



***Bull Run Mountain Civic Association
PO Box 372
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November 20, 2013

BRMCA Roads Guardrail Project

Each winter, the Bull Run Mountain Civic Association directors and roads coordinator receive multiple reports of cars sliding off our roads, over embankments, into trees, and into people's yards and houses. When we get ice storms, the roads turn into Olympic-caliber bobsled runs that residents attempt to traverse. Gravity and physics always win, and cars end up in our ditches. Residents have been injured. Cars have been totaled.

The board, working with Prince William County Public Works, has received approval to use road maintenance funds to install guardrails on some of our most dangerous curves. We have some guardrails on the mountain now, but some have fallen into disrepair, and others have been removed. The board wants to improve road safety by updating and installing guardrails on the most dangerous parts of the mountain roads.

Adding guardrails on the mountain is not a new effort. The roads committee in the mid-2000s had identified a number of problem areas. The current committee took that earlier list and did a GIS analysis of the highest-slope roadways at curves that are adjacent to steep hillsides or residences. We selected several high-risk areas on Ridge and Sumney where we want to start making guardrail improvements. These locations are also where past wrecks have occurred, and will again. It is the board's hope that judicious placement of guardrails on some of the most dangerous areas will prevent more wrecks, prevent injuries, and save lives. It is not, however, the board's plan to line all mountain roads with guardrails, only the higher-risk areas.

We have identified two options for guardrail types: the rusted finish standard corrugated rails that you see on most area highways, and a steel-backed timber guardrail, of the type installed at national parks and locally at the Prince William State Forest. Prince William County is working now



One of many crashes on the mountain



One proposed guardrail style, as used in Prince William State Forest

with their guardrail contractor on bids for these options. We want the guardrails to be practical but visually appealing, and blend in with the mountain's views and character.

In this first phase of guardrail installation, we have identified 350 feet on Sumney and 550 feet on Ridge that need attention. The board will be notifying those specific landowners near the planned sites and working with them on any impact and right-of-way issues.

The board will also hold a public meeting on these plans at the monthly board meeting on Sunday, December 15, 2013, at 12:00 noon at the BRMCA clubhouse. We will be seeking input from residents about which guardrail style they prefer and other locations that they believe are hazard areas where guardrails would be a benefit to public safety.

The BRMCA board has been working diligently to improve the roads on the mountain over the years. Now that the chip coating bond has been paid off, the board wants to catch up on overdue road maintenance and improvements. Residents will note that many of the major roads were re-chipped this summer, and we replaced a number of collapsed and plugged culverts, cleaned ditches, and filled potholes. We believe that maintenance includes these critical guardrail improvements to support public safety.

Please come to come to the meeting on the 15th and let us know your preferences.

Regards,

Glenn Cruickshank

President, BRMCA