

The Saunders Point Citizen

Newsletter of the Saunders Point Citizens Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 275, Mayo, MD. 21106

May 1, 2009

Carvel Lane: An Important Exchange

Anyone who drives through the pillars at the entrance to Saunders Point is immediately presented with the visual impact of the median that runs virtually the entire length of Carvel Lane. This week, you can see the newly installed Keep Right sign leaning since it was pushed over by a vehicle shortly after being installed by the County. In years past, I would sit on the top of one of the pillars waiting for a car to come down the road and could see a long stretch of grass, with shrubbery and trees. This greenery stretched down past an old barn and out-buildings as a shaded driveway to the Manor House that still sets along the waterfront at 4195 Carvel Lane. That is all long gone today.

Since then, the Community's roads have been turned over to the County. After more than a decade waiting, the County has begun to pave and improve our roads. The median no longer belongs to the Community and unfortunately, it has become overflow parking. In fact, it has been so rutted by parking and drive-overs that all of the topsoil long ago washed away and it is difficult to even get weeds to grow on the median. Residents, visitors and commercial vehicles began using the median as a crossover and shortcut. In fact, be very careful if you walk along Carvel Lane to watch for speeding vehicles and vehicles traveling along Carvel Lane in the wrong direction. Last year shortly after I was elected President, the County showed up one day and inexplicably paved a portion of the median to make a nice parking pad at Ritchie Road. This was really my first introduction to many newer residents who contacted me to complain angrily that the median had been paved, that it was unsightly in appearance, that it was unsafe the way traffic crossed the median and drove against traffic and parking.

The median is unsightly. In its present condition, nothing will grow on it. After the parking washed all of the topsoil away residents found a way to get it filled with gravel and subsequently paved for parking. Traffic drives too fast along Carvel Lane. Please remember they are children waiting for school buses out there in the morning. They aren't mine, but I am concerned for their safety. Traffic does not obey lane direction on Carvel Lane and you will frequently encounter people driving the wrong way because it is easier for them.

There are two prevailing opinions in Saunders Point on the median. The majority opinion appears to be that the median is unsightly, unsafe and that something should be done to improve the appearance and safety along Carvel Lane. The second minority opinion appears to be that the median looks is fine the

way it is, or could be improved by paving the whole thing and that any improvement efforts to prevent parking and attempt to install some topsoil and plantings is an effort by the Association to single out certain individuals in a biased and unfair manner.

Last year, shortly after the median was inexplicably paved your Board requested that the County remove the pavement. The pavement was placed improperly without any request from the Association or the require permits. At that time, the County advised us and we reported at the November General Membership Meeting that the pavement would be removed when the roads were paved in this Spring. Your Board, with the County's approval, seeks to restore at least some of the median's greenery and improve its appearance. The County will place new topsoil on the median and we hope to work with residents to do some planting and improve the general appearance of the median.

This has been the subject of numerous e-mail exchanges with residents. I am including the most recent e-mail exchange between Mr. Bob Doyle, who lives on Carvel, and myself. This subject is certain to come up at our May General Membership Meeting on Thursday, May 14, 2009, at 7:30PM. Here is the exchange:

My name is Bob Doyle, and my wife Dixie Doyle and I own 4226 Carvel Lane, at the corner of Carvel and Wakefield. We bought our house in October 2005, and we currently are weekend and summer residents, but we will retire to Saunders Point within a year or two. I am writing to you regarding the median on Carvel Lane at and near the intersection of Carvel Lane, Ritchie Road and Wakefield.

I learned recently from my neighbors that the paved portion of the median there is scheduled to be removed and replaced with either gravel, or with dirt (I heard conflicting stories on this) by the County. Over the past two or three weekends, we have seen painted markings on the paved median that I suppose represents the area to be removed.

When we bought our house in Saunders Point in October 2005, the median near the intersection of Carvel and Ritchie in front of my house and my next door neighbor's house was basically loose gravel which dislodged easily and frequently, and the area became very muddy when it rained. Through the effort of someone (perhaps the SPCA officers at that time -- I don't know), this median area was filled in with blacktop or asphalt. This eliminated the problems of the loose gravel and the mud, and also looked much better. This job was done by the County as far as I remember, but I don't remember exactly when this was done.

For this reason, I am surprised about this possible removal of the median. Why is this being considered? I can tell you that the Saunders Point owners who own homes near this median and are directly affected by this median have no complaints about this paved median and are quite happy about the job. Have there been complaints about this median? I understand that persons occasionally park there (such as service vehicles on service calls or extra parking if someone has house guests). But parking problems are frequent in Saunders Point because of our narrow streets and short driveways. (For example, this past Sunday I was driving some guests around the neighborhood and because of several cars parked in the street at the corner of Stuart Rd and Kings Road it was very difficult to maneuver around the cars.) But I don't think that occasional parking problems warrant removal of the paved median at Carvel, Ritchie and Wakefield. I am not even sure if median parking or obstructive on-street parking (like what I saw at the corner of Kings Road and Stuart Rd Sunday) is illegal given the narrow roads in Saunders Point.

I would appreciate it if you, as President of the SPCA, would ask the County to not proceed with this project so that we will not return to the unsatisfactory conditions that were present before this portion of the median was very effectively paved. I cannot imagine that anyone would want to return that part of the median to that condition (of loose gravel and/or dirt). Robert and Dixie Doyle.

My Reply:

Thank you for your input on the median along Carvel Lane.

The Board has received various complaints about the appearance of the median, safety related to the practices of people driving along and across the median, the general appearance of the median and parking on the median over the last few years. In addition, the County paved a substantial section of the median last year, which residents now also use for parking. There was a storm of complaints from residents about this pavement being installed. As I reported in the November General Membership Meeting, the Association requested that the pavement installed on the median be removed because it creates safety issues and is used for parking. The County agreed with the Association. Officials from AACO DPW (Main Office) were puzzled as to why this portion of the median had even been paved. The Association was advised by DPW last year in writing that the pavement on the median would be removed when the roads were paved this Spring. All of this was reported at November's meeting. When the median was paved inexplicably by the County last year no one came to the Association or any residents to ask if we wanted the median paved.

The pavement in the median at Carvel and Ritchie Road is a safety problem. It creates a hazard. It was inappropriately installed without the proper permits and without any interaction with the Association or the Community. As I am sure you are aware, creating additional impervious surfaces within the Critical Area of the Chesapeake Bay without proper permits and remediation is a violation of several County, State and Federal Codes. When the pavement is removed, it will be replaced with topsoil and grass.

After the pavement is removed, the Association looks forward to improving the appearance and safety along the median. As we pursue this, we will work with all residents. This is the entrance to the Community and I think we can do better. If the median is not used as a parking lot and roadway, we will have an opportunity to grow grass and add some pleasant plantings along the median. We have already had a generous offer from two of our residents to donate plants for this area for beautification.

You can contact Mr. Beau Marshall with the Southern District Roads at AACO DPW at (410) 222-1933.

Thanks,

Patrick Schmitt

Meeting:

May General Membership Meeting!
Thursday, May 14, 2009 at 7:30 PM at the MCA Hall
(Opposite Mayo Elementary School)

A representative of the County DPW will attend to discuss the County's on-going Drainage Project and answer questions about the next phase.

Warning – Indecent Exposure Incident:

The Association has been advised of a recent indecent exposure incident in the Neighborhood. Several days ago, two teenage girls were walking around Saunders Point, when a car stopped near them. The male driver opened the door and proceeded to expose himself. The girls were, of course, very upset by the incident. A parent immediately called the Anne Arundel County Police, but apparently the police said that they could do nothing without a license plate ID. We have no information on a description of the car or the driver. We want everyone to be vigilant. We thought that the residents of Saunders Point, particularly those with young children, would want to be aware of what has happened. If there is any new information, we will let you know. Please talk to your children about the importance of being careful and protecting their persons. We live in a safe community, but the outside world is very close.

Mosquito Control:

The Association has submitted an application to the MD Department of Agriculture to participate in the 2009 Mosquito Control Program. Saunders Point has been accepted and the Community will be monitored for mosquito infestation and conditions for mosquito breeding. We will be advised, in advance, when spraying will be and we will advise residents.

Lawn Care Services:

Brian Consoli, of 4218 Kings Road, is offering lawn care services this year. Brian, is working his way through college doing lawn care and would like to get the word out to anyone who might need lawn mowing & trimming this year. He can be reached at 443-758-0244

Mayo Civic Association Annual Garage Sale and Flea Market:

The Mayo Civic Association, Inc. (MCA) is now accepting donations for its annual Spring Garage Sale at 1175 Mayo Road (Route 214) in Mayo, Maryland to be held on Friday, June 5 and Saturday, June 6, 2009. The sale and flea market will also include a Bake Sale, which will feature home-baked goods and freshly made preserves. For more information, to make a donation or to reserve a vendor table, please call 410-224-2034 or 410-798-0937.