



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

June 11, 2010

Mr. Arthur Holmes, Jr., Director
Montgomery County Department of Transportation
101 Monroe Street, 10th floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

RE: Cedar Lane Bridge (No. M-0074) over Rock Creek
CIP No. 509132-05
Mandatory Referral No. MR2010802

Dear Mr. Holmes:

At our regularly scheduled meeting on June 10, 2010, the Planning Board reviewed the Mandatory Referral for this project.

We would like to highlight a concern about the widening of the Elmhirst Parkway trail. At the public meeting for the bridge project on April 14, 2010, sponsored by MCDOT, residents requested that your Department widen this trail, which is a six-foot-wide neighborhood park trail. Your staff requested that our Parks Department widen the trail.

The Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan recommends a shared use path on Cedar Lane from Rockville Pike to Beach Drive. However, the limits of both the bridge project and the West Cedar Lane Shared Use Path project reflect an intent to use this park trail in place of constructing a new path along most of Cedar Lane. We do not disagree that the park trail location would provide a good alternative since users would be able to avoid a 60-foot grade difference and residential driveways on Cedar Lane by doing so. The need to widen the trail comes from converting it to serve the transportation function provided by the planned path along Cedar Lane, not from providing a park function. We therefore believe that MCDOT should implement the trail widening.

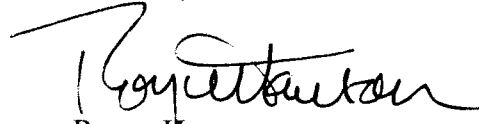
Your staff stated at our meeting that it would be difficult to design the trail widening in time to meet the anticipated advertisement date for the bridge project and that a construction delay could result. We therefore recommend that this work be added to the West Cedar Lane Shared Use Path, which is also part of the County's transportation response to the BRAC changes at NNMC, but has not yet been submitted for Mandatory Referral.

Our detailed comments are as follows:

1. Widen the existing Elmhirst Parkway trail to eight feet minimum as part of the West Cedar Lane Shared Use Path project.
2. Widen the proposed handicap ramp widths at the Beach Drive/Cedar Lane to match widths of the intersecting paths.
3. Provide a southbound left turn lane on Cedar Lane to East Parkhill Drive.
4. Construct the proposed sidewalk and path behind the handicap ramps.
5. Provide landscaped offsets from the curb for both the sidewalk and shared use path where more space exists beyond the Capital Beltway bridge and provide street trees where possible.
6. A park permit will be required for this project. All conditions of the permit must be adhered to.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions or comments concerning our review, please call Larry Cole at 301-495-4528.

Sincerely,



Royce Hanson
Chairman