



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

MCPB
ITEM NO. 3
December 6, 2010

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 1, 2010

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Dan Hardy, Chief *DKH*
Transportation Planning

Ron Cashion, RA, Planner Coordinator *RC*
Community-Based Planning

FROM: Larry Cole, Master Planner: 301-495-4528 *LC*
Transportation Planning

PROJECT: Snowden Farm Parkway (A-305) from Morning Star Drive to Ridge Road (MD27)

REVIEW TYPE: Mandatory Referral No. MR2010814

APPLICANTS: Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

APPLYING FOR: Plan Approval

COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING TEAM AREA: I-270 Corridor

RECOMMENDATIONS:

We recommend that the Board approve the proposed project with the following comments to DPS that they should require the developer to:

1. Reduce the proposed pavement width on each side of Snowden Farm Parkway by one foot, and stripe each side to the dimensions shown in the new County Standard 2004.10: 11.5-foot-wide inside lanes, 11-foot-wide outside lanes, and 5.5-foot-wide bike lanes, for a total of twenty-eight feet for each half of this divided roadway.

2. Provide roadway and landscaping designs in the area of the driveway to the historic Howes Farm that:
 - a. implement all practicable design measures to maintain the line-of-sight along the current driveway, through and across the proposed roadway, to the historic core of the site in order to mitigate visual intrusions caused by road grading and/or landscaping
 - b. facilitate to the extent possible the maintenance in its existing condition of that portion of the current historic driveway alignment beyond the limits of the proposed roadway
3. Provide a new driveway and apron for the historic Howes Farm within the limits of work and/or right-of-way (whichever is greater) that:
 - a. maintain the character of a late 19th/early 20th agricultural setting through design, materials, landscaping and site features
 - b. limit any adverse impact on the historic resources and landscape associated with the site caused by the design and construction of the new driveway and associated features
 - c. are adequate to serve the approved 63 vehicle parking facility southwest of the house and meet the potential needs related to the County Inn zoning of the site
4. Coordinate with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to provide bus stops if needed within the project limits.

In addition, we recommend that the Board advise DPS that the portion of this project that is located within the designated environmental setting of Master Plan Site #13/19 requires a Historic Area Work Permit (HAWP), which must be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) prior to construction. The conditions of the HAWP should be considered prior to issuance of the permit from DPS.

PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION, RELATED PROJECTS, AND SITE DESCRIPTION:

This project would be constructed by Clarksburg Village, L.C. and Clarksburg Skylark, L.L.C. under permit from the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services as a condition of approval for Preliminary Plans 1-02033 and 1-01030. Clarksburg Village Phase II includes the on-site construction of Snowden Farm Parkway (A-305) to the development's southern boundary, including the cul-de-sacs on Morning Star Drive. The subject project would construct the segment of the roadway from the southern boundary of Clarksburg Village Phase II to Ridge Road (MD27) that was not covered in their Site Plan.

On 7/24/08, the Planning Board approved the Mandatory Referral and Water Quality Plan for the related construction of the Ridge Road at Snowden Farm Parkway Intersection Improvements, at the southern limit of the subject project, by the same applicants. The subject segment of Snowden Farm Parkway is the portion that is outside the Clarksburg Village Phase II development, but is compatible with the roadway design shown in the approved Site Plan.

Attachments 1 and 2 show the Clarksburg Master Plan alignments for A-305 and M-83 (discussed below), as well as an enlargement of this area showing the related projects. (While the Master Plan refers to A-305 as Midcounty Highway, the arterial portion of the roadway has been renamed Snowden Farm Parkway.)

One-third of the roadway would pass through the David Yegher property, which is zoned Country Inn and currently has a single home that would be more than 300 feet from the roadway. This property is also known as the Howes Farm, an individually listed site on the Master Plan of Historic Resources.

The remaining two-thirds would pass through the 54-acre Butz parcel of open farmland, which is zoned RE-2. The owners of the Butz property have discussed the possibility of applying for rezoning the property to a higher density, but no application has yet been filed.

The Forest Conservation Plan and Water Quality Plan for this project are the subject of a separate memo to the Board and must be approved prior to acting on this Mandatory Referral.

M-83/Midcounty Corridor Study is currently in Facility Planning by MCDOT. A number of alternatives are being considered, including the Master Plan alternative that would extend the roadway directly east from the intersection of Snowden Farm Parkway and Ridge Road, the southern limit of the subject project. A briefing to the Planning Board on the M-83 project is anticipated early in 2011.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project would construct a quarter-mile long segment of Snowden Farm Parkway (A-305) from approximately 620 feet south of Morning Star Drive to Ridge Road (MD27). The applicant intends to construct this project by the end of 2011, and will construct the segment within Clarksburg Village Phase II including the cul-de-sacs on Morning Star Drive at the same time. When complete, Snowden Farm Parkway will provide an alternative to Frederick Road (MD 355) between the Clarksburg Town Center/Stringtown Road and Ridge Road.

The typical section of the proposed four-lane roadway would consist of two 29-foot-wide roadways (25-foot travelways and 4-foot shoulders) divided by a twenty-foot-wide landscaped median.

An eight-foot-wide shared-use path would be provided on the west side of the road; a five-foot wide sidewalk would be constructed along the east side of road. Each would be located in Public Improvement Easement (PIE) outside the right-of-way and would be separated from the roadway by a twenty-two-foot-wide space that would include the street trees and ditches (see Attachment 3).

FINDINGS

Master Plan: The A-305 project is consistent with the Clarksburg and Vicinity Master Plan for a four-lane divided road in a 120-foot-wide right-of-way (see Attachment 4.)

Road Code: The typical section is not consistent with the County's Road Standards, as discussed in greater detail below. The target speed is consistent with the Target and Design Speed Standard.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Typical Roadway Section

The proposed roadway would have a closed section (curb and gutter) design adjacent to the median and an open section (drainage swale) on each side of the roadway. Each half of the divided roadway would have twenty-nine feet of pavement: one foot for the concrete gutter pan adjacent to the twenty-foot-wide median, two twelve-foot-wide travel lanes, and a four-foot-wide shoulder (see Attachment 3). The proposed typical section is noted as being a modified version of the County's old road Standard No. MC-217.04. However new standards were adopted in 2008, subsequent to the general revision of the County's Road Code in 2007 to promote context-sensitive design, better incorporate all modes of travel, and improve stormwater management. The new standard closest to what is proposed (a four lane, divided arterial roadway) is Standard No. 2004.10.

The comments below summarize the staff recommendation to modify the typical section slightly, based on a comparison between the proposed section and the new County standard:

- The proposed 20-foot-wide median is wider than the 17 feet shown in the new Standard 2004.10, per the 2008 Road Code Executive Regulations. We agree that the 20-foot-wide median should be used since it is the narrowest that can accommodate the planting of shade trees under the new Street Tree standard. Street trees in the median are needed to achieve the parkway character recommended in the Master Plan.
- The proposed 29-foot distance between the face-of-median-curb and the edge of the shoulder is only slightly greater than that in the new standard (28 feet) but is striped differently. We recommend that the pavement width be reduced by one foot and that each side of the roadway be striped to include 11.5-foot-wide inside lanes, 11-foot-wide outside lanes, and 5.5-foot-wide bike lanes, for a total of twenty-eight feet.
- The proposed section does not have curb between the bike lanes and sidewalk/shared use path whereas Std. 2004.10 does, so a direct comparison is not useful. The proposed section is wider than the standard (120 feet vs. 100 feet) and incorporates the east-side sidewalk and west-side shared use path in a PIE outside the right-of-way. While this section is ultimately wider than Std. 2004.10, it is more environmentally friendly in regard to stormwater management since the proposed swales promote the infiltration of stormwater.

The proposed roadway section would be reduced in the immediate area of the proposed culvert, narrowing the twenty-two-foot-wide landscape panels on each side of the road to six feet with a curb at the roadway edge. In contrast to the rest of the project, no trees would be planted between

the curb and sidewalk/shared use path, and smaller ornamental trees would be planted in the median rather than shade trees.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Accommodation

On-Road Bike Accommodation

No on-road bike accommodation is recommended in either the Clarksburg Master Plan or the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, but on-road bike lanes are encouraged on most Arterial roads with the update of the County's Roadway Standards in 2008. While the proposed four-foot-wide shoulders could accommodate bicyclists, the 5.5-foot-wide bike lanes recommended by staff, and supported by the new County road standards, would provide better accommodation.

Off-Road Bike Accommodation

Off-road bike accommodation would be provided via an eight-foot-wide shared use path along the west side of Snowden Farm Parkway, separated from the roadway by a 22-foot-wide landscape panel that would include the roadway drainage swale.

Pedestrian Accommodation

Pedestrians would be accommodated on the proposed five-foot-wide sidewalk on the east side of Snowden Farm Parkway, separated from the roadway by a 22-foot-wide landscape panel that would include the roadway drainage swale. Pedestrians are also accommodated on the proposed shared-use path on the west side of the road.

Lighting

Continuous roadway lighting would be provided along Snowden Farm Parkway by means of cutoff dark-sky-friendly "shoebox" luminaries.

Landscaping/Streetscaping

The proposed project would provide street trees on both sides of Snowden Farm Parkway as well as in the twenty-foot-wide median. Japanese Zelkova 'Green Vase' would be planted east of the proposed culvert, with the exception of Okame Cherry trees being planted between the bikes lanes and sidewalk/shared use path nearest the Ridge Road intersection; Okame Cherry trees would be planted in the median in the immediate vicinity of the culvert; and Willow Oaks would be planted north of the culvert.

We believe that the proposed landscaping would achieve the parkway character recommended in the Master Plan, with the adjustments recommended to accommodate the vista to the historic Howes Farm, as reflected in the Recommendations above.

Environmental

A Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD #420071450) was originally approved by Environmental Planning staff on June 11, 2007 and subsequently recertified on January 29, 2010, and revised on November 22, 2010. The NRI/FSD covered a study area of 32.84 acres. The study area contained 1.08 acres of forest, a stream, 0.46 acres of wetlands, and 4.25 acres of stream valley buffer (SVB). The property is located within the Little Seneca Creek watershed, which is a USE Class IV designation. The Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS) rates this watershed as good.

The entire project is located within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area (SPA) and requires approval of both water quality and forest conservation plans, which are addressed in a separate memo to the Board for action immediately prior to this Mandatory Referral.

Historic

The Howes Farm (MP# 13/19), at 22022 Ridge Road, is a Master Plan Historic Site, so designated in the *Approved and Adopted Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area, June 1994*. The historic site was found to meet four of the nine criteria for designation established in section 24A-3 of the County Code: 1A, 1D, 2A, and 2E. The designation recognizes the farmhouse, built in 1884 (enlarged in the 1920s), several outbuildings, and the long drive from Ridge Road. The historic site's environmental setting is 16.75 acres. The property is zoned Country Inn.

The Master Plan notes several planning issues related to the site, including:

... a proposed extension of the Midcounty Highway limited access highway [that] would sever the driveway entrance of the Howes Farm from Ridge Road (MD 27) requiring a new entrance to the property either through a subdivision or across environmentally sensitive wetlands. ***The approach to the historic resource should be given careful consideration in the development of the proposed Midcounty Highway, retaining as much of the original setting as possible*** [emphasis added]. Visibility of this resource will increase from Midcounty Highway, a benefit for the County usage of the property. (p. 175-176)

Under section 24A-6 of the County Code, any change to the exterior of a historic site or its environmental setting, including grading, requires an approved Historic Area Work Permit. The proposed road traverses the environmental setting of MP#13/19. On particular note, the proposed road alignment would cross the property's driveway approximately 440 feet east of the house, separating the property from its access to an existing road - Ridge Road (MD27) (see Attachment 5.) The Historic Preservation Commission must review and approve that portion of the project within the environmental setting prior to permit issuance.

The current driveway is not original to the house. However, the current alignment providing access to the property from Ridge Road dates to the 1920s alterations to the property and has been in use longer than the original alignment which provided access from Brink Road. As such,

it has acquired historic significance in its own right. Because the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #4 indicates that such changes should be retained and preserved, special attention should be paid to the treatment of the existing driveway and to the design of that portion of the roadway that interrupts the existing driveway.

The placement and design of a new driveway must be undertaken such that it is compatible with the historic characteristics of this late 19th/early 20th century agricultural site. Further, consideration should be given to the needs associated with the site's Country Inn zone, and any future requirements for parking and circulation on the site. The Master Plan indicates that "the HPC and the Planning Board have approved plans for parking of 63 vehicles southwest of the house."

PUBLIC OUTREACH

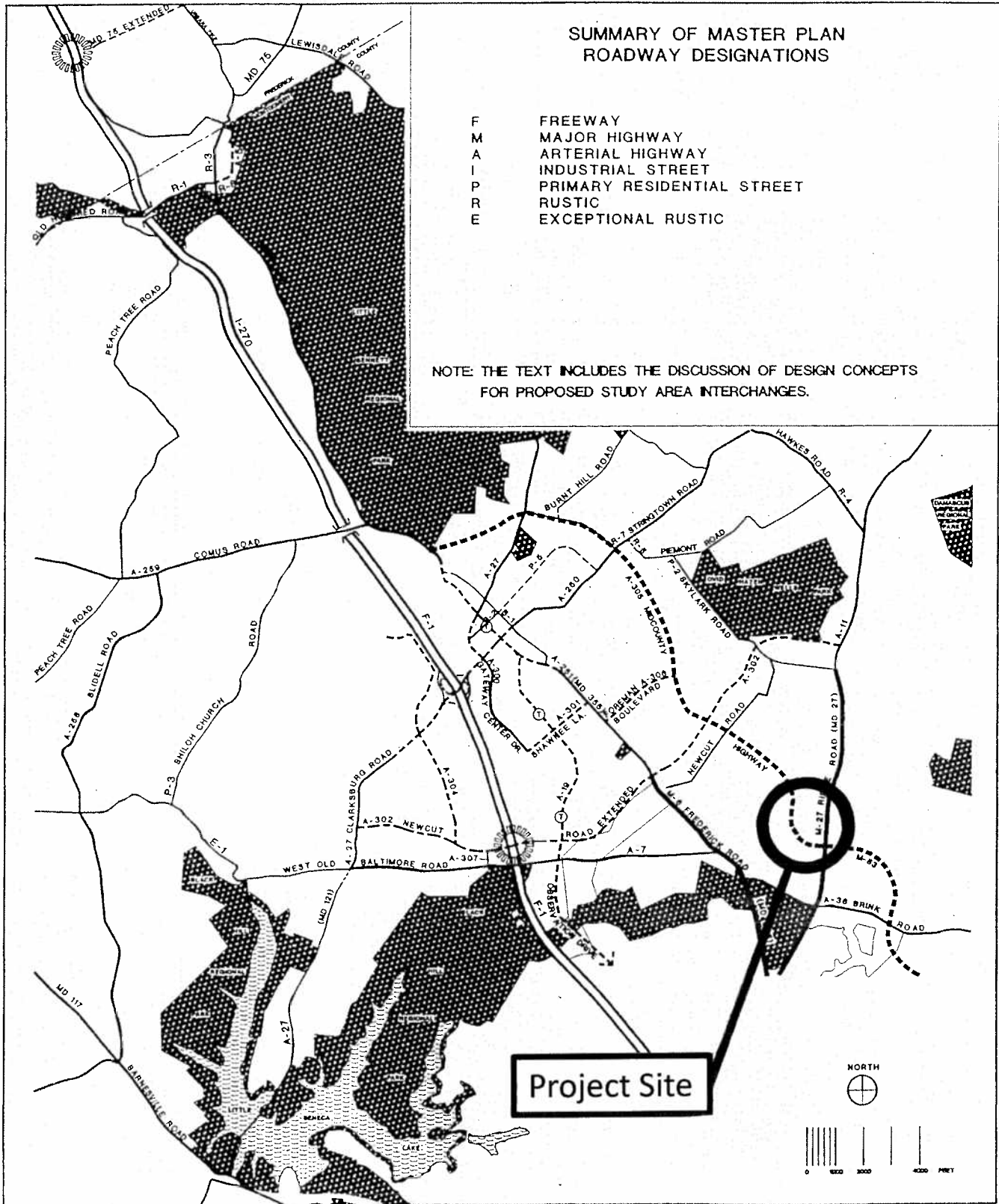
A public meeting for this project was held by the developer of Clarksburg Village on March 3, 2008, just prior to the Mandatory Referral of the related Ridge Road (MD27) at Snowden Farm Parkway Intersection Improvements project. The Mandatory Referral of the subject project was delayed until issues related to the Water Quality Plan could be resolved.

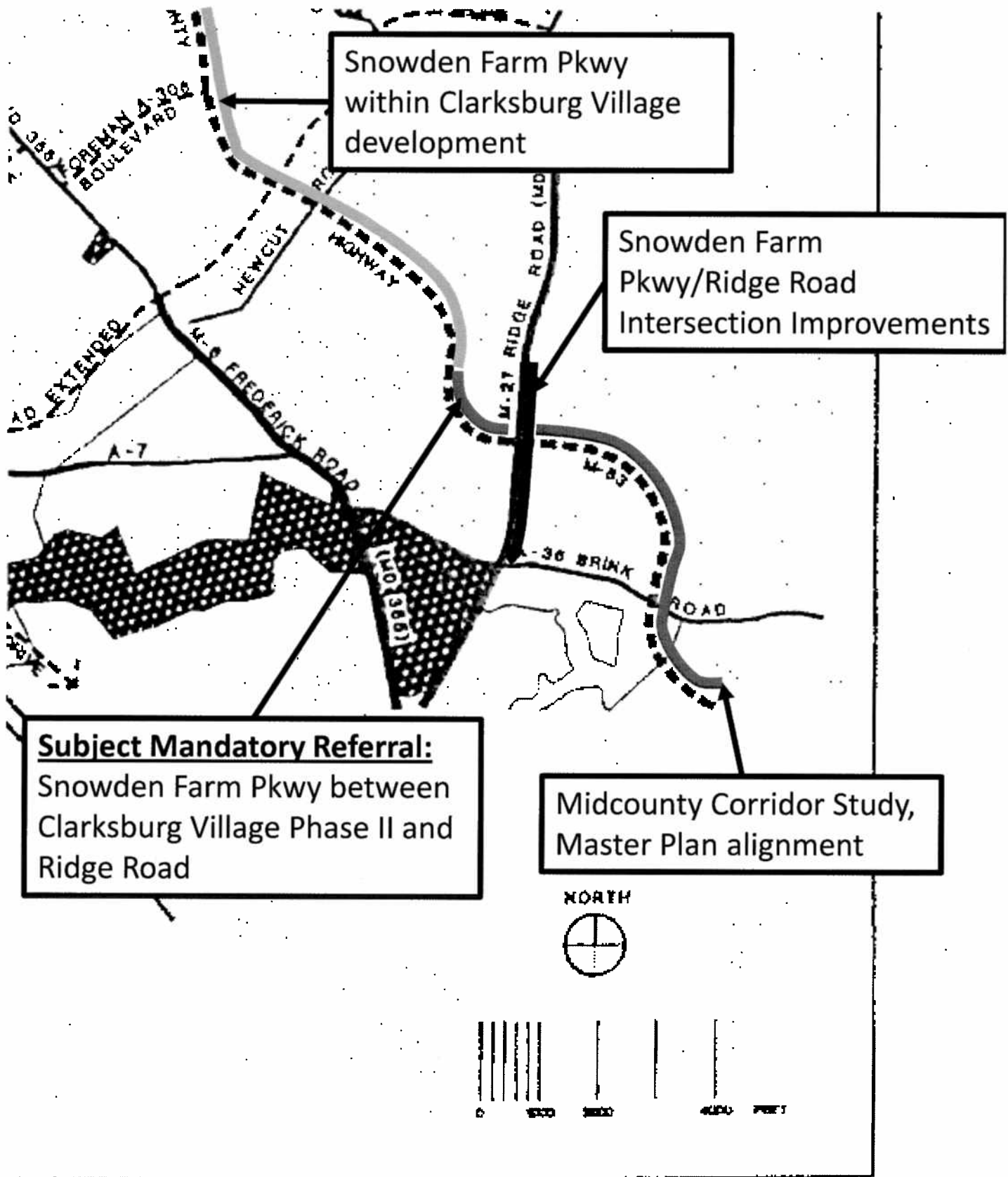
Most of the comments received at the public meeting were general questions for information as to the design and schedule. Other issues discussed:

- Speed limits - The target speed of this project is appropriate for this roadway per the Road Code.
- Noise – The developer added berms within the Clarksburg Village Phase II area to address those concerns. (This is outside the area of the subject project however.)
- Cul de sacs on Morning Star Drive – The citizens' association of Greenridge Acres, the community most affected by the change, voted to support the construction of the cul de sacs. (This is outside the area of the subject project however.)

Generalized Highway and Transit Plan

Figure 40



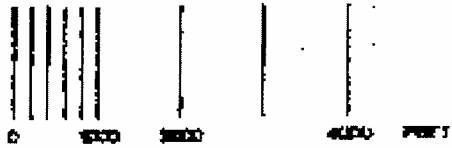


Snowden Farm Pkwy within Clarksburg Village development

Snowden Farm Pkwy/Ridge Road Intersection Improvements

Subject Mandatory Referral:
Snowden Farm Pkwy between Clarksburg Village Phase II and Ridge Road

Midcounty Corridor Study, Master Plan alignment



Highway and Street Classifications (cont.)

Table 7

Master Plan Roadway Designation	Name	Limits	Number of Travel Lanes ¹	
			Maximum Recommended	Minimum Right-of-way Width ²
Arterial Highways (cont.)				
A-36	Brink Road	MD 355 to M-83	4 Divided	100'
A-251	Frederick Road (MD 355)	Newcut Road Extended to A-19	4 Divided	120'
		A-19 to A-305	4 Divided w/transitway	150'
		A-305 to Comus Road	2 w/transitway	130'
		Comus Road to Hyattstown Bypass	2	80'
A-258	Slidell Road	Northern to Southern Study Area Boundary	2	80'
A-259	Comus Road	MD 355 to Western Study Area Boundary	2	80'
A-260	Stringtown Road	I-270 to A-305	4 Divided	120'
A-300	Gateway Center Dr.	A-260 to A-301	4 Divided	80'
A-301	Shawnee Lane	Gateway Center Drive to MD 355	4 Divided	120'
A-302	Newcut Road Extended	MD 121 to A-305	4 Divided	120'
		A-305 to MD 27	2	80'
A-304	Proposed Road	Newcut Road Extended (A-302) to Site 30	4 Divided	120'
A-305	Midcounty Hwy.	MD 27 to Stringtown Road	4 Divided	120'
		Stringtown Road to Clarksburg Road (A-27)	2	80'
		Clarksburg Road to MD 355	2	80'
A-306	Foreman Boulevard	MD 355 to A-305	2	80'
A-307	Proposed Road	Newcut Road Extended (A-302) to West Old Baltimore Road	2	80'

Clarksburg Village Phase II

PLANNED RD

A-305

Ridge Road (MD27)

CANTERFIELD WAY

MORNING STAR DR

GREENRIDGE DR

GREENBROOK DR

Howes Farm Driveway

Yegher

A-305

M-83

Butz

BRINK MEADOW LA

RODGER RD

Attachment 5

0 51 302 604 906 1208 Feet

MapCopyrightText1

