

Road Connections in the Southeast Olney Area

Aerial.jpg
Type: JPG File
Size: 2.18 MB
Dimension: 1650 x 1275
pixels

Emory Church Rd

Batchellors Forest Rd

Olney Manor
Recreational Park

Westminster Dr

Batchellors Forest Rd

- Streams
- Property boundaries
- Roads
- Subject Property



Olney Master Plan – Polinger Property

page 31 Discussion (connection references are highlighted in red)

A septic large-lot development on this property would negatively impact the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road and the open space in the Southeast Quadrant. A clustered development would be the best mechanism to create significant open space and protect the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road. It should be rezoned to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 unites per acre. Access to new houses should be provided from both Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road. A pedestrian and bikeway connection between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road should be provided through the property. All new houses should be clustered near the corner of Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road leaving the western and southern portion of the property as rural open space.

Polinger Property Recommendations

page 31-32

Recommendations:

1. Rezone the Polinger property from RE-2 to RNC on community water and sewer with 0.33 units per acre.
2. Cluster development on the northeastern portion of the property, away from the stream valley to the south, to allow for gravity sewer service to the existing sewer mains which traverse the property near the intersection of Batchellors Forest Road and the Emory Church Road right-of-way, eliminating the need for an off-site sewer main extension along the tributary stream valley originating at the Lockwood property.
3. Preserve the rustic character of Batchellors Forest Road and the existing vistas on this property though careful placement of housing clusters in appropriate locations and other techniques.
4. Provide a pedestrian path between Emory Church Road and Batchellors Forest Road through the property
5. Provide a bike and pedestrian connection from any redevelopment on the Polinger property to the Olney Manor Park
6. Convert some of the existing man-made ponds into naturalized wetland areas where appropriate
7. Convert some of the existing man-made ponds into stormwater management facilities (e.g., upland isolated ponds).
8. Require the applicant to reforest all stream valleys on the property as part of redevelopment. If such reforestation exceeds the minimum standards required under the Forest Conservation Law, encourage the use of forest “banking.”



SITE DATA

SITE AREA:	175.40 ACRES
EXISTING ZONE:	R2C
DEVELOPMENT TYPE:	MPOU OPTIONAL METHOD
BASE DENSITY ALLOWED: (0.88 x 175.4 Ac)	37 LOTS

Pre-Preliminary Discussion at Planning Board

September 27, 2012

Staff did not see a need for a connection. “To briefly conclude what was a long debate, Staff does not support a through-street connection between Batchellors Forest Road and Emory Church Road” Two reasons given: 1. Traffic analyzed during Master Plan Update indicated that additional traffic created by proposed zoning densities would not push traffic to exceed 3000 trips per day needed to keep rustic road designation. 2. Applicant's traffic consultant concluded a connection would invite non-local trips to use this route (mostly in AM peak) which could result in greater than 3000 trips on Batchellors Forest Road, resulting in a loss of rustic road status. (Staff packet, page 13)

Applicant received non-binding advice from the Planning Board regarding its plan. Traffic Engineer at P&P does not believe there needs to be a connection to meet adequate facilities. Majority of Planning Board agreed with staff as there is no goal to achieve by connecting the two roads (Casey Anderson was the exception, Amy Presley favors connections in general but feels it is more important to follow the Master Plan recommendations which does not show the connection on the maps). The Master Plan does not indicate a connection and access indicated in Master Plan can be bike/pedestrian.

Reasons to connect Emory Church Road (ECR) and Batchellors Forest Road (BFR)

Additional way in and out of both community areas (either road blocked with snow, fallen tree, flooding, etc.) is good for residents and emergency vehicles on both roads

Some (many believe most) vehicles from new development will use ECR to 97 potentially reducing additional traffic on BFR (assuming no cut through traffic using the connection or perhaps those using ECR instead of BFR will offset additional cut through traffic on BFR)

Provides a safe way to access southbound Georgia Ave from both roads without going through Olney Manor Park due to fully functioning traffic signal at ECR

ECR homes will have access to fire hydrants. CORRECTION: ECR will have fire hydrants with or without a vehicular or emergency access connection

Planners in general believe more internal connections are better for traffic flow

No study done, but believe a connection would reduce park cut-through traffic due to fully functioning light at ECR. Residents from ECR who have been using the park to access 97 south will stop now that the light at ECR is functioning (thus reducing some of the cut-through). Alternate way to reduce park cut-through traffic is to lobby for light at BFR and Georgia Ave. That would likely increase cut-through traffic on BFR if it is easy to go south at that point and State Highway Administration has never approved lights that close together on a state road (BFR is just over 0.1 mile from Emory Lane and ECR is ~ 0.3 miles from Emory Lane)

Traffic studies done outside of peak park occupancy (April to Oct). Studies only look at "peak hour" trips (peak hour = AM or PM rush hour).

Reasons not to connect ECR to BFR

The vehicular connection is not specified in the Olney Master Plan

Applicant's traffic engineer says increase (~10% of Old Baltimore users) will use the connection as a cut through (AM peak). If an accurate prediction, this jeopardizes Batchellors Forest Road's rustic road designation.

Community just fought a PIF project on Emory Church Road because that plan did not meet the PIF policy criteria, did not conform to the Olney Master Plan, and would have turned Emory Church Road from a 1½ lane road into a full 2 lane road removing many mature trees and destroying the rural nature of road.

Improvements to ECR would dramatically change character of that area. Increased traffic will worsen the quality of the road (crumbling now). A permanent connection will require improvements to ECR. A back up connection just for fire/rescue would not require improvements (BFR would be primary access point - one lane bridge on BFR will need to be widened).

SEROCA does not support a connection. Planning Board gave non-binding advice of no connection between ECR and BFR on 9/27/12.

Pedestrian Safety concerns from those walking on ECR would now have more traffic to compete with. This is also true for those on BFR.

Toll Brothers feels a community without a cut through road feels more secure and quieter

Notes

Road connection or not - frontage improvements will occur on Emory Church Road between western portion of property to Norbrook

Sidewalks will likely be required along Emory Church Rd – in particular shared use paths that are 8-10 feet wide (discussed by Planning Board on 9/27/13) to meet the paths indicated in the Master Plan

Total # of trips from this project is estimated to be 49 trips morning 49 evening peak hour. There are two other developments along Batchellors Forest Road currently underway and when FMS is rebuilt it will be larger. Those projects are not included in the 49 trip counts.

Old Vic Blvd connects Batchellors Forest to 108 at FMS entrance. This was not analyzed in the traffic study for Trotters Glen as it was not complete at the time. Unknown impact on traffic along BFR

Thoughts

Batchellors Forest is rustic road – no southbound access to 97 was done on purpose to prevent it being used as cut through from 108 to 97. In addition, it is very close to Emory Lane light and SHA has never allowed lights that close together on any other state road. Improvements to a rustic road are limited. Analysis at time of Master Plan concluded Batchellors Forest would still meet rustic road designation after all the properties developed. Residents concerned about changes to the road – in particular to the one lane bridge. Other residents are concerned about traffic through Olney Manor Park. Park manager indicated speeding is problem in morning – have speed bumps and have had park police there to ticket speeders. Seems problem are parents who have dropped kids off at one of the three schools on road. He has worked with the schools to address this.

Emory Church Road is not an official rustic road (classified as a secondary or tertiary residential road) but very rural in nature and provides the quiet rural character of that community. Full light at Emory Church Rd and Georgia Ave was prompted by commercial development on west side of 97 (Roots shopping center). Any improvements or sidewalks will dramatically affect the community as large mature trees line the road.

Choices for GOCA

1. Make no recommendation
2. Support a connection (for vehicles)
3. Support a fire/rescue connection only
4. Support no connection (for vehicles)