



Carroll Avenue (MD 195) Bridge Rehabilitation, Mandatory Referral No. 2015014

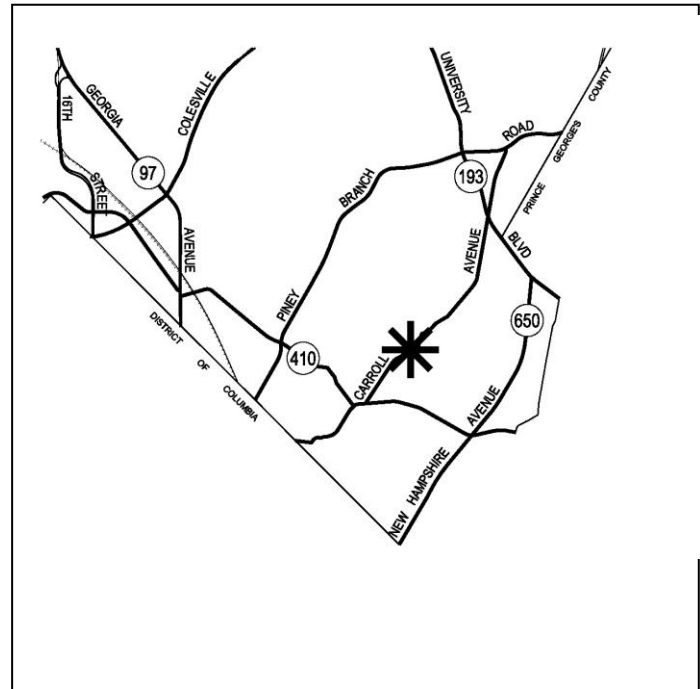
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Completed: 01/22/15

Description

Mandatory Referral approval is requested for the Maryland State Highway Administration’s (SHA’s) project to rehabilitate the MD 195 (Carroll Avenue) bridge over Sligo Creek. The project would replace the entire bridge above the three main structural arches (see Attachment 1).

The project limits along Carroll Avenue extend from the intersection at Jefferson Avenue to the entrance for the Washington Adventist Hospital (see Attachment 2). In addition to rehabilitating the bridge, the project includes constructing a new sidewalk along the east side of Carroll Avenue between Old Carroll Avenue and the bridge, upgrading existing sidewalks and ramps to meet ADA standards, and roadway drainage improvements. In order to complete the necessary work safely, the bridge would be closed and traffic detoured during construction.



This project is a part of SHA’s bridge system preservation program aimed at providing reliable facilities in a timely manner. It would ensure the continued safe operation of the bridge and extend the service life of the 81-year-old structure. Because the bridge is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, SHA intends to maintain the appearance of the bridge while still meeting current codes and safety requirements.

The project is located within the Takoma Park Master Plan area. See Vicinity Map above.

Summary

We recommend that the Board approve this project with the following comments to SHA, SHA shall:

1. Obtain a Park Construction Permit from Montgomery County Department of Parks prior to commencement of any construction activities on parkland.
2. Achieve pedestrian facilities that meet ADA Best Practices wherever possible.

3. Construct the sidewalks behind the proposed ramps, rather than through them, wherever possible so that a level path can be maintained, minimizing the grade changes that have to be negotiated by handicapped persons.
4. Fully utilize the existing right-of-way to offset the sidewalk from the curb wherever possible to provide a facility that is safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, as well as being less subject to splashed roadway runoff and blockage by plowed snow.
5. Opposite the hospital entrance, extend the proposed curb to provide a slightly wider sidewalk and a smoother curb line. Provide a handicap ramp on this side of Carroll Avenue.

Previous Board action

None

Site Context

The MD 195 (Carroll Avenue) bridge spans Sligo Creek Stream Valley Unit 1, including the creek's floodplain, Sligo Creek Parkway and Sligo Creek Trail. The project extends along Carroll Avenue from the intersection at Jefferson Avenue to the driveway of the Washington Adventist Hospital, at the northwestern corner of the project. Sligo Creek Center, a short-stay rehabilitation and long-term care facility is located at the southeastern corner of the project. The remainder of the immediate project area is generally single-family homes.

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Accommodation

The curb-to-curb width of the bridge would be widened from thirty to thirty-two feet to accommodate the on-road bike lanes recommended by both SHA's bike guidelines and the Takoma Park Master Plan. This change would require that the bridge parapets be moved out one foot on each side.

The existing sidewalks along Carroll Avenue would be replaced and slightly widened in some areas to achieve a five-foot minimum width, and ramps would be constructed to meet ADA standards. While there are constraints to making additional improvements in some areas, such as stone retaining walls that are immediately adjacent to some segments of sidewalk, there are opportunities for improvement.

We believe that SHA should provide facilities that meet ADA Best Practices wherever possible and recommend the following changes toward that end:

- Construct the sidewalks behind the proposed ramps rather than through them wherever possible so that a level path can be maintained, minimizing the grade changes that have to be negotiated by handicapped persons.
- Fully utilize the existing right-of-way to offset the sidewalk from the curb wherever possible to provide a facility that is safer and more comfortable for pedestrians, as well as being less likely subject to splashed roadway runoff and blockage by plowed snow.
- Opposite the hospital entrance, extend the proposed curb to provide a slightly wider sidewalk and a smoother curb line. Provide a handicap ramp on this side of Carroll Avenue.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction

During construction, SHA crews would close Carroll Avenue at the bridge. Pedestrian traffic would be maintained on a temporary bridge directly adjacent to the MD 195 over Sligo Creek Stream Valley Unit 1. Access to all residential, business, hospital, and trail entrances adjacent to the work zone would also be maintained. All other vehicular traffic on Carroll Avenue would be detoured. Trucks would use a detour consisting of only State-maintained roadways: East-West Highway (MD 410), Piney Branch Road (MD 320), and University Boulevard (MD 193).

SHA estimates that the Carroll Avenue bridge carries 7,500 vehicles per day. While there are other roads that parallel Sligo Creek Parkway, specifically Lincoln Avenue and Sherman Avenue, these are narrow residential streets lined with driveways and on-street parking. These streets are inadequate to serve as a detour while the Carroll Avenue bridge is closed. Local roadways of this type are avoided when analyzing potential detour routes on SHA projects because they are structurally not suited to carry large numbers of vehicles and particularly heavy vehicles, the huge increase in traffic would make it difficult for residents to access their homes, and delays would be increased for first responders.

Motorists north and south of the MD 195 over Sligo Creek Bridge wishing to continue on MD 195 beyond the project site would be directed to a traffic detour utilizing Flower Avenue, Maplewood Avenue, Maple Avenue, Sligo Creek Parkway, and Old Carroll Avenue. The detour length is just under a mile and would require the installation of temporary traffic control devices at several intersections to accommodate the additional traffic. These include the installation of temporary traffic signals at the intersections of Maple Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway and at Maple Avenue and the Hospital entrance; the installation of three-way stop signs at the intersections of Maplewood Avenue and Flower Avenue and Old Carroll Avenue and Sligo Creek Parkway. Montgomery County Ride-On Transit has reviewed the proposed detour and would utilize Sligo Creek Parkway to minimize impacts to the No. 12 and No. 13 routes that currently travel over the Carroll Avenue Bridge.

Work would not start until construction is completed on the New Hampshire Avenue (MD 650) over Sligo Creek Bridge project. Construction of the Carroll Avenue Bridge project is tentatively scheduled to begin in spring 2015 and will start with the relocation of utilities and the construction of the temporary pedestrian bridge, as well as a temporary bridge across Sligo Creek for construction vehicles. This work will take approximately one year. Once the temporary bridge is constructed, work will begin on the rehabilitation project and the Carroll Avenue bridge will be closed. The bridge construction is estimated to last for one year making the total construction duration approximately two years. SHA intends to make every effort to complete this project as quickly as possible while minimizing impacts to local residents and motorists.

Park Impacts

The Carroll Avenue bridge spans Sligo Creek SVU 1 which includes Sligo Creek Parkway and Sligo Creek Trail and is located southeast of Maple Avenue and northwest of Jackson Avenue (Attachment 2). While the roadway bridge itself is within the public right of way, access to the project and staging areas would impact parkland. In addition, the proposed temporary pedestrian bridge and temporary construction bridge would be constructed on parkland. SHA will be required to obtain a Park Construction Permit from Montgomery County Department of Parks prior to commencement of any construction activities on parkland.

Both Sligo Creek Parkway and the Sligo Creek Trail would remain open during construction. Any short-term closures would be coordinated with the Department of Parks. To protect both vehicles traveling along Sligo Parkway and pedestrians/bikers traveling along the trail, a protective enclosure would be

constructed under the bridge both over the trail and the parkway. The trail enclosure would have lighting to ensure public safety during construction.

Currently, a 1.12 mile stretch of Sligo Creek Parkway between Piney Branch Road and Jackson Avenue is closed to vehicular traffic on Sundays from 9am to 4pm in the fall and winter and from 9am to 6pm in the spring and summer to allow for its sole use by hikers and bikers. Because the Carroll Avenue bridge would be closed during construction, SHA has requested of Parks that the 0.29 mile area of Sligo Creek Parkway between Maple Avenue and Jackson Avenue remain open to vehicles on Sundays to accommodate traffic detours (Figure 2).

SHA will coordinate with the Department of Parks for construction access off of Sligo Creek Parkway and Sligo Creek Trail. Access to the construction areas would require specialized access routes that are designed to protect forest resources. Access is limited in order to protect trees and shrubs while providing the minimum space required for construction. In areas where communities and/or pedestrians are adjacent to work areas, blaze orange fencing and signage would be installed for safety purposes.

Wetland and Stream Impacts

The Carroll Avenue bridge rehabilitation project would utilize the existing bridge abutments and piers and therefore would not create new wetland or stream impacts from construction. The project would necessitate the construction of a bridge to carry construction vehicles over Sligo Creek that would have temporary stream impacts.

Also, as part of this project, SHA would need to power wash the existing Carroll Avenue bridge. The Department of Parks will continue to work with SHA to develop a method to wash the bridge while avoiding any polluted water from entering Sligo Creek. These measures will be worked out during the park construction permitting process. Wetland and stream impacts are being coordinated as required with the Maryland Department of the Environment and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. All areas affected temporarily during construction would be fully restored to pre-construction conditions.

Maryland Historical Trust

Due to the historic nature of this bridge, all work is being coordinated with Maryland Historic Trust. There are no historic properties on parkland within the general vicinity of the project, although Sligo Creek Parkway was determined eligible for listing in the National Register in 2000.

Natural Resource Inventory and Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD)

There would be impacts to forested areas on parkland resulting from the bridge rehabilitation, access, staging areas, temporary power lines, and the temporary pedestrian bridge. These proposed impacts have been reviewed and minimized through Parks staff review and coordination with SHA. Impacts are being coordinated with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources as required and mitigated for in accordance with both the Maryland Forest Conservation Act and Park Permit. Forest impacts for this project have been estimated at 0.38 acres. A reforestation/planting plan has been developed as part of this project and replanting on parkland will be reviewed and approved as part of the park construction permitting process.

SHA and Parks Staff have coordinated these efforts to ensure that natural resource impacts are avoided or minimized, to every extent possible, while still meeting the goals of the rehabilitation. Numerous field reviews have taken place to ensure that access, construction work, and landscaping do not unduly impact natural resources. Certain impacts to trees within the area proposed for the temporary pedestrian bridge would be unavoidable. Parks will continue to work with SHA as plans are finalized to develop further methods to avoid and/or minimize tree impacts. These strategies will be detailed in the park construction permit and would include root pruning, avoidance of critical root zones, and tree protection fencing. Disturbed and impacted areas would be stabilized and replanted once rehabilitation of the bridge is complete.

Outreach

A public notice of this Planning Board meeting was sent by staff to area community associations. In addition, SHA has undertaken extensive public outreach for this project in the City of Takoma Park. A public meeting was held in November, 2013; several updates and briefings have been provided at City Council meetings, most recently in June 2014; and a presentation was also made to a City Task Force meeting in September 2014.

A project web page has been created on SHA's website and can be found here:

<http://apps.roads.maryland.gov/WebProjectLifeCycle/ProjectInformation.aspx?projectno=MO2402115#>

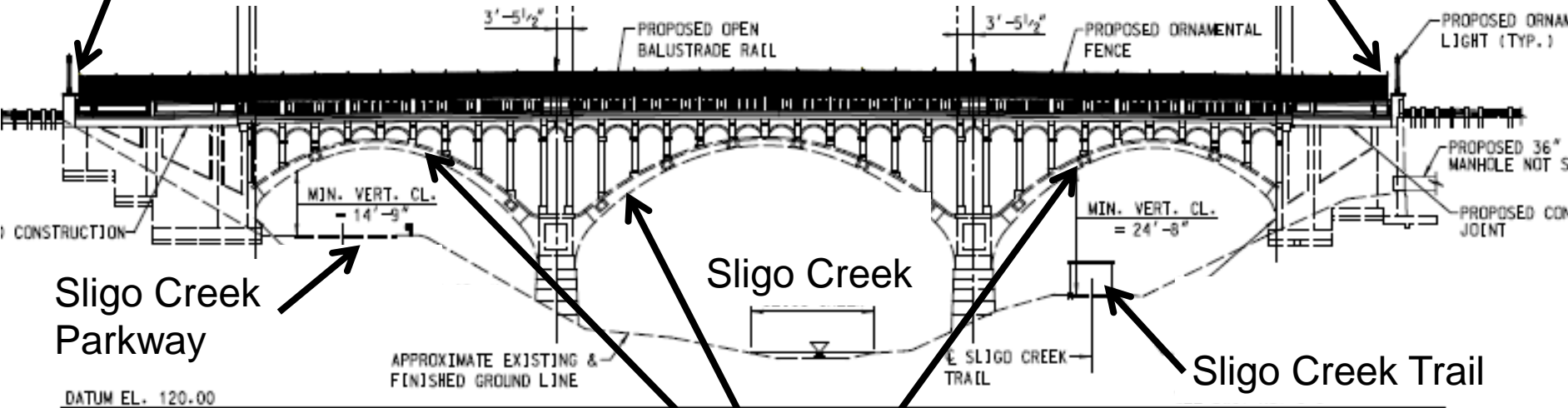
There is a link to this page on the City of Takoma Parks website and there will be a link on Parks' website as well. In the coming months, SHA will be working with MNCPPC on public outreach geared towards park and trail users as well as a detailed signage/notification plan.

Conclusion

The project would replicate as closely as possible the existing historic bridge while making some pedestrian and bike improvements. Keeping Sligo Creek Parkway open to vehicular traffic on Sundays and including its use in the maintenance of traffic plan is acceptable to the Department of Parks. We recommend approval of the project with the comments as listed above.

Proposed Bridge Rehabilitation

Everything above arches to be removed and replaced



Sligo Creek Parkway

Sligo Creek

Sligo Creek Trail

Three large structural arches to remain



- Carroll Ave. Bridge Project Limit
- Portion of Sligo Creek Parkway To Remain Open
- Hydrologic Features
- H Washington Adventist Hospital

- Parks**
- STATUS, OWNER**
- Proposed M-NCPPC
 - U Washington Adventist University

- M-NCPPC
- Municipal

400 Feet

Map Compiled: 1/16/2015

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