



HPCA Newsletter

November 2024



President's Corner

Hello Neighbors. It is Tuesday morning of Thanksgiving week—a time to be thankful, a time to remember and a time to embrace those who enrich our lives. I am particularly grateful for my wonderful family, friends and the Holland Point Community.

Happy Thanksgiving to all our neighbors in Holland Point.

Gayle

Board Member and Chair of the HPCA Long-range Planning Committee, Larry Brown, and his Committee members have steadfastly pursued the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to conduct studies to address the feasibility of various changes to MD Route 261 (Walnut Ave) in order to address safety, speeding and drainage/flooding issues. After well over a year, the SHA presented drafts of its conceptual studies on November 7th. A full report from that meeting appears at the end of this newsletter.

SHA is looking for feedback on its concepts to address our concerns and we plan to create and provide SHA with a prioritized list of the SHA concepts we believe are best for the community. We hope to send out a survey in the coming weeks. However, if you have ideas that are different from those presented by SHA, those too will be welcome. For example:

- Could the community move the ditches back away from the road, or place drainage pipes onto SHA property?
- Instead of re-engineering the intersection at the south end of Walnut and Myrtle, could a stop sign be placed on Walnut?

When we send out the survey, there will be an opportunity to write in your creative ideas.

Dates to Remember – 2024

Dec 14, 2024 (Saturday): 6:00 PM HPCA Holiday Party. **NEW DATE**

Officers and Board Members

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The evening of November 7th, HPCA hosted ten representatives from the Maryland State Highway Administration (“SHA”) at the Community Center. There was a good turnout of Holland Point and Rose Haven residents. The 2 ½ -hour session was divided into two, very interactive presentations. The first was a draft conceptual study of various options to address the communities’ concerns regarding MD Rt. 261: traffic calming to slow speeders; bicycle and pedestrian safety on the narrow road; and sight distance/curves and visibility. The study focused on the portion of 261 from Kim Lane to the Calvert County border. (See the map at the end of the write-up.) The second presentation, also a draft conceptual study, focused on Coastal flooding along 261 from just south of Kim Lane (the west end of Herrington Harbour South (“HHS”)) to the Calvert County border using the SHA Climate Change Vulnerability Map - mean Sea Level Scenarios (up to the year 2050). Because both studies are drafts and not finalized, we were unable to obtain copies.

The presentations were conceptual only. SHA is looking for community input on the options presented. Currently, SHA is facing a budget shortfall of \$1.3B. Any significant project, such as widening 261 to add a shared pedestrian/cyclist lane, would be a capital improvement project requiring not only significant funding, but also a feasibility study and a two-year environmental impact study (to include effects on the Bay, marshland and trees). We should expect seven to ten years to complete any such project, if approved.

In selecting concept to go forward, SHA has a number of considerations, including: Statewide considerations; benefit / cost analyses; determination of feasibility and reasonability; and coordination with local jurisdictions for emergency management planning.

Roadway Evaluation Conceptual Study

Route 261 between Kim Lane and the Calvert County border is designated a “connector road” because it provides access (connects) to major roads such as MD Rt 2. It is a suburban road with low to moderate use. The study focuses on three areas: traffic calming; pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and mobility; and sight distance (curves).

Traffic calming:

Deterrents to speeding. The designated speed limit in the affected portion of 261 is 30 MPH. The speed limits entering the designated area are 40 MPH from Friendship and 25 MPH from North Beach. The straight run from HHS to the Calvert County line promotes speeding. To date, SHA has added signage, a crosswalk at HHS across from the Deli and (quiet) rumble strips.

Crash analysis January 2018 to December 2023. Using Anne Arundel County police report data, SHA found that there were 22 crashes, which number was below the State average for collector roads during the period. There were 14 crashes with fixed objects (ditches, trees, etc.), which number was higher than the State average for collector roads during the period. One crash involved a pedestrian. There were no fatalities. The data may have been affected by the closure of the portion of 261 at the County line due to construction of the new road and COVID reducing the amount of traffic.

Traffic calming concept options:

- (1) Install median islands called chicanes. Candidate placement areas are near the intersections with Birch, Juniper and Chestnut. Installing chicanes would require widening 261 where the chicanes would be installed.
- (2) Add stop signs at 261 and Alabama and at the curve by HHS and the entrance to the Inn at Herrington Harbour (“Inn”).
- (3) Install recessed pavement marking (reflective) at HHS curve and Myrtle and Walnut by the Holland Point Community Center. Quiet rumble strips could also be added by the Community Center.

Pedestrian/Cyclist Safety:

Field observations. SHA personnel conducted field observations during the Fall of 2023 (12-1PM and 5-6PM).

Pedestrians and cyclists generally: The combination of a narrow road with no shoulder, speeding cars and curves creates a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.

HHS: Pedestrians are not using the crosswalk by the Deli parking lot.

HPCA Community Center: When events are held at the Community Center, pedestrians are at risk when walking across 261.

Pedestrian/Cyclist Safety concept options:

- (1) Widen 261 from HHS to Birch to create a 10-foot wide shared-use path for pedestrians and cyclists on the inside lane of 261 with a 5-foot buffer and new drainage options. This would be a capital improvement project requiring right of way determination, an environmental impact study and significant tie-ins with flooding and drainage plans.
- (2) At HHS across from the Deli parking lot and Ketch 22, increase signage with speed reduction markings and visual indicators of a pedestrian crossing. Create a pedestrian zone that expands the width of the current crosswalk.

(3) Add a crosswalk at the Holland Point Community Center. Construct a raised crosswalk or speed table similar to the one by the Friendship United Methodist Church. This option needs to be researched because our portion of 261 is a State of Maryland- controlled road and the area of 261 by the Friendship United Methodist Church is County-controlled. State and County roads are subject to different laws and regulations. Also, the installation of speed tables require coordination with maintenance as the design can affect snow plow use.

Sight distance:

Observations: There are a number of curves along the affected area of 261. The worst are (1) the curve by the intersection of 261 and Alabama and (2) the entrance to the Herrington Harbour Inn across from the Deli parking area, which also has vegetation that obstructs the view. There have been a number of crashes at both locations. Additionally, the triangular intersection of 261/Walnut and Myrtle south of the Holland Point Community Center poses a sight distance issue and is at an awkward angle.

Sight Distance concept options:

- (1) Install four-way stop signs at 261 and Alabama.
- (2) Install stop signs on 261 at the entrance to the entrance to the Herrington Harbour Inn.
- (3) Change the angles of the intersection at Myrtle and creating a more defined intersection.

Coastal Flood Study - Drainage/Water Management Conceptual Study

Employing the MDOT/SHA Climate Change Vulnerability Map tool, SHA conducted a conceptual impact analysis of the affected area of 261 for roadway flooding under various scenarios at five locations called points of investigation (“POI”). POI #5 is the location of the project completed at the Calvert County border. POI #0 is the project underway at the west side of HHS.

The Climate Change Vulnerability tool is an interactive map that illustrates the potential impact of storm surge and sea level rise on roadways and transportation infrastructure in Maryland. The tool’s water level projections are based on data from the US Army Corps of Engineers Sea Level Change Projections, US Geological Survey studies, and the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration tidal observations.

The tool is primarily intended to support SHA’s mission to mitigate potential impacts of sea level rise and storm surge on transportation infrastructure, such as 261. The map has layers that are organized to address roadway flooding, general projected flood depth, and roadway incidents. The data layers feature extensive projection scenarios, such as the roadway inundation layer which shows 10, 25, 50, 100, and 500-year storm events from 2015’s observed sea level. This layer also shows the same storm event projections for 2050. You can learn. More and access the tool via this link

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/d14029580e314f089267968010179c32> .

The concept study considered a number of variables: increased rainfall amount and intensity due to climate change; large scale flooding (inundation) events such as hurricanes; and nuisance flooding.

Nuisance tidal flooding, also known as sunny-day flooding, is caused by abnormally high tides that traditionally occurred a few times per year, degrading road support. NOAA has documented that nuisance flooding has become significantly more common in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The study assessed tides, sea level rise, wave height and rainfall using current data and projections for the year 2050. Additionally, the study used the 25-year storm event scenario, which translates to a 4% probability of a

storm event occurring in an area in a year. This is the standard measure for collector roads like 261. Notably, roadway flooding is a key aspect of emergency management, particularly evacuations. Each POI was assessed as follows: current state; predicted conditions in 2050 with no change/improvement; and predicted conditions for 2050 with changed/improved road construction.

The routine flooding we currently experience has been mitigated through maintenance of the drainage ditches along 261.

Conceptual approaches at various POIs:

- (1) Replace existing 36” corrugated metal pipes with 36” concrete pipes that are stronger and improve the flow of water.
 - (2) Replace existing 6’x5’ reinforced concrete box culverts new ones.
 - (3) Raise the road between Rose Haven and west side of HHS three feet and tie into existing roads and drainage. There are five properties in this area that would be affected by a large-scale flooding event.
- The next step is for Holland Point and Rose Haven residents to provide comments on the concepts raised in the two studies. Clearly, some concepts, such as adding stop signs and rumble strips, are less costly and easier to implement than those that involve construction.

