

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning

June 28, 2005

**MEMORANDUM:**

TO: Clare Cavicchi  
Countywide Planning Division

VIA: Daniel K. Hardy, Supervisor *DKH*  
Transportation Planning

FROM: Ki H. Kim, Planner *KHK*  
Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Deer Park Bridge Writeup

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This memorandum describes the purpose and status of the Department of Public Works and Transportation Phase I Facility Planning Study for the reconstruction of the Deer Park Bridge that connects East Deer Park Drive to Railroad Street in Gaithersburg.

The purpose of the Deer Park Drive Bridge Planning Study is to provide a safe and efficient crossing over the CSX Railroad tracks in Montgomery County. The existing bridge crossing at Deer Park Drive is inadequate in terms of geometric, structural, and safety considerations to all users. The needs identified for an improved bridge crossing include:

- Single lane of traffic limits accessibility
- Substandard clearance over railroad tracks
- Emergency vehicles exceed weight limits
- Lack of pedestrian facilities

The degree to which the characteristics of the existing bridge limit accessibility is evidenced in part by the fact that the bridge carries approximately 6,300 vehicles per day, a lower volume than the 9,000 vehicles per day that cross the CSX tracks via the at-grade crossing of Railroad Street located about a quarter-mile to the south.

The approved and adopted 1985 Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan recommends a fifty-foot-wide transit easement located directly adjacent to the existing railroad tracks and a four-lane arterial (A-255) along Oakmont Avenue realigned to include an oblique crossing of the CSX tracks. The

Gaithersburg Vicinity Master Plan is in the process of being updated and the Staff Draft is tentatively scheduled for the Planning Board in November 2006. The Staff Draft will reflect the County's recommended alternative for the Deer Park Bridge.

The Project Team developed three concepts in Fall 2004 and had a public informational meeting in January 2005 to seek the public's inputs to be considered in the Project Team's selection of the recommended concept. The Project Team is currently reviewing the public's comments and coordinating with the Town of Washington Grove, and City of Gaithersburg to develop a concept to be recommended to the County Council's Transportation and Environment Committee for their consideration for the Phase II Facility Planning Study. Staff expects to schedule a Planning Board briefing on the recommended alternative during fall 2005.

KHK:gw

Mmo to Cavicchi re Deer Park Bridge

July 6, 2005

Montgomery County Planning Board  
M-NCPPC  
8787 Georgia Ave  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Chairman Berlage and Planning Board Members:

We are gratified that the County Historic Preservation Commission has recommended that the Humpback Bridge, a structure that is so intimately connected to the lives, character and memories of the residents of our Town, be included on the County Master Plan of Historic Resources.

As ably detailed in the application, the image of the bridge is one that is inseparable from that of Washington Grove itself. They originated in the same era –WG Camp Meeting in the 1870s, the bridge in the 1880s, matured together – the Camp Meeting becoming a Town in 1930s, bridge rebuilt in 1940s; and are aging gracefully together to this day. The vision of the bridge was the first image that greeted those that flocked to the Camp Meeting revivals, the full summer residents, the sojourners and visitors, and it was the last image as they boarded the train to return to their normal lives in the bustling city; it continues to greet as just the opposite happens now: morning commuters depart their “special time and place” and the evening commuters return to the peace and tranquility that marks our very fortunate community.

For those arriving by car, the unusual experience of waiting to cross a single lane bridge, jolting over a whistling train, and plunging into the separate environment that is Washington Grove is as equally unique and memorable as the arrival by train. It successfully throws you back to the time before life became engineered primarily for the automobile. The quirky contrivances that may at first appear problematic are those that have successfully accommodated the roadway to its multifaceted context rather than transforming that context to the dictates of a single-minded purpose. That the bridge “has character, interest and value as part of our development, heritage” and culture is very clear.

As you know, the character and form of this part of the County is the result of railroad driven development, and we, as well as the other Railroad Communities, represent the closest connection to its compelling linear nature and the difficult contradictions inherent in its dividing and uniting forces. This explicit contradiction is exemplified by this bridge and the almost poetic tension it embodies between the connection and separation of communities that is the historic heritage of the railroad. It appears from the report that it is likely the last expression of this kind remaining.

## Montgomery County Planning Board Correspondence Received by July 7, 2005 Humpback Bridge

The history of the bridge, as detailed in the application, is firmly linked to the tradition of timber trussed bridges once common both to the County and USA. It retains its singular shape, timber bent supports, wood decking, concrete abutments and wooden rails characteristic of this class of structure. Its hand-worked elements as well as its modest scale make it of a piece with the surrounding rural environment that still firmly speaks of the agricultural heritage at the heart of the County.

To the people that have lived in the area for their entire lives and to those newly arrived, the bridge is an iconic landmark for directions, a singular element uniting communities both physically and emotionally, and a uniquely fascinating character in the local scene.

It clearly meets criteria 1a, 1d, 2a, and 2e of the Historic Preservation Ordinance and should be placed on the Master Plan for Historic Resources.

Thanks and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Robert Booker, Chair  
Historic Preservation Commission  
Town of Washington Grove

**PACKKI & SYLVIA JARUTON**  
221 East Deer Park Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

July 7, 2005

Derrick Betlage, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
M-NCPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chairman Betlage:

I am writing this letter to express my support for the nomination of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

When searching for our perfect piece of land on which to build our home, my husband and I ultimately decided upon the "Little House on the Prairie" located at 221 (and 223) East Deer Park Drive. This site contained an extremely small, rustic home on a large combined property which allowed us to add a large custom built addition, incorporating both my husband's craftsmanship and his artistic capabilities. Over the course of the past ten years, we constructed this house, literally with our own blood, sweat and tears, nail by nail, ourselves, with minimal outside assistance. An added bonus for us was the nearby quaint bridge crossing the railroad tracks, which brought back pleasant memories for me from my childhood years. This timber bridge was influential in our choice of neighborhoods, exemplifying historic character, which, I believe, dates back to the late 1800's. I would venture to say that it is the only one of its kind remaining in Montgomery County. When giving directions to our home, I always include the one-lane, humpback bridge as a distinctive landmark, and this singular physical characteristic never ceases to amaze our visitors.

Please preserve this unique attraction by supporting the nomination of our bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Sincerely,

  
Sylvia A. Jaruton

cc: Clare Cavitchi  
Historic Preservation Planner

**Cavicchi, Clare**

**From:** Joseph T. Hodges [joseph.hodges@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 07, 2005 2:15 PM  
**To:** MCP-Chairman  
**Cc:** Cavicchi, Clare; Nancogh@aol.com  
**Subject:** humpback bridge

Dear Mr. Berlage,

I am writing to express my support of the preservation of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge. The appearance and scale of the bridge are in keeping with its surroundings namely the Town of Washington Grove and the Oakmont neighborhood of Gaithersburg. I would like to see it added to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. I do not find the one lane bridge an inconvenience. I think the current bridge serves our purposes well and that other plans that have been proposed to replace the bridge would greatly affect our community in a negative way both visually and otherwise. Not building a new bridge would save the county money. I'm sure there are other communities with more pressing transportation needs that would love to have this type of funding.

Sincerely,  
Tamara Williams  
213 Grove Avenue  
Washington Grove, MD 20880

E-mails can be sent to Chairman Berlage (mcp-chairman@mnppc-nc.org) with a copy to Clare Cavicchi, Historic Preservation Planner (clare.cavicchi@mnppc-nc.org) and to me at (Nancogr@aol.com)

**Cavicchi, Clare**

**From:** Styles, Mirni [Mirni.Styles@otsuka.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 07, 2005 11:20 AM  
**To:** MCP-Chairman  
**Cc:** Cavicchi, Clare; Nancogh@aol.com  
**Subject:** Nomination of the Washington Grove "Humpback Bridge" to the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation  
**Importance:** High

Mr. Derrick Berlage  
Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
M-NOPPC  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Berlage:

I am writing to ask for your support of the nomination of the Washington Grove "Humpback Bridge" to the Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation. We love our bridge. It is in keeping—both in scale and in spirit—with our historic community. The humpback bridge is a powerful, symbolic reminder of the role of the railroad in the founding of Washington Grove.

The communities of Olde Towne Gaithersburg and East Deer Park are similarly linked to the humpback bridge. All three communities support preservation of the existing bridge.

The humpback bridge is part of our cultural fabric. Say, for example, "Washington Grove" is unfamiliar to a service person you are directing to your home. Just mention the proximity of the humpback bridge—not only will there likely be an immediate geographic recognition, the image of the bridge strikes a chord of nostalgia for many who have memories of it dating to their childhood—all of which is likely to, at least temporarily, to brighten the day.

The various proposals for a larger, wider bridge would devastate the character of these three communities. For residents of Washington Grove, the thought of losing our ancient oaks and having our bucolic walkways terminate in concrete walls or embankments is indeed heartbreaking.

An over-scaled bridge would only increase traffic (at higher speeds) through residential neighborhoods. I would urge that the millions of dollars earmarked for such an endeavor could be better spent on quality-of-life initiatives – education, parks, and libraries would immediately come to mind as more worthy undertakings.

I hope you will support the nomination of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,  
Emilia A. Styles  
301 First Avenue  
P. O. Box 1214  
Washington Grove, MD 20880-1214

Cavicchi, Clare

From: Anna Radlinski McDermitt [antigravity53@verizon.net]  
Sent: Thursday, July 07, 2005 10:30 AM  
To: MCP-Chairman  
Cc: Cavicchi, Clare  
Subject: Humpback Bridge

Dear Mr. Berlage,

There are many reasons, historic and otherwise to save the Humpback Bridge in Washington Grove. The most important one for the County should be that the roads on either side of it are substandard and are in dire need of repair themselves. Why have a big four-lane bridge that connects two two-lane substandard roads? It just doesn't make sense. Unless, of course, the County has plans for those roads that we don't know about.

Our funny little bridge has served us and the people who travel over it well. If a few bus drivers have run into while driving across it, then perhaps they need to be replaced - not the bridge.

Thank you for listening.

Anna McDermitt  
503 Brown St.  
Washington Grove

MCP-Chairman

From: Sood A N [ajitaji1971@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2005 12:42 PM  
To: MCP-Chairman, Cavicchi, Clare  
Cc: nanogh@aol.com; j.neumann@verizon.net; LTMJDJM@yahoo.com; LEAGLEELUTE@peoplepc.com; rjgmixell@aol.com; brewer000@comcast.net; islaback@verizon.net; KL.RoyneStadl@verizon.net; plundstro@aol.com; skatz@galtiersburg.md.gov  
Subject: WASHINGTON GROVE HUMPBACK BRIDGE- Hearing 14 July 2005

Public Hearing 14 July 2005 - Master Plan for Historic Preservation

WASHINGTON GROVE HUMPBACK BRIDGE

We (AviNash & Rita Sood) who have lived at 219 East Deer Park Bridge 100 yds from the bridge strongly support to the County's Master Plan for Historic reservation for its history, design, uniqueness and specially just a handful of this design bridges left in the country.

I am a licensed professional engineer. This is a "Timber design bridge" and there are not many left in the country of this design. The structural engineering students which they read in the books witness the bridge and can see in action. It is important to keep a bridge like that which our coming generations can visualize the history.

One of the main reasons I bought the house was living close to the history. Ask any structural, design engineer and he will tell you, preserving a bridge will be a smart move. Timber design bridges have no fatigue stress problem like the new bridges. They are safe and can last for ever if maintained properly by apply "Cresol" every few years to avoid Insect attack, and avoiding bleaching. The cost of maintenance is much cheaper compare to modern bridges. Since I live so close to the bridge and being a engineer I see no "Shear problems, no pot holes and this bridge can last and last if maintained properly.

If you have any question please call me at (301) 926-2283.

Thanks

Very truly

**MCP-Chairman**

**From:** Perry, Kristin [Kristin.Perry@ed.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 06, 2005 11:50 AM  
**To:** MCP-Chairman  
**Cc:** Cavicchi, Clare; Nancogh@aol.com  
**Subject:** Nomination of WG Humpback Bridge for Historic Preservation

Derrick Berlage, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board

Dear Mr. Berlage:

I am writing request that you support the nomination of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

The bridge is a unique reminder of historic past of Montgomery County. In a period of rapid and voracious development, it is important to preserve meaningful historic remnants like this to create a livable environment for everyone. An livable environment should provide some sense of history, green and natural areas, and a humane aesthetic. Historic structures provide an anchor to the past and create a feeling of place and neighborhood for residents.

This bridge is an important reminder of importance of the railroad and communities founded along this railroad in the 1800s. It's scale is consistent with the community of Washington Grove and the Deerpark neighborhood. It is also consistent with the preserved area of old town Gaithersburg.

Further, I would like to request that you support the preservation of the current traffic patterns over the bridge and do not allow replacement and enlargement of this bridge. We do not want more traffic through the adjoining neighborhoods. Please spend the money for better things, like improving Oakmont Ave--cleaning up trash, building sidewalks, planting trees. These are the kinds of things that make people want to live in an area.

Thank you for supporting the nomination of this bridge and the preservation of the bridge as it is now.

Sincerely,

Kristin Perry  
PO Box 335  
Washington Grove, MD 20880

**MCP-Chairman**

**From:** Larry French [larryfrench88@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 05, 2005 7:58 PM  
**To:** MCP-Chairman  
**Cc:** Cavicchi, Clare; nancogh@aol.com  
**Subject:** humpback bridge in Washington Grove

Dear Mr. Berlage,

Although a current resident of Boyds, I own a house in Washington Grove and continue to participate in the social life of the community. I have been very concerned for some time regarding the county's proposal to replace the humpback bridge over the railroad track with a higher, wider, and more "modern" structure. As you might imagine, I was delighted to learn recently of the possibility that the bridge might be added to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. This odd, little bridge has been a familiar landmark to Grove residents and visitors for many years and reminds all of us who pass slowly over it that they are entering or leaving a very special place. As such, my wife and I strongly support its preservation.

We have attended several meetings devoted to the issue of this bridge and have concluded that the problems noted by the county officials and planners can be easily handled by repairs to the existing structure rather than its replacement. Dealing with the problems in this manner will not only support the efforts of many within and outside Washington Grove to support and preserve this historic community. It will also save the taxpayers what I would guess would be several millions of dollars. There may have been a time in the past that the County had the luxury of committing such funds to projects of dubious merit, but surely the fiscal constraints at present now preclude such spending.

We will appreciate your serious attention to the issues raised and look forward to a resolution of this matter that preserves our bridge.

Sincerely,

Larry French  
Linda Mundy  
Emily French  
16530 Sugarland Road, Boyds, MD 20841  
(301) 990-7891

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Rekindle the Rivalries. Sign up for Fantasy Football!

2005-1104

**MCP-Chairman**

From: georgette cole [georgettecole@yahoo.com]  
 Sent: Tuesday, July 05, 2005 10:09 PM  
 To: MCP-Chairman; MCP-Feedback  
 Cc: washgrove@comcast.net; nancy and ned helme; briggs3@comcast.net; jcomp@genedx.com  
 Subject: Historic Preservation Status for the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge

July 7, 2005

Derick P. Berlage, Chairman  
 and members of the  
 Montgomery County Planning Board  
 The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
 8787 Georgia Avenue  
 Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Dear Sirs,

We understand that the Planning Board is considering the nomination of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. As residents of Washington Grove we would like to express our strong support for such a move. The bridge is a charming reminder of the historic railroad-linked past of this area. It is sad to see so much of our rural history disappearing, but this is a feature that really need not disappear. Due to the cherished memories of many old-time residents and the nostalgia that many new residents feel for that past, it enjoys strong preservation support in the surrounding community.

Current self-interest undoubtedly plays some role here. In addition to the historic character we would all like to see preserved, it is obvious to most local residents that the bridge serves as an efficient traffic-calming device. In fact, it is doubtful that Gaithersburg or Washington Grove could deliberately come up with a better one. It serves the transit needs of the local residents while tending to minimize the daily influx of cut-through traffic from the northern and southern Montgomery County communities. For this and many more visceral reasons we love our humpback bridge and implore you to help us preserve it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
 Georgette Cole and Ernie Kawasaki  
 217 Ridge Road, Washington Grove, MD 20880

Sell on Yahoo! Auctions - No fees. Bid on great items.

2005-1103

**MCP-Chairman**

From: Hoerle, Heather [Hoerle@nais.org]  
 Sent: Tuesday, July 05, 2005 4:13 PM  
 To: MCP-Chairman  
 Cc: Cavicchi, Clare; Nancogh@aol.com  
 Subject: Preserve the Humpback Bridge!

Dear Mr. Berlage,

I am writing to request your support for preservation of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge - please help us add it to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. The bridge's style and historic significance is in keeping with our town's early founding as a rural Methodist Church camp. As you know, starting in the 1870's, the town of Washington Grove came into existence to serve Methodist campers seeking relief from the city's summer heat and noise; early campers came to the town via the B and O railroad and they came to enjoy the Grove's cool forests and peaceful tranquility. The Humpback Bridge reminds all who see it, of the surrounding area's rural past. It is as welcome to us Grovers as the frequent train whistles which are still part and parcel of our lives 132 years later. Amazingly, Washington Grove residents have many of the same ambitions as our founding fathers/mothers - we wish to come home from a long day of working in a humid city to the tranquility of tall trees, the joy of a small town, the peacefulness of a place that has remained steadfastly unchanged in measures of quality of life.

Washington Grove in 2005 remains an active community intent on preserving what matters... and the Humpback Bridge matters. The bridge is in keeping with the size, scale, style and history of its surrounding communities (Washington Grove, Deer Park and Oakmont). If the planning board decides to build a larger, modern alternative, the new bridge will not only serve as blight on our landscape, but will negatively impact our communities with increased traffic through residential neighborhoods, higher speeds of cars, greater pollution, and more noise. By preserving the existing Humpback Bridge, you will provide a safer, more economical and wiser traffic solution to the surrounding communities and to the County as a whole. You will also help to retain the tranquility of this area which developed as a railroad community at the turn of the century.

There are better uses for limited county dollars than the building of a new modern bridge... please preserve our Humpback Bridge and spend those additional millions that you save on more open space and parks for the county.

Sincerely, Heather Hoerle

P.S. I thought you might appreciate the photos from our 4th of July celebration in town yesterday. As you can see, a Grover's golf cart was turned into a float -- dedicated to the preservation of the Humpback Bridge and complete with "Carpenter Gothic" trim!



**MCP-Chairman**

**From:** Kenny & Linda [KL.Royneestad@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 30, 2005 9:54 AM  
**To:** MCP-Chairman  
**Subject:** Re: Washington Grove Humback Bridge

RECEIVED  
JUN 30 2005  
7:06 PM

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

Derrick Berlage, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
M-NCPPC  
8737 Georgia Ave.  
Silver Spring, Md. 20910

June 29, 2005  
Mr. Berlage:

I feel compelled to write you regarding the Humback Bridge in Washington Grove. I firmly believe this structure needs to be preserved and protected in its current configuration.

Certainly you have received many letters and considerable data regarding vehicular counts, future safety concerns, population projections etc. A fair portion is probably quite emotional while the rest being frank and analytical *engineer speak*.

I'm not viewing this as a Transportation, Engineering, Development, Safety, or Progress concern. This proposal is really about identity, the identity a community develops and maintains as it matures and changes through generations. The Town of Washington Grove and the areas of Oakton and Deer Park have evolved with the Humback Bridge in their center. It is now, as in the past, a reference point and connection. If this bridge were to be replaced with any new structure reflecting *current engineering standards*, the generational and community reference will be immediately eroded.

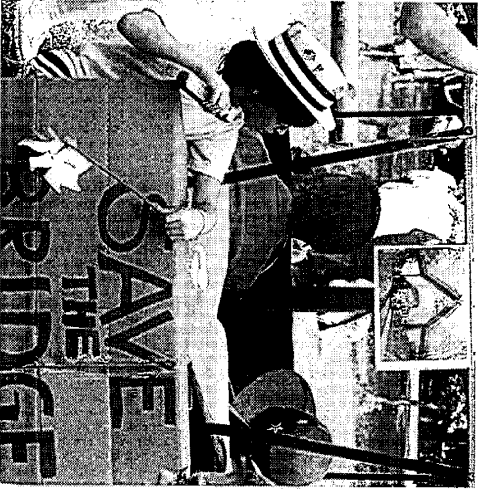
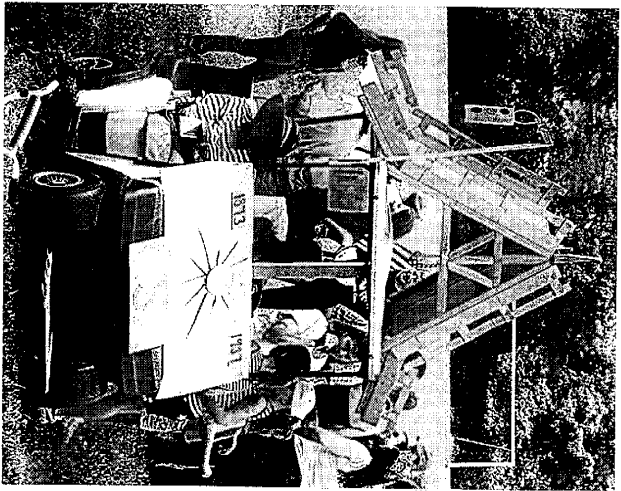
Any structure with new size, new ramps and sidewalks, not to mention nice new asphalt ribbons would be bisecting our communities, not joining them. All of these (so called) improvements would in fact be intrusions into established stable residential areas. The Washington Grove Humback Bridge is part of a much larger picture that stretches from the center of Gaithersburg to the Railroad St. grade crossing in Washington Grove. The identity and character of this larger community needs to be maintained, not streamlined. Protecting this bridge now will certainly help conserve our bit of heritage.

This little timber-framed bridge represents more than just a snapshot of the past. It is a tangible example of our community connections and its part of our collective historic identity.

I strongly urge you support historic designation for the Washington Grove Humback Bridge in the County's Master Plan. In the decades to come, I'm convinced planners and citizens will view the preservation of this bridge as prudent and wise alike.

Sincerely,

Kenneth R. Royneestad  
414 Gaider Street  
Gaithersburg, Md. 20877



**MCP-Chairman**

From: R.G.Mixell@aol.com  
Sent: Thursday, June 30, 2005 3:23 PM  
To: MCP-Chairman  
Cc: Cavicchi, Clare; L.neumann@verizon.net; Nancogh@aol.com; R.G.Mixell@aol.com  
Subject: Washington Grove Humback Bridge

June 30, 2005

Derrick Berlage  
Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board  
M.A.N.C.P.P.C.  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Berlage:

As residents on East Deer Park Drive since 1995, we strongly support the nomination of the Washington Grove Humback Bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation. We have fond memories of purchasing our first home near this unique Humback Bridge with its historic connection to the railroad and the surrounding communities. We also will never forget after our son was born how many times we sat (and still do) at the railroad tracks waiting for the train to pass under the bridge and to be driving over the bridge when the train was passing under was the "best thing ever." Our son is only 6 years old and thinks the bridge is "cool" but our hope is that some day, he too will be able to appreciate the history of the bridge and share this experience with his children and be able to say, "I used to do this with my mom and dad when I was growing up." When our nieces and nephews from Pennsylvania come to visit, they too like to travel over the Humback Bridge and watch the trains. They have never seen another bridge like it. It seems as though everyone always thinks new, modern and bigger is better, but some things are best preserved for future generations to experience. The Humback Bridge is surely one of them. It's important for children to learn how things used to be in the "old days." We just learned that the mall was dropped into the train car as it went under the bridge. Even as adults, we are never too old to learn and appreciate our history.

We love Gaithersburg and what it stands for because Character does Count. Gaithersburg is a city that has managed to grow while preserving many qualities of a small town and the Humback Bridge is an essential and unique part of the history that makes Gaithersburg so special. Gaithersburg gives you the feeling of a quiet town far from the big city. The residential areas have personality and charm and the Humback Bridge adds to the character of our City. We have trees and yards and flowers, unlike some of the newer developments where huge homes are just crammed in. When giving directions to our home all we say is "do you know where the Humback Bridge is?" It's such a landmark in Gaithersburg, that everyone knows where it is. Preserving the Humback Bridge would ensure that our neighborhood and quality of life would also be preserved.

Having a small child and lots of nieces and nephews who come to visit, we appreciate the fact that speed bumps were installed on our residential road to help ease the traffic speeds and volume in our neighborhood. Even though there is still a problem with speeding, loud music and littering, we just cringe when we think of what it would be like with a wider, longer, higher bridge. It would be devastating to our community. The traffic speed and volume would only increase as would the danger and safety concerns for our children and elderly residents. We just simply do not need more traffic passing through our peaceful neighborhood. It would also mean that some businesses and homeowners' land would be destroyed. Many have worked long and hard to be able to buy and maintain their homes and to destroy properties for something that will only destroy our neighborhood just isn't right.

We believe that the best solution, both financially and for safety reasons, is to preserve the Humback Bridge as an historical landmark in Gaithersburg. We recall when the bridge was rehabilitated in 2000 and understand it was also done in 1988 so one would think that future preservation costs would be more



reasonable than the millions needed to build a new bridge. The bridge has served its purpose for many years and it would be a waste of money when other more important County concerns such as our schools, gangs, homeland security, or the homeless could benefit.

To preserve the quality of life for the communities of East Deer Park Drive and Washington Grove, the right thing to do is rehabilitate and preserve the Humback Bridge. It would be the most cost effective and least disruptive to our communities. The only thing that would change is the bridge would be repaired. No resident, business, nor any historic site would be effected and that will make everyone in our communities happy. Humback bridges are very unique in design and very rare. It would be a shame to tear down such an exceptional and almost extinct bridge that we are fortunate enough to have right here in Gaithersburg - in our neighborhood - only to replace it with a monstrous modern bridge that will not conform with our communities and only bring turmoil to the residents.

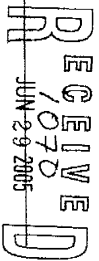
The final decision will ultimately effect many lives. We are confident that if you and your families were in our shoes you would feel the same as we do. You have the power to help prevent this from happening and we encourage you to support the nomination of the bridge to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert & Julie Mixell  
208 East Deer Park Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

cc: Clare Cavicchi



MCP-Chairman

From: Bob and Katie Brewer [brewer000@comcast.net]

Sent: Tuesday, June 28, 2005 9:03 PM

To: Cavicchi, Clare; MCP-Chairman

Cc: Janet Neumann; skatz@gaithersburgmd.gov; delegatesimmons@aol.com

Subject: M-NCPPC-Historic Preservation hearing-Gaithersburg Humpback bridge

Derrick Berlage

Chair:

Montgomery County Planning Board

M-NCPPC

8787 Georgia Ave

Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Chairman Berlage

I am respectfully urging you to fully support the nomination of the Washington Grove Humpback Bridge to be included in the County's master plan for Historic Preservation.

I feel this bridge is essential to the historic and rustic character of this neighborhood, and replacing it would destroy a true landmark and link to Montgomery's Counties past.

I moved here in 1995 because prior to that I used to drive on this road (E. Deepark Dr) and think what a beautiful place this would be to live. I use the bridge in general direction's to my neighborhood and enjoy it everyday.

It fully complements both the DeepPark and Washington Grove neighborhood's and replacing it would certainly hurt (permanently) the old fashioned feel and looks of this very unique part of Gaithersburg/Mont. CO.

As you may already know, there is a heavy volume of traffic already on this road (I knew this but chose to live here anyway) and Mont CO has serious plans to replace this bridge with a modern (no esthetics, zero personality, or historic looks) bridge with multiple lanes, this would only increase the # of cars thru here everyday, eliminating once and for all the looks, feel and intangibles of this area.

It would also drastically effect (negatively) the quality of life for those of us living on E. DeepPark Dr.

I feel very sincerely that this money could be spent in many more pressing areas of the county's budget, and that in the big picture/long run, people would look back and say that saving the Humpback bridge was one of the smartest things we ever did. Historic Preservation wise.

What we don't need in this area are poorly thought out short term answers to congestion, and I would again respectfully ask that you do everything in your power to ensure that this bridge will last for many more years.

I plan to attend and testify at the upcoming July 14th, Montgomery County Planning Board hearing.

Most Sincerely Yours

Robert & Kathryn Brewer

205 E. Deepark Dr

Gaithersburg, MD 20877

301-977-0087

From: Richard Cavicchi [rcavicchi@verizon.net]

Sent: Saturday, July 02, 2005 1:06 PM

To: Berlage, Derrick

Cc: Nancogh@aol.com; washingtongrove@yahoo.com; Cavicchi, Clare

Subject: Humpback Bridge

Dear Mr. Berlage

I am writing to you about the "humpback" bridge near Washington Grove. This is a unique structure who's quirkiness is evident even in the sound of it's universally applied name. I like saying "humpback bridge" very slowly, and perhaps repeating it a few times when giving directions. Often in giving directions to Washington Grove, I find that all I need to do is mention "It is near the 'humpback bridge'" and the listener will nod the head with recognition and smile and say, "Oh yeah, I know where that is."

In a way, the odd character of this transition point reflects the unusual and somewhat out-of-time eccentricity that is Washington Grove. It is unexpected when approached from Deer Park Rd, and even more so, when a driver comes upon it by performing the out-and-back maneuver from Oakmont. A newcomer would say to him/herself "what is this"? But newcomer or regular commuter will have to slow down to negotiate the hump, as passengers in the car take a gander at the freight train rumbling below and sounding the odd chords of what serves as a "train whistle" these days. Perhaps even peering to see what those cars are carting anyway, if they are open lid.

The bridge is not the destination, but rather the gateway. It's even shaped like an arch, a rainbow, but you don't go through it, you go over it. What you find on the other side is a different place, with its tall trees (that don't throw apples!), architecture out of a child's fantasy, and a transportation system of alleys and walkways that is nothing like the broad-enough roads-for-the-rv-boat-and-fourth-vehicle-to-park. Why shouldn't the gateway be a bridge that is not like any other in the area?

I can imagine the scramble to find historic photos of the bridge to bolster the case for saving it and the exclamations of joy when that photo that has been shared around lately was found. There aren't going to be a lot of photos of this bridge- it is experienced by the traversing of it. It is a part of the setting that gently resides in the background of our experience, taken for granted like growing up and growing old.

But it, like other things we may value, is fragile, like an egg sitting on a wall. Let us steer clear of the fate of our bridge's near namesake, and put all our king's horses and men to good use while we have the opportunity.

Sincerely,  
Richard Cavicchi  
PO Box 64  
Washington Grove, MD  
20880

7/6/2005

Caviochi, Clare

From: Janet Neumann [j\_neumann@verizon.net]  
Sent: Tuesday, June 28, 2005 4:46 PM  
To: MCP-Chairman  
Cc: Caviochi, Clare  
Subject: Humpback Bridge nomination for the Master Plan for Historic Preservation

Dear Chairman Berlage and Planning Board Members,

I have learned that the Planning Board will be having a public hearing and worksession on July 14th where the nomination of the Humpback Bridge to be added to the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation will be discussed. Unfortunately, I will be out of the country on that date and cannot come to testify. But I want to strongly support this nomination to the Master Plan.

I have lived on East Deer Park Drive, just down from the Humpback Bridge, for the past 18 years and have used this unique bridge as a "landmark" to tell people where I live and how to get here for years. It is a widely recognized landmark which has been part of this neighborhood for over 100 years! This bridge represents a period of history that is so frequently being destroyed in our current times of "bigger and better" mentality. Galthersburg, Washington Grove, and the Oakmont areas all began as rural, railroad communities and this Humpback Bridge was a link between our communities and is still more than adequately meeting that need. All three of the surrounding neighborhoods remain reasonably quiet, residential areas, and the size and scale of the current bridge fits right in with that picture. Building a new multi-lane bridge over the tracks will destroy the identity of these neighborhoods as we have known them for over 100 years. As time and traffic marches on, we want to save what little is left of our rural past. When you come up to the bridge from any direction, you see the old, large trees, the rustic look of the wooden Humpback Bridge, and from some directions, the old Galthersburg silo in the background. This is a site we would like to preserve for ourselves and for future generations. You and the Planning Board have the ability to help make this happen, and I encourage you strongly to make that recommendation to the County Executive and Council. We have so precious little space left that has not been developed or redeveloped. Preserving the Humpback Bridge and the surrounding areas is a huge opportunity to maintain a small piece of our railroad community's history.

The current study being done by DPWT appears to be set on removing our historical bridge. Their rationale seems to revolve around safety which I believe can and has been refuted by many. The idea that a one-lane bridge is not safe for moving traffic across the tracks is just simply not true. This bridge, in fact, makes it safer because it causes traffic to slow down and only allows movement of traffic in one direction at a time and the traffic is slowed or calmed by having the one-lane bridge. This is good for our communities! A multi-lane bridge would bring increasing numbers of cut through drivers going at faster speeds into our residential neighborhoods that are not designed to carry that much traffic and certainly not at any higher speeds than we already have. In fact, we have four speed humps on our road now to try to reduce the speeding traffic on our residential road. We have large roads all around (355, Shady Grove, Mid County Highway) which WERE built to take the bulk of commuting traffic. Our residential roads are NOT built to handle cut through commuting traffic, nor should it be encouraged by taking away our historic Humpback Bridge.

DPWT has also indicated that there are a large number of school bus accidents on the bridge. Again, this is not true. Some buses have scraped some paint when not making a proper turn, but no serious

accident has occurred. Being concerned about the huge number of school buses traveling on East Deer Park, I personally did a school bus count on May 17, 2005 and found that ninety (90) traveled our road that day. Not all, but a large number went over the bridge. Therefore, if the County School System felt that this bridge was so unsafe, do you think they would be letting 50-70 buses cross it each day?

Regarding DPWT's implication that the bridge is not structurally sound for many more years. Well, all things deteriorate, but they can also be rehabbed. While America may only be a couple hundred years old, and our infrastructure fairly new compared to Europe for example, it is obvious that many very old structures in our world have been rehabbed over and over to preserve them as historical structures. We have the current technology to rehab this bridge for many decades into the future. In addition, the costs to rehab should be a fraction of what a new multi-lane bridge would cost with all the adjoining road reconstruction that would be required to access this proposed behemoth. We have far more pressing needs for our County tax money than building a new bridge that will not provide increased safety, will increase traffic, noise and pollution into our residential neighborhoods and will destroy our historical, Humpback Bridge.

Please, please help us save this small piece of our history by recommending this unique, landmark bridge to be placed on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Thank you,

Janet Neumann  
211 E Deer Park Drive  
Galthersburg, MD 20877  
301-990-1123  
j\_neumann@verizon.net