

# RUSTIC ROADS FUNCTIONAL MASTER PLAN UPDATE

## PLANNING BOARD BRIEFING



*Santini Road, a rustic road*

### Description

Briefing for Planning Board on the status of the update to the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan. The briefing also contains a summary of preliminary recommendations.

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Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update Planning Board Briefing

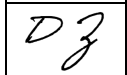
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### LOCATION

Montgomery County

### MASTER PLAN

Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan

### REVIEW BASIS

Montgomery County Code:

- Chapter 33A. Planning Procedures
- Chapter 49. Streets and Road. Article 8. Rustic Roads Program
- Chapter 50. Subdivision of Land. Article II. Subdivision Plans



### Summary:

- The Scope of Work for the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update was presented to and approved by the Planning Board on February 6, 2020.
- There are currently 99 roads in the Rustic Roads program.
- An additional 25 roads have been nominated for inclusion in the program, 19 of which are currently recommended as rustic or exceptional rustic.
- 27 roads currently in the program lack a complete description. In particular, many of these roads do not have the required significant features identified.
- Planning staff intends to bring a working draft of the plan to the Planning Board in June.
- The preliminary recommendations included here are subject to change as staff continues to revise the road descriptions.

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## SECTION 1. SUMMARY

This briefing is intended to bring the Planning Board up to speed on the progress of the Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update. The scope of work for the plan was presented to and approved by the Planning Board on February 6, 2020. Since that time, the original project manager has retired from the Commission and a new team has been put in place to complete the project.

The project team has been reviewing each of the 99 roads currently classified as rustic or exceptional rustic roads, as well as 25 roads nominated for inclusion in the program. This work includes identifying the significant features along the roads, writing or checking historical narratives, updating or adding driving experiences, and creating new maps for each road.

Attached to this document are seven road descriptions as examples of the revised content that is intended to make up the final plan document. The seven road descriptions each represent a different type of decision the Planning Board will be asked to make to produce the final plan; they are explained in more detail in the sections that follow.

## SECTION 2. BACKGROUND

### PURPOSE

The Rustic Roads Program “establishes a program to preserve as rustic roads those historic and scenic roadways that reflect the agricultural character and rural origins of the County. Preservation of rustic roads must be achieved by retaining certain physical features of rustic roads and by certain right-of-way maintenance procedures,” (County Code Chapter 49 Streets and Roads, Article 8 Rustic Roads Program).

The Rustic Roads Program was initiated by residents living along these roads who sought to protect their narrow, character-filled, and safe roads from being paved, widened, and brought up to modern engineering standards, as was then county policy. The preservation of one-lane and historic bridges on the roads was also instrumental to the creation of the program. Roads classified as rustic or exceptional rustic are excepted from Road Code engineering standards in order to preserve their unique character, history, configuration, and setting. Their safety is reviewed based on their crash histories.

The County Code directs that the “significant features” of each road be identified and preserved. Roads are added and removed from the Rustic Roads Program through the master plan amendment process, following criteria established in the Code.

This update to the 1996 *Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan* (“RRFMP”) serves two main purposes:

- 1) to consider roads that have been nominated for inclusion in the rustic roads program, and



- 2) to provide the necessary details for several roads that are currently in the program but have incomplete descriptions.

When completed, the approved Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update will combine all the designated rustic and exceptional rustic roads into one document. The update was originally included in the approved 2014 scope of work for the *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*,<sup>1</sup> but was later separated from that project. The scope of work for this update was presented to and approved by the Planning Board on February 6, 2020.<sup>2</sup>

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## EXISTING RUSTIC ROADS

The current rustic roads program includes 99 roads: 80 rustic roads, 13 exceptional rustic roads, and 6 roads that have segments that are both rustic and exceptional rustic (see Attachment A). Sixty-six of the roads were included in the 1996 *RRFMP*, while a further 34 roads have been added by various master plans and the 2004 *Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan, Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area, Boyds Master Plan & Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan Amendment* (“2004 Amendment”); the 2004 Amendment also removed the designation of one road (Piedmont Road).

The eleven master plans that have added roads to the program in addition to the 1996 and 2004 plans:

- *Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area* (1994)
- *Fairland Master Plan* (1997)
- *Cloverly Master Plan* (1997)
- *Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan* (1998)
- *Potomac Subregion Master Plan* (2002)
- *Olney Master Plan* (2005)
- *Damascus Master Plan* (2006)
- *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan* (2010)
- *Ten Mile Creek Limited Amendment* (2014)
- *Sandy Spring Rural Village Plan* (2015)
- *MARC Rail Communities Sector Plan* (2019)

All currently designated rustic and exceptional rustic roads were reviewed as part of this planning effort. Many roads were completely lacking a description; for each of these roads, a complete road description was developed, including an introductory statement, a list of the road’s significant features, the history of the road or of sites along the road, a driving experience, environmental features, and technical road characteristics (see Attachment B).

For those roads that already had full descriptions, such as those from the 1996 *RRFMP* and the 2004 *Amendment*, the descriptions were reviewed for changes. Much has changed in the last twenty-five

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2014/documents/MPOHTPlanningBoard11.20.2014\\_000.pdf](https://www.montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda/2014/documents/MPOHTPlanningBoard11.20.2014_000.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/RRFMP-Scope-of-Work-FINAL\\_w\\_attachmentslabeled.pdf](https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/RRFMP-Scope-of-Work-FINAL_w_attachmentslabeled.pdf)

years, so the significant features, histories, driving experiences, road characteristics, and maps were all examined. Many minor technical changes were made to the road descriptions, but Planning Board approval is required for more substantive changes, such as to a road's significant features or its designation as rustic or exceptional rustic.

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## NEW RUSTIC ROADS

In addition to a review of the 99 existing rustic and exceptional rustic roads, 25 roads have been nominated to be added to the program and are being assessed as part of this update (also shown on Attachment B).

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## EQUITY

The Montgomery County Council passed the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act with Bill 27-19 in November 2019. The act requires the Planning Board to consider the impact of a plan on racial equity and social justice in the county. This is accomplished through changes in policy, practice, and allocation of county resources to ensure that all people have the same rights and opportunities regardless of race, socioeconomic status, age, sex, religion, or other characteristics.

Rustic Roads and those nominated for the program are found in rural and sparsely populated areas outside the Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) developed by the Planning Department to help identify marginalized populations. With very few exceptions, the roads are in either white predominant (greater than 70% of population) or white majority (50% - 70%) Census Tracts. The roads are also not found in low-income areas or areas where English is spoken less than very well—other factors that were used to identify the EFAs. The EFAs are instead located in areas characterized as more urban or suburban, with traffic volumes and road improvements that do not meet the criteria of a rustic road as outlined in County Code.

The Rustic Roads program is not inequitable in and of itself. The roads are public roads that can be enjoyed by everyone. Because these are historic roads, it is not possible to build a new rustic road in an Equity Focus Area or propose new communities along the roads to change the demographics in the rural areas where roads already have the low volumes and safe characteristics necessary to be part of the program. But the updated plan will go a long way in showing respect to all those who have contributed to their history and character.

The program includes a number of roads connected to the many small communities established in the county by free or formerly enslaved African Americans. Many historic sites from these early settlements still exist, and the descendants of the early inhabitants of these communities still live along these roads. Several roads were added to the list of nominated roads because of their location within historically African American communities, such as Holly Grove Road and Awkard Lane.

But the primary changes that have been made to address equity issues are within the individual road descriptions. Each road profile contains historical information about the roads and sites along those

roads, including details about early inhabitants. Planning staff reviewed the existing and draft road descriptions and flagged 58 profiles for potentially dated language. Due to the age and agricultural origins of many of these roadways, many histories touch upon the relationship between the roads and the institution of slavery. Minor updates were made to ensure that language around this difficult subject aligns with guidance issued by the National Park Service and leading history institutions. For example, changes were made to avoid the use of euphemistic language when referring to plantations, slaveholders, and Confederate soldiers, and to acknowledge and name persons enslaved at historic sites referenced in the text. More comprehensive updates to these narratives should be undertaken in a future plan update.

The histories written for roads designated without descriptions and for newly nominated roads provided an opportunity to bring forward underrepresented themes and communities and to utilize knowledge gained through Historic Preservation research projects completed since the original plan's adoption. New histories highlight themes of women's history, African American individuals and communities, and social activism and create opportunities for more people to see themselves and their communities reflected in these roads.

The Rustic Roads program promotes access to an invaluable local resource: scenic and historic public roads that can be enjoyed by everyone. The roads can be visited at any time and allow people to walk, bike, or drive along and experience a connection to nature and the local history embodied in these roadways.

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## **RUSTIC ROADS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

None of the above work could have been accomplished without the assistance of the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee (RRAC), which contributed the driving experience section for the roads without one, as well as revisions to dozens more. This is a very time-consuming task given the number of roads in and nominated for the program and the geographical spread of these roads. Members of the committee also suggested revisions to significant features, historical references, environmental features, and maps based on their familiarity with the roads and, in many cases, their histories.

The current and past members of the RRAC who provided driving histories and other recommendations are:

- Laura Van Etten, Chair
- Dan Seamans
- Robert Wilbur
- Kamran Sadeghi
- N. Anne Davies
- Barbara Hoover
- Charles Mess
- Jane Thompson (member emeritus)

- Sarah Navid (member emeritus and former staff coordinator)
- Leslie Saville (member emeritus and currently with Heritage Montgomery)

Also instrumental in this effort has been Darcy Buckley, the staff coordinator from the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). Ms. Buckley organizes the committee's meeting agendas, minutes, and official correspondence, but her most important role is in coordinating on behalf of the committee with outside entities, including Montgomery Planning staff and MCDOT staff.

We can't emphasize enough how grateful we are for their help.

### SECTION 3. PLAN DOCUMENT

The current concept for a completed revised functional master plan document is based on the structure of the 1996 *Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan*, but somewhat streamlined. Staff has completed a first draft of an introductory chapter, which summarizes the purpose and history of the program, describes the criteria for a road to be classified as rustic or exceptional rustic, and provides other general information about the program. The draft of the introductory chapter is attached to this briefing.

Following the introductory material will be the descriptions of all the roads in the program following a very similar format to the descriptions in the 1996 plan. Each road profile contains the following elements:

- the road's name and classification
- a brief introductory statement
- recommendations, if any
- a list of the road's significant features
- the history of the road and/or of sites and communities along the road
- a driving experience, which may include other historical details
- an environment section (optional)
- a road characteristics table (extent, length, width, surface, lane markings, shoulders)
- a map
- one or more photos of the road or features along the road

Examples of some of the updated road profiles are attached to this document and discussed further below. Note, however, that staff has not yet selected photos to include in the updated profiles.

Planning staff is also contemplating adding a rustic roads resource guide to provide guidance on the maintenance of road surfaces, roadside vegetation, bridges, and other matters that arise in the protection and upkeep of these roads and their features. Staff intends to work with various stakeholder groups, including the RRAC, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture, to create this guide.



The plan should also contain a final chapter to discuss any necessary implementation efforts, such as revisions to the county code.

## SECTION 4. NOMINATED ROADS

### ROADS CONSIDERED

Table 1 shows the 25 roads that have been nominated to be added to the program (see Attachment B). Planning staff is reviewing these roads according to the criteria outlined in Chapter 49, Section 8 to determine eligibility and classification. Roads removed from consideration are discussed below.

*Table 1. Nominated Roads*

Road Name	Area	Extents	Notes
Aitcheson Lane	Burtonsville	Riding Stable Road to end of county maintenance	
Allnutt Road	Poolesville	Westerly Road to end of road	Not a public road (required for designation)
Awkard Lane	Cloverly	Holly Grove Road to end of county maintenance	Removed from consideration
Barnesville Road (MD 117)	Boyds	Bucklodge Road to Clarksburg Road (MD 121)	Removed from consideration
Brighton Dam Road	Brookeville	Bordly Drive to New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650)	Extension to existing rustic road
Brown Church Road	Damascus	Ridge Road (MD 27) to end of county maintenance	
Bucklodge Road (MD 117)	Boyds	Darnestown Road (MD 28) to Barnesville Road (MD 117)	
Conoy Road	Barnesville	Barnesville Road to end of road	Not a public road (required for designation)
Dickerson Church Road	Dickerson	Dickerson Road (MD 28) to Dickerson Road [loop]	
Dickerson School Road	Dickerson	Big Woods Road to end of road	
Emory Church Road	Olney	Georgia Avenue (MD 97) to end of county maintenance	
Georgia Avenue (MD 97)	Brookeville	Segments between Brookeville Bypass and Brookeville Town limits	Consider after completion of the Brookeville Bypass
Greenbridge Road	Brookeville	Georgia Avenue (MD 97) to end of county maintenance	
Halterman Road	Laytonsville	Hipsley Mill Road to end of county maintenance	

Road Name	Area	Extents	Notes
Holly Grove Road	Cloverly	Norwood Road to end of county maintenance	
Holsey Road	Damascus	Ridge Road (MD 27) to end of county maintenance	
Kings Valley Road	Damascus	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Bethesda Church Road	
Lewisdale Road	Clarksburg	Prices Distillery Road to Frederick County Line	
Mount Carmel Cemetery Road	Brookeville	Georgia Avenue (MD 97) to end of county maintenance	
Mullinix Mill Road	Damascus	Damascus Road (MD 108) to Howard County Line	
Nicholson Farm Road	Dickerson	Dickerson Road to Mouth of Monocacy Road	
Riding Stable Road	Burtonsville	Sandy Spring Road (MD 198) to Prince George's County Line	
Seneca Road	Potomac	River Road to Rileys Lock Road	
The farm road	Sandy Spring	Brooke Road to end of road	Not a public road (required for designation)
Thurston Road	Comus	Old Hundred Road (MD 109) to Frederick County Line	

Six of these roads were initially considered for rustic or exceptional rustic classification but are no longer being reviewed. Three of the roads were removed from consideration because it was determined that they are private roads, and only public roads can be classified as rustic. Two short stretches of Georgia Avenue between the new Brookeville Bypass and the Brookeville Town Line were also suggested, but the bypass will need to be completed before traffic counts and crash histories can be studied in the nominated sections. (The segment of Georgia Avenue within the Town limits of Brookeville is outside the jurisdiction of Montgomery Planning.)

Finally, two roads were removed from further study for other reasons. Although Barnesville Road west of the nominated section is already a rustic road, the nominated section carries a lot of traffic not predominantly for local use (a requirement to be classified rustic). The RRAC does not support adding this segment of Barnesville Road to the program, agreeing that there is too much traffic and not finding it to have a particularly rustic appearance. Awkard Lane was nominated together with Holly Grove Road, but it does not meet the criteria of having outstanding natural features or vistas and does not appear to provide access to historic resources, follow an historic alignment, or highlight an historic landscape. The RRAC did not provide a formal recommendation for this road.

After removing these six roads, 19 nominated roads remain and are being further studied.

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## DESIGNATIONS

For the 19 roads or road segments studied further for classification, 15 are recommended as rustic roads, three as exceptional rustic roads, and one road, Kings Valley Road, has segments recommended as both rustic and exceptional rustic. Another segment of Kings Valley Road is not recommended to be added to the program. Because only public roads can be designated rustic, if any of these roads are found to be private, they will be removed from consideration.

### ROADS CURRENTLY RECOMMENDED AS RUSTIC

- Aitcheson Lane
- Brighton Dam Road (Bordly Road to New Hampshire Avenue [MD 650])
- Brown Church Road
- Bucklodge Road (MD 117)
- Dickerson Church Road
- Dickerson School Road
- Emory Church Road
- Halterman Road
- Holly Grove Road
- Kings Valley Road (Stringtown Road to Kingstead Road) (see also exceptional list)
- Lewisdale Road (Prices Distillery Road to Frederick County line)
- Mullinix Mill Road (Damascus Road [MD 108] to Howard County line)
- Nicholson Farm Road
- Seneca Road (Rileys Lock Road to River Road)
- Sugarloaf Mountain Road
- Thurston Road

### ROADS CURRENTLY RECOMMENDED AS EXCEPTIONAL RUSTIC

- Greenbridge Road
- Holsey Road
- Kings Valley Road (Kingstead Road to Bethesda Church Road) (see also rustic list)
- Mount Carmel Cemetery Road

### ROADS NOT RECOMMENDED

- Kings Valley Road (Ridge Road [MD 27] to Stringtown Road)

Out of the 19 nominated roads not removed from consideration, only one portion of Kings Valley Road is currently not recommended as rustic or exceptional rustic, although further analysis may lead to other roads being removed from consideration.

## EXAMPLE: EMORY CHURCH ROAD

A completed road description for Emory Church Road in the Olney area is attached as an example of a nominated road that is recommended for a rustic designation.

## SECTION 5. INCOMPLETE DESCRIPTIONS OF ROADS

Of the 31 roads added to the program by area master plans (as opposed to those added by the 1996 *RRFMP* and the 2004 *Amendment*), 27 were added to the program with incomplete descriptions. The most important part of the descriptions of these roads is the identification of the significant features that must be protected when the roads are maintained or improved. Other important information missing from the descriptions are the history of the roads and sites along them, the driving experience, and a map showing features and outstanding views along the roads. A list of roads with incomplete descriptions are shown in the order in which they were added to the program in Table 2. The master plan that added the roads to the program and relevant page numbers from the plan are included in the table.

*Table 2. Rustic Roads with Incomplete Descriptions*

Road Name	Classification	Extents	Notes
<b>Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area (1994)</b> (pp. 126-130 and appendix pp. 34-42)			
Old Hundred Road (MD 109)	Rustic	I-270 to MD 355	Road is rustic south of I-270
Frederick Road (MD 355)	Rustic	Between recommended Hyattstown Bypass intersections	Hyattstown Historic District
<b>Cloverly Master Plan (1997)</b> (pp. 53-58)			
Avoca Lane	Rustic	Entire length	
Batson Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Bryants Nursery Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Johnson Road	Rustic	Entire length	Update extents
Link Road	Rustic	Entire length	Recommended for removal
Oak Hill Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Old Orchard Road	Rustic	Entire length	
<b>Fairland Master Plan (1997)</b> (pp. 96-99)			
Santini Road	Rustic	Entire length	
Dustin Road	Rustic	West of US 29	Update extents
Belle Cote Drive	Rustic	Entire length	

Road Name	Classification	Extents	Notes
<b><i>Sandy Spring/Ashton Master Plan (1998)</i></b> (pp. 54-57)			
Haviland Mill Road	Rustic	Brinkwood Road to county line	
Tucker Lane	Rustic	Ednor Terrace to MD 108	
<b><i>Potomac Subregion Master Plan (2002)</i></b> (pp. 110-117)			
Berryville Road	Exceptional rustic	Seneca Road to Darnestown Road	
Boswell Lane	Rustic	Piney Meetinghouse Rd to Glen Mill Rd	Recommended for removal
Glen Road	Rustic	Query Mill Rd to Piney Meetinghouse Rd	
	Exceptional rustic	Piney Meetinghouse Rd to Beekman Place	
Glen Mill Road	Rustic	Red Barn Lane to Circle Drive	
	Exceptional rustic	Red Barn Lane to Glen Road	
Poplar Hill Road	Rustic	Berryville Road to Pavey Terrace	
Query Mill Road	Rustic	Esworthy Road to Turkey Foot Road	
South Glen Road	Exceptional rustic	Glen Road to Deepglen Drive	
Stoney Creek Road	Rustic	Travilah Road to River Road	
Turkey Foot Road	Rustic	Darnestown Road to Travilah Road	
<b><i>Olney Master Plan (2005)</i></b> (pp. 99-102)			
Batchellors Forest Road	Rustic	1,200 feet east of Georgia Ave to Dr. Bird Road	
Brighton Dam Road	Rustic	Town of Brookeville boundary to Bordly Drive	
Triadelphia Lake Road	Rustic	Entire length	
<b><i>Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan (2010)</i></b> (pp. 81, 85)			
Game Preserve Road	Rustic	Clopper Road (MD 117) to Frederick Avenue (MD 355)	

These roads require a Planning Board recommendation, and ultimately a County Council decision, to designate their significant features.

## SECTION 6. CHANGES TO RUSTIC ROADS

The descriptions of rustic and exceptional rustic roads that already have full descriptions were reviewed for changes. Features along many roads have appeared, disappeared, or become more or less apparent than before—a lot can change in 26 years. The historic designation of some sites along



the roads has changed, and additional details have been added to the histories. Some roads currently designated as rustic appear to meet the criteria of an exceptional rustic road, and in a small number of cases the opposite is true: the roads do not appear as rustic as they once did. New maps were created for all existing roads in the program. See Attachment C1 for an overview map of all preliminary recommendations included in this report.

Below are the five broad categories of recommendations for the Planning Board to consider for roads already in the program. Many roads fall into more than one change category, as can be seen in the Preliminary Planning Board Recommendation Matrix (see Attachment C2). If only minor details have changed in a road description, the road has been included in the list of roads that do not require a decision by the Planning Board. An example from each category has been included as an attachment to this document.

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### NO PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION NEEDED

The following 34 roads of the 99 currently in the program have only minor changes that do not affect their designation in the program or change any significant features, and therefore do not require a specific Planning Board recommendation, although the revised profiles will be included in the plan ultimately approved by the Board. Many of the roads in this list have outdated history or driving experience sections, especially with respect to roadside features that are no longer in existence or have had a change to their historic designation. In many cases, only a historic resource number has been added. Planning staff may recommend changes for some of the roads in this list as they continue revisions to the master plan.

- |                      |                          |                       |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Bentley Road       | • Hawkes Road            | • Purdum Road         |
| • Big Woods Road     | • Hipsley Mill Road      | • Rileys Lock Road    |
| • Black Rock Road    | • Jerusalem Road         | • Sugarland Lane      |
| • Budd Road          | • Jonesville Road        | • Trundle Road        |
| • Burdette Lane      | • Kingsley Road          | • Violettes Lock Road |
| • Cattail Road       | • Kingstead Road         | • West Offutt Road    |
| • Clopper Road       | • Meeting House Road     | • West Willard Road   |
| • Club Hollow Road   | • Montevideo Road        | • Whites Ferry Road   |
| • Comus Road         | • Moore Road             | • Whites Store Road   |
| • Edwards Ferry Road | • Mount Nebo Road        | • Zion Road           |
| • Elmer School Road  | • Mountain View Road     |                       |
| • Haines Road        | • Prices Distillery Road |                       |

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### EXAMPLE: MOORE ROAD

The road description of Moore Road is included with this document as an example of a road that has been updated to the new format but for which no Planning Board decision is recommended other than to approve the updated profile with the rest of the plan. The significant features have not

changed, but the history section has been updated with a historic resource number. The history section has also been updated to acknowledge that the historic site adjacent to the road was once a tobacco plantation home to an enslaved workforce. Some historical facts from the driving experience have also been moved to the history section.

The driving experience was also reviewed and slightly updated based on the current features along the road. The road characteristics table was updated and a new map has been included.

## UPDATE EXTENTS

For many roads in the program, changes to the road network or to features along the road require that the extents of the road be changed or clarified. These changes are typically very minor and are discussed within the recommendation section of the individual road descriptions. The 14 roads out of the 99 currently in the program with recommended changes to one or both extents are shown in Table 3. In some cases, the roads have been included in the list more for a technical correction to the road description than to an actual removal of part of the road from the program.

*Table 3. Extent Changes for Existing Rustic Roads*

Road Name	Road End	Old Extent	New Extent
Batchellors Forest Road	Western	Georgia Avenue (MD 97)	Harvest Intercontinental Church entry drive
Brookeville Road	Eastern	Georgia Avenue (MD 97)	New roundabout at Brookeville Bypass (Georgia Avenue)
Dustin Road	Eastern	Columbia Pike (U.S. 29)	Roundabout at Old Columbia Pike
Hoyles Mill Road	Eastern	Ag and Open Space plan boundary (RDT zone boundary at the time)	Park gate near the eastern end of the road
Hughes Road	Southern	River Road (ambiguous)	Hunting Quarter Road
Johnson Road	Eastern	Norwood Road	High school driveway
Mount Ephraim Road	Northern (correction to road name)	Incorrectly followed Sugarloaf Mountain Road	Frederick County line (at a different crossing point)
Mouth of Monocacy Road	Eastern	Bridge over Little Monocacy River	End of county maintenance
Schaeffer Road	Eastern	“New” park entrance for South Germantown Recreation Park	Burdette Lane
Slidell Road	Northern	10 Mile Creek plan boundary	Comus Road
Stringtown Road	Southern	Piedmont Road	Cedarbrook Community Church driveway

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Road End</b>	<b>Old Extent</b>	<b>New Extent</b>
Sugarloaf Mountain Road	Both (correction to road name)	Incorrectly included as part of Mount Ephraim Road	Mount Ephraim Road to Frederick County line
Turkey Foot Road	Southern	Travilah Road	New roundabout at Travilah Road
West Harris Road	Northern (correction to road name)	Frederick County Line	Mount Ephraim/Sugarloaf Mountain Road

#### EXAMPLE: HOYLES MILL ROAD

While most of the changes to the extents of the roads in this list will lead to a slight shortening of the designated rustic or exceptional rustic road, in the case of Hoyles Mill Road, the recommendation is to extend the designation. Most of Hoyles Mill Road is closed to vehicular traffic, and it now serves as part of the Hoyles Mill Trail, but the rustic designation ended at a master plan boundary and is being extended to include the entire part of the road that is now closed to vehicular traffic. As with the other examples attached to this briefing, the other sections of the road description have also been revised where necessary.

#### APPROVE SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

For the 27 roads out of the current 99 roads in the program that were added to the program with incomplete descriptions by the various master plans, as described in Section 5 above, the most important part of the description missing is a list of significant features that must be protected when the roads are improved or maintained. In some cases, narrative text within a master plan described the roads and its features but did not specifically designate any features as “significant.” In many other cases, only a table showing that the roads met the eligibility criteria was included, but the roads weren’t otherwise described. In at least one case (Game Preserve Road), no information at all was provided. While the Planning Board will ultimately be approving all of the text and revised maps, the designation of significant features is the key element of each road profile.

For each of these roads, Planning staff reviewed the language in the master plan that added the road to the program to find any significant features mentioned in the text. Additional significant features were added based on notes compiled over the years, from field visits, and from online resources. Most of these roads were also evaluated by members of the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee, who also suggested adding or removing features. Roads needing their significant features approved are listed in Table 4. Two roads needing a description, Link Road and Boswell Lane, are recommended for removal from the program and are discussed in Section 7 below; however, updated profiles and a list of significant features needing approval have been provided if it is determined that the roads should remain in the program. Another road, Old Hundred Road, is only missing a description in the short section between I-270 and Frederick Road (MD 355) and has been incorporated into the updated profile for that road.

*Table 4. Roads with Significant Features Needing Approval*

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Master Plan</b>
Avoca Lane	Cloverly
Batchellors Forest Road	Olney
Batson Road	Cloverly
Belle Cote Drive	Fairland
Berryville Road	Potomac
Brighton Dam Road	Olney
Bryants Nursery Road	Cloverly
Dustin Road	Fairland
Frederick Road (MD 355)	Clarksburg
Game Preserve Road	Great Seneca Science Corridor
Glen Mill Road	Potomac
Glen Road	Potomac
Haviland Mill Road	Sandy Spring/Ashton
Johnson Road	Cloverly
Oak Hill Road	Cloverly
Old Orchard Road	Cloverly
Poplar Hill Road	Potomac
Query Mill Road	Potomac
Santini Road	Fairland
South Glen Road	Potomac
Stoney Creek Road	Potomac
Triadelphia Lake Road	Olney
Tucker Lane	Sandy Spring/Ashton
Turkey Foot Road	Potomac

#### EXAMPLE: GAME PRESERVE ROAD

When Game Preserve Road was classified rustic in the 2010 *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan*, no details about the road were provided. While some master plans provided short descriptions of the roads added to the program by those plans, in this case, the entire road description had to be written from scratch. This new road description is a good example of where women's history has been brought forward in the road profile.

#### REVISE EXISTING LIST OF SIGNIFICANT FEATURES

Several roads that have well-defined significant features are recommended to have these features updated. Many roads are adding features, while a few are losing features. Some significant features have minor changes. The 27 out of the existing 99 roads in the program that already have well-defined significant features but are currently recommended to have features added, updated, or removed are shown in Table 5. As with other roads in the program, the updated profiles will also contain other text changes and revised maps.

*Table 5. Roads with Changes to Significant Features*

<b>Road Name</b>	<b>Master Plan</b>
Barnesville Road	Rustic Roads
Beallsville Road	Rustic Roads
Brookeville Road	Rustic Roads
Burnt Hill Road	Rustic Roads / Damascus
Gregg Road	Rustic Roads
Howard Chapel Road	Rustic Roads
Hunting Quarter Road	Rustic Roads
Hyattstown Mill Road	Clarksburg / Rustic Roads
Martinsburg Road	Rustic Roads
Mouth of Monocacy Road	Rustic Roads
Moxley Road	Rustic Roads
Old Hundred Road (MD 109)	Clarksburg / Rustic Roads
Old River Road	Rustic Roads
Pennyfield Lock Road	Rustic Roads
Prescott Road	Rustic Roads
River Road (exceptional segment)	Rustic Roads
River Road (rustic segment)	Rustic Roads
Rocky Road	Rustic Roads
Sugarland Road	Rustic Roads
Sugarloaf Mountain Road	Rustic Roads
Swains Lock Road	Rustic Roads
Sycamore Landing Road	Rustic Roads
Wasche Road	Rustic Roads
West Hunter Road	Rustic Roads
West Old Baltimore Road	Clarksburg / Rustic Roads / 10 Mile Creek
Westerly Road	Rustic Roads
White Ground Road	Rustic Roads / MARC Rail
Wildcat Road	Rustic Roads

#### **EXAMPLE: MOXLEY ROAD**

Moxley Road provides an example of a very simple update to an approved significant feature. One current significant feature is that the road provides an “expansive view into Frederick County.” But this road provides expansive views in all directions, so a change to this significant feature is recommended. The revised road description is attached to this report. As with the other examples attached to this report, Planning staff made revisions to other sections of the road description.



## CHANGE CLASSIFICATION TO EXCEPTIONAL RUSTIC

Exceptional rustic roads are rustic roads that meet all the criteria for a rustic designation, but also meet three additional standards. Before classifying a road as an exceptional rustic road, the Council must find that the road or road segment:

- Contributes significantly to natural, agricultural or historic characteristics.
- Has unusual features found on few other roads in the County.
- Would be more negatively affected by improvements or modifications to the physical characteristics of the road than would most other roads in the rustic roads program.

Of the 99 roads currently in the program, 80 are rustic roads, 13 are exceptional rustic roads, and 6 roads have segments that are both rustic and exceptional rustic.

After additional review, many roads that were added to the program as rustic roads appear to meet the criteria for classification as exceptional rustic. A preliminary list of the 17 roads recommended to be reclassified from rustic to exceptional rustic are shown in Table 6.

*Table 6. Rustic Roads Currently Recommended as Exceptional Rustic*

Road Name	Master Plan	Extents
Avoca Lane	Cloverly	Entire road: Oak Hill Road to end of county maintenance
Belle Cote Drive	Fairland	Entire road: Kruhm Road to end of county maintenance
Brighton Dam Road	Olney	Current rustic section (Town of Brookeville to Bordly Drive)
Davis Mill Road	Rustic Roads	Watkins Road to Brink Road
Elton Farm Road	Rustic Roads	Entire road: Howard Chapel Road to end of road
Gregg Road	Rustic Roads	Riggs Road to Georgia Avenue (MD 97)
Hunting Quarter Road (clarification)	Rustic Roads	Entire road: Hughes Road to River Road
Hyattstown Mill Road	Clarksburg / Rustic Roads	Frederick Road (MD 355) to Prescott Road
Old Bucklodge Lane	Rustic Roads	Entire road: Bucklodge Road (MD 117) to White Ground Road
Peach Tree Road	Rustic Roads	Barnesville Road to Old Hundred Road (MD 109)
Prescott Road	Rustic Roads	Entire road: Frederick Road (MD 355) to Hyattstown Mill Road
Query Mill Road	Potomac	Glen Road to Esworthy Road
Riggs Road	Rustic Roads	Zion Road to Gregg Road

Road Name	Master Plan	Extents
Triadelphia Lake Road	Olney	Entire road: Georgia Avenue (MD 97) to boat ramp parking lot at end of road
Tschiffely Mill Road	Rustic Roads	Entire road: River Road to gate at Seneca Stone Mill
Tucker Lane	Sandy Spring-Ashton	Ednor View Terrace to Ashton Road (MD 108)
Wildcat Road	Rustic Roads	Brink Road to Davis Mill Road and Davis Mill Road to Watkins Road

#### EXAMPLE: TSCHIFFELY MILL ROAD

Tschiffely Mill Road is a good example of a road that is currently classified as rustic but is recommended to be reclassified as exceptional rustic. The recommendation included in the road description file shows how it meets the criteria for exceptional rustic designation. The history and driving experience sections have also been updated, and environmental details have been added.

## SECTION 7. ROADS TO BE REMOVED

Two roads currently in the program no longer meet the criteria for a rustic classification, and therefore should be reclassified. These roads are shown in Table 7. Planning staff has not yet determined what, if any, new road classification should be assigned to these roads. If it is decided to retain these roads in the program, their updated profiles will need to be approved, including the designation of significant features.

*Table 7. Roads Currently Recommended to Be Removed from the Program*

Road Name	Master Plan	Current Designation	Recommended Classification
Boswell Lane	Potomac	Rustic	TBD
Link Road	Cloverly	Rustic	TBD

#### EXAMPLE: LINK ROAD

Link Road was added to the program by the 1997 *Cloverly Master Plan*. At the time, a new neighborhood of homes had just been built along the road, but there was still a very rustic section at the end of the road leading to a very scenic farm. The lane leading to the farm was later determined to be a private road, and therefore ineligible to be a rustic road. Despite views to the farm at the end of the road and of another farm property along the north side of the road, the rest of the road is too modern in design throughout its length for it to be considered rustic.

## SECTION 8. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As mentioned above, the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee has contributed significantly to Planning staff's initial review of these roads. Members of the RRAC represent various stakeholder groups and interests, such as farms, civic associations, and rural preservationists. They are intimately familiar with most of the roads in this plan, as well as with many that have been nominated. Staff sent drafts of every existing and nominated rustic road to the RRAC, primarily for their help in creating driving experiences where none currently exist, but they were free to suggest changes to any aspect of the road descriptions. The driving experiences and comments they have provided have been extremely helpful.

The Rustic Roads team presented to several area civic associations and other groups. The history of the plan and the purpose of the update were explained to attendees and feedback was solicited.

- MidCounty Citizens Advisory Board: November 19, 2019
- Upcounty Citizens Advisory Board: February 24, 2020
- Darnestown Civic Association: September 17, 2020
- Town of Brookeville: February 23, 2021
- Montgomery Parks: March 5, 2021

An online feedback map has been available since early 2021 to solicit comments on the existing and nominated rustic roads. The map has been shared with online audiences through Montgomery Planning and Historic Preservation Office social media outreach. Feedback from this map will be used to inform the plan as it moves forward. 102 comments were submitted through this map last year, and we aim to promote the map in an upcoming e-letter to the mailing list (currently 77 people).

Kacy Rohn from the Historic Preservation Office also presented an overview of the new approach to the road histories at the 2022 Montgomery County History Conference in January and at an encore performance in March which was promoted and open to members of the public without a registration fee. These presentations were both well attended and helped raise awareness of the roads and the update to the plan. Audience members had the opportunity to ask questions about the plan update and engage with Planning staff.

## SECTION 9. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The above text contains a summary of Planning staff's current recommendations based on a preliminary review of the existing and nominated roads. Staff will continue discussing and revising recommendations and completing the road descriptions. The following tasks need to be completed before a final working draft is presented to the Planning Board:

- Analyze crash histories along the roads to determine if they are currently unsafe
- Analyze traffic counts to see if a road is too heavily travelled to be added to the program

- Determine if changes need to be made to the program based on the county's Vision Zero policy
- Continue identifying important environmental features along or close to the roads
- Perform a tree canopy analysis to compare canopy coverage along some of the roads over time
- Consider whether revisions to County Code are necessary
- Determine if and how the resource guide should be used
- Identify suitable photos to include in the updated plan
- Format the road descriptions for publication

The results of these efforts and continued community feedback are likely to change some of the recommendations included in this briefing.

Staff intends to bring a working draft of the plan to the Planning Board within the next few months with the revised road descriptions and maps for every existing and nominated road in the program. At that point, Planning Board work sessions will be scheduled to review recommended changes to the master plan and program.

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## ATTACHMENTS

- *Attachment A: Map of Existing Rustic Roads*
- *Attachment B: Map of Nominated Roads and Roads Needing Descriptions*
- *Attachment C1: Preliminary Recommendations Map*
- *Attachment C2: Preliminary Recommendation Matrix*
- *Attachment D: Introductory Chapter*
- *Attachment E: Road Description Examples*
  - *E1 - Example of a Nominated Road: Emory Church Road*
  - *E2 - Example of a Road with No Major Changes: Moore Road*
  - *E3 - Example of a Road with Updated Extents: Hoyles Mill Road*
  - *E4 - Example of a Road Needing Significant Features Approved: Game Preserve Road*
  - *E5 - Example of a Road Where an Existing Significant Feature Is Being Revised: Moxley Road*
  - *E6 - Example of a Road Recommended to Be Reclassified from Rustic to Exceptional Rustic: Tschiffely Mill Road*
  - *E7 - Example of a Road Recommended to be Removed from the Program: Link Road*
- *Attachment F: RRAC Recommendation Letters*
  - *F1 - RRAC Letter to Director Wright with Votes on Nominated (and Some Existing) Roads - 2021-10-12*
  - *F2 - RRAC Letter to Director Wright with Votes on Reclassifying Rustic Roads as Exceptional Rustic - 2021-12-15*