






MCPB 06/12/08
Item # 4

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 6, 2008
TO: Montgomery County Planning Board
VIA: Michael F. Riley, Deputy Director of Administration 
Douglas Alexander, Acting Chief, Park Development Division 
Michael Ma, Acting Supervisor, Project Management Section 
FROM: Dilip Pandya, Project Manager, Park Development Division
SUBJECT: Amendment and Special Appropriation to the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for the Rock Creek Pedestrian Bridge PDF 048703

RECOMMENDATION

Approve transmittal of a request to the County Council for an Amendment and Special Appropriation to the FY09-14 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for design and construction of the Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge. The proposed PDF seeks increased funding in the amount of \$1,589,000. The Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) will provide this additional funding from the Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP). The total project cost is \$8,351,000.

SPECIAL APPROPRIATION

Staff recommends requesting the additional appropriation as a Special Appropriation due to its emergency nature. County Council approval of the amendment must be obtained in time to award a contract for the project before the low bid expires in October 2008.

Upon the Planning Board's approval of the amendment request, staff will immediately forward the request to the County Council staff for review and introduction. We expect the Council staff to schedule a public hearing for this amendment in about a month, with approval by the Council to occur in late July before the summer recess.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail is a heavily used trail that extends 15 miles from Beach Drive at the District of Columbia line to Lake Needwood in Rock Creek Regional Park. The trail north of Veirs Mill Road currently ends at Aspen Hill Local Park and travels approximately ¼ mile on local streets to cross Aspen Hill Road and Veirs Mill Road at a signalized intersection. High levels of vehicle traffic are encountered at both crosswalks by trail users and transit users accessing and transferring between adjacent WMATA and County Ride-On bus stops. The proposed pedestrian bridge will provide a grade separated crossing for the trail over Veirs Mill Road and remove the need for the on-road segment. It would also provide paved connections from the bridge to adjacent public transit stops (see Site Plan, Attachment A).

The Countywide Park Trails Plan identified the Veirs Mill Road crossing as a priority for safety improvements at high traffic volume trail-road intersections. Over a three-year period prior to the planning study for the bridge, there were five reported accidents between vehicles and trail users at this intersection, and one of these accidents was a pedestrian fatality. In 2000, during the Planning Board's review of the mandatory referral for MSHA's project for intersection improvements at Veirs Mill Road and Aspen Hill Road, the Board recommended a grade separated crossing of Veirs Mill Road for the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail.

This proposal was supported by the Aspen Hill Civic Association, as well as the County Council in an adopted resolution (#14-773) pertaining to the MSHA project. The Council recommended that the State fund the bridge and that it be done on a schedule commensurate with construction of the intersection improvements in 2003. The Maryland Department of Transportation recommended that Montgomery County apply for Transportation Enhancement Program Funds, and in November 2003, M-NCPPC submitted an application.

Project Design

The facility planning study evaluated five alternatives for the trail connection and bridge, and selected an alignment that provides the shortest and most direct connection between the two ends of the trail in a configuration that would accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and occasional vehicle use for maintenance or police patrols. The facility plan was approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board on September 11, 2003.

Detailed design for the project began in FY05. The proposed project length is 0.33 miles and includes a new 605-foot span steel girder bridge on concrete piers and abutments over Veirs Mill Road, approximately 1,120 feet of 8-foot wide trail approaches, and additional length of spur trail and sidewalk connections to the adjacent community. The project meets access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Beginning at its current terminus in Aspen Hill Local Park, the Rock Creek Trail bridge connection traverses wooded parkland to reach the north side of Veirs Mill Road. The land north of Veirs Mill Road is approximately 18-20 feet above the grade of the road, so the bridge

elevation is level with existing grade on the north side of the road. The road and land south of Veirs Mill Road is lower by approximately 20 feet, which requires ramping down to connect the existing trail grade to the south. The land south of the road also includes some floodplain areas, which limit the opportunity for grading these ramps and result in a longer bridge structure than might otherwise be required.

Art Work

In order to improve the design and appearance of the bridge, as well as to keep the bridge in scale with pedestrians, the Public Arts Trust of the Montgomery County Arts & Humanities Council was consulted. The Trust provided \$10,000 during the facility planning stage of the project to include an artist on the design team to identify opportunities for public art. Vicki Scuri, who has a nationwide reputation and extensive experience with the design of infrastructure, bridges and highway projects, was selected for this project. Her recommendations have been integrated in the design of the bridge and reference the historical roots of the Veirs Mill, which was located along Rock Creek several hundred feet west of the bridge location on the south side of the road.

The design components of the bridge connect the Victorian era of the Veirs Mill through contemporary design motifs that draw their inspiration from mill iconography and Victorian design. Design elements include concrete patterning for the piers and barrier walls that references mill stone motifs; designing the required metal cage over the bridge at the road to reference Victorian geometrical shapes and to create interesting shadow patterns on the walkway to provide human scale and interest; and using color on the metal cage, handrails and concrete paving. An interpretive sign will be included on the bridge at a point that overlooks the historic mill site.

Public Input

Meetings were held with the Aspen Hill community throughout the course of the project to obtain their input during both the facility planning and the detailed design stages of the project. Staff has also worked closely with the Maryland State Highway Administration for review and approval of the project throughout all stages of design.

Project Funding

In February 2002, the Planning Board sent a request to the County Council to add \$333,000 to its FY03-08 CIP submission for the purpose of completing a facility plan for the pedestrian bridge, with the expectation that the facility plan would be completed in time to request the TEP funding in the Fall of 2003. The Council approved this request, and M-NCPPC staff worked in conjunction with the Montgomery County Department of Public Works & Transportation to complete the facility plan in September 2003. On November 18, 2003, in Resolution 15-388, the County Council amended the FY03-08 CIP and approved a PDF for the design and construction of the project. This amendment was needed in order to provide evidence of the County's commitment to provide matching funds for the TEP grant.

Staff applied for the TEP grant in November 2003, and was awarded funding of \$2,368,000 in July of 2004. In October 2006, after receiving official notification that Montgomery County's FY07 Program Open Space (POS) apportionment would be a greater allocation than expected, the Council approved a PDF that substituted POS funding for a portion (\$1,631,000) of the County General Obligation Bonds. The remaining cost to the County was \$2,329,000.

During the latter stages of the detailed design, the cost estimate for the project increased due to the overall increase in industry-wide costs experienced throughout the facility planning and design stages. In order to address the increase, staff contacted the State Highway Administration to begin the process for requesting an increase in TEP funds. On November 10, 2005, the SHA counseled staff to wait until the completion of the design before applying for any increase in funds.

On October 31, 2007, the Board submitted its FY09-14 Parks CIP request to the Executive and Council, including the Rock Creek Pedestrian Bridge project. We sought an increase in County bonds for the project in the amount of \$434,000, which increased the total project cost from \$6,328,000 to \$6,762,000. The request included the understanding that we would seek additional TEP funding, which if successful would be used to offset the requested County bond amount. On February 25, 2008, we submitted a request to SHA for the additional \$434,000, and on March 14, 2008, SHA responded by requiring that we provide the TEP Executive Committee with the bid results so that the request would be for the amount actually needed.

Project Status

We received Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval to advertise the project for construction on February 15, 2008, which was the final approval needed to advertise. The project was advertised on March 17, 2008 and the bids were opened on May 5, 2008. The low bid is higher than the consultant engineer's estimate that was used in our FY09-14 CIP request for the project. Immediately following the bid, staff contacted the State Highway Administration to request additional TEP funds. To fully fund the project, staff's request was for an increase of \$2,118,542. In its May 23, 2008 letter (see Attachment B), the State offered to provide 75% of the request, or \$1,588,907, bringing the total TEP funds for the project to \$3,956,907.

In order to construct the project at this funding level, staff recommends making several value-engineering cost savings to the project. In addition, we must continue to include the previously requested \$434,000 County bond funding as part of the overall project funding package. Staff is confident that these measures will allow us to contract with the low bidder and construct the project within the available funds.

If the special appropriation funding request is approved by the Planning Board and County Council, the construction will begin in the later part of 2008.

COST INCREASE

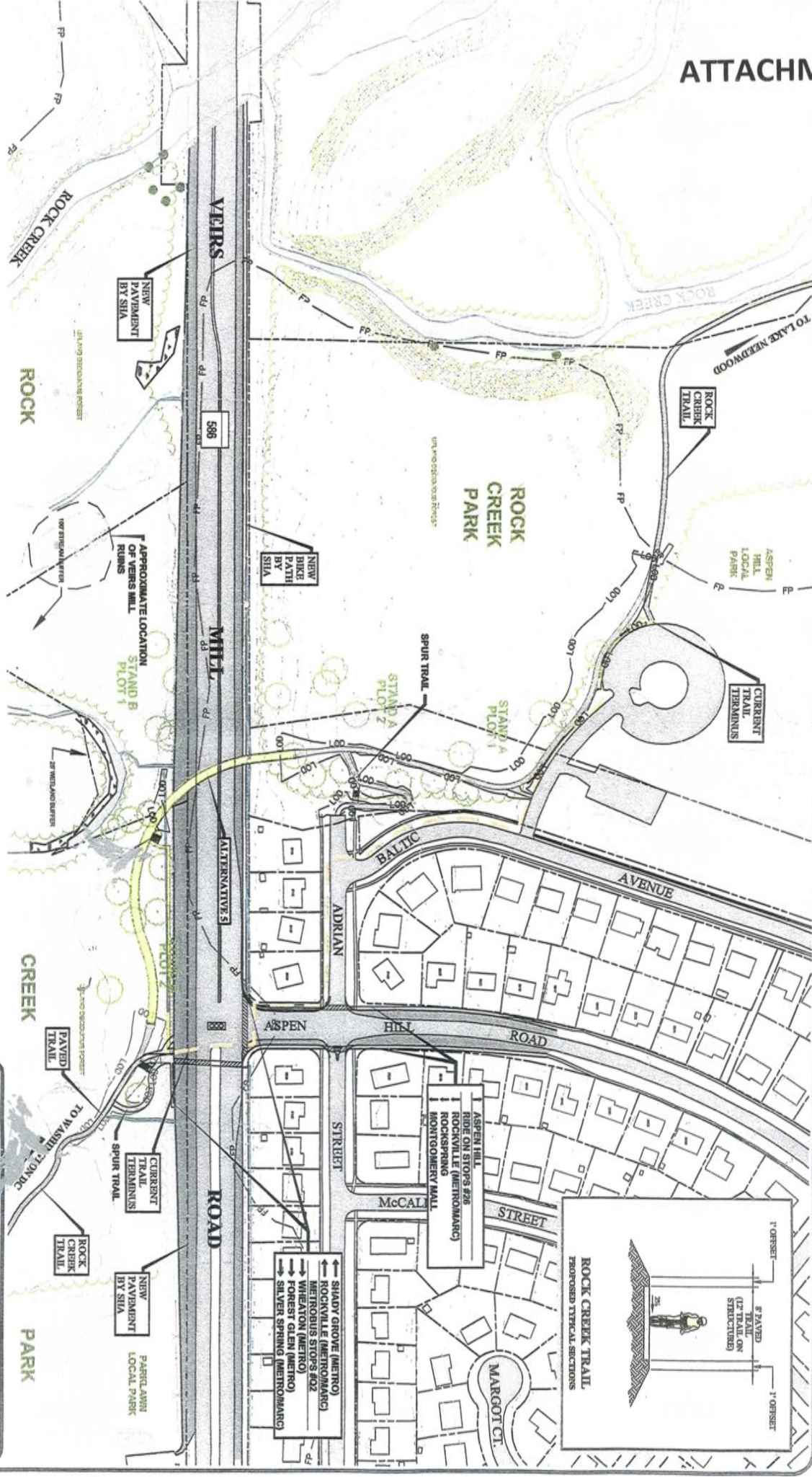
The low bid of \$6,040,076 is higher than the consultant engineer's estimate of \$4,949,935. Staff attributes the increase in construction costs to the continuing industry-wide increase in costs experienced since the approval of the initial project. The consultant engineer's estimate used for the FY09-14 PDF was provided in April 2007, one year before the construction bid. In addition, the artwork components of the project, which are integrated in various structural elements of the bridge and trail, were not accurately estimated by the engineer due to lack of recent comparables. As part of the value engineering assessment for the project, staff is proposing to include modifications to the art components to lower the overall project cost.

Based on the construction bids received and on the low bid amount, and consistent with the State offer of an additional \$1,598,000, staff is recommending the overall project cost be increased from \$6,762,000 as adopted by the County Council to \$8,351,000. The \$1,589,000 increase will be met by the increased TEP grant (formerly titled TEA-21).

Staff recommends requesting the additional appropriation as a Special Appropriation and Amendment to the FY09-14 Parks CIP (see Revised PDF, Attachment C).

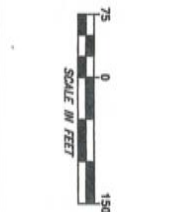
ATTACHMENTS

- A. Site Plan and bridge artwork illustrations
- B. SHA's May 23, 2008, letter offer of additional TEP funds
- C. Revised PDF



LEGEND

PROPERTY LINE	EXISTING TREES	CURRENT PROPOSED/ADJUSTED ROUTE
STRAIN ON CREEK	TREE LINE	SIA INTERSECTION RECONSTRUCTION
PROPOSED WALKWAY	MANHOLE/UTILITY LOCATION	PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION HIGH TRAIL
FP - FLOOR PLAN BOUNDARY	STREET SIGN PLACEMENT	PROPOSED RECONSTRUCTION TRAIL CROSSING
LOD - LIMIT OF DISTURBANCE		



M-NCPPC

ROCK CREEK TRAIL BRIDGE

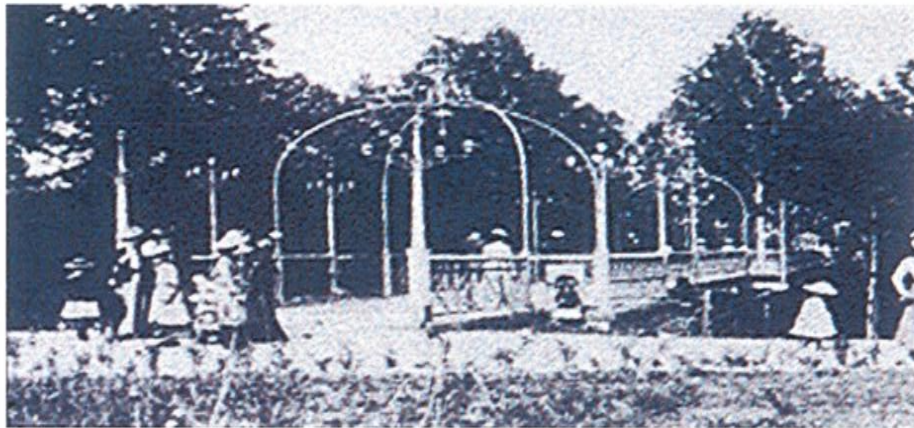
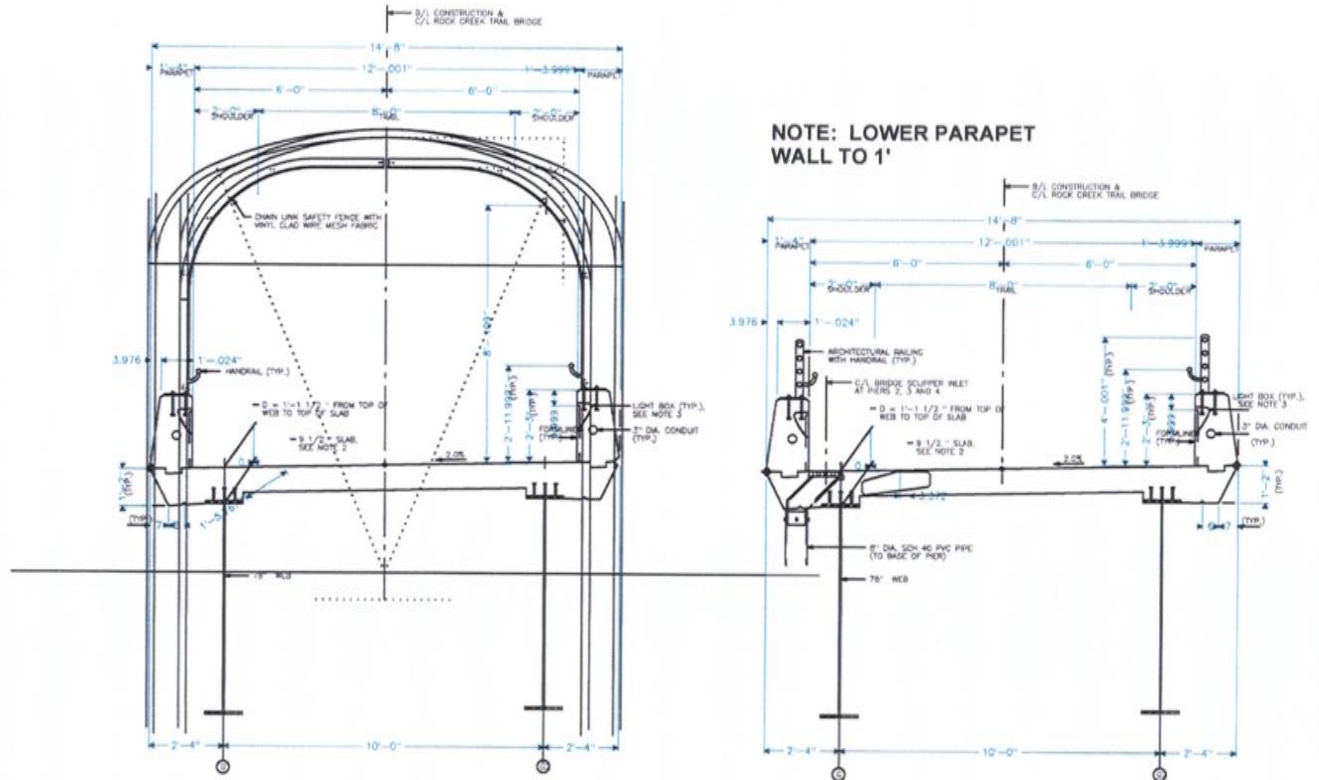
PREFERRED FACILITY PLAN

DATE: FEBRUARY 2004
SCALE: AS SHOWN

URS
Engineering & Construction Services
1000 North 17th Street, Suite 2000
Columbia, Maryland 21046
TELEPHONE: 410-326-7200

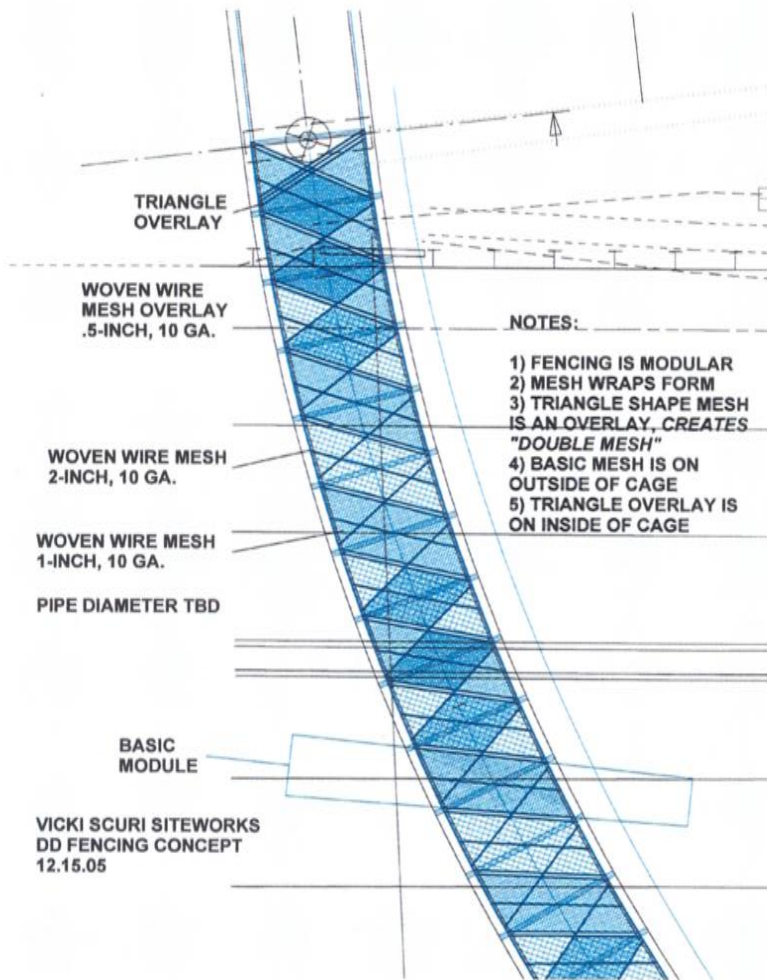
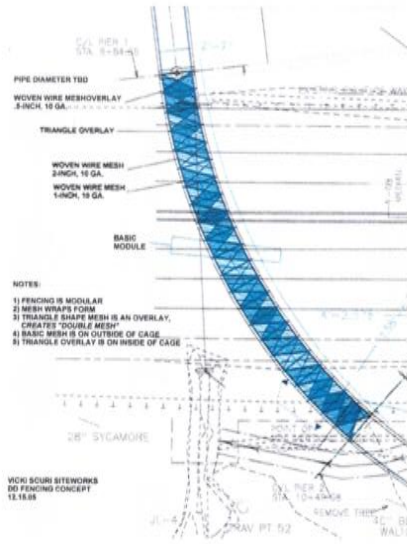
BRIDGE: **2**

Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge – Cage Cross Section

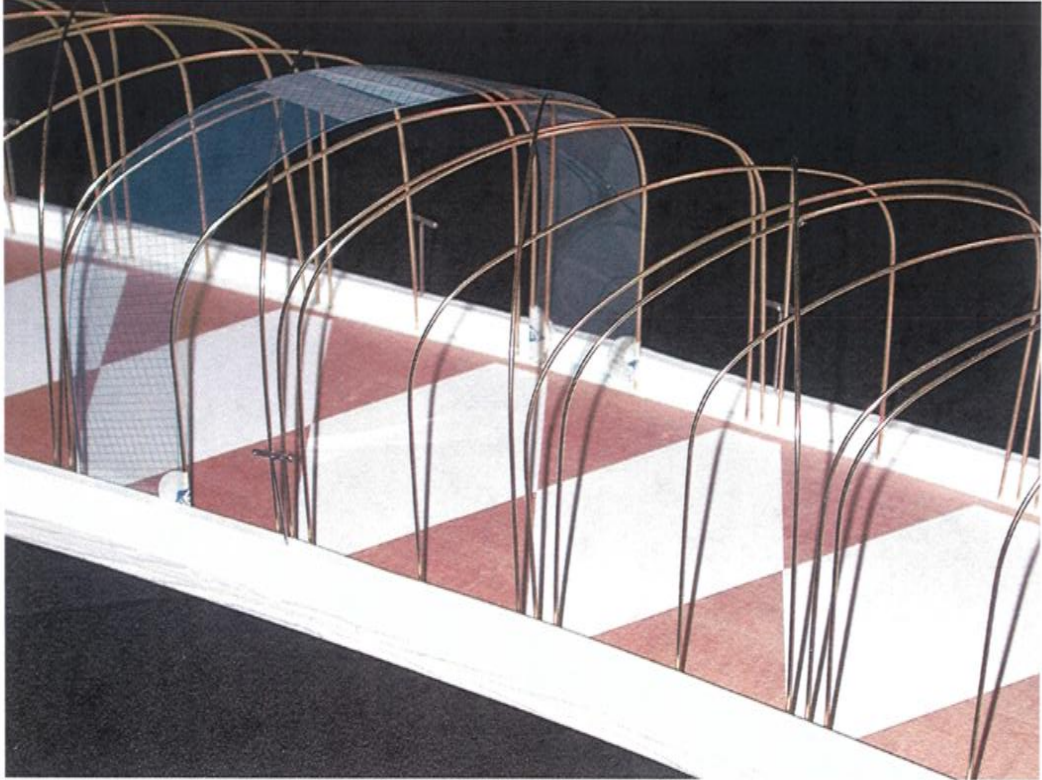
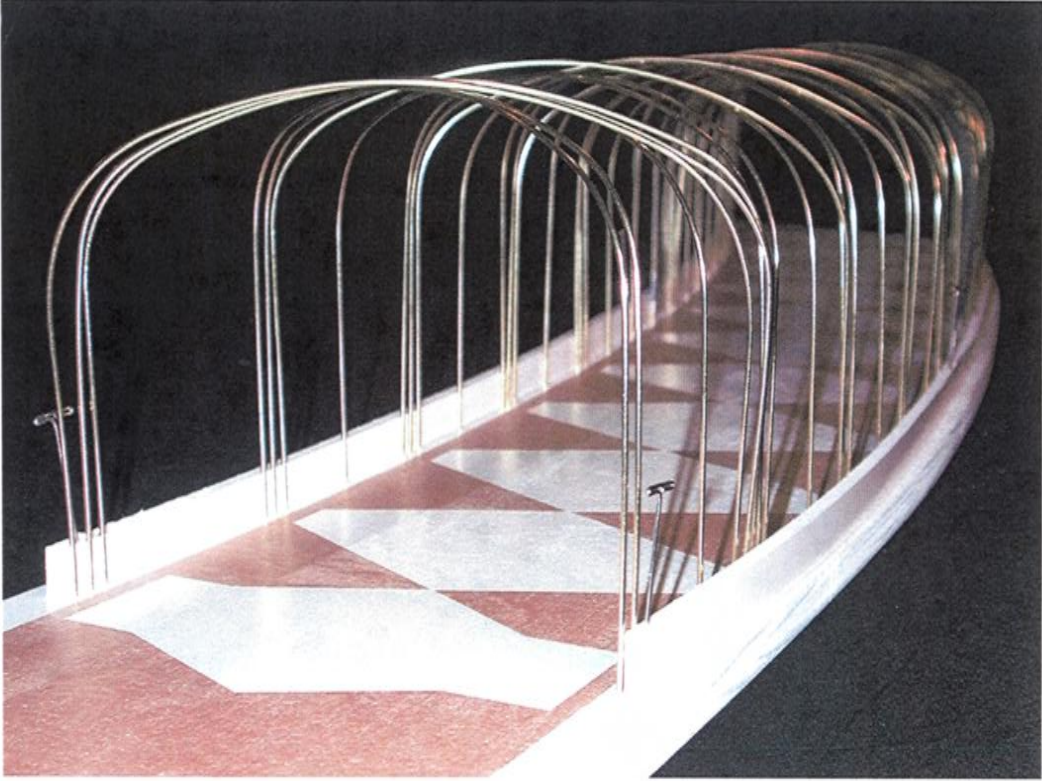


Historical Reference – Cabin John Bridge

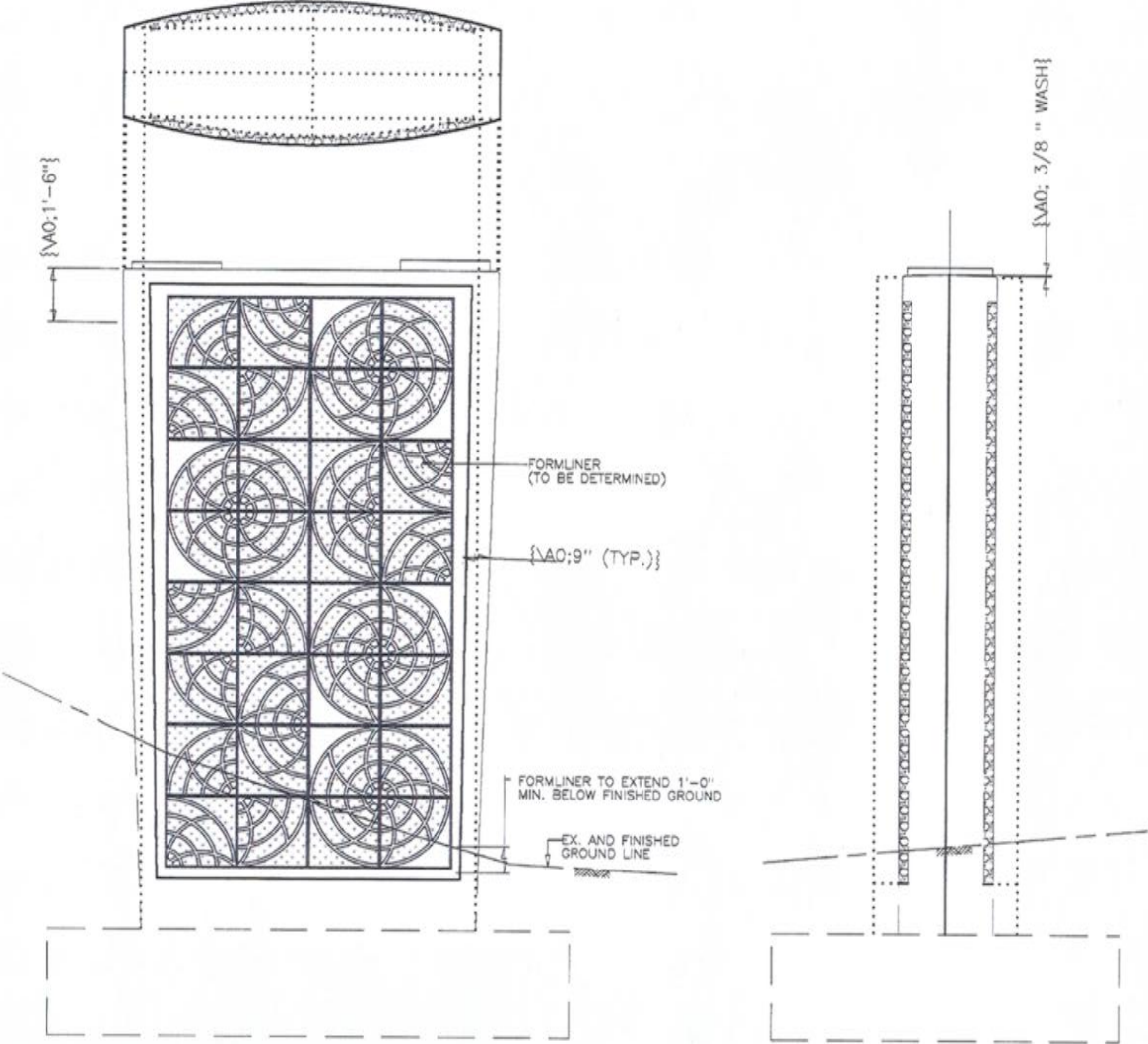
Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge – Cage Fencing Plan



Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge – Model of Cage Structure & Paving



Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge – Concrete Pier Patterning





Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

John D. Porcari, Secretary
Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator

Maryland Department of Transportation

May 23, 2008

Ms. Tin-Mala
Grants Manager
Office of the Director
Montgomery County Department of Parks
Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission
1400 Spring Street
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Ms. Tin-Mala:

Thank you for the request from the Montgomery County Department of Parks, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission for an additional \$2,118,542 in Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) funding. This request would have increased the current award of \$2,368,000 to \$4,486,542 in TEP dollars, for the construction of the Rock Creek Hiker Biker Trail Bridge over Viers Mills Road. The request was reviewed by the TEP Executive Committee at their meeting May 14, 2008.

The Executive Committee was pleased that the project has been advertised, but was concerned with the high cost of the project. In the interest of assisting the Commission to proceed with a project that has taken several years to bring to the point of advertisement, the Executive Committee has generously offered to provide an additional \$1,588,907 or seventy-five percent of the requested amount. This will bring the total TEP funds available for this project to \$3,956,907.

Thank you again for your request. If you plan to move forward with the project with the amount of TEP funds offered, please proceed with the required concurrence in award package for submission to State Highway Administration (SHA). If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Mary Keller, SHA's Enhancement Program Liaison, at 410-545-5675, toll-free 888-204-4828 or via email at mkeller@sha.state.md.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Simmons', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Douglas H. Simmons
Deputy Administrator/Chief Engineer
for Planning and Engineering

cc: Ms. Mary Keller, Enhancement Program Liaison, SHA
Mr. Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator, SHA
Mr. John D. Porcari, Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation



My telephone number/toll-free number is 410-545-0411 or 866-697-0559
Maryland Relay Service for Impaired Hearing or Speech: 1.800.735.2258 Statewide Toll Free

Street Address: 707 North Calvert Street · Baltimore, Maryland 21202 · Phone: 410.545.0300 · www.marylandroads.com

Rock Creek Trail Pedestrian Bridge -- No. 048703

Category M-NCPPC
 Subcategory Development
 Administering Agency M-NCPPC
 Planning Area Aspen Hill

Date Last Modified
 Required Adequate Public Facility
 Relocation Impact
 Status

June 05, 2008
 No
 None
 Bids Let

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY07	Est. FY08	Total 6 Years	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	1,440	422	357	661	250	311	100	0	0	0	0
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	6,911	0	800	6,111	2,334	2,877	900	0	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8,351	422	1,157	6,772	2,584	3,188	1,000	0	0	0	0

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

Program Open Space	1,631	0	400	1,231	100	631	500	0	0	0	0
TEA-21	3,957	0	400	3,557	500	2,557	500	0	0	0	0
G.O. Bonds	2,763	422	357	1,984	1,984	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	8,351	422	1,157	6,772	2,584	3,188	1,000	0	0	0	0

	OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (\$000)									
Work Years					0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Maintenance				25	0	21	1	1	1	1
Program-Staff				110	0	22	22	22	22	22

DESCRIPTION

The Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail extends 15 miles from Beach Drive at the District of Columbia line to Lake Needwood in Rock Creek Regional Park. The trail currently crosses Veirs Mill Road at grade at its signalized intersection with Aspen Hill Road. To the north of Veirs Mill Road, the trail is on-street for approximately 0.2 miles traversing Aspen Hill Road, Adrian Street, Baltic Avenue, and finally the access drive to Aspen Hill Local Park before continuing northward as a trail. The proposed pedestrian bridge will provide a grade separated crossing for the Rock Creek Hiker-Biker Trail over Veirs Mill Road and remove the need for the on-street section described above. It would also provide the opportunity for local residents of the Aspen Hill community to cross Veirs Mill Road on the bridge to access bus transit or other destinations without crossing at grade at the busy intersection of Veirs Mill Road and Aspen Hill Road.

COST CHANGE

Increase due to construction bids higher than estimated as a result of escalating industry-wide costs in steel, concrete and wages.

JUSTIFICATION

On February 13, 2001, the County Council adopted Resolution 14-773 pertaining to the improvement of Veirs Mill Road/Aspen Hill intersection. Listed among the County Council's recommendations was "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."

The Planning Board approved the facility plan on September 11, 2003. Aspen Hill Master Plan, approved 1994. Countywide Plan of Trails, approved 1998.

FISCAL NOTE

An FY09 Supplemental Appropriation for \$1,589,000 was approved. The source of funds is a TEP (formerly TEA-21) Grant. This additional appropriation was necessary because of industry-wide cost increases in steel, concrete and wages.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis has been completed for this project.
- M-NCPPC asserts that this project conforms to the requirements of relevant local plans, as required by the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA	COORDINATION	MAP
Date First Appropriation FY05 (\$000)	Facility Planning: Non-Local Parks PDF 958776 Trails: Hard Surface Design and Construction PDF 768673 Montgomery County Department of Transportation State of Maryland Department of Transportation	See Map on Next Page
First Cost Estimate		
Current Scope FY05 5,760		
Last FY's Cost Estimate 6,328		
Appropriation Request FY09 434		
Appropriation Request Est. FY10 0		
Supplemental Appropriation Request 1,589		
Transfer 0		
Cumulative Appropriation 6,328		
Expenditures / Encumbrances 621		
Unencumbered Balance 5,707		
Partial Closeout Thru FY06 0		
New Partial Closeout FY07 0		
Total Partial Closeout 0		