

354. All applications for opening, altering, relocating or closing roads shall be by petition to the Highways Commission, and whenever any freeholder of the county shall desire to have opened a new road for the public benefit or an old one altered, relocated or closed, he shall give notice of his intention to apply therefor by publication in one or more of the county newspapers for three successive weeks, setting forth as near as may be the length, location and termini thereof, the names of the abutting property owners, and the date on which he will appear before the Commission and ask for the order on such petition. In addition to such notice by publication he shall cause a copy of said advertisement to be served upon such abutting property owners where personal service is practicable, and where not practicable to be left on the premises with the person in charge thereof. Within ten days after the last publication of such notice he shall file his petition with the Highways Commission, together with a certificate of publication of the notice aforesaid, and a certificate of the person serving such notices as to the service of the same. Counter petitions or objections to the opening, altering or closing of such road may be filed by anyone interested at any time before the date fixed for the hearing on such petition, and whether there be objections or not to the granting of such petition, the Commission shall on the day fixed in such notice hear such evidence as may be offered, and pass on said petition or sustain or overrule such objections, or, in its discretion, withhold its decision until it has had an opportunity to investigate the matter, or until a final hearing of the matter after the report of examiners appointed as hereinafter provided, if it shall decide that it is expedient to appoint such examiners. If the petition be for the opening, altering or selecting of a road and there be no objection to the granting of the same, or if there be such objection and the Commission decide that it is expedient that such petition shall be granted, and no appeal be taken from such decision as hereinafter provided, or if such appeal be taken and dismissed, said Commission shall have the power to contract with the owner or owners of land through which the road is intended to run for the right of way necessary for said road, if he, she or they be competent to contract, and in case the said Commission shall so contract, it shall cause a plat of the said road to be made by the County Surveyor under the direction of the Roads Engineer, and filed and recorded in the office of the clerk of the Circuit Court for Baltimore county, which said plat shall be referred to in and shall be a part of said deed or deeds, and the lands so conveyed shall be and become thenceforth the property of the county in the same manner and to the same extent as other county roads, and shall be kept in repair as such; and at