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SOUTH SHORE TRAIL PHASE III SCHEMATIC DESIGN COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES

PROJECT: South Shore Trail Phase III
LOCATION: Crofton Library
TIME: 6:00 - 7:00pm

SUBJECT: Community Meeting
MEETING DATE: 4/1/25
CURRENT PHASE: Schematic design

ATTENDANCE:

Name	Organization
Khadija Abdur-Rahman	AACo - Department of Public Works
Anthony Ricottilli	AACo - Department of Public Works
Michael Stroud	AACo - Department of Public Works
Bruce Bruchey	AACo - Department of Recreation & Parks
Joan Viennas	AACo - Department of Recreation & Parks
Peter Stone	Pennoni
Jonathan Norman	Pennoni

MEETING MINUTES:

On April 1, 2025, a 30% Schematic Design Community Meeting was held at the Crofton Library at 6:00 pm for the South Shore Trail Phase III. Anne Arundel County and its Design Team presented a Preliminary South Shore Trail design to the public. The agenda included team introductions, existing conditions, trail phasing, as well as preliminary design drawings. After the presentation, County and Pennoni Staff answered questions and talked with the community about the project. Below is some of what was discussed:

1. Several residents spoke up in support of the trail and asked about timing of the trail construction.

2. Several residents had concerns about the trail bringing crime to the area.
3. Some residents were concerned about their home values dropping due to the implementation of the trail, to which some residents spoke about home prices going up due to the construction of trails nearby.
4. One resident was concerned about environmental impacts and the introduction of invasive species to the area once the trail is built.
5. Jeffrey Moller, a representative for the First Church of Christ Scientist Annapolis located at 1031 Epping Forest Road, inquired about selling a sliver of land that the church owns adjacent to the trail. This is a small stand-alone parcel that is basically unusable to the Church.
6. Micheal Strawbridge, who lives at 1837 Generals Highway, voiced concerns about the grading and disturbance to the existing underground storm drainpipe, ravine, and steep slope adjacent to his property. He mentioned this area is very unstable and the trail may need to be moved further towards Generals Highway in this area. He is also concerned about construction vehicles parking in his driveway during construction. He suggested the old Generals Highway roadbed just south of his property should be used as a construction staging area. He is also concerned about trail users potentially parking in his driveway to use the trail. He also suggested the use of bollards at the trail intersection with his driveway, which is quite large, to prevent people from driving down the trail.
7. One resident of Woodlore was concerned about the trail location in relation to steep slopes in the area of station 309+00 to station 313+00. This same resident asked if property taxes would increase with the installation of the trail. This same resident also understood that houses adjacent to the trail would most likely increase in value.
8. Several residents questioned why the trail did not continue down MD 178 for the entire length, all the way to Bestgate Road, instead of the current alignment which follows the power line right of way. The recreational value of the trail was discussed, where it was important to separate the trail as much as possible from the roadway so as to provide a better experience for trail users. Potential conflicts with traffic were also a factor in the trail alignment.
9. Residents near the signalized intersection of Old Generals Highway raised concerns about the impact of the trail on their properties. The plan was reviewed to show that at this time the intent is to keep all impacts from the trail within the right of way.
10. Multiple residents had concerns about the clearing that is currently being done along the power line. It was noted that this clearing has nothing to do with the trail, but is related to BGE maintenance.

DISCUSSION:

Question 1: I'll still have to maintain the area of the trail? They will cut my grass?

Answer 1: AACO Department of Recreation and Parks will maintain the area of the trail. Grass will not be cut on private property.

Question 2: But they haven't maintained it for over 52 years. When are they going to do that?

Answer 2: Anne Arundel County Right of Ways are maintained by the Department of Public Works. Right of Ways owned by the State or BGE are maintained by their individual organizations.

Question 3: Is there going to be a bridge for the Generals Highway crossing?

Answer 3: The crossing will be at the signalized at grade intersection. No bridge is proposed.

Pedestrian signals will be added and synchronized with the existing traffic signals.

Question 4: Who here rides their bike in this area?

Answer 4: (Several hands were raised) There are a lot of kids in the area that ride their bikes.

Question 5: Will they ride their bikes in the street or will they use the bike path?

Answer 5: (Several answers) Bike path. However, based on state guidelines, the existing shoulder will still be able to be used for bikers.

Question 6: If bike riders ride their bikes on the road will they be ticketed?

Answer 6: Maryland law allows bike travel on any road with a posted speed limit of 50 MPH or less, unless otherwise posted.

Question 7: What is the purpose of the trail as it ends at the mall?

Answer 7: The trail continues southeast from this point and links to Phase V near the Hospital.

Question 8: Is there going to be an environmental impact study to that section of the trail near Brightview?

Answer 8: There has been an environmental study by an environmental consultant for the entire proposed trail alignment.

Question 9: Is this environmental study public knowledge?

Answer 9: This can be released at the 60% Design Development Phase when it is further refined.

Question 10: If we can't see the environmental report until the 60% Design Development Phase, how can questions be asked about it before we even get to that phase?

Answer 10: You can submit your questions to the website and they will be answered at the end of the 2 week comment period for this meeting. The level of detail asked in the question is a 60% Design Development Phase question.

Question 11: If we put the questions in now will they be finalized before we get to the 60%?

Answer 11: Yes. All of the questions tonight will be taken into account for the 60%.

Question 12: How will the drainage in this area be affected?

Answer 12: Stormwater management design will be taken into account throughout the design process. The project will go through a permitting review process to make sure it is in compliance with County codes and Maryland Department of the Environment regulations.

Question 13: When is the public made aware of all this information that is not being shared at the beginning of the project?

Answer 13: at the 60% Design Phase.

Question 14: But won't it be too late then?

Answer 14: If questions are submitted now for this 30% presentation the questions will be taken into account for the 60% Phase and answers will be given at that time.

Question 15: Are there any security cameras planned?

Answer 15: No, Security cameras are not a part of this capital project.

Question 16: What determines the use of chain link fence versus split rail fence along the trail?

Answer 16: Chain link fence and split rail fence are used when there are steep slopes that fall off next to the trail to provide a physical barrier. Chain link fencing is also utilized at the top of the retaining walls, when the wall exceeds 30 inches in height. Split rail fence is also used when a separation of uses is needed.

Question 17: What is the consideration for security cameras?

Answer 17: See response to question 15.

Question 18: Will there be fences near the driveways?

Answer 18: At this time, there won't be any fences near or impeding any driveway locations. Consideration for fences will be made on a case by case basis as the project proceeds.

Question 19: What about if there is snow, who is going to take care of the trail and driveway areas?

Answer 19: County Recreation & Parks will manage snow clearing of the trail similar to other County trails. Residents are responsible for clearing snow in their driveways.

Question 20: Phase I took a long time to build. How long will this Phase take to be constructed?

Answer 20: 18 to 24 months.

Question 21: How is this project going to be funded?

Answer 21: The phase III design is currently County funded..

Question 22: What is the cost of Phase III?

Answer 22: Current schematic phase estimate for construction only is approximately \$8 million.

Question 23: I thought MD 178 is a state road?

Answer 23: Yes. We are working with the Maryland Department of Transportation to obtain their permission to work within the State right-of-way

Question 24: Is a speed bump proposed at the intersection with Epping Forest Road?

Answer 24: All traffic impacts will be analyzed during the 60% Design Development Phase. A traffic consultant will review and make all necessary recommendations regarding traffic concerns.

Question 25: Why is the South Shore Trail not being constructed in a more contiguous fashion, Phase I then Phase II and so on?

Answer 25: A lot of factors go into the phasing of each section, design, funding, right-of-way acquisitions, etc. Phase IV will be constructed before Phase III. The Phasing is used for design and construction purposes.

Question 26: How long will Phase IV take to be constructed?

Answer 26: 18 to 24 months.

Question 27: Are Phase III and Phase IV expected to move in tandem?

Answer 27: Most likely but there are right-of-way acquisitions to get through first which could slow one of the other phases down.

Question 28: Near Dunton Road, what kind of separation is planned there?

Answer 28: It will be graded out to ADA compliant slopes and there will be about 20' of separation between the trail and MD 178.

Question 29: Where the trail ends at Callahan Lane, how does that link to other existing trails and sidewalks in that area and to the Phase V trail section that is built?

Answer 29: There will be a connection to this area through existing sidewalks.

Question 30: Why has this project taken since 1989 to be implemented?

Answer 30: There are several reasons, but a main reason is the way that the County has been developed.

Question 31: Have there been impact studies of backyards abutting trails in term of crime?

Answer 31: No, bike-ability and walkability of trails and their location to homes and neighborhoods is a positive feature. Existing County trails are an asset and a selling point to home buyers and realtors.

Question 32: What happens to our driveways if the grades need to be changed due to topographic challenges to comply with ADA guidelines?

Answer 32: Driveways will be assessed further in the later design stages to ensure the proper treatment is being used. If driveways need to be altered in any way, they will be replaced or rebuilt in a fashion that is both beneficial to the trail and the driveway owner. Every effort will be made to minimize changes to and disturbance of driveways.

Question 33: This trail goes right up to my property line and it is hard to get information on what the impacts will be. Is there going to be a fence? Can we put a fence on the easement?

Answer 33: We can discuss this specific case further in the one-on-one discussion portion of the meeting. Residents should not install anything within the right of way.

Question 34: When will a survey be done so you can see where the property impacts will be?

Answer 34: A property survey has been completed for the whole trail. Questions regarding individual properties should be directed to the County's project manager for further discussion.

Question 35: What about evaluating different alternative routes for the trail that are less disruptive to properties?

Answer 35: The County has conducted a number of studies to get the design to this point (master plan, feasibility study, and the schematic design) as well as beginning outreach to affected property owners, and the public. Based on a number of factors including property impacts, recreational value, environmental impacts, cost of construction, etc., the current alignment has been selected. As the design progresses, these factors will continue to be weighed. The County right-of-way division will be in contact with residents who have property impacts during the 60% Design Development Phase.

Question 36: It seems there is more right-of-way available on the south bound side of MD 178 and there would be less impacts to property owners. What about putting the trail there?

Answer 36: Other alignments have been considered. The option to cross MD 178 at the Old General Highway at the traffic light is the safest place to cross. The south bound side of MD 178 has steep slopes that exist there which would cause difficulty and possibly more impacts to deal with the slopes. There is generally more right-of-way located on the north side of MD 178 than on the south side.

Question 37: Is there a parking lot proposed for the trail?

Answer 37: Parking at the mall is an option and there is a parking lot at each end of Phase I. Parking will eventually be available at South Shore Park and Crownsville Hospital Memorial Park.

Question 38: What is the time frame for the construction of Phase III and Phase IV? Parking along Honeysuckle Lane is a concern.

Answer 38: We do not know the timing at this point. A preconstruction meeting will be held before the start of construction and further refined schedule will be presented at that time. Concerns about parking along Honeysuckle can be addressed at the time of final design. There is the possibility of working with the County Roads to add No Parking signage along Honeysuckle.

Question 39: It would be easier for you to run the trail on the other side of Generals Highway from Honeysuckle Lane so you don't have to cross Generals Highway.

Answer 39: The goal for the trail alignment is to get to the BGE power line easement and use that for the trail alignment since it is already cleared and graded. This alignment was also chosen for the Master Plan in 1989. There is generally more right-of-way available on the north side of Generals Highway than on the south side.

Question 40: Waterworks Trails: Has the feasibility of enhancing existing trails and using AA county owned property been assessed. There is already an extensive network of trails associated with the Waterworks Trails which run from Honeysuckle Lane back toward the old Annapolis Reservoir. At least one of these trails comes out on Housley Road – not far from the mall. Also, since AA county owns land at the Fairgrounds and at the Eisenhower Golf Course, an alternative might be more scenic - rather than running the trail right next to Generals Highway. A lot of development has occurred over the past decade, which seems to increase the impact of the South Shore Phase 3 Trail to local residents. Have alternatives been assessed?

Answer 40: See responses to questions 36 and 39

Question 41: What is the distance of the State Highway right-of-way from the northbound and southbound shoulders for Generals Hwy? (In particular in the area between the two Old Generals Hwy entrances onto RT-178, near the Wedding Chapel.)

Answer 41: The right-of-way width varies in this area and along all points of the right-of-way. In this area from the northbound edge of pavement to the right-of-way line it ranges from 41' to 127' wide. In this area from the southbound edge of pavement to the right-of-way line it generally ranges from 10' to 60' wide.

Question 42: Is the South Shore Trail Phase 3 project coordinating with the Severn River

RiverKeepers Restoration Project? (There is a sign at Bestgate and Generals Highway near the Mall, indicating that the Riverkeepers project is underway at that location.)

Answer 42: These are two separate projects.

Question 43: Are there plans to do cost estimates on maintenance for the trail? Will this be budgeted?

Answer 43: Anne Arundel County Recreation & Parks budgets maintenance funding for future capital projects and uses existing costs from similar parks (trails) as a guide.

Question 44: We run a small farm 1717 Old Generals Highway. The trail will be close to our plants. We are requesting a fence be put there blocking anyone from walking through our vegetable beds and prevent people from picking vegetables! At the original meeting we were told that wouldn't be a problem. We would like confirmation that a fence will be erected. Ideally the fence should be at least 6 feet high

Answer 44: Areas along the trail will be evaluated for the need of fencing. Any proposed fencing will consist of 4' high split rail fence or 8' black vinyl coated chain link fence. We will note the area of your property for the need of fencing as requested.

Question 45: The photos on display at the recent meeting showed the proposed trail on the ridge and immediately adjacent to the homes in Woodlore. As a community this is very undesirable, infringing on our property and privacy. A better location would be to utilize the existing trail which is straight, level and out of view of the Woodlore community. In addition, the costs involved would be less. Your consideration of this option would be appreciated.

Answer 45: Noted, See responses to questions 36 and 39 regarding trail alignment

Question 46: I would like to know how the county plan will not infringe on Woodlore property. As my residence will back to the trail I feel as though we should get some sort of natural boundary compensation to plant trees to protect our privacy as well as a plan for law enforcement to be on the trail so as to not allow for crime in our community to increase.

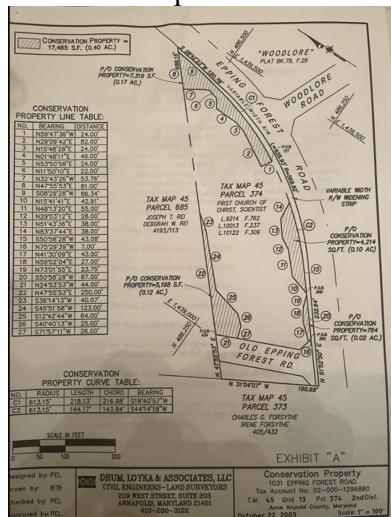
Answer 46: At this point in design disturbance for the trail is within the County/BGE right-of-way. Landscaping will be proposed along the trail per County requirements. The County is sensitive to safety and security along the trail. After the trail is constructed, contact your local police department with any questions or concerns.

Question 47: I would like to see the survey plats for the area of phase III , Epping Forest Rd down to Bestgate.

Answer 47: The survey performed is used to verify the property boundaries along the trail alignment and not necessarily to generate new plats. These property boundaries are shown on the drawings.

Question 48: Thank you for an informative meeting on April 1. This comment is from the First Church of Christ Scientist, Annapolis, located at the corner of Epping Forest and Old Epping Forest Roads. I serve as a Board Member of the Church. Our property includes a strip of land across the street from the church between Old Epping Forest Road and the proposed trail. (See attached property map.) During the April 1 meeting a presenter indicated the County might be interested in acquiring this strip of land and our church is open to exploring that possibility if mutually agreeable. (A major question for us is whether reducing the size of our property might

affect future permissible uses of the land.) Feel free to contact me to discuss further. Thank you.



Answer 48: Noted, thank you. I would be difficult to evaluate property impacts, but appraisals could be conducted if the process proceeds.

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