

Date: 4/21/2025

To: Talbot County Council: Chuck Callahan, Pete Leshner, Lynn Mielke, Keasha Haythe, and Dave Stepp

CC: Talbot County Manager: Clay Stamp

From: Althea Dulin *Althea Dulin*

Re: Queen Anne to Easton bike trail along/near the path of the Rt. 309 and/or deteriorated and abandoned rail road track and property title issue

I am writing as a private citizen, landowner, and resident of Talbot County. I was unable to attend the 7/9/2024 Talbot County Council work session with representatives from the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) for a presentation of a proposed bike trail using the abandoned rail road track. However I viewed the recording, noting at the end of the meeting Mr. Callahan urged attendees to remember the land is owned by the State not the County. (Bolded quotes below reflect my emphasis)

Indeed, Talbot County deed 564/182 indicates on 1/8/1982 the State of Maryland/MDOT paid Penn Central Corporation for "all its right, title and interest of, in and to the premises described in Schedule A..." which includes among others, a reference to the Queen Anne through Cordova to Easton line. However the deed states "**QuitClaim-Maryland**" meaning the seller provided no title assurances. This purchase was authorized by the Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW) on 12/2/1981, Document Item 35 RP.

In the Remarks section of Document Item 35 RP, the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, states *..."Concurrently, with the appraisers' work, MDOT lawyers review the deeds and titles to adjust appraisals. The appraisals (land and track material) and **title adjustments were completed in March 1979.**"* The purchase was approved.

However the Item was approved with discussion. The meeting transcript indicates Mr. Bridwell, MDOT Secretary, stated in response to questions on property title from Governor Hughes *"...**There has been no thorough title search, so that one could reasonably expect title problems...**"* which clearly contradicts the official Document that is relied upon for an accurate and unambiguous statement of fact.

Owners of properties along that long-abandoned section have been unable to locate the deed between the initial railroad company and previous owner in Talbot County Land Records; other landowners have responded to the MDOT notice regarding survey work for this project by refusing permission to enter their property. As our elected officials I respectfully ask for your help and support to make a priority request to MDOT to provide the Council, the interested public, and current adjoining property owners Talbot County Record Office liber/folio deed reference for any/all property adjoining the rail road line as the deed/title uncertainty causes concern and confusion.

I look forward to your confirmation of receipt and timely response to my request. If you need further information call me 443-786-1949.  
Thank you.