

September 27 2011

Minutes PennDot Meeting to discuss road conditions in Chester County

Attending: Robert Kennedy, Sr. Highway Maintenance Manager PennDot District 6, Natasha Manbeck, Chester County Planning Commission, Ellen Zadoff, CCCC

Natasha and I met with Bob Kennedy to discuss the poor road conditions following tar and chip applications throughout the County. We wanted to know if PennDot considered the work to be up to standard. If they did, how could we change the standards; if they did not, how could we improve the work.

Bob felt that the work this season was very poor. He attributed it to the fact that for the first time, crews from all 5 counties (District 6) were allowed to bid on all jobs. In the past, all the work done in Chester County was done by Chester County crews. Since we have much more chip and tar than any other County we also have the most experience with the process. Importantly, machines are supposed to be calibrated at the start of each day and mid-way through the day. This clearly was not done.

Next year, the work will once again be done by Chester County crews. Bob thinks this alone will be a big improvement. In addition, he proposes to change the way in which the roads are swept. Currently, immediately after paving, a tag broom comes through to push excess material to the side of the road. Several days to a week after this, a sweeper comes through (much like the type used to clean roads) to pick up excess stone. Bob thinks this system is inefficient. He also said that since a lot of stone is piled on the side of the road, a lot is missed.

Next year, the road will be swept immediately after paving only by the sweeper that removes stone. This will eliminate all that excess stone that accumulates year after year on the side of the road. Bob also said that he would advise crews to pick up excess stone in any areas that are contiguous to the area being paved (the bottom of warpath was the road used as an example), even if those are county roads.

Bob agreed to investigate the cost of using small stones for the treatment, similar to the treatment on Pughtown Rd. If it is cost effective, smaller stones can possibly be used on more roadways to provide a smoother riding surface.

Bob agreed to add Natasha and Ellen to the weekly email list of Roadwork in the Chester County. This will allow Ellen to inform cyclists when oil and chip and other roadwork will be performed so the roadways can be avoided, if possible. Additionally, Bob agreed to request Ellen be added to the PennDOT Press Release email list.

In addition to talking about tar and chip, we also asked if share the road signs could be placed on Brandywine Creek Road. Bob said he would look into it but didn't think there was any reason not to install them.