

Baltimore Co. plans to buy flood-prone Towson properties

By Allana Haynes

After a nine-year endeavor, Baltimore County government is moving forward with its plans to purchase two properties in the Overbrook neighborhood of Towson.

The County Council is scheduled to vote March 15 to purchase the first of the properties. The date for the vote on the purchase of the second property is under negotiation.

The acquisition of the properties, both of which have homes on them, will allow crews to mitigate storm-related flooding along the stream running through the neighborhood and move forward with the Six Bridges Trail, a project connecting a series of small parks throughout East Towson.

The properties, which sit at the end of a cul-de-sac on Worthington Road, are separated from the road by a private bridge stretching across Herring Run.

After heavy rainfall, water from the stream rises, covering and damaging the bridge, and cutting off residents from the road, according to residents.

County Councilman David Marks, who represents Towson, said the purchase of the properties and removal of the houses will provide residents with more space and better access to the trail. The date for the vote on the purchase of the second property is under negotiation.

"The idea is that the county will purchase these two properties and will allow for a drainage area when there is flooding," Marks said.

"The other purpose [is] to create an access point to the proposed Six Bridges Trail that will run along the Herring Run."

David Riley, who is an advocate for the creation of the Six Bridges Trail project, said the removal of the houses on the properties will help make the trail a reality.

"What I hope will happen is [to have] a discussion [about] what is the real future of the Six Bridge Trail project and how we can



The bridge in the Overbrook neighborhood of Towson that crosses Herring Run routinely floods. The County Council will vote on the purchase of two properties on the other side of the bridge. **LIBBY SOLOMON/BALTIMORE SUN MEDIA**

turn that area into something that is a real asset to the community," he said.

Tammy Cyzyk, 60, and her husband, Mark, have lived in Towson for more than a decade.

Moving into their home on Worthington Road after marrying in 2008, they recently moved into the Ridgely Condominiums on Joppa Road after experiencing flooding in their home.

"The bridge that goes across the Herring

Run was starting to sink, and we had so many floods from the uncontrolled storm-water that was coming down from Towson and it would overflow the bridge," she said. "In 2015, the flooding was really bad and 12 cars in our neighborhood were completely destroyed and we lost two cars ourselves."

While living in the house, she said the county had done a great deal to help them during the flooding.

Their former home is one of the properties

that will be removed and they are expected to receive money from the county for it after the March 15 vote.

Cyzyk said the addition of the trail will enhance the neighborhood and bring the community together.

"It's the perfect way to use the flood-prone lands over there [for] a park, instead of having houses there," she said. "It'll be a place for people to enjoy open space, so I'm excited about that piece."