

26517 Aiken Drive
Clarksburg, Md. 20871
August 23, 2003

Derick Berlage
Chair, MC Planning Board
8787 Georgia Ave.
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

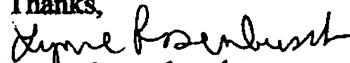
RECEIVED
AUG 26 2003

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
THE MARYLAND NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Dear Mr. Berlage:

I am a member of the Montgomery County Bicycle Action Group (MCBAG). MCBAG supports the proposed bridge over Viers Mill Road connecting Rock Creek trail to Aspen Hill Road. The traffic signals do not allow a safe crossing for bicyclists or pedestrians. The Rock Creek trail is the only north south bike route in Montgomery County connecting Gaithersburg to DC. It is important to improve the safety of this trail.

Thanks,


Lynhe Rosenbusch

Pandya, Dilip

From: Dwight Ufford [dwightuf@erols.com]
Sent: Sunday, June 29, 2003 3:55 PM
To: Pandya, Dilip
Subject: veirs mill bridge

Currently bikers cross veirs mill and then again Aspen Hill rd. to get to the park trail. This creates an additional hazard against those vehicles that turn from Veirs mill onto aspen hill, and also those turning right onto Adrian. It would seem to make sense to provide a pedestrian overpass that would be west of Aspen Hill Rd. and avoid Aspen

Hill road altogether.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

August 14, 2003

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning
Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Berlage:

The County Council supports the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's application for \$2.65 million in Federal Highway Administration Enhancement Program funds to construct a bridge for the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail over Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) at Aspen Hill Road.

The Council has already appropriated \$330,000 for the initial planning work for this bridge, which would carry the heavy volume of Rock Creek Trail users safely over the heavy and fast-moving traffic on MD 586. This State highway carries an average daily traffic volume of nearly 35,000 vehicles per day. The speed limit on this section of MD 586 is 45 mph. The speed of traffic often exceeds the limit on this straight, flat segment of the highway.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Subin
Council President

MLS:go
004596





THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Office of the Chairman, Montgomery County Planning Board

Bette

February 15, 2002

The Honorable Steven A. Silverman, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Silverman:

The Planning Board proposes to amend its FY03-08 CIP submission to incorporate a new project (\$333,000) in the Facility Planning: Non-Local PDF 958776 in FY03 and FY04, specifically, facility planning for a hiker-biker bridge over Veirs Mill Road to connect portions of the Rock Creek Trail.

The County Council is familiar with the history of this project:

- (1) On February 13, 2001, the County Council adopted Resolution 14-773 pertaining to the improvement of Veirs Mill Road/Aspen Hill Road intersection. Listed among the County Council's recommendations is "accommodation of a potential Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail bridge over Veirs Mill Road. The Council will seek State funding for this pedestrian/bicycle bridge."
- (2) On February 16, 2001, County Council President, Blair G. Ewing, wrote to Parker F. Williams, Administrator, State Highway Administration (SHA), that the County Council

"is committed to seeking State funding to construct a bridge over MD 586 for the Rock Creek Trail, which would allow pedestrians and bikers to avoid the thousands of vehicles that pass through this intersection daily. We think it appropriate that the State fund this bridge under the Access 2000 program, and we hope it can be done on a schedule commensurate with the construction of the intersection improvements, that is during 2003."

- (3) On March 21, 2001, John D. Porcari, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation, wrote to County Council President, Blair G. Ewing, that "We are recommending that Montgomery County apply for the improvement as an Enhancement Project through the Executive Committee review process. . . It is

our intention to continue to coordinate with M-NCPPC and Montgomery County staff to develop a strategy to address the hiker-biker connection at Veirs Mill Road. We will also continue to investigate all funding sources available for this improvement.”

- (4) On January 8, 2002, Neil Pedersen (SHA) and Department staff discussed the project. Mr. Pedersen urged the Commission to submit an application for TEA funds in November 2003.

It is likely that the federal Transportation Enhancement Act will be reauthorized in Fall 2003 making more funds available for projects such as the hiker-biker bridge over Veirs Mill Road. To be eligible for those funds, projects must be in public ownership, design must be 35 percent complete, i.e. facility planning must be complete, and design and construction must be able to begin soon after award of the grant. Grants are fifty percent of the cost for remaining design and construction.

The Planning Board proposes to facility plan the hiker-biker bridge over Veirs Mill Road to connect portions of the Rock Creek Trail so that the project will be eligible for Transportation Enhancement Act funds by Fall 2003. We will be eligible to apply for TEA funds for this project if we can begin facility planning in FY03. The need for the project is described in part by Attachment 1, a letter from the Aspen Hill Civic Association to the County Council dated November 24, 2000.

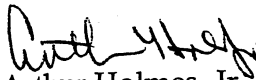
The PDF proposes to fund facility planning with County Current Receipts in FY03 and FY04 so that facility planning can be completed in FY04 and an application filed for TEA funds in November 2002 (FY04). The Planning Board seeks these funds in addition to the level-of-effort funding already proposed in the FY03-08 program. FY02 facility planning projects in progress and expected to carry-over into FY03 are the Rock Creek Maintenance Yard renovation, Woodlawn Park Police Special Operations Program of Requirements, and Black Hills Regional Park hard surface trail renovation. The new FY03 appropriation funds further work on the Woodlawn Park Police Special Operations facility plan, a facility plan for a skateboard park at South Germantown Recreational Park, and a facility plan for a dog park at a site to be determined. New FY04 appropriation funds facility plans for the Magruder Branch Hard Surface Trail extension Capital Crescent Trail connector to Rock Creek Trail, and Wheaton hard surface trail extension to Randolph Road. Our original appropriation request for FY03 was \$135,000 and for FY04, \$145,000. The sum of these two requests (\$280,000) would not be sufficient to meet the \$333,000 needed for the hiker-biker bridge over Veirs Mill Road to connect portions of the Rock Creek Trail. The Commission cannot absorb this project in our current level-of-effort expenditure schedule because it would require elimination of part of our current FY02 program and all of the FY03 and FY04 programs proposed by the Planning Board prior to consideration of the hiker-biker bridge over Veirs Mill Road.

The Maryland State Highway Administration proposes to acquire 3.3 acres from Rock Creek Regional Park as part of its intersection improvement at Veirs Mill Road and Aspen Hill Roads. The acquisition is likely to occur in Fall 2002 (FY03). The estimated

cost of the acquisition is \$333,000. The acquisition may involve four parcels—some owned by Montgomery County and some by the Commission. It is possible that some or all of the proceeds from the sale of the property to the State could be earmarked for a portion of the local share of the project costs. Staff will pursue the viability of this option as the SHA project progresses.

Please note that this request is shown in the Facility Planning: Non-Local PDF. The text of this PDF has been changed slightly from our original November 1, 2001 submission. The Planning Board's acceptance of the County Executive's reduction to the Trails: Hard Surface Design and Construction PDF involved shifting two projects—Magruder Branch Trail and the Capital Crescent Trail connector to Rock Creek Trail -- back into the facility planning PDF so that facility plans could be finalized.

Yours truly,


Arthur Holmes, Jr.
Chairman

Attachments

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ASPEN HILL CIVIC ASSOCIATION

November 24, 2000

NOV 28 9:13

034820

Montgomery County Council
Mr. Michael L. Subin, Council President
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: Resolution regarding SHA Intersection Improvements,
MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road) and Aspen Hill Road

Dear Council President Subin:

As President of the Aspen Hill Civic Association, I would like to express the concerns of our Association regarding the intersection improvements at Aspen Hill Road and Veirs Mill Road (MD 586). The boundaries of the Aspen Hill Civic Association include all of Aspen Hill Road and is bounded by Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) from Turkey Branch Parkway to the Rock Creek Stream. The Board of Directors and our members are well aware of the accidents, backups, and all around headaches that result from the amount of traffic driving through this intersection. I am sure you are aware that Aspen Hill Road is a major cross county route.

The Maryland State High Administration and Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning have been extremely generous in making themselves available to the Aspen Hill Civic Association to explain the two options for improvement of this intersection. The Aspen Hill Civic Association is very concerned because there is a large volume of bus, auto, bike, and pedestrian traffic in a very complicated intersection in limited space. Part of the Rock Creek Hiker Biker trail comes out of Aspen Hill Community Park, on to Baltic Avenue and Adrian Street, across Aspen Hill Road and then across Veirs Mill Road. This trail is highly utilized. Many families with small children use this trail in the evenings and on the weekends. Many employees from the Parklawn Drive area use this trail during workdays. This trail is used for marathons during workdays and weekends. The large volume and speed of traffic on Aspen Hill Road and Veirs Mill Road is a constant all day long, and of course, reaches a peak at rush hour. Careful attention must be made in making this intersection safe for all pedestrians, hikers, and bikers.

At the Montgomery County Planning Board Public Hearing held Thursday, November 16, 2000, Chairman Hussmann expressed his concern for pedestrian safety at this intersection. It was suggested that the State procure funds for a pedestrian bridge to be built over Veirs Mill Road taking the Rock Creek Hiker Biker trail away from this extremely busy intersection. The Aspen Hill Civic Association highly encourages this proposal.

Montgomery County Council
Mr. Michael L. Subin, Council President
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

RE: Resolution regarding SHA Intersection Improvements,
MD 586 (Veirs Mill Road) and Aspen Hill Road

It is fortunate that some of our neighbors and friends have not lost their lives at this intersection. However, it is extremely tragic that three people have lost their lives along Veirs Mill Road since 1998. It is very possible that these three deaths are the result of trying to cross this extremely busy road. Last winter a vehicle hit a bicyclist exiting the bike path on to Veirs Mill Road.

I would also like to add that the residents along Aspen Hill Road are currently experiencing problems exiting from their driveways on to Aspen Hill Road. Another problem local residents currently encounter is "cut through" traffic. Residents on Arbutus Avenue and Adrian Street have not found a way to prohibit "cut through" traffic. Therefore, they are considering requesting traffic calming devices be installed to at least slow down "cut through" traffic.

The Aspen Hill Civic Association and I respectively thank you for your time and attention to our concerns. We look forward to a safe and mutually agreeable resolution to the problems at this intersection.

Sincerely,



Mr. Donald A. Becker
President
13115 Dauphine Street
Silver Spring, MD 20906

cc: Council Member Isiah Leggett
Chairman, Transportation and Environment Committee