

PUBLIC HEARING

REPLACEMENT OF PARK VALLEY ROAD BRIDGE NO. MPK-03 OVER SLIGO CREEK AND IMPROVEMENTS OF SLIGO CREEK TRAIL AROUND PARK VALLEY ROAD

Capital Improvement Project No. 501523

*October 29, 2015, 6:00 p.m.
Executive Office Building Auditorium
Rockville, Maryland*

*Testimony of
Bruce E. Johnston, P.E. Chief
Division of Transportation Engineering
Department of Transportation:*

GREETING

Thank you, Mr. Erenrich. Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. My name is Bruce Johnston and I am the Chief of the Division of Transportation Engineering for the Montgomery County Department of Transportation.

The purpose of today's public hearing is to present to you a proposal for the replacement of Bridge No. MPK-03 on Park Valley Road over Sligo Creek and the improvements of Sligo Creek Hiker/Biker Trail in the vicinity of Park Valley Road in the Thirteenth Election District of Montgomery County.

PURPOSE AND NEED

This project is needed to replace Bridge No. MPK-03 due to its age and condition. It is also needed to improve the Sligo Creek Trail to enhance safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Built in 1931, the existing bridge is a 30-foot long single span structure carrying a 20-foot wide roadway with a 5-foot sidewalk on the south. The 2013 Biennial Bridge Inspection Report reveals that the concrete deck and beams are in poor condition with a bridge sufficiency rating of 48.7 out of 100. Preliminary engineering studies have substantiated the need for a full bridge replacement. Furthermore, the existing bridge parapets are in poor condition and do not conform to current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards for vehicle crash safety. Although the existing condition is not an immediate danger to the public, the bridge is considered structurally deficient. It is currently posted with 30,000 lbs. limit for any of the Maryland State Legal Load Trucks.

The existing hard surface Sligo Creek Trail in the vicinity of Park Valley Road is considered as an unsafe pedestrian/bicycle facility and does not comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The trail runs from north to south through a hard surface parking lot for approximately 140 feet at the northwest corner of the Park Valley Road Bridge, crosses Park Valley Road at mid-block without a marked crosswalk, and continues on a 20 feet wide roadway without shoulders for approximately 70 feet. The trail then follows an excessive 12.5% slope path for approximately 40 feet at the southeast corner of the bridge.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

For your convenience, we have brought several displays that show key features of the project.

For orientation purposes, please refer to “Location and Detour Plan”, Display A. The existing crossing of Bridge No. MPK-03 over Sligo Creek is located approximately 0.2 mile east of MD 320, Piney Branch Road, and approximately 70 feet west of Sligo Creek Parkway. Park Valley Road is designated as a secondary residential road.

The proposed project involves:

- 1) replacing the existing deteriorated Park Valley Road Bridge, and reconstructing approximately 85 feet of approach roadway and approximately 85 of sidewalk connector to tie the roadway bridge into the existing road and trail;
- 2) Replacing the existing Sligo Creek Trail in the vicinity of Park Valley Road at a new off-road alignment for approximately 213 feet, and constructing of a new 65-foot single span permanent pedestrian bridge over Sligo Creek;
- 3) Reconfiguring the existing substandard mini circle intersection with Sligo Creek Parkway to become a conventional T-intersection;
- 4) Removing the existing hard surface parking lot at the northwest of the Park Valley Road Bridge and restoring the area to natural surface; and
- 5) Installing new stream stabilization measures for Sligo Creek in the vicinity of the Park Valley Road and the proposed pedestrian bridge to protect the stream from erosion and scour.

The “**Site Plan**”, Display B, depicts our proposal.

The **RED** dashed lines outline the existing 30’ foot long roadway bridge structure to be removed.

The **LIGHT GRAY** area shows the existing roadway and trail to remain.

The **BROWN** area shows the new 34 feet long replacement roadway bridge, consisting of precast prestressed concrete beams with a reinforced concrete deck slab that will be supported on two new reinforced concrete abutments. The new bridge will provide a 26-foot clear roadway width that will accommodate two 10-foot travel lanes and two 3-foot shoulders, plus a 5-foot 8-inch sidewalk on the south side of the bridge. The existing vertical profile and horizontal alignment of the bridge will be maintained. Stone veneers will be installed over the fascia faces of the new bridge parapets and abutments to provide an aesthetic that matches the stone masonry character of the existing bridge as close as possible.

The **GREEN** area shows the existing hard surface that will be removed and be restored to green natural surface at the Sligo Creek Parkway intersection, the Sligo Creek Trail and the existing parking lot at the northwest corner of the Park Valley Road Bridge.

The **YELLOW** area shows the new 12 feet wide 65-foot signal span simply supported prefabricated steel truss pedestrian bridge with timber deck.

The **DARK GRAY** area represents new approach roadway and sidewalk, and new trail tying the new roadway bridge and pedestrian bridge to the existing roadway and trail.

The project will meet all applicable federal, state and local regulations to ensure the project minimizes impacts on adjacent environmental and community resources. Environmental reviews and permits for this project are being performed or processed by federal, state and local environmental agencies including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland State Highway Administration Environmental Planning Division, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services.

To minimize the construction duration and associated traffic disruption to the traveling public, The Park Valley Road in Sligo Creek Park will be closed to traffic during construction while maintaining traffic with a detour. Please refer to “Location and Detour Plan”, Display A, for details of the detour. During the roadway closure, traffic will be detoured through Park Valley Road, Piney Branch Road and Sligo Creek Parkway for a distance of 1.2 miles. This detour route is selected to comply with County policy to only use similar or higher level classified roads as suitable detour roads.

Pedestrian and bicycle access on Sligo Creek Trail will be maintained throughout the construction period by phase construction as follows:

- Phases 1-2: Construct the new permanent pedestrian bridge and a temporary trail through the pedestrian bridge at the east of the Park Valley Road Bridge.
Pedestrian/bicycle access will be maintained thru the existing trail.

Phases 3-6: Construct the Park Valley Road Bridge, approach roadway, sidewalk connector, new trail, intersection and stream stabilization. Pedestrian/bicycle access will be maintained thru the new pedestrian bridge and temporary trail.

All the construction activities are within Sligo Creek Park or roadway right-of-way. No land acquisition is required for this project.

COST AND ASSESEMENTS

The total cost of this project is currently estimated at three million nine hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$3,950,000) including engineering, site improvements, utilities, construction, and construction management and inspection. This project will be partially funded by the County with the remaining finds coming from Federal Funds.

As indicated in the Executive Order authorizing this hearing, and pursuant to Section 49-53 of the Montgomery County Code (2004 Edition as amended), there are no properties which are considered to be specially benefited by the proposed project. Therefore, no properties are expected to be assessed.

Several exhibits are incorporated into the public record for your information and consideration as follows:

1. The mailing list of adjacent property owners

2. Copies of the newspaper publication of the hearing notice
 - (a) The Washington Post
3. Copy of the Capital Improvement Program “Project Description Form CIP No. 501523”, as approved by County Council for Fiscal Year 15-20
4. Copy of the latest project construction drawings for advertisement
5. Copy of the 2013 Montgomery County Biennial Bridge Inspection Report

The plans showing the proposed work are available for examination in the offices of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation on the fourth floor of the Public Safety Headquarters at 100 Edison Park Drive, Gaithersburg, Maryland.

The current project schedule anticipates that the construction will start in the summer of 2016 and be completed in the winter of 2017/2018.

The following County representatives are here with us this afternoon: Mr. Barry Fuss, Mr. Greg Hwang, and Mr. Charles Nolan from our consultant. They will be available to answer any questions relating to the engineering, construction, right of way acquisition process, and maintenance of traffic during construction after this hearing.

This concludes the presentation of the project description by the Department of Transportation. I will now turn the Hearing back to you Mr. Erenrich, thank you.