



## **Riedel Road Community Meeting Minutes October 8, 2024**

Nestor Flores - Chief, Traffic Engineering Division, AACO  
Sgt. Regina Collier, Anne Arundel County Police Traffic Safety  
Cpl. Tom Middleton - Anne Arundel County Police  
Courtney Buniskis - Office of the County Executive  
Jessica Ewing - Councilwoman Shannon Leadbetter's Office  
Brooke Doerfler - Resident, Nantucket/Riedel  
Danielle Richard - Board Member, Crofton Mews  
Krista Swetz - Crofton Mews  
Torrey Jacobsen - President, Greater Crofton Council  
Nicole Ramsey - Resident, Lowell Ct  
Lisa Woolcock - Director, Crofton Downs  
Heather Taylor, Briarleigh HOA  
Roberta McCartney, Board of Directors, Crofton Mews  
Erin Aldrich Gray - HOA Chapman Farm  
Eden Casterline - Crofton Square Condominium #2/Coventry 2 COA

### **Nestor Flores**

- Presented slide deck with traffic study survey results. Slide deck as well as the meeting recording is posted on the Riedel Road Community website located here:  
<https://www.aacounty.org/public-works/highways/riedel-road-johns-hopkins-road>
- Discussed plans to implement speed reduction measures on Riedel, aiming to lower the speed limit to 30 miles per hour by the end of November. He proposed reviewing existing speed sign placements and warning signs, and possibly installing new signs with verbal messages. He also mentioned the possibility of using solar power for these signs. In the long term, Nestor suggested revisiting the idea of roundabouts and conducting a more robust outreach to the community to explain the benefits and impacts.
- Will create work orders for upgrading existing signs and replacing worn out/faded/damaged signs on Riedel Road
- Emphasized the importance of the group and the community remaining engaged with this project - a lot of our strategies will be trial and error and we are depending on your feedback for real change to happen.

## Meeting Comments

**Courtney Buiniskis** - One of the biggest citizen complaints right now is about the big trucks on the road. If the police see a big truck on that road can they go after them and do enforcement? *Nestor responds yes, as soon as the No Thru Trucks Over 5T GVW signs are installed, this will be enforceable. This will be a challenge as the officer has to follow the truck through the corridor to confirm that they are using the road as a thru road. If a truck stops to make a delivery, then that is not considered "thru" traffic. But if they are cutting through because they do not want to go to Route 3, then the officers will be able to issue the citation. We are also working on having the signs installed in the SHA right-of-way. Also, we will be working with Waze and other GPS systems to have the restrictions added to their maps as well.*

**Erin Aldrich Gray** - Is the speed reduction only on Riedel or Johns Hopkins also? I know you have about a 50/50 support for the roundabout on Riedel - I think Riedel is too small for mini roundabouts. Can you explain them to me in a different way? *Nestor confirmed that the initial study was only performed for Riedel Rd. We will perform a similar study for Johns Hopkins Rd and report back to the committee & community. Regarding the mini roundabouts - the intention is to try to fit everything in the existing footprint of the road. We're going to have to do a more detailed study and identify those locations where we think the roundabouts will work most effectively. We have plenty of space on Riedel Road with almost 5 lanes of road width. We will stay within the existing footprint, and in order to take into account, for example, delivery vans or oversize vehicles, we can make everything mountable. Montgomery and Prince George's Counties have them all over the place - as well as SHA. Another good example is eastbound route 50 after going over the Bay Bridge - when coming off of that ramp there is a mini-roundabout. See photo below for an example photo of how the roundabouts may appear. Some time ago, we attempted a regular roundabout on Waugh Chapel @ Symphony but it was too large for the space where the signal is.*



**Torrey Jacobsen** - For your first study, you had bike lanes. From my understanding, this would mean the center lane is to be shrunk and the lining of the road would change. When the road was repaved, they just put the same linings back in but made the center line a bit wider. We still don't have bike lanes or signs. *Nestor responds that we are currently in the process of installing the bike lane symbols on the new section of Riedel Rd. The reason that I did not make the center lane any more narrow is because the previous community survey we conducted showed that the community did not want the center lane changed at all. The only changes we made were to make the edgelines of the road thicker so that they would be more visible. The community did not want changes made to the 2-way left turn lane. We are going to mark the shoulders because it's wide enough per guidelines from State Highway that we can mark them as bike lanes.*

**I drive the road every day. People drive down the center lane for no reason or just to pass you. They pass you in the right hand lane. They pass you if you're doing 35 miles an hour, which is the speed limit, they're passing you and the County doing nothing about the center lane is not going to slow down traffic. Nothing that I've heard here is really going to slow down the traffic except the speed cameras, because people are going to get a lot of tickets, and it's going to become a big negative stigma for the community. There are ways to make the road tighter and closed so that the traffic slows down naturally, like making either all parking on the road or putting in a real bike lane so that people have to slow down because of the bike lane. Right now, I don't see anything slowing down the traffic, and I guarantee you, if you do another speed traffic thing 12 months from now, The only time it's going to be slower is at the cameras. The rest of the road is going to be just as crazy as it is today as it will be 12 months from now, because It's my opinion and my background lets me have this opinion because I used to do this for a living, that nothing presented here is going to work. Something needs to be done about the center lane. They think they can go fast because it is so big. I have people turning right on red to turn off Johns Hopkins to 3 and nobody enforces it. There was an Anne Arundel County police officer in one lane, and the guy went right on Red. Nobody did anything. This is a very dangerous area, and it's when Route 3 is busy, and Riedel Rd gets busy because of it. It's the same people, the same cars. Double lining the side of the road would have been better. Putting cross lines in so people don't drive down it. They also pass on the right all of the time.**

*Nestor responds that we are going to be installing medians down the center of the islands. The next step is to strategize where we are going to put the islands. Similar to the islands on Waugh Chapel - it is that type of strategy. I also watched the digital sign for speeding and it is wrong - it tells everyone that they are speeding and it is not slowing anyone down. The issue with the bike lanes is that if the speeding is not addressed despite our best efforts, we are now exposing the cyclist to speeders by installing the bike lanes. If pavement markings are not slowing them down as they exist now, then there is not enough evidence to prove that the bike lane markings will slow them down. It must be a combination of efforts - engineering, enforcement, and education. A real bike lane like the ones used in DC have the little yellow cone marking the road, it makes the road skinnier, and then people have to actually go slower and they use them in the cities all the time. Montgomery County and our County have a bike plan that is sitting on a shelf that needs to be implemented - if it was implemented and all the signage was put up, then the roads would be so that people won't pass on the center lane or the right hand lane. The speed - we're not going to fix that. The road is built too wide to fix the speed. It's going to be 30, 35 - but to pass on the right hand lane and the center lane so they can go 50 or 60 miles an hour is a big issue on the road. I drive it at least 3 times a day or more and it happens continuously.* *Nestor agrees that the speed is unlikely to be fixed.*



**Torrey Jacobsen - Riedel Road used to have parking all the way up and down it. The parking was removed because people were having garage sales in the open spaces. Are we going to reinstitute some extra parking on Riedel to use that to slow down the traffic? Or are we going to leave it with these vast caverns, where nobody can do anything?** *Nestor responds that the no parking zones were installed at the request of the Community Association for that reason - garage sales and people selling vehicles that they would park on the street - there were many cars being parked for sale. Some of them are strategic, like near crossings, and I have to retain those no parking areas for visibility. If there is a community that would consider the removal of the no parking zone, I am open to that. We will need to make sure everybody is aware of the pluses and minuses associated with opening it up to parking. Torrey suggested a change to no parking from 2-4pm so that residents can park there overnight and weekends. With the new High School, we're having an issue now on Underwood Road and Mount Tabor. All the high school kids are parking there and at the circle during the day. Nestor responds that he can meet with those communities as well if Torrey would be willing to be the facilitator to engage their community and involve them with our larger group as well.*

**Brooke Doerfler - When on Riedel and turning right onto Johns Hopkins toward Rt 3, people constantly use the "bike lane" as a turn lane. Can we put a sign saying "not a turn lane?"** *Nestor will contact Ms. Doerfler directly to discuss her concerns.*

**Danielle Richard - Is there going to be an island placed on Johns Hopkins Road as well?** *We can explore that idea if we get to the point of a "road diet" - then I can create that space in the middle on JH just as we have on Riedel. There, we can put a center lane to allow the turns to the side courts and then we create a median and we can create bike lanes or shoulders on the outside. At this point it will be difficult, because it will create too much of a shift. I am okay with one or the other - I know it cannot be everything. For example, if we did the bike lanes, it's still going to squeeze the road down visually and hopefully slow people down some. I walk frequently on Johns Hopkins every day and there's always cyclists that are riding the sidewalks. And I get it, it's safer that way, but they impede the sidewalks and sometimes that can be dangerous for peds too. We can perform a traffic study with a simulation, however, my initial feeling based on other similar installations tells me that this will not produce any change. If you go to Annapolis on Jennifer Road, we did this already - Jennifer has similar traffic to Riedel - and it did not perform successfully. I want to do a study and have a simulation, so you can see what the results may be.*

**Erin Aldrich Gray - I know we talk a lot about Riedel, but Johns Hopkins is also a concern. I am always seeing people crossing Johns Hopkins in areas where there is no crosswalk. They also don't use the crosswalk where the child was hit, which I think is a dangerous crosswalk anyway because the road is so wide, etc. But there's always people just crossing wherever they wish to because they need to get places. There's an entire shopping center over there where they're going from their apartment over to the shopping center, and they don't have a safe way to get there other than that one crosswalk which is for them out of the way, so they choose to cross where there's not a marked crosswalk, but on top of that I was thinking about the side streets and I see people trying to get out and make turns and the roundabouts will make it safer and easier for the side street residents to get to their homes, and safer for peds as well.** *Nestor replies we can include Johns Hopkins as a part of our Safe Speed Corridors project. I started with what I can do now by starting with Riedel. We have an existing crossing, but if we need to review other crossings for pedestrians, we can do that. Please email Lisa and myself where you think the crosswalks would be beneficial and we can evaluate those locations. We will*

*also have to evaluate if these locations will require us to install handicap ramps per ADA regulations. But it would not cost an extraordinary amount of money to make that project happen. Danielle responds that there is a location in the center of JH that already has ADA ramps in place that would just need the road lining and the signage installed. She will forward that location to Lisa/Nestor.*

**Erin Aldrich Gray - I think what Tori is saying is with the first study that we did, yes, people didn't want to reduce the travel lanes, but the middle lane is supposed to be just for where you turn to go into your community, and Riedel has that third lane the entire length even when there's no community there, and I think, and from what I'm seeing, and I think this is what Tori is saying is, that if you're not going fast enough they'll get in that middle lane and use it as a passing lane. I think that was our concern, because we had talked about putting something in the middle to kind of slow traffic down in the median - not where the communities are, but where there's huge stretches of Riedel where that third lane is, and I think that's what Tori is concerned about. Nestor responds that this is our intention - but we need to be strategic because we don't want to impact people turning left because there are benefits to the center lane - one of the benefits being when you turn left from a side street you can use that lane as a shelter, and then you accelerate, and then you join the flow of traffic in that direction. If you take that away, you're making that turn less safe. The right angle collisions will begin to increase. I don't think anyone has a problem with it right around the communities. I think from what I'm hearing, from what people tell me, the primary concern are those stretches of center lane where there are no side streets to turn onto. As far as reducing lanes on Johns Hopkins, people think that is going to slow down traffic - I think if we do another study we can educate people to realize that's not the case. Nestor responds that we will be completing this study for Johns Hopkins. We will strategically break up where we are going to address the center lane. As Tori mentioned, the flex posts being installed are an option - the issue with those is that they get hit and knocked out of the ground and tossed around constantly - you will find them laying all over the road. Alternatively, such as we did on Waugh Chapel, we can install concrete medians which are much more likely to be respected by drivers than flex posts or even metal posts (which are routinely sheared off at the base when hit). These medians can be strategically placed based on our conversations with you, the community, and we can even do a walking audit with residents who are interested to gain more perspective on what you are experiencing and where these should be placed. This will be our next step. Just to clarify, the area that Tori was talking about is the newly repaved area on Riedel leading up to route 3, so you are planning on putting medians on the newly repaved area somewhere? I didn't know if you could do a median after the road had been resurfaced. It will be the whole stretch from 424 to route 3, we just need to agree on the locations. The permanent location of the median, when my guys come and resurface, they will resurface around the median like they did on Waugh Chapel.**

**Erin Aldrich Gray - I recently visited UMD and all of their bike lanes are green in that area. Why can't we do that here in AACO? My other question was about the possibility of putting rumble strips on those center turn lane lines on Riedel so when someone goes to pass it makes it more uncomfortable to do so. Nestor responds that he has been hesitant to use the green paint on the bike lanes as it is very expensive and labor intensive to keep them maintained. We have learned from our colleagues in other Counties that the paint becomes worn and weather faded very quickly and it is almost impossible for them to keep up with the miles and miles of repainting/resurfacing that needs to be done for these particular paintings. Also, the paint needs to be textured so that the bike tires have a surface to grip onto, otherwise it can become a concern especially when the pavement is wet. We are not refusing to consider this as a possibility, but we would have to consider our maintenance plan as well. Regarding rumble strips, we have done this for communities in the past and we receive nothing but complaints about the noise they generate. More noise complaints than we ever got speeding complaints (this was for Epping Forest). We could also install these rumble strips strategically as suggested earlier, but we would again have to do a flier blast to the community to get their opinion on if those are**

*something they could live with were the noise to be an issue. We could also do strategic painting of some parts of the bikes lanes as well - if there are areas you know there are more kids and more cycles than others it would be a good option to paint that portion of the lane, etc.*

**Erin Aldrich Gray - Our homes are too close to the road for rumble strips all down Riedel. I think it's not bad if you live back down in one of the communities. But the townhomes are everywhere - they're close to Riedel and John Hopkins and no one wants to hear the rumble strips let alone the traffic that we already hear at night.** *Nestor understands the concern - this is just one example of why we will need to engage the community before we install any rumble strips.*