

BELMONT BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT STATUS REPORT

OCTOBER 2018



Purpose

The Board of Architectural Review(BAR) recently reviewed the project's application for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) at their regularly scheduled meeting on September 18, 2018. The application was deferred with the following motion approved 7-0 by the Board:

Mr. Carl Schwarz moved having considered the standards set forth within the City Code, including City Design Guidelines for Public Design and Improvements, I move to find that the proposed changes satisfy the BAR's criteria and are compatible with this property and other properties in the Downtown ADC District, and that the BAR approves the application with the following modifications:

- Approve the horizontal concept of the MSE panels [aesthetic treatment of retaining walls/bridge abutments]; BAR requests further development of this design, which must come back to the BAR for approval
- Denial of the use of brick on the east side of the bridge [on abutment, north of Water Street, facing LexisNexis]
- Request to see an existing example of the proposed street light
- Request that applicant revisit details on the stairs—the south stairs particularly (between pedestrian plaza & pedestrian underpass to 9th/Avon Street) -- to create more fluidity and cohesion with the rest of the design concept for the bridge.

Mr. Tim Mohr seconded.

Since this motion requires modifications to the application, a final COA will not be obtained until these modifications have been resubmitted and approved by the BAR at a future meeting. The project team is coordinating with wall manufacturers to provide additional details to BAR regarding the aesthetic treatment and location/appearance of joints. The walls are being designed to closely match renderings shared previously

with the public with one exception: wall treatment was previously shown as vertical and is now being proposed as horizontal to 1) better hide joints, 2) simplify construction and 3) better contain or lower public expense. A sample of the pedestrian light fixture is being obtained for BAR review. And the design of the stairs to be constructed with the project will be advanced to determine more details and explore possible adjustments to obtain BAR's design directive. Once a future meeting date is scheduled with BAR, the date will be advertised to the public.



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Horizontal Wall



Treatments

Work continues on advancing the other, approved details of design with various reports and submissions- the Phase II Geotechnical Borings Report has been reviewed and accepted, a Stage I Report for pedestrian tunnel and “knuckle” design connecting the bridge to the Downtown Mall is under review by the Virginia Department

of Transportation (VDOT) along with submission for Design Approval and Acceptance by the state for the Design Public Hearing. Please refer to other activities listed under the Work in Progress section below.

Project Work Activities

Work in Progress

- Drafting correspondence to Buckingham Branch Railroad (BBRR) documenting City's position and reasoning supporting elimination of railroad protective fencing. While City has expressed this position since project conception, last meeting with BBRR representatives concluded with verbally denying waiver. BBRR will elevate City's request within railroad's organization with receipt of correspondence.
- Advancing utility design for public (underground) and beginning coordination with private (overhead) companies.
- Completing detailed roadway plans and submitting to City for review.
- Refining stormwater management analysis and calculations for detention.
- Coordinating wall design and lighting sample for BAR review.

Upcoming Work (now-November 2018)

- Conducting Value Engineering (VE) Study (rescheduled due to hurricane forecasts). VE Studies are required for all transportation projects with a construction value over \$15 million to ensure taxpayer dollars are invested responsibly and opportunities for cost savings are explored while still meeting the project's purpose and need.
- Scheduling Utility Field Inspection to begin coordination, discuss relocations and refine any needed easements.
- Scheduling BAR work session and/or formal meeting review of resubmitted COA application.
- Working with the VDOT to address any issues regarding reports or submissions.
- Completing an appropriation to commit all funding to project through construction phase.

Project Overview

The bridge replacement project is striving to address four specific needs:

- 1) to improve safety for the traveling public
- 2) to provide pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations
- 3) to maintain connectivity with the surrounding community, neighborhoods and business activity centers
- 4) to accommodate vehicular traffic volumes.

The preferred concept proposes to address these needs with the following approved major design features:

- A replacement bridge that is shortened to approximately 236 LF in length and maintains the existing 62' width
- Roadway Section on Avon/9th Street between Levy Avenue and East Market Street intersections will consist of one travel lane in each direction, a protected 7' wide bike lane in each direction and a 10' wide pedestrian sidewalk in each direction. Turning lanes will be added/lengthened at each intersection to maximize efficiency of each signal while maintaining traffic flow.
- "Old" Avon Street will be closed to vehicular traffic between Levy Avenue and East South Street to improve the function and safety of the Levy Avenue/9th Street intersection for all modes of travel while creating a pedestrian plaza within the former roadway.
- Enhanced pedestrian lighting and landscaping will be provided along 9th Street between Levy Avenue and East Market Street.

- New sidewalk will be constructed along neighboring streets to the project corridor and landscaping will be installed – on East South Street, Avon Street, Graves Street and Water Street.
- Additional new proposed pedestrian features include:
 - a pedestrian passageway under 9th Street south of the railroad,
 - a reconstructed staircase connecting “Old” Avon Street to 9th Street,
 - new staircases from 9th Street to Water Street on either side of the bridge north of the railroad and a mezzanine to cross 9th Street under the bridge

Website

For more information about the Belmont Bridge Replacement project, please visit the project web site at www.belmontbridge.org