

**Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail Bridge  
Public Meeting Comments  
May 1, 2003**

The first Public Meeting for the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail Bridge Facility Planning Study was held at Wheaton Woods Elementary School on Thursday, May 1, 2003. Approximately 15 citizens attended this meeting. Most of those in attendance live near the Rock Creek Trail or access the Trail in the vicinity of the Study Area. Some of the attendees are bicyclists who use the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail as their primary bike route to work and others use it for recreation. No elected officials attended. Following a short presentation given by the Study Team, a question and answer session concluded the meeting. The following displays were available for public comment:

- Alternative 1 – No-Build
- Alternative 2 – M-NCPPC preferred Alignment
- Alternative 3 – SHA suggested Alignment (winding path through park)
- Alternative 4 – Direct Trail Connection (minimization of impacts)

The following specific comments and responses were recorded at the meeting and categorized by subject in the following table:

TOPIC	COMMENTS	RESPONSE
General	Are the proposed alignments marked in the field? Could a public walk-through be organized?	M-NCPPC and DPWT will look into the possibility of a public field review
General	Neighborhood transit (bus) users would benefit from improved access to the Trail and the proposed crossing – to cross Veirs Mill Road more safely.	All alternatives provide a safer crossing of Veirs Mill Road and access to the bus stop.
General	Bicycle commuters would benefit from shorter, more direct trails. The Park already has miles of winding path and additional meandering is not desired.	Will be a consideration during the decision making process.
General	Could a high fence block the view of the bridge from the residences?	No, the required height of the fence would be at least 20-feet in places, which is an undesirable condition. Fences may also detract from the aesthetics of the bridge.
No-Build	How can the intersection be improved for pedestrians with the soon-to-be constructed widening?	As part of SHA's project, signals will be programmed to provide adequate pedestrian Crossing time. Pedestrian refuge will be provided in the widened median. Improved sidewalks will be provided along the north edge of MD 586.

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General	Has wildlife habitat and road crossing been accounted for?	Yes. As part of the study, impacts to wildlife and habitat will be accounted for and documented. Currently, the Veirs Mill Road structure over Rock Creek provides for wildlife crossings.
Design Criteria	Commuter bicyclist would like to see larger curve radius to provide smoother travel at greater speeds.	The Design Team will consider this.
Impacts	How will impacts to environmental features be mitigated?	Mitigation practices will be performed for all impacts to the environment as set by Federal, State and Local Environmental Agencies.
Bridge	What type of bridge will be constructed?	No decisions have been made about the design of the bridge at this point. It will be constructed to provide a "Gateway to Rockville" with certain features designed by an artist.
Bridge	Could the bridge be skewed across MD 586?	That option was investigated and was found not to be desirable due to the length and depth of structure it would require.
Timeline	How long before the project is complete?	Application for funding will happen by Sept. 2003. Construction will start two years after funding approval.

June 23, 2003

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Robert T Galla, Jr., P.E.

REFERENCE: Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail Bridge Study  
Meeting with Aspen Hill Civic Association  
Meeting Summary

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A meeting between the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail Bridge Study Team and the Aspen Hill Civic Association (AHCA) was held on Wednesday, June 18, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. in the offices of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) in Silver Spring, Maryland. The purpose of the meeting was to review Alternative No. 5 with the AHCA. The Team developed Alternative No. 5 to address earlier comments from the AHCA. The following were in attendance:

Thomas Hardmon	AHCA	301-871-6216
David Polinsky	AHCA	301-466-4874
Carol Petzold	AHCA	301-871-7413
Dilip Pandya	M-NCPPC	301-495-2469
Tricia McManus	M-NCPPC	301-495-3580
Rob Galla	URS Corporation	410-785-7220

Mr. Galla began the meeting by describing Alternative No. 5. The AHCA representatives offered the following comments:

- Consider sidewalk on Baltic instead of ramps in park.
- Who owns property on park side of Baltic? (Later confirmed to be M-NCPPC.)
- Add stairs from bridge at south side of Veirs Mill Road crossing.
- Put bus stop on south side of Veirs Mill Road next to bridge. Request State to put in sidewalk to connect to new bus stop as a change order on CRS project.
- Request that SHA accommodate pedestrians at traffic signal at Aspen Hill Road intersection by providing: more time for people to cross; island in middle; and on demand pedestrian.
- Community concerned that trail is located in isolated area.
- Lighting on bridge will not resolve security concerns.
- Snow removal/maintenance? M-NCPPC does not remove snow from trails.
- Provide AHCA copies (JPEG/PDF) of alternatives.

MEMORANDUM

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- Post public meeting notes at Glenmont Metro, WMATA bus stops in park.

The AHCA wanted to look at locating the bridge closer to the community. The group discussed moving the crossing to the Aspen Hill Road intersection. It was agreed that a crossing in this location would require substantial property acquisition on the north side of Veirs Mill Road in order to provide an accessible route to the structure and would leave the bike trail within the community. The AHCA understood the undesirable impacts at crossing at the intersection.

A copy of Alternative No. 5 display was left with the AHCA and an electronic version will be provided so it can be posted on their website.

The meeting ended at 11:00 a.m.

RTG:slm

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Dilip Pandya  
**FROM:** Romaine Kesecker, RLA, ASLA  
**DATE:** July 8, 2003  
**REFERENCE:** Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail Bridge Study  
 July 2, 2003 Public Meeting  
 Meeting Minutes / Action Items

The second Public Meeting for the Rock Creek Trail Bridge Project was held at Parkland Middle School on Wednesday, July 2, 2003 at 7:30 PM. Approximately 10 citizens attended this meeting along with a number of County and M-NCPPC staff. Most of those in attendance reside near the Rock Creek Trail, or access the Trail in the vicinity of the Study Area. Some of the attendees were bicycling commuters who use the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail as their primary bike route to work, and others use it for recreation. House Delegates Carol Petzold, Hank Heller (of District 19, Ways and Means Committee) and a representative of Council member Marilyn Praisner's office also attended. Following a project introduction by Dilip Pandya, a presentation of the project, its latest alignment and other items was given by Romaine Kesecker via PowerPoint, with a question and answer session concluding the meeting. The following materials were available for public review and comment:

- Alternative 5 Display
- 30% Construction Plans

The following specific comments and responses were recorded at the meeting and categorized by subject in the following table:

TOPIC	COMMENTS	RESPONSE	ACTION ITEMS
1. Bridge over Veirs Mill Road	How close is the bridge to the nearest property and residence at 5114 Adrian Street? Is the bridge is too close? Can it be moved farther away?	The bridge as proposed is approximately 85' from the property line and 130' from the adjacent residence. The bridge needs to be reasonably close to the intersection to be worth using by pedestrians and bicyclists, and especially for the transit stops. It has been located away from the adjacent property to the extent possible to minimize	<i>M-NCPPC should establish a meeting with the homeowner in the field as soon as possible to review the new alignment and obtain any additional concerns. The homeowner at 5114 Adrian Street is, Fidel Granados at 301-946-2570, cell is 301-252-</i>

		environmental impacts and to service the neighborhood pedestrians and transit users.	2946.
2. Bridge	Will the bridge be visible from the adjacent property? The bedrooms of two young girls face the bridge site, and trail users should not be able to look into the house. The adjacent homeowner does not want screening of landscape plant material and is concerned that it may attract homeless to set up camp between the landscape screening and the bridge.	The Design team can work with the adjacent homeowner regarding additional landscape screening possibilities for the view of the bridge from the house.	<i>After further discussion of the homeowner's concerns, the design team should look at alternative means (possibly structural) to screen views to the house from the bridge.</i>
3. Bridge	Will the bridge be designed to support snow removal trucks? The park needs to be able to plow the bridge after snowfall.	The bridge will be designed for H-10 loading which will accommodate light maintenance vehicles, such as pickup trucks. M-NCPPC does not perform snow removal on their trails from a maintenance standpoint. However, for transit users there may be a need for snow plowing. Snow would have to be removed from the bridge, as snow can not be pushed/blown through the barrier fence to the road below.	<i>M-NCPPC, the Park Manager, Montgomery County, and related transit authorities to discuss how snow plowing will be handled, and who will perform the work.</i>
4. Bridge	Please coordinate with police so that they can provide input on their needs. Police need to be able to drive on path through park. Can a police vehicle cross the bridge?	The bridge will have 12' wide inside clearance. A police cruiser would be able to cross the bridge. Placement of bollards at the bridge entrances is not a standard practice by the M-NCPPC, and they are a safety issue with bicyclists.	<i>M-NCPPC to discuss issues with park police to determine need for a police cruiser to cross via the bridge.</i>

<p>5. Stair Tower</p>	<p>Please describe the stair tower, and how far is the stair tower and the connecting sidewalk from Veirs Mill Road? Is too far away? Can it be moved closer? The stair tower should be no further than 20' from the roadway. Many trail users will be using the trail late at night and will not feel safe using the sidewalk/stair tower if it is so far from the road. The sidewalk should be along the road. The ingress/egress to the stair tower should be oriented to the roadway.</p>	<p>The stair tower would consist of about 45 to 50 steps with landings at about every 12 steps. It would consist of an open design for security concerns in order to allow for the clearest visibility to the structure.</p> <p>The path to the stair tower from the transit stop would vary from about 10' to 40' from the future edge of widened Veirs Mill Road (location of stop subject to change). The sidewalk as it is shown was set to avoid a proposed SWM ditch which will run along the widened shoulder, and to avoid existing trees. The sidewalk and tower can be moved closer to the roadway, but the ditch may be impacted. Also, moving the stair tower closer will increase the number of steps required. Too many steps may deter pedestrians from using the stair tower. The design team will look into options for setting the sidewalk and stair tower closer to the road. It was shown as well that there may be an alternative to the stair tower by connecting a path from the transit stop to the southern terminus of the bridge. The stair tower will also be subject to available construction funding for the overall project.</p>	<p><i>M-NCPPC to determine if stair tower is to be included in application for funding. Preliminary cost estimates for the stair tower are at \$40,000 however the cost may be substantially higher for all requirements, including lighting and long-term, maintenance of this structure.</i></p>
<p>6. General</p>	<p>Will the various sidewalks and stairs be lighted?</p>	<p>Yes. The sidewalks and stairs will be appropriately lighted with pedestrian poles or other suitable fixtures. The bridge lighting may be flush-mount type fixtures in the parapet (assisting to reduce glare considerations for motorists).</p>	
<p>7. General</p>	<p>Homeless individuals have been noted living</p>	<p>This will be a park police / park manager item to resolve.</p>	<p><i>M-NCPPC to investigate.</i></p>

	within the forested areas of the northern section of the bridge area. Will they be a problem living under the bridge?		
8. Bus Stop	Can a more formalized bus stop with either a concrete pad or shelter be provided?	The final design will investigate this with the transit agency.	<i>M-NCPPC and DPWT to consider determining if rider ship numbers exist for the transit stops.</i>

Additional topics discussed at the meeting include:

- Overall, there was general consensus the project would benefit the community, and that the crossing would provide an excellent means of pedestrians and transit users crossing Veirs Mill Road more safely.
- It was also noted that SHA widening work included reprogramming signal to provide adequate timing for pedestrians and provision of pedestrian refuge in the center median.
- M-NCPPC also anticipates adding a public artist to the Team in the near future. The artist will work with the Team for incorporation of artistic treatment into the project.
- The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and the SHA's District Office are critical Team members in the project and will be involved in every aspect of the bridge crossing.
- Drainage off the bridge will likely be pick-up with scuppers and directed to appropriate stormwater management practices. No drainage discharge will occur over the roadway.

The attendance sign-in sheet has been scanned and is available from Dilip Pandya or URS.

Please contact me if there are any question or comments regarding the above.

cc: Peter Noursi, M-NCPPC  
Tricia McManus, M-NCPPC  
Marian Elsasser, M-NCPPC  
Rodney Brown, P.E., DPWT  
Hai-yan Zhang, DPWT  
Bob Simpson, DPWT  
Robert T. Galla, Jr., P.E., URS  
B.C. Mehta, P.E., URS  
Chris Growchowski, URS