

**Goshen Road Improvement Project**  
**Questions received during and after the Public Information Meeting of 9/8/09**

1. *Rolling road – will you smoothen out the road?*

The proposed geometric improvements will improve the vertical and horizontal curves.

2. *At some locations, center median will deter making a left turn into Goshen. Will U- turns be allowed at next intersection?*

In order to protect vehicles making a left turn across two or more lanes of traffic, left turns out of most driveways will not be permissible. A U-turn can be safely completed at the next intersection.

3. *How will school buses be handled?*

We have coordinated our design efforts with Montgomery County Public Schools. Currently, school buses do not enter smaller side streets. The proposed improvements will not change this. Special Needs school buses do enter some side streets, but the only side street that will not have a left-turn exit/entrance option is Rock Elm Way. This is not an unusual situation. Special Needs school buses are smaller, can make maneuvers similar to a passenger vehicle, and they can reroute, as necessary.

4. *What are you doing regarding the Black and White Inn?*

What is now formally referred to as the Black & White Inn was not designated as an historic property until 2008. The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) recommended that the existing house be moved back approximately 50 feet east of its current location to preserve the structure and allow the Master Plan-proposed alignment for Goshen Road. We have conducted an Archaeological Investigation to make sure that no features that are of historic significance are impacted by the move.

5. *Snouffer School Road widening – impact to properties*

The limit of work for this project extends to less than 200 feet on Snouffer School Road to tie (connect) to existing configuration of that road. Most of the work will be done within existing slope and utility easements. Retaining walls will also be installed to limit impact to properties along Snouffer School Road. As a result, there will be little or no impact to most of the properties at that location.

6. *Accident increased because of the left turn that is not provided at Centerway Road*

Division of Traffic Engineering and Operations deals with signal related issues. This can be investigated independent of the proposed roadway improvements.

7. *What is the property acquisition process?*

The property acquisition process starts with assessing the right-of-way needs for the project and identifying the different types of acquisition (fee-simple, temporary easement, revertible easement, etc). Once the needs are identified, an independent appraiser determines the fair market value of needed property. The County will make offer and negotiate with the property owners to purchase the property.

8. *When the Safeway was built some years ago, it was stated that there will not be any road improvements needed on Goshen Road.*

The subject development by the developer may have studied impacts of the proposed development on Goshen Road; however, that study is not part of the Goshen Road Improvement project.

9. *Median Width – why is the road and median wider than stated in the Preliminary Planning Phase I meetings before?*

The current design is based on the alignment and typical section selected in the planning phase. The chosen typical section, which was approved by the County Council in 2004, called for a 16-foot wide median that would widen to 24-feet at non-signalized intersections. The bulk of this project corridor consists of non-signalized intersections.

Since 2008, the County Council has adopted a new Context Sensitive Road Design Standards (Road Code). In order to comply with the Council-approved typical section and the requirements of the New Road Code, our proposed design utilizes a uniform 18-foot wide median. The 18-foot median is six feet narrower along the bulk of the project corridor over the Planning Phase recommendation, yet is wide enough to permit a two-stage left turn maneuver. The right of way width remains consistent with the recommendations of the Planning Phase.

The median and the right-of-way are substantially narrower in the vicinity of the bridge over Cabin Branch and Goshen Elm tree so as to minimize impact to existing dwellings and natural features present in that area.

10. *What is proposed to mitigate the noise from the proposed road?*

Noise impact from the proposed road will be studied at Final Design phase. Evaluations will be conducted as per the County's Highway Noise Abatement Policy to identify locations that meet the County's criteria for highway noise mitigation. The funding for highway noise mitigation is separate from any proposed roadway improvement and is governed by the criteria outlined in the Highway Noise Abatement Policy. If highway noise mitigation is warranted,

affected and benefited residents will be notified and the subject location(s) will compete for funding with other locations around the County that qualify for noise mitigation.

*11. Why not use narrow median to minimize impact to property?*

The proposed median width is consistent with the median width (typical section) selected at Facility Planning Phase 1. The proposed width (18 feet) also complies with the County's New Road Code requirements and recommendations from MNCPPC which call for planting of trees along the median at appropriate locations. With a narrower median a safe opening can not be provided for left-turning vehicles. Also, a reduction of the median width would not leave sufficient distance between the travel lanes and the proposed trees.

*12. Vegetation near Framingham drive –please make sure that there will be no vegetation that blocks sight distance at this intersection.*

We will verify availability of adequate sight distance during final design.

*13. Median Break at Framingham Drive – Will the median be wide enough for pedestrian refuge area?*

We will make sure that the medians are wide enough at all intersections to provide refuge area for a two-stage crossing by pedestrians.

*14. Judge Place – My backyard will be impacted.*

*a. When done, will they grade it back to what it was before?*

After construction work is done, the contractor will be required to stabilize the ground and restore the area. Any existing fences will be reinstalled and grass areas will be re-seeded or re-sodded, as necessary.

*b. Will there be any sound barriers to mitigate noise?*

This will be addressed based on a Highway Noise Analysis which will be conducted during Final Design. The funding for highway noise mitigation is separate from the funding for other transportation improvements. If your area qualifies for noise mitigation, it would have to compete for noise mitigation funding with other locations around the County that qualify for highway noise mitigation.

*15. Improving Goshen Road between the limits specified will only add more traffic North of Warfield Avenue. Instead of Widening Goshen Road, build the M-83 which should address the congestion problems.*

The Mid-county Highway Corridor (M-83) Study is currently in early planning phase and no alternative alignments have been selected for that project. The Facility Planning study for Goshen Road did include construction of M-83 and

number of other roads in the general area in its traffic analysis. The traffic modeling for Goshen Road project revealed that even with Master Plan recommended improvement to the area transportation network, the No Build option for Goshen Road will result in failure (congestion and long delays) along the project corridor.

The traffic study for Goshen Road revealed that with the No Build option by 2015, delays on some side roads will increase beyond the model's limits (999.9 seconds of waiting to exit/enter the side road during peak hours). Currently, 10 out of 18 intersections are operating at unacceptable Level of Service (LOS=F). By 2015, 16 intersections will be operating at unacceptable Level of Service and travel time will increase by 20-28%. By 2025, all 18 intersections will operate at unacceptable Level of Service and travel times will increase by 78%.

*16. Currently you are showing no traffic signal at Warfield Road. However, a signal will be needed at this intersection because there is a large number of pedestrians and vehicles using this intersection especially on Sundays.*

Our current studies show that this intersection does not warrant a signal. We will reevaluate the need for a traffic signal once the proposed improvements have been completed.

We will also request our Division of Traffic Operations to investigate the need for a traffic signal based on current pedestrian volumes at this intersection.

*17. The shrubs and trees planted for the Cabin Branch bridge project are not regularly maintained. Will this project address this issue?*

This project will have provision for installing and maintaining trees and shrubs that are maintainable. The division of Highway Services maintains the County's highway related facilities. We will coordinate the maintenance of planted trees and vegetation with them.

*18. Will today's presentation and display be available on the County's website?*

A PDF file of this presentation and display maps will be posted on the County's website.

*19. What will you do to limit right of way impact to properties whose property line is close to the edge of the existing road?*

We will try to minimize impacts to properties as much as possible. The proposed improvements call for planting of street trees along both sides of the road. The trees will offer a screening effect. We will reinstall any existing fences at the conclusion of construction phase.

20. *Proposed improvement renderings do not show enough cars while the existing ones are full of cars*

The proposed widening will alleviate most of the congestion problem and vehicles are expected to be spread out along Goshen Road.

21. *How long will it take to start construction?*

The project currently is not funded for final design, let alone construction. The next step in the process is to request funding for final design, right of way acquisition, utility relocations and construction. If funded, to complete these necessary steps and to start construction of this complex project will take approximately five to six years.

22. *How will the contract be awarded? Will there be any alterations to other neighboring roads to accommodate construction detours?*

The project will be advertised for bids. The construction contract will be awarded based on the County's Procurement requirements.

We will try to limit impact to existing traffic patterns as much as possible. The final design will consist of Traffic Control Plans to address Maintenance of Traffic. No alterations to neighboring roads are expected at this time.

23. *Installing sidewalks will provide more opportunity for intruders who target properties adjacent to the road.*

The purpose of providing sidewalks and hiker-biker paths along this road is to allow other means of travel besides motor vehicles and to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety and mobility along the Goshen Road corridor. Currently, the pedestrian accident incidence along Goshen Road is more than five (5) times the statewide rate.

24. *Why not just do safety improvements?*

Spot improvements alone will not address the capacity problems for this corridor. With spot improvements alone, it was found that most intersections will operate at unacceptable Level of service (LOS F) in the next 10 to 15 years.

25. *How does Goshen Road project stack up in the list of projects that the County undertakes?*

We simply do not know the answer to this question. The Department of Transportation, along with other County agencies, submits its budget request to the County Executive biennially. The County Executive evaluates all the needs in the County and submits a Proposed Budget to the County Council. The next Proposed Budget is expected in January 2010. The Council can and often does modify the Proposed Budget. We will not know how this project stacks up with

other budgetary needs in the County until the budget is approved by the Council in June 2010.

26. *Consider adding fire hydrants along Emory Grove Road.*

We will pass along this request during final design to the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) who owns and maintains the water distribution lines.

27. *Why are you increasing the speed limit? This will increase the rate of accidents.*

The 85th percentile speed on the existing Goshen Road, during non-rush hours, is nearly 50 mph. The proposed speed limit is consistent with the proposed improvements, the classification of the road (a major divided highway), and the requirements of the County's Road Code. The proposed improvements such as curb and gutter, landscaped median, and grass buffers between the roadway and sidewalk will increase safety along Goshen Road. Also note that posting an arbitrary and artificially low speed limit will not reduce travel speeds.

28. *Which houses will be taken by the project?*

This project will not take any properties in whole. No dwelling structures are impacted save for the Black and White Inn, which will be relocated.

29. *Will there be another public meeting?*

There will be a public hearing at the end of final design. However, comments from the community are welcome. Comments can be sent via the comment cards provided or directly by email.

30. *Can you post the questions and answers on your website?*

Questions and answers discussed at this meeting will be posted on our website.

**Comments Received via Comment Cards**

1. *Very good. Needs to happen sooner. Leave room for 6 lanes in the future. Increase speed limit to 45mph.*

The Facility Planning Phase I study investigated and concluded that widening Goshen Road to six lanes will not be necessary in the near future given the projected traffic volumes. The speed limit is based on the criteria outlined in the County's New Road Code.

2. *Framingham and Goshen Road on the hill - remove vegetation; it is a safety issue when crossing Goshen Road on Framingham or at Sandy Lake, can not see oncoming traffic.*

*Possibly traffic light on Framingham and Goshen intersection. I support the widening and can not wait until it is done.*

The vertical profile at this location will be modified to address the sight distance issue. Throughout the project, vegetation in the median will be limited in size and height such that sight distance is not compromised. We will also make sure that the median is wide enough at all intersections to provide a refuge area for pedestrians.

- 3. This is the beginning of the end of our community. We will be surrounded by a network of highways - Goshen Road, Route 124 and Brink Road and Wightman Roads. This monster of a road will destroy our historical sites.*

The proposed improvements for Goshen Road are called for in the County's Master Plan and are badly needed due to the limited capacity and inadequate safety of this road. Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) completed a Facility Planning Phase 1 study to investigate the type and extent of improvements needed along this road. MCDOT will also take every measure to avoid and minimize any impacts to historic and environmental sites. There are no immediate plans for improvements to other roads in this area other than Midcounty Highway and certain portions of Snouffer School Road. All such improvements will follow the County's Master Plan and will go through the necessary planning and design phase.

- 4. I am very supportive of the project and believe the current design will address all of the existing issues associated with the 3.3 mile stretch of Goshen Road. I wish my neighbors attending last night were equally supportive. These improvements are needed now and a six year wait seems excessive.*

Goshen Road is one of several Transportation projects in the County's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that must compete for funding with other budgetary needs in the County. If funded, the final design, property acquisition, and utility relocation for this large and complex project will take five to six years to complete before we can commence construction.

- 5. The State recently authorized the widening of I-270 up to Frederick; this will cause increased need for traffic to move through MV and North/South streets for a few years only. Once I-270 up to Frederick opens, I believe the need for traffic to filter through these roads will not warrant the expense invested in widening them. 40 mph is a 'Europhoric' standard to impose 5 to 10 years out when all the other mph standards are 35 in these communities. I agree that Goshen Road needs improvement as for; drainage, pedestrian safety, utility lights, but the standards you speak of bringing 100' wide traffic churning through MV needs further evaluation.*

The proposed improvements for Goshen Road are based on the findings of a Facility Planning Phase I study that analyzed the traffic volumes in the

transportation network in this area as well as the rate of accidents along Goshen Road. The model used in the traffic study considered Master Plan recommended capacity (number of lanes) for all roads in this area and considered construction of M-83. With the No Build option, the Goshen Road corridor would still lack adequate capacity and would fail (long delays and congestion).

The proposed design speed is consistent with the County's New Road Code, which establishes the posted speed limits for all classes of roadways in the County.

### **Comments received via email/Letters**

1. *This project will cause traffic to come through our community. When it is all done, there will be more accidents and more delays. A scaled-down project would meet the objectives. A safe two-lane road with a side-walk but without a hiker/biker trail is preferred. Better road safety can be achieved by lower speed limits.*

The proposed improvements for Goshen Road are consistent with the Master Plan recommendations and are based on the findings of the Facility Planning Phase I study that analyzed the traffic volumes and accident incidence along Goshen Road.

The traffic study for Goshen Road revealed that with the No Build option by 2015 delays on some side roads will increase beyond the model's limits (999.9 seconds of waiting to exit/enter the side road during peak hours). Currently, 10 out of 18 intersections are operating at unacceptable Level of Service (LOS=F). By 2015, 16 intersections will be operating at unacceptable Level of Service and travel time will increase by 20-28%. By 2025, all 18 intersections will operate at unacceptable Level of Service and travel times will increase by 78%.

A "scaled down" project (a two-lane road with only a sidewalk), will not address the severe capacity problems along this corridor. Such a road would not meet the Master Plan recommendations or the County's Road Code standards for a major divided highway.

2. *How does DOT factor in citizen sentiment in its Facility Planning Phase 2?*

Beginning with the Phase I Facility Planning, Montgomery County Department of Transportation strives to engage the community in the development of concepts and alternatives for transportation projects through mail-ins, public information meetings, web correspondence and interpersonal communications. Comments obtained through these means of communication are incorporated as they best fit the needs and purpose of the project. By the end of Facility Planning Phase I, a viable alternative was selected, analyzed and approved by the County Executive and the County Council to proceed to Preliminary Design (Facility Planning Phase II). The purpose of Facility planning phase II is to develop a preliminary design for the proposed improvements and prepare an initial cost estimates and construction alternatives. Here again, public information meetings are conducted to present the progress of the project to the public and to obtain input on the

proposed design, which will be incorporated into the final design as they best fit the needs and purpose of the project.

3. *How is the Goshen Road Widening project aligned with the 2030 Vision, the Gaithersburg East Master Plan, and the M-83 decision?*

The 1985 Gaithersburg Master plan calls for a four or six lane Highway for Goshen Road. All Transportation improvements in the County are implemented based on guidelines of the Master Plan and studies conducted in various phases to make sure these improvements meet the needs and intended objectives. The Facility Planning Phase 1 of this project conducted studies for the year 2025. The traffic studies conducted for this project assumed a number of area roadways were improved to their ultimate Master Plan-recommended capacity and Midcounty Highway (M-83) were also constructed as called for in the Master Plan.

4. *There are at least 5 public bus stops along Goshen Road. How will this be handled? There are no safe places for people to cross going North from Center Way to reach these bus stops.*

Division of Transportation Engineering has coordinated with the Division of Transit Services, which is responsible for Ride-On service along Goshen Road, regarding maintenance of bus service during and after construction of the proposed improvements. Pedestrians will be required to cross Goshen road at signalized intersections or where safely marked mid-block crossings exist. Detailed information on the effects of this project on bus service will be available at Final Design.

5. *There are no traffic lights proposed at Framingham Drive, Trams Way or Stewartown Road.*

Our current studies show that the traffic volumes at these intersections do not warrant a traffic signal. We can reevaluate the need for a traffic signal at these locations once the proposed improvements are completed.

6. *The plantings done from Centerway to Framingham are not currently maintained; weeds and trash are making this section of Goshen look very disgraceful.*

We will coordinate with the County's maintenance forces (Division of Highway Services) to take necessary steps to address your request.

7. *Traffic lights are not aligned with pavement markings at Goshen Road and Midcounty highway.*

We will pass along this information to the Division of Traffic Operations to investigate your concern.

We will also ensure the signing and marking for the proposed improvements are implemented properly so the lane markings are aligned with overhead traffic signals.

8. *Overall we were impressed by the planning put into the improvements on Goshen Rd. Pointing out that most of the intersections were at capacity or soon would be is a convincing reason for the improvements. In downtown Gaithersburg the traffic in the evening backs up to Rt. 355 from the stop light at Diamond Ave. Encouraging more traffic hardly seems desirable. While some may claim that the traffic will join Goshen Rd at other intersections, that is probably true and is part of the even larger problem at the other end of Goshen Rd. The three way stop at Goshen and Brink Roads is already well beyond capacity and is in no way capable of handling any increase in traffic. It is inconceivable that this “improvement” will take place with no apparent planning as to the enormous problems that it will precipitate beyond its terminus at Warfield Rd. For example, in the morning I have frequently seen southbound traffic on Brink Rd lined up from the 3 way stop at Goshen and Brink all the way to Rt. 124, a distance of over one mile. In fact cars on 124 frequently find it difficult to turn right on to Brink in the morning because traffic is backed through the intersection.*

*Unless you can assure me and many other concerned citizens in the Goshen area and beyond that the next stage of road improvements following immediately upon the completion of Goshen Rd will include the extension of Goshen Rd into Brink Rd, bypassing the “dead man’s curve”, with subsequent improvements all the way to Rt 124, we will remain opposed to the Goshen widening as a step backward in traffic control.*

In addition to capacity, there are a number of other issues, such as substandard geometric design, safety, inadequate drainage, and lack of facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, which this project would address.

The southern terminus of the project is within the City of Gaithersburg limits. We have coordinated the development of the project from the planning phase to the current Preliminary Design phase with the City. Improvements to roadways within the City limits would need to be implemented by the City of Gaithersburg and/or the Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) who owns and maintains MD 355.

While the northern terminus of our Goshen Road improvement project is at Warfield Road, the bulk of the traffic currently “exits” at Centerway Road or Wightman/Snuffer School Road. The County’s Master Plan calls for improvements to Snuffer School Road and Wightman Road (east and west of Goshen Road, respectively). A developer is currently working on plans to widen Snuffer School Road from Centerway Road to Goshen Road. And if funded, Montgomery County Department of Transportation will improve Snuffer School Road from Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Centerway Road. Upon the conclusion of the Facility Planning study for Midcounty Highway (M-83), we’ll have a better

grasp of the exact location and manner of other future needed roadway improvements in this general area.

9. *I received notice about the Goshen Road South Improvements a few weeks ago. I was wondering why this has come up again as back in 2004 or 5 a study was done and had hearings and a plan was selected. Then nothing happened. If the planning and study was done already, why is this being repeated again? Please refer to Facility Planning-transportation No. 509377, milestones. I believe this was started back in 2003. Please clarify.*

While the next project development phase, Phase II (also referred to as Preliminary Design) was well underway and was nearly completed, the County Council proposed significant revisions to the County's Road Code (standards by which roads are designed) in 2007. Therefore, we redeveloped the Preliminary Design of the project. The results of this most recent Preliminary Design were presented to the public on 9/8/2009.

10. *My property borders Goshen Road and will be affected by the Goshen Road project. It looks like we will lose some of our backyard to the project. Will the homeowners losing land be compensated in any way?*

The current right of way needs for Goshen Road project are based on preliminary (35%) design. Compensation will be made for all needed property acquisition based on the fair market value and the type of acquisition. Generally, the type of right of way needed to construct the proposed improvements can be summarized as follows:

**Fee-simple:** Fee-simple is a permanent acquisition of right-of-way that is needed to build some portion of the proposed improvements. The County will pay fair and just compensation for acquiring a piece of your property.

**Perpetual Easement:** Perpetual easement is acquired to build storm collection inlets, drain pipes and/or drainage channels. Once the improvements are completed, the ground is stabilized and the fee-simple ownership of this piece of land remains with the property owner. The easement provides the County with the access right to maintain the storm drain structures or channels in the future, should that become necessary. The County will pay fair and just compensation for this right, as well.

**Revertible Easement:** Revertible slope easement is needed to build slopes that will support the proposed road. As in the case of perpetual easements, once the slopes are built, the ground is stabilized and the Fee-simple ownership remains the property owner's. The County will pay fair and just compensation for this right, as well.

Temporary Construction Easement: Temporary Construction Easements are needed for the duration of the construction of the project for equipment access. Upon completion of the project, the ground will be stabilized and the temporary construction easement is terminated. The County will pay fair and just compensation for such right.

Please note that the current right-of-way need estimates are based on the preliminary (35%) design, and these needs may have slight decreases or increases based on final (100%) design.

*11. There should absolutely be a break in the median at Rock Elm Way allowing for left turns in and out of the community. School buses stop on Goshen at Rock Elm Way and the traffic on the opposite side of the median will not stop, putting our children in danger. In addition, some buses actually have to come on to our street which this plan will make difficult by requiring them to make U-turns or change routes. Without the median break at Rock Elm way, dangerous u-turns at signaled intersection and other median breaks will be required. Not just for the residents, but for the post office, trash pickup, emergency services, etc. We do not support the widening of the median.*

*We do not support the construction of the additional lanes. The additional lanes will just encourage more traffic. Efforts should instead be directed to route traffic to roads already built to handle the volume, such as Montgomery Village Avenue and Shady Grove Road.*

Goshen Road (M-25) is designated as a divided Major Highway in the 1985 Gaithersburg Transportation Master Plan. The Master Plan calls for a four or six lane highway with a divided median to address expected growth in traffic. Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MC DOT) completed the Facility Planning Phase I study for Goshen Road in 2004-2005. This planning study evaluated various alternatives to address the traffic capacity and pedestrian and vehicular safety issues along Goshen Road. After consideration of various alternatives, including the No Build option, based on the community input, a typical section was chosen to address all the safety and capacity concerns while minimizing impact to properties and natural resources.

The chosen alternative (Alternative 8) proposed a hiker/biker path on the west side, four travel lanes, a median, a sidewalk on the east side and grass (buffer) strips between the sidewalk and the curb and between the hiker/biker path and the curb. This typical section was set within a minimum 100 feet right of way. However, in the vicinity of Rock Elm Way, the typical section had to be modified into a four lane divided highway with a 4-foot median and no buffer strips.

The alternative chosen at Facility Planning Phase 1 was to have a 16-foot wide median which would widen to 24 feet along non-signalized intersections (which make up the bulk of the project corridor) so as to provide adequate storage width to accommodate a two-staged vehicular crossing (left turn). The

Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (MNCPPC) concurred with the chosen alternative and the County Council approved the alternative in July 2004.

After we began the Preliminary Design of the project, the County's Road Code, standards that govern design of roadways, was revised. The proposed improvements for Goshen Road are consistent with both the chosen Facility Planning alternative and the new Road Code. The typical section of the road utilizes a consistent 18-foot wide median (a reduction of six feet along the majority of the project corridor over the original Facility Planning recommendation of 24-foot median) and is set within a minimum 103-foot wide right-of-way. The 18-foot wide median is necessary to provide the left-turn lanes. If the 18-foot wide median were eliminated, left-turn lanes could not be provided for the side streets.

Rock Elm Way is the only side street along this project where a median break has not been provided. There are a number of reasons for the lack of a median break at this location:

- In order to provide a median break, the median has to be of adequate width to allow a vehicle to complete the turn maneuver in two stages.
- Also a left-turn lane would need to be provided for vehicles turning left into Rock Elm Way from the southbound lanes of Goshen Road.
- At this location, because of the proximity of homes along the west side of Goshen Road and the presence of the Goshen Elm tree on the east side, there is not enough space to provide a wide enough median on Goshen Road.
- In order to minimize impacts to the Goshen Elm, which has been placed on protected Park property, and in order to maintain the necessary road geometry on its approach to the bridge across Cabin Branch, the right-of-way along this stretch of Goshen Road has been reduced to 90 feet. The grass buffer strip between the proposed sidewalk and the curb and between the proposed hiker/biker and the curb have been eliminated (the sidewalk and the H/B path abut the curb), and the median is only four (4) feet wide.
- The 4-foot median is not wide enough to provide a protected left turn lane.

Given the above constraints, it is not feasible to provide a wide median at this location. And therefore, no opening is provided in the median.

The lack of a median break is not unusual. In fact, it is common on Major Divided Highways or arterials (e.g. Georgia Avenue). Access can be gained by completion of a U-turn at the next intersection. School buses currently do not enter Rock Elm Way and other small side streets along Goshen Road. And while Special Needs school buses do enter some side roads, those vehicles are

smaller and can gain access to Rock Elm Way like regular passenger cars by turning at the next intersection. The design of this project has been coordinated with Montgomery County Public Schools. They have confirmed that the lack of a future median break at Rock Elm Way does not pose a problem for their routes or access to this community. The lack of a median break also does not pose a problem for other non-resident traffic; Mail delivery, trash trucks, and emergency vehicles will reroute as necessary to safely access this community like others around the County where a median break is not available.

12. *In general, I think that the project is too large and expensive for our struggling county budget. The intersection of Lochaven and Goshen Road has awful storm water drainage and often water floods onto the northbound lane of Goshen. I hope that the project could be extended to include this fix. Please include Fire Hydrants as one of the improvements throughout Goshen road, all the way up to Lochaven. Remove tree lined median strip between opposing directions of traffic.*

We will investigate the drainage problems at the intersection of Lochaven Drive and Goshen Road as a Drainage Assistance Request.

The proposed median is as per the design alternative chosen at Facility Planning Phase 1, which was concurred by MNCPPC and approved by the County Council. It is also consistent with the design standards of the County's New Road Code. The 18-foot wide median is necessary to provide the left-turn lanes. If the 18-foot wide median were eliminated, left-turn lanes could not be provided for the side streets.

13. *I see no reason to make Goshen Road into a dual lane road. There are many other roads in the county that could use the attention that Goshen Road is receiving. I see that there are two storm water management systems planned by the creek between Centerway and Rock Elm Road. We have a problem now with mosquitoes, adding more standing water is only going to make this situation worse; can we come up with another plan other than storm water ponds?*

Goshen Road (M-25) is designated as a divided Major Highway in the 1985 Gaithersburg Transportation Master Plan. The Master Plan calls for a four or six lane highway with a divided median to address expected growth in traffic. Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MC DOT) completed the Facility Planning Phase I study for Goshen Road in 2004-2005. This planning study evaluated various alternatives to address the traffic capacity and pedestrian and vehicular safety issues along Goshen Road. After consideration of various alternatives, including the No Build option, based on the community input, a typical section was chosen to address all the safety and capacity concerns while minimizing impact to properties and natural resources.

The traffic study for Goshen Road revealed that with the No Build option by 2015 delays on some side roads will increase beyond the model's limits (999.9 seconds of waiting to exit/enter the side road during peak hours). Currently, 10 out of 18 intersections are operating at unacceptable Level of Service (LOS=F). By 2015, 16 intersections will be operating at unacceptable Level of Service and travel time will increase by 20-28%. By 2025, all 18 intersections will operate at unacceptable Level of Service and travel times will increase by 78%.

The newly adopted Road Code (Context Sensitive Road Design Standards) calls for Vegetated Integrated Management Practices (VIMP) for the collection and treatment of storm runoff. These facilities will not be "ponds" that collect and store runoff. We have made every effort to incorporate VIMPs, to the extent possible, in the design of Goshen Road. Despite our generous use of VIMPs, in order to meet County and State requirements for storm water management (SWM), we must provide other SWM facilities along the project corridor. The exact type and location of such facilities will be developed at final design stage.

- 14. I am in favor of widening Goshen Road as far north as the intersection with East Village Ave. I am opposed to widening at the intersection with Warfield Road, if that would mean the destruction of a recognized historic property, formerly known as the Black and White Inn. The traffic volume is not as great at that intersection. Installing a traffic light should improve traffic flow in that area without sacrificing a piece of Goshen history.*

Based on the findings of the traffic study conducted during Facility Planning Phase 1 in 2004, the intersection of Warfield Road-Goshen Road already fails (Level of Service 'F'). A traffic signal warrant study revealed that the intersection does not meet the warrants for a traffic signal. We have requested our Division of Traffic Operations investigate the need for a traffic signal at this intersection based on current pedestrian activity.

The proposed widening beyond East Village Avenue is needed to accommodate the projected traffic demand in the area. By 2015, 16 intersections along Goshen Road will be operating at unacceptable Level of Service and travel time will increase by 20-28%. By 2025, all 18 intersections will operate at unacceptable Level of Service and travel times will increase by 78%.

The proposed road improvement will not destroy the Black and White Inn. The Black and White Inn was not designated as an historic property until 2008. The Historic Preservation Commission of the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) recommended that the existing house be moved approximately 50 feet east of its current location to avoid impact from the road project. We have conducted an archaeological investigation to ensure no features that are of historic significance are impacted by the move.

- 15. The proposed improvements with 18 feet median, 4 travel lanes, 5 feet on road bicycle lanes sidewalks separated from the travel lanes by 5ft grass strips are excessive foot print*

*for Goshen Road. The reasonable more environmentally friendly footprint as previously proposed by distinguished Montgomery Village resident Marty Cadle and agreed upon by Village residents would be within a 91ft ROW with a minimal median, 4 traffic lanes, 1 hiker-biker lane and 1 sidewalk. The 91ft ROW would also protect the famous Goshen Elm. Montgomery Village Foundation president Bob Hydorn expressed the frustration of Village residents with the new plan in the latest issue of the Village News (9/11/09).*

In the Facility Planning Phase I stage, several alternatives were identified, analyzed and presented for public review and comment, including the No Build option. Based on the capacity and safety needs of the project and input from the community, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC), and other stakeholders, an alternative that addresses all the needs of the project and that causes minimal impact to the environment, property owners and users was selected. The selected alternative, Alternative 8, consists of four travel lanes, on-road bicycle lanes, landscaped median, grass buffers and five-foot wide sidewalk on the east side and eight-foot wide hiker-biker path on the west side. Alternative 8, which was approved by County Council in 2004, was set within a minimum 100-foot wide right of way.

In 2008 the County revised its Road Code. The Road Code specifies road design standards. The improvements proposed in Facility Planning Phase II (Preliminary Design) are based on Alternative 8, and are consistent with the requirements of the New Road Code. Our proposed design is set within a minimum right of way width of 103 feet.

16. *We oppose the county's improvement plan of Goshen Road South because it will not improve the quality of life for the residents of Montgomery Village North area. The county's improvement will transform Goshen Road into a major four (4) lane highway. It will increase the traffic density, the vehicular noise level and vehicle and pedestrian accident rates. The section of road between Wightman and Woodfield Roads will also adversely impact wildlife in the area. An environmental impact study should disclose that deer who once habitated on land which was developed for the Safeway Shopping Center at Goshen Road now congregate in residents' yards. Widening of Goshen Road south will further exacerbate the problem. Was there an environmental impact report done for residents to view?*

The 1985 Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan calls for improving Goshen Road to a four- or six-lane roadway. The Transportation Facility Planning Phase I study for this road, conducted in 2004/2005, investigated the capacity and pedestrian and vehicular safety of Goshen Road with existing and projected traffic. The proposed improvements are badly needed to address the existing and projected high volumes along Goshen Road as well as the high accident incidence along this road. The proposed improvements will also address the deficient drainage system and culverts.

An environmental site assessment was conducted during Facility Planning Phase I. The assessment found that according to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), there are no federally and state listed rare, threatened or endangered species within the project area. In implementing the proposed improvements, Montgomery County DOT will take every measure to ensure that any impacts to existing forest and vegetation cover are limited to a minimum and all impacts are mitigated.