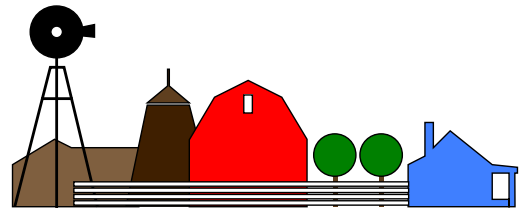


RUSTIC ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

4th Tuesday of the month

6:00-7:30 PM Executive Office Building, Rockville

DGS Large conference room 9th Floor



Meeting of March 24th, 2015

Attendees:

DPS Staff coordinator: Chris Myers

M-NCPPC member: Leslie Saville

Voting Members present:

Christopher Marston

Jane Thompson

Greg Deaver

Angela Butler

Absent:

Voting Members

Audrey Patton

Todd Greenstone

Marc Miller

Guests:

Steven Hollie – SHA consultant

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm.

Presentations -

SHA Tourist Area and Corridor Program

Steven Hollie, a consultant with the State Highway Administration, gave a presentation regarding the state's Tourist Area and Corridor (TAC) signing program. This program allows area attractions to apply to the state for signage along roads which will direct visitors to their attraction. Mr. Hollie explained that there are certain criteria that the attractions must meet, such as how many hours a week they are open and that they are primarily a non-retail attraction, which limits who can qualify for this program. He presented some handouts showing what the proposed signs would look like and their sizes. Eight signs were proposed to be installed along Rustic Roads throughout the county but it turns out there will be more because not all the Rustic Roads were accounted for. Mr. Hollie said he would send a link to allow the committee to view the entire inventory of proposed signs for them to make comment. He was interested in hearing the committee's comments regarding the state flag

that will be displayed at the top of each of the sign, the colors of the sign (brown, or brown and blue) and the size of the signs. He explained he can only change/reduce what the message says on the sign to limit their size but not the size of the text because that is regulated by The Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). He could also adjust the proposed location of the sign. The committee decided to hold off comment until they got to view the entire display of proposed signs along the Rustic Roads, and review some of the areas where there are currently large numbers of signs.

New Business –

Letter of Thanks for Brian

The work done by the committee's previous staff coordinator, Brian Jeeves, was greatly appreciated by the members. Christopher Marston presented a draft to the committee of a thank you letter. The committee agreed the letter looked good and would be signed and sent to Brian's manager.

West Harris Road

Leslie informed the committee that a meeting has been scheduled with some of the residents along West Harris Road to discuss some of the issues they have been having with erosion, water runoff and the excess gravel. Jane, Leslie, Chris and Christopher are planning to attend. Anyone is welcome to join the meeting which is scheduled for March 31st at 1PM.

Montevideo Road Bridge Status

Leslie informed the committee that the pony truss bridge was going to be worked on by MCDOT. The bridge has been inspected and was found to need some repairs. Chris Myers will contact MCDOT to obtain a list of projects that they will be working on along Rustic Roads.

Street Name Sign replacement

In 2012, the committee worked with MCDOT to establish a brown street name sign standard for rustic roads. Recently, former committee member Greg Glenn and the Montgomery Countryside Alliance asked about the status of the program. There are currently a few of the brown signs appearing, but signs are being replaced individually rather than in clusters—just one or two signs here or there. Until a larger number of signs are changed, people won't be able to understand what roads are rustic, and people may get the impression that some rustic roads are not rustic, because their signs are still green.

With budgets currently under review, the committee agreed that making a budget request would be timely. Leslie will work with MCDOT on an estimate of costs, and a draft request letter will be circulated.

Ten Mile Creek Master Plan

A technical error was noted in the recent Ten Mile Creek Master Plan—the rustic roads adopted in the 2004 Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan were not reflected. The committee reviewed a draft letter to be sent to the Planning Department. Chris will circulate the letter for final comment.

Outside Inquiries

Leslie presented the idea of hosting a workshop with neighboring jurisdictions and their rustic roads program to discuss the issues that each program encounters. Greg Deaver suggested a more one on one approach meeting one jurisdiction at a time to keep the time required for such an event to a minimum. Christopher agreed and added that it takes a lot of time and effort to coordinate such an event.

Old Business –

Minutes -

The February 24th, 2015 minutes were approved with minor corrections.

Promoting the Program

Chris said that he had received ideas from a few of the members on how to promote the program and would circulate those ideas among the committee so they could be prioritized. The top vote, along with a cost estimate, would then get presented to the director of the Department of Permitting Services for some money that had been promised to the committee.

Member Update

Chris informed the committee that Marc Miller's replacement and Christopher's reappointment should be official by the end of the month. Christopher said he already received his letter from the County Executive but is still waiting on confirmation by County Council. Chris said that the former position had closed on March 23rd and that as of the 20th there were no applicants. Angela Butler said they need to lower the 50% income criteria so that more people could apply.

Rustic Roads Resource Manual

Leslie presented a draft document on some of the issues that are holding up finalizing the manual. One issue is some language that MCDOT was not ok with concerning minimum sight distance requirements. Leslie had contacted Sarah Navid, the RRAC's long-time staff

coordinator who started the Resource Manual project, and Sarah had offered some compromise language. Greg voiced concerns, and Angela suggested that the Ad Hoc group that had worked most extensively on the project discuss it further offline.

Poplar Hill Update

Leslie informed the committee that many different ideas are being discussed for how to handle some of the Poplar Hill Road drainage issues. MCDOT has not yet finalized their study, but when they do, we should invite them and the community back to discuss.

Correspondence –

Sugarland – two letters are drafted and ready for whatever decision the planning board reaches

Burnt Hill Road – Chris has a rough draft regarding the presentation made to the committee on February 24th and will circulate for comment

SHA TAC Signing Program – Chris to write a thank you letter to Steven Hollie

Public Awareness – None

Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm. The next Public RRAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday April 28th from 6:00 to 8:00 in Rockville.

MINUTES APPROVED:

April 28, 2015