHTO standard (7-10 feet off of pavement) or the reduced right of way will probably keep the fence closest to the current location, which is preferred.
- On the stone wall, no information was left with the committee. We will request a description, materials, and a sketch or photo mock-up to show us what the wall might look like.
- On the culvert/bridge, we would like to maintain the narrowness.
- On the cut through or connection through to Emory Church Road, our concern is that the road retains its rustic character and function.

A copy of the letter will be sent to the Batchellors Forest residents as well as the applicant and the Planning Board.

**Adjourned**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21, 2013, at 6:30 pm.

**MINUTES APPROVED: 5/21/13**