



# Howard County

---

## *Internal Memorandum*

**Subject:** Scenic Roads Inventory

**To:** Greg Fox, Councilman  
County Council

**From:** ✓ Valdis Lazdins, Director  
Department of Planning and Zoning

**Date:** November 23, 2015

This memo responds to your request for input from the Department of Planning and Zoning on your proposal to add Haviland Mill Road to the Howard County Scenic Roads Inventory.

The purpose of the Scenic Roads Act is to “protect the character of certain roads or road segments in the County, which have outstanding scenic or historic value, and pass through areas of the County where environmental (forests, steep topography, stream or river valleys), agricultural or historic features are **predominant.**” Howard County has many attractive roads where frequent residential development is interspersed with agricultural or forested landscapes. The Scenic Roads Act was intended to recognize those roads that offer unique or scarce resources. Roads that have a scenic vista or short scenic sections but are primarily residential, generally do not meet the criteria for scenic road designation.

In 1994 the full length of Haviland Mill Road was evaluated, from Brighton Dam Road to the Montgomery County border, from which the survey results are attached. On November 6, 2015, DPZ re-evaluated the same road length for potential addition to the Scenic Roads Inventory and found that the description of the road from the original 1994 survey is still applicable:

Haviland Mill Road is a narrow, winding, rolling road that crosses into Montgomery County at the Patuxent River. Views from the road are generally confined by the rolling terrain.

Residential development is continuous along Haviland Mill Road. The dominant character of the landscape viewed from the road is a rural residential neighborhood consisting of homes on large lots with mature trees and substantial setbacks. Scenic features along the road include a forested area, rolling pastures, rows of trees or hedgerows, several picturesque barns, wooden fences and the Patuxent River.

Negative features include an eroding stream (previously referred to as a drainage swale), utility lines, a transmission line partially visible in the one distant view from the road, and metal guard rails.

The original survey also indicates Historic Site #570 is located along the road. This reference actually pertains to a burial site located in the general area.

Consistent with the original evaluation, DPZ does not consider Haviland Mill Road to meet the criteria for designation of a scenic road due to the fact that it is predominately residential in character. No changes have occurred in the evaluation criteria or the landscape of the road to suggest addition to the inventory would be appropriate.

However, both the Scenic Road Survey and the designation criteria have not been updated in over twenty years. PlanHoward2030 acknowledges that “Since the original scenic roads survey and guidelines were adopted in 1994, there has been additional development in the County. The current guidelines apply to development adjacent to the scenic road, but nearby development that is not subject to the guidelines may occur within the viewshed of the scenic road and impact the quality of scenic road.”

Guidelines to preserve the scenic character of designated roads are contained within Section 16.125 of the Howard County Subdivision Regulations- Protection of Scenic Roads. These guidelines address lot orientation, grading, slope retention, use of cluster subdivisions, protection of environmentally sensitive features, location of parking, and various other entrance and sign design criteria. As proposed, the current development under review at 6780, 6930 and 6940 Haviland Mill Road conforms to the requirements under Section 16.125 even though the road is not designated as a scenic resource. Therefore, according to the current standards, designation of Haviland Mill Road as a scenic resource would not impact or alter the adjacent proposed development.

Policy 4.11 of PlanHoward 2030 recommends that the County review current conditions and regulations related to the County’s designated scenic roads to determine whether the existing inventory continues to qualify and to determine whether amendments to the Code or Design Manual could enhance protection for scenic roads.

cc: Beth Burgess, Chief, Resource Conservation Division

*T:\Shared\RCDD\Scenic Roads\Scenic Roads Inventory\_Haviland Mill Rd Addn\_Nov 2015.doc*

## HAVILAND MILL ROAD

Road Characteristics	Pavement width: varies ROW width: 30' Lanes: 2 lanes striped, no shoulders, some sections have curbs with swales. Speed limit: 30 miles per hour
Length	Entire road is candidate scenic road; 1.65 miles from Montgomery Co. line to Brighton Dam Road.
Road Classification	Minor Collector
Traffic Volume (ADT) 7/92:	812 S of Brighton Dam Rd
Accident History (for entire road)	Number of accidents 1990-1992: 1 Accident Rate (accidents per million vehicle miles): 3.6
Adjacent Zoning	RR-DEO
Adjacent Land Uses	Mixture of rural residential and undeveloped land; one parcel of WSSC land
Historic Sites	#570

### Description

Haviland Mill Road is a narrow, winding, rolling road that crosses into Montgomery County at the Patuxent River. Views from the road are generally confined by the rolling terrain.

Residential development is continuous along Haviland Mill Road. The dominant character of the landscape viewed from the road is a rural residential neighborhood consisting of homes on large lots with mature trees and substantial setbacks. Scenic features along Haviland Mill Road include forest areas, rolling pastures, rows of trees or hedgerows, several picturesque barns, wooden fences, and the Patuxent River.

Negative features include an eroding drainage swale, utility lines, a transmission line visible in the one distant view from the road, and metal guard rails.

**Recommendation: Do not designate as a scenic road.**