



## GALLATIN COUNTY

### MEMO

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**To:** Amsterdam/Churchill Residents  
**From:** Warren Vaughan, Planning Department   
**Date:** July 30, 2007  
**Re:** Community Meeting Regarding Transportation Issues

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Attached are the meeting notes from the July 26 Churchill/Amsterdam Neighborhood Planning meeting regarding transportation issues. There was a lot of information presented and a lot of concerns raised, and I've attempted to boil it down to the main points. I have not typed up the notes verbatim from the meeting, but have listed a series of concerns the group identified (all of which seem to fall under the broad heading of "general lack of planning in the area") and then typed up the main ideas discussed by George Durkin (County Road) and Rob Buckvich (MDT).

As discussed at the beginning of the meeting, it's important to remember that these first meetings are not about making decisions. They are designed to begin a community conversation and educate all of us about concerns, basic information, and possible directions for us to go later. We will have three more meetings over the next three months, all from 7:30 – 9:00 pm on the last Thursday of the month at the Amsterdam Rural Fire Department. The broad public involvement period will not begin until late fall, when many of the large landowners are available. Remember: a community plan is not just a document; it's also a process, and last Thursday's meeting was the very first step in that process.

Thanks to everyone who came to the meeting, and thanks to the Fire Department for agreeing to be our hosts. Again, we've got the second of our four educational meetings on Thursday, August 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM at the Amsterdam Rural Fire Department. The topic will be fire and emergency services. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 582-3130 or email at [Warren.Vaughan@gallatin.mt.gov](mailto:Warren.Vaughan@gallatin.mt.gov).

## **Notes from the July 26<sup>th</sup> Amsterdam/Churchill Neighborhood Planning Meeting re: Transportation Issues:**

### **Concerns**

- The overall lack of planning in the area
- Speed control in town
- The Churchill/Manhattan road connection (and intersection issues)
- Traffic impacts from Amsterdam Village
- Lack of a county engineer to review and evaluate traffic studies
- The possibility of a four-way stop at Churchill and Amsterdam roads
- Possibly connecting Churchill and Cameron Bridge Road
- The lack of a school zone in front of Manhattan Christian
  - Better traffic controls in front of the school?
- Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) does not react to projects quickly and is on their own timetable for improvements
- MDT views Churchill Road as a highway; residents see it as main street of their town
- Coles corner
- Need to get large landowners here

### **Information Needed**

- Traffic analysis and road counts on State and County roads in the area;
- Information on how the warrant analysis system works as MDT reviews future impacts on their roads and intersections

### **Notes**

#### George Durkin:

- The County road dept. is mostly in charge of maintenance, and only deals with County roads (as opposed to State highways, interior subdivision roads, or private roads);
- The County road dept has very little funds for anything beyond maintenance, so the County requires developers to improve both interior subdivision roads and County roads that they impact.
- There are no new roads planned to be built in the Churchill area at this time.
- The County will occasionally participate in building roads, but only when funding options allow them (for example, Cameron Bridge Road).
- There are basic standards regarding ingress and egress for new development: a subdivision with up to five lots is only required to have one access in and out; six or more lots are required to have at least two access points. The County attempts to balance requiring an appropriate number of access points with an attempt to limit new access points onto County roads for safety reasons.

- All roads accessing and within a development must meet County standards. The County does not take over maintenance of interior subdivision roads; Home-owners Associations are responsible for maintenance.
- Intersections are analyzed using Level of Service (LOS) indicators. LOS indicators assign a given intersection with a grade (A through E) based on intersection conditions, such as how long a car has to wait to turn one way or the other

### Rob Bukvich

- MDT is responsible for maintaining and building State roads. If a developer is directly accessing a State roads, they must get an approach permit. With an approach permit, MDT can require certain conditions to be met, such as improvements. If a subdivision impacts a State road farther down the road but does not directly access it, MDT cannot require improvements.
- Occasionally, State roads have been part of improvement districts, such as S. 19<sup>th</sup>.
- The final conditions improvements to Churchill Road for Amsterdam Village have not yet been finalized as MDT is still analyzing their permit and traffic study. It is likely that new turn lanes will be required. It will be difficult to require improvements for Amsterdam Road.
- Amsterdam Village has voluntarily agreed to pay \$300 per lot to MDT for potential State road improvements.
- No light is proposed within the Churchill area.
- With the Amsterdam Village project, the intersection of Amsterdam Road/Churchill Road will be aligned.
- It would be both appropriate and desired if a community planning group designated where they through new road connections should go. If this happens, developers would be required to build those roads as part of their development and road connections would be assured.
- Road improvements on State roads are required when they are warranted. Warrants are based on various Level of Service criteria.
- There are generally two types of improvements one on State roads: planned improvements (such as the widening of Jackrabbit Lane), and spot improvements based on site-specific studies or specifics (such as studying whether or not a school needs a crosswalk).
- There is a lot of analysis available for Churchill Road from MDT and Rob can get it to Warren and the group.
- A stop sign on Churchill is not recommended by MDT because MDT views Churchill as a road for moving traffic. Putting a stop sign in will impede traffic flow. The best way to slow down traffic in Churchill is to create conditions (such as more homes) which make drivers slow down on their own, rather than requiring new speed limit controls (which can be difficult because of enforcement).
- The best thing people in Churchill could do would be to lay out an optimum road network with connections helping traffic flow that development would have to construct in the future.

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