

Email sent to Park and Planning and MC Department of Transportation

All,

I report the following: subsequent to our meeting with Pepco at their office on February 23, 2011, MCA heard nothing back save that Pepco would be identifying roads and special circumstances with Sarah Navid and other staff. MCA requested a seat on the bus for a discussed tour of Reserve roads and on site discussion of how to best provide for maintenance sensitive to the special nature of the rustic roadways and desire for protection of same. We did not hear back on whether such a tour occurred.

Pepco's tree work has been underway within the Reserve for a number of weeks now and there is no indication at all that the concerns discussed at the February meeting have been addressed. In fact, the tree cutting currently underway is in no way sensitive to and in direct conflict with the Rural and Rustic Roadways master plan. Live trees, in good health and not threatening the wires are being felled on both sides of roadways. The attached pictures taken from two rustic roads, Hughes and Budd, outside of Poolesville show this practice. Moreover, the aggressive nature of the line clearing has removed full tree canopy to an extent that alters the roadway vista and character.

Contrary to the assertion by Pepco staff that debris would be removed during maintenance, a number of large trees were simply cut, dropped and left. Perhaps the crews felt that since this is a rural area that this would be acceptable. I submit that it is not. Moreover, property owners, such as one pictured here on Budd Road, were told that their trees (even outside the normal service area for maintenance) posed danger to their homes and the power lines and felt pressured to agree to their removal. I was told that trees well within my property (25 or more feet and not growing near the lines) were slated for removal because they were considered nuisance species (i.e. Wild Cherry). FYI: I have declined Pepco access to my property though I have never done so in previous years. I have no confidence that my wish for appropriate pruning will occur.

Reports from various locations within and in proximity to the Reserve have been received. I did not have time to photograph the damaging results on Montevideo Road, Berryville Road or Blackrock Road yet.

Please advise as to whether your offices have any further inclination to assist in this matter. Much damage has already been done. Yet some roadways could still be afforded the respect they deserve.

Note: photos attached are of live tree damage unless otherwise noted (trees that were dead near lines were clearly within the maintenance scope). With regard to Budd road shot of Parrish home: one tree cluster was dead and appropriate for removal, the large oak tree near driveway and some distance from power lines was alive and with full healthy canopy. The trees on the opposite side of Hughes Road at the Willard Farm (where the tree row was cleared several years ago) were the only two that were not cut down by the property owner and were healthy and not threatening the lines across the road. Debris photographed was not storm related but from current maintenance cutting. The last photo was taken at long time Reserve resident Neville Smith's home. She allowed dead trees and those threatening lines to be removed but denied the aggressive cut back of her canopy.

Regards,

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