



December 7, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Jeff Zyontz, Chief
County-wide Planning Division

Jorge A. Valladares, P.E. Chief
Environmental Planning/County-wide Planning Division

FROM: Joe Anderson for Department of Park and Planning
(301) 650-4373

SUBJECT: **MANDATORY REFERRAL** No. 01007-SHA-1—State Highway
Administration (SHA) Congestion Relief Study—Intersection
Improvements—**New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650) at
Olney—Sandy Spring Road (MD 108)**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Board approve the project with the following comments:

1. All intersections within the limits of this project must be made ADA accessible.
2. Construct a right turn island in the southeast quadrant of the intersection to reduce the pedestrian crossing distance.
3. Extend the proposed bikeway on the west side of MD 650 to Crystal Spring Drive.
4. Construct a bikeway on the north side of MD 108 from the intersection to the Sherwood High School crossing signal.
5. Maintain the existing open section roadway, east of the bank on MD 108. The proposed sidewalk is not required along the open section roadway.

6. Mitigate the impact or removal of large trees with preservation measures and replacement shade trees (2½ to 3 inch caliper in double rows).

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The State Highway Administration (SHA) is proposing to improve the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650) and Olney—Sandy Spring Road (MD 108). The project will add an additional eastbound lane on MD 108 through the intersection and include a sidewalk on the south side of MD 108 and a sidewalk and bikeway on the south leg of MD 650. The location and extent of the project is depicted on the attached aerial photograph.

The project is in the semi-final design stage and the schedule currently has construction beginning in summer 2003.

BACKGROUND

The proposed project has been developed by SHA under their Congestion Relief Study program. The improvements are intended to address the existing congestion problems.

Staff convened a special public meeting in the community to present the proposal and answer questions. The meeting was held on November 7, a copy of the meeting invitation is attached. The meeting was well attended by area residents, many of whom had insightful comments and concerns. These comments and staff responses are summarized in the Staff Evaluation section below.

STAFF EVALUATION

The proposed transportation improvements are in conformance with the *Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan* and its recommendations for roadway and intersection improvements. Currently, the intersection operates at Level of Service (LOS) E in the morning peak hour and LOS D in the evening. The proposed improvement is projected to result in LOS D and B in the morning and evening peak hours, respectively.

The proposed improvement design incorporates closed-section design (curb and sidewalk) throughout, which is consistent with the existing conditions at the intersection. However, staff recommends that the closed-section design on MD 108, east of the intersection, transition to open section, without sidewalk, at the east edge of the bank property. This change will better preserve the area's rural character.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodation

The project includes development of a sidewalk along the south side of MD 108, and the master planned bikeway and a sidewalk along the south leg of MD 650, east and west sides respectively. Staff recommends extending the bikeway on MD 650, south to Crystal Spring Drive. The new eastbound curb lane of MD 108 should be 16 feet wide to accommodate bicyclists who prefer to use the roadway.

In addition to these improvements staff recommends that a bikeway be added on the north side of MD 108 from the intersection west to the Sherwood High School crossing signal. As outlined in the second page of the attached memo, Community-based Planning staff believes the bikeway should be located on the south side of MD 108. However, Transportation Planning and the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) staff recommend a north side location. The north side is recommended due to the lack of space to implement it on the south side.

At the MD 650/MD 108 intersection, a right turn island in the southeast quadrant would be desirable, to shorten pedestrian crossing distances. All intersections within the project limits must be made ADA accessible.

Landscape and Tree Preservation

The landscape plans are not typically detailed until the final design stage. When they are prepared, they will be coordinated with staff. Three mature trees are at risk in the southeast quadrant. The removal and/or impact of large trees must be mitigated with preservation measures and replacement trees. In particular, staff suggests tree removal mitigation at this intersection consist of a minimum 2½ to 3 inch caliper shade trees in double rows within the right-of-way or on private property with the owner's permission.

Community Concerns

The many concerns expressed by the local community were addressed at the community meeting and some are under further investigation by SHA. The following summarizes the comments and staff responses to these community concerns.

1. Consideration should be given to adding of left turn phase and separate left turn lane on eastbound MD 108; otherwise, accidents may result from drivers switching lanes to bypass queued turning vehicles.
 - While desirable, addition of a new, separate left turn lane would create the need to remove as part of a gas station in order to maintain reasonable alignment of lanes through the intersection. This did not appear to be a reasonable or warranted impact.

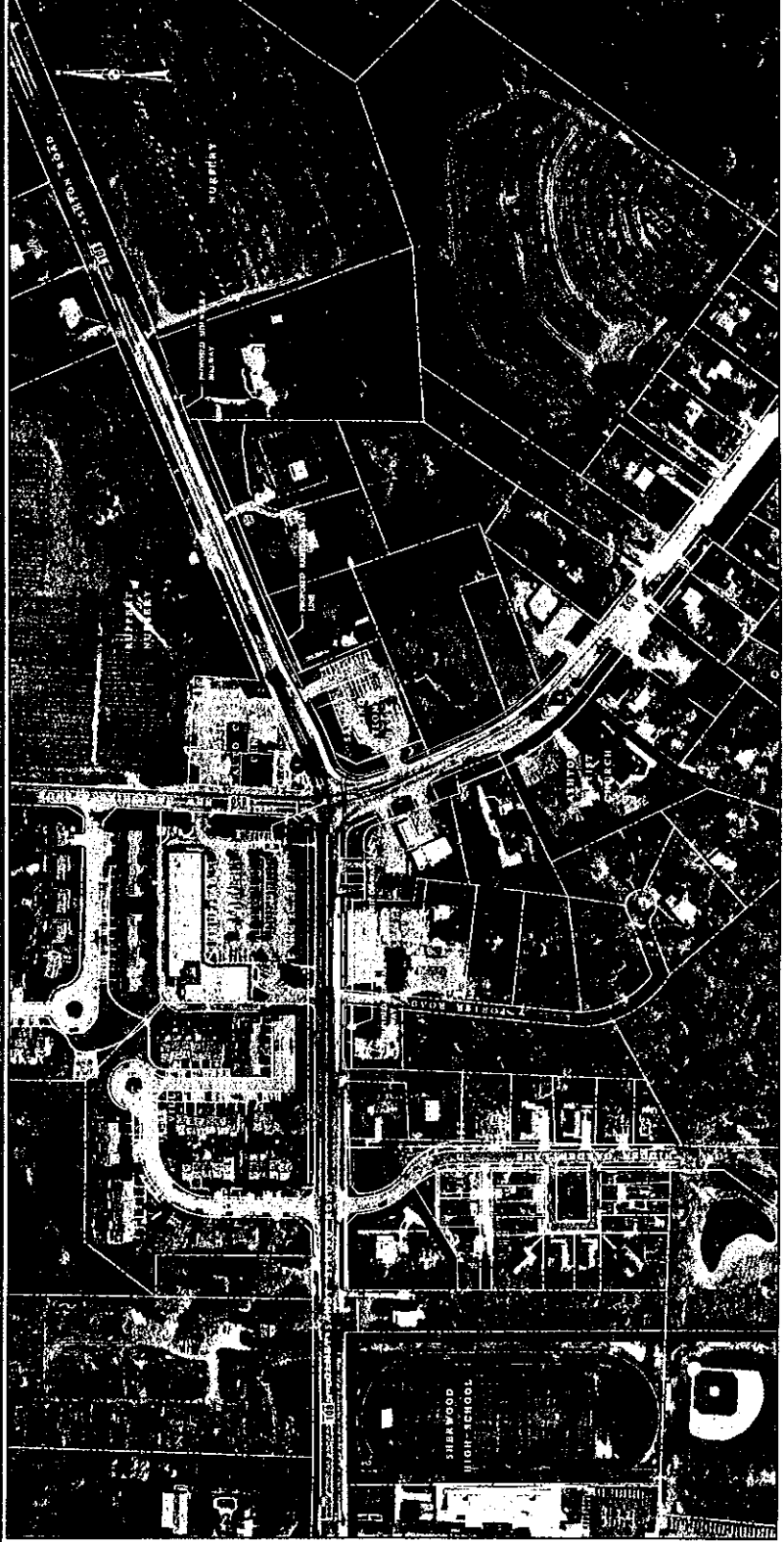
2. Sidewalks are also needed along both sides of MD 650 south of the intersection and along the north side of MD 108 from New Hampshire Avenue to Springbrook High School.
 - SHA is investigating the feasibility of additional area sidewalks.
3. The existing merge space distance (two lanes to one lane) south of the intersection is currently inadequate and needs to be lengthened.
 - The southbound merge will be extended as suggested.
4. There is concern over possible impact of stormwater management on private property.
 - Stormwater management provisions should not impact private property.
5. New area development may impact area roads and require installation of a new signal at nearby intersections.
 - Staff is not aware of any local development that might require installation of a new signal at any nearby intersection.
6. Safe pedestrian crossings are needed at the intersection and at Sherwood High School.
 - Signals, crosswalks, and ramps will be carefully evaluated in the final design.

Attachments

JA:ss\D:\PlanningBoardMemos\SHA-01007-joe.doc

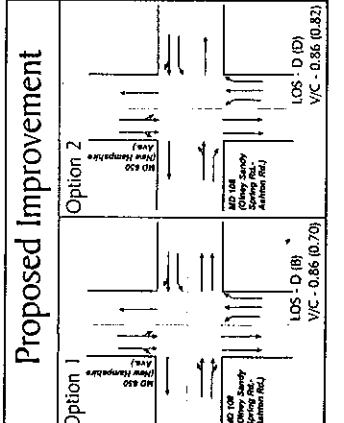
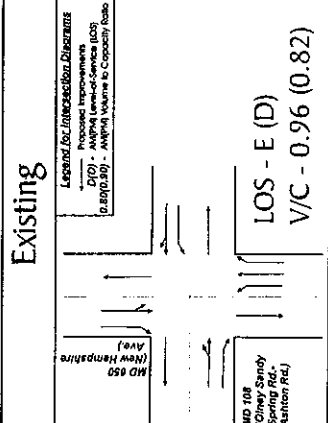
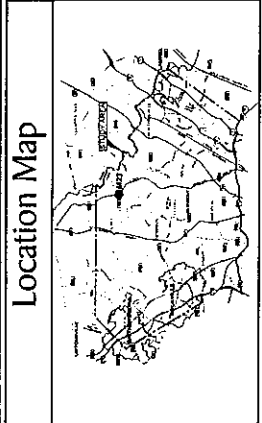
cc: Lary Cole
Marion Clark
Calvin Nelson
Bob Simpson, DPWT
Ken Briggs, SHA

M23 MD 108 (Old Spring Rd) / MD 650 (New Hampshire Ave) / MD 650 (New Hampshire Ave) / MD 650 (New Hampshire Ave)



Legend

- ▬ Existing Properties
- ▬ Potential and Recreational Areas
- ▬ Wetlands
- ▬ Stream/Open Water
- ▬ New Roadway
- ▬ New Street and/or Driveway



M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK & PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

October 23, 2001

RE: Intersection Improvements for
MD 650 (New Hampshire Avenue)/
MD 108 (Olney-Sandy Spring Road)

Dear Community Member:

The State Highway Administration (SHA) is planning a project to improve conditions at the intersection of MD 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) and MD 108 (Olney-Sandy Spring Road). SHA would like public comments on this proposal.

You are invited to a public open house to view the design concept for the intersection of MD 650 (New Hampshire Avenue) and MD 108 (Olney-Sandy Spring Road). The meeting will be held:

Wednesday, November 7, 2001, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Sherwood High School, Cafeteria
300 Olney-Sandy Spring Road
Sandy Spring, MD 20860

The session will be informal and designed to show attendees the proposal and to take comments. Staff from the SHA and the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT), along with M-NCPPC will be on hand.

For your further information, the Planning Board is tentatively scheduled to review the proposals during its regular meeting of Thursday, December 13, 2001. The public may direct comments to the Planning Board. If you are interested in attending or testifying, as always, please double check on the Board's date and time prior to attending, at 301-495-4600, during the week of their meeting. Submit any formal comments on the project to Arthur Holmes, Jr., Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board, 8787 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe Anderson".

Joe Anderson, Planner
County-wide Planning Division
Telephone: 301-650-4373


G:\JOEja635.doc


CC: Ken Briggs, SHA
✓ Bob Simpson, DPWT
Calvin Nelson, Community-Based Planning
Larry Cole, County-wide Planning

December 6, 2001

MEMORANDUM

TO: Joe Anderson, Environmental Planning

VIA: Bill Barron, Community-Based Planning 

FROM: Calvin Nelson, Jr., Community-Based Planning 

SUBJECT: MD 108/ MD 650 Intersection Improvements

Following are team comments and Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan recommendations for the proposed intersection improvements for MD 108 / MD 650. Please note that the proposed set of plans submitted for review shows some discrepancies in dimensions between the "typical sections" and "roadway plans".

MD 108 – East of MD 650

- The Master Plan recommends a Class III bikeway along this portion of MD 108. The proposed five-foot sidewalk shown along the south side of MD 108 should end at the bank's driveway, and not be extended further to the east. To help retain the rural character in this area, measures such as moving the proposed sidewalks around existing trees and/or using alternative paving materials in the area of the trees should be considered.

MD 108 – West of MD 650

- The Master Plan recommends a Class I bikeway along this portion of MD 108. Staff recommends that a Class I bikeway be placed on the south side of MD 108. The existing sidewalk along portions of the south side of MD 108 could be widened to accommodate this bikeway. Where space permits, a landscape strip for street trees should also be provided.

A bikeway on the south side of MD 108 is recommended for the following reasons:

- Sherwood High School is on the south side of MD 108.
- Most new residential development is located on the south side of MD 108.
- The rural legacy trail ends on the south side of MD 108.
- An existing Class I bikeway is located on the south side of MD 108 in Olney at Dr. Bird Road.
- The proposed Class I bikeway on the west side of MD 650 ends on the south side of MD 108.

We also recommend a sidewalk and landscape strip on the north side of MD 108.

MD 650 – South of MD 108

- On the east side of MD 650, the Roadway Plan shows a five-foot wide sidewalk and a five-foot wide landscape strip whereas the typical section for MD 650 shows an eight-foot wide sidewalk and a nine-foot wide landscape strip. Staff recommends providing a minimum eight-foot wide landscape strip and a five-foot wide sidewalk.

The 1998 Adopted and Approved Master Plan for Sandy Spring / Ashton offers Roadway Character and Design Guidelines which pertain to all new roads and roadway improvements. Many of the guidelines involve landscape treatments which should be taken to retain the rural character of the area. As more detailed plans are made available, additional comments will be provided.