

**OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD REALIGNMENT PROJECT
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**

Location: Wolftrap Elementary School, Cafeteria, 1903 Beulah Road, Vienna, VA 22182
May 31, 2016

Agenda:

7 PM–7:30 PM - Open House to view display of proposed improvements
7:30 PM–7:45 PM - Project Presentation
7:45 PM–8:30 PM - Question and Answer period

Project Team Present:

Fairfax County Department of Transportation

Tom Biesiadny, Director

W. Todd Minnix, Chief, Transportation Design Division

James Beall, Section Chief, TDD

Seyed Nabavi, Project Manager

Chris Wells, Pedestrian Coordinator

Vanessa Aguayo, Project Coordinator

Parsons Transportation Group (Design Consultant)

Krishna Potturi, Project Manager

Greg Relyea, Project Engineer

Bryon Johnston, Sr. Communication Specialist

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

Randy Dittberner, Regional Traffic Engineer

Elected Representatives Present:

Supervisor Catherine Hudgins (Hunter Mill District, Fairfax County)

MEETING SYNOPSIS

The second public information meeting for the project was held on May 31, 2016, in follow up to the first one held on January 13, 2016. The design team incorporated comments received from the community on the two alternatives presented at the first public information meeting. Based on the comments received and VDOT input, one alternative was developed as the preferred alternative and presented at this meeting. The meeting was attended by 35 people, including Supervisor Hudgins.

The meeting began with an open house for the community to view the alternative developed based on previous comments.

Fairfax County Department of Transportation Project Manager, Seyed Nabavi presented the salient features of the project.

PRESENTATION

Mr. Nabavi went through the following aspects of the project in detail during his presentation:

Speeding/Accidents: The design speed has been changed from 30 mph to 25 mph to better accommodate pedestrians. The current sub-standard S-curve is required to be redesigned to meet current VDOT requirements for 25 mph. A new S-curve has been designed to keep the same feel of the road while maintaining a safe roadway.

Safe Pedestrian Crossing: A pedestrian refuge island has been added to the project. The crossing was located at the intersection of Proffit Road to allow for the best sight distance.

Pedestrian Access: A 5 foot concrete sidewalk has been added to the north side of the roadway to complement the previously proposed 10' asphalt shared use path on the south side.

Intersection/Driveway Sight Distances: The required sight distance for a 25 mph design speed is 240 feet. The project is providing more than 240 feet of sight distance for all driveways and intersections within the project limits.

Aesthetics: Various potential treatments were shown for the look and feel of the retaining wall and bridge.

Typical Section: The current proposed typical section consists of: 5 foot sidewalk on north side of road, 3 foot buffer strip, curb and gutter, 4 foot paved shoulder (reserved for future bike lane), 2-11 foot lanes, a 4 foot paved shoulder, curb and gutter, 8 foot buffer strip, and 10 foot asphalt trail on south side of road.

Conceptual Design: The new alternative alignment was shown with the new pedestrian refuge and the sidewalk on the north side. Potential signs were also shown.

Conceptual Profile: The roadway profile was shown. It was again noted that the profile shown is a worst case scenario (highest roadway profile that may be required, based on preliminary hydraulic needs and bridge/ culvert structure depth) and will be refined as design is further developed.

Stormwater Management Design: The basic details about the watershed, flood plain, and design storm were shown. It was indicated that the project will have a closed system with inlets and storm drain pipes. Stormwater management ponds cannot be provided as they are not allowed within flood plains. The purchase of nutrient credits will be pursued to meet VDEQ (Virginia Department of Environmental Quality) water quality requirements.

Environmental Impacts: A Phase I cultural resources survey is currently under review by Fairfax County Park Authority. Mitigation for potential wetland and stream impacts will be required. The preliminary environmental report, threatened and endangered species habitat survey report, and the wetland delineation report has been submitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers for review.

Maintenance of Traffic during Construction: The conceptual Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plan was shown as a 5 phase construction process.

Detour Plan for Besley Road: The detour for the closing of the intersection of Besley Road and Old Courthouse Road was shown as not having changed since the previous meeting.

Project Cost & Schedule: Current cost and current funding was shown. It was stated that all funding gaps will be closed in order to construct the project generally as presented at the meeting.

RESPONSES TO PREVIOUS COMMENTS

Several comments were received from the community after the first public information meeting. All these comments were summarized into the nine comments shown below. Mr. Nabavi presented responses to all these comments as described below.

Q1. Project Premise and Solution: Based on your FCDOT presentation at the last public meeting of 13 January 2016, the premise for the project was expressed as being due to numerous accidents in the Besley Road Valley as a direct consequence of icing conditions of the roadway. It was pointed out during the meeting that the icing was due to leaves in the road side ditches forcing rain water onto the roadway which would then freeze with below freezing temperatures. The reason for the leaves clogging the ditches and drains along Old Courthouse Road was stated as resulting from inadequate county funding for leaf removal. Since this will be a continuing problem, it was suggested at the meeting that adequate gutters with an underground storm drainage system be included in the Besley Road Valley to deal with this problem. With the continued growth in the Tysons Corner area and additional commuters using Old Courthouse Road, a modern and code compliant road system is essential to be included within Project # 35. Do you concur?

Response: The roadway is owned and maintained by VDOT and as such any changes must meet current VDOT design criteria. The roadway drainage will be a closed system with curb & gutter, inlets and storm sewer. The roadway will meet all current VDOT standards. Note that the premise for the project is the recurring flooding due to the inadequate stream crossing. This location is one of the top five spots in Fairfax County where County emergency services perform high water rescues.

Q2. Project Funding: At present, Project # 35 has a funding deficiency of approximately \$1.8M even to accomplish the work presented during the 13 January public meeting. Removing blind curves in the road (where drivers cannot safely see around the hills immediately adjacent to the edge of the road), safety provisions for pedestrians crossing to the parks, and safety provisions for vehicles entering and exiting driveways in the Besley Road Valley are all presently not included in the latest cost estimate or design. What happens to the project if the additional \$1.8M cannot be provided? What would have to be eliminated? If additional funding can be made available to make up the \$1.8M deficiency, the addition of relatively inexpensive and common-sense safety provisions should be included. VDOT representative at the 20 April 2016

meeting in Supervisor Hudgins' office stated that safety provisions would be included in the design for project # 35. An alternative to save money would be to not straighten or elevate the road as presently planned.

The current level of funding vs. the current cost estimate will be reconciled as the project moves further along. As the project moves along and the cost estimate is better refined, estimated costs may be reduced but the general project designs as presented to the public will not be revised. If any funding gap still exists then money will be moved from other projects that came in under budget to cover the gap. As presented, the roadway features will not change as the existing elevation of the road and the curves cannot remain and meet current standards. If there are any significant changes to the scope, FCDOT will present the new scope to the community before moving forward.

Q3. Old Courthouse Road as a major access road to/from Tysons Corner: You referred to the Old Courthouse Road community as an "urban area" during the 13 January meeting while it is actually a rural community. With the Tysons center planned to become a major city with numerous high-rise construction projects being approved on a regular basis, retaining Old Courthouse Road in the Besley Road Valley as a rural byway without code required shoulders etc. and adherence to sight distances codes makes no sense. What is your rationale for not conforming to County and State code requirements?

Response: Old Courthouse Road is designated by VDOT as an urban minor arterial roadway. VDOT designates all roadways in Fairfax County as urban roadways. FCDOT staff noted that by being classified as urban, there is more flexibility in design which will help to minimize right of way impact. The current design of the project, within the project limits, is in accordance with all County and State design criteria.

Q4. Bicycle Path to No-where: Scope in the present project includes bike paths; however, they do not connect to anything. Adam Lind, FCDOT, has told me that there is no programmed projects to connect to the planned bike paths presently shown in Project # 35. Although the cost of the paths is relatively small, eliminating them would help provide additional funding to accommodate the safety item indicated above. Do you agree?

Response: The current bicycle path will be connected to the existing trail that currently ends approximately 20 feet from Old Courthouse Road in the Wolftrap Stream Valley Park to the existing trail that exists along Old Courthouse Road at Burlwood Court. A sidewalk is also proposed for the opposite side of the roadway to allow for more pedestrian access. The on-road bike lanes will not be striped as such until they are connected to the existing bike lanes further up on Old Courthouse Road. They will act as shoulders that bicycles can use. While no additional projects are currently programmed for extending the bike lanes at this time, from a common sense standpoint, it is logical to provide the extra width for the future bike lanes at this time so that additional widening of the roadway and bridge will not be required in the future when the bike lanes are connected.

Q5. Eliminate straightening of the Road: What is your rationale against not straighten the present road, thus retaining the present curve at the Besley Road intersection? Emergency

vehicles, school buses, and other large truck are able to negotiate the present curve. If removal of the present curve is considered essential for sound engineering reasons, replacement with a mini circle should be considered. Please provide a detailed engineering explanation if these alternatives are considered unacceptable.

Response: The current curve does not meet a 25 mph design speed and is unsafe and must be redesigned in order to meet VDOT standards. A mini-circle was evaluated but this option would require more right of way, increase impacts to private properties, the stream and wetlands, and potentially increase the width of the bridge/culvert, In addition, traffic volumes don't warrant a roundabout.

Q6. Storm Drainage Improvements: Consider additional and adjacent low-head pipe under the road for Wolftrap Run stream flooding instead of an elevated and expensive bridge. Savings in funding could be used to address the other safety issues in the Besley Road Valley.

Response: A low head pipe under the road would neither solve the flooding problem, nor meet VDOT or FEMA requirements. To satisfy VDOT criteria for Urban Minor Arterial the proposed crossing must be designed to pass the 25 year design storm with 18 inches of freeboard relative to the road shoulder. Because the stream crossing is in a FEMA designated, and regulated Zone A flood plain, Fairfax County code requires that the proposed design shall not increase the current 100 year flood plain elevation. A Hydrology & Hydraulic Analysis Study is ongoing that must be reviewed and approved by the County's Floodplain Manager, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and FEMA if necessary.

Q7. Access to Old Courthouse Road: During the 13 January public meeting, it was stated that during construction of project # 35, access to Old Courthouse Road via Besley Road for residents in north-side subdivisions such as The Trails and Springlake Park will not be possible for up to a year or more. Provide details and alternatives for this concept.

Response: The access to Besley Road will be closed for about 6-9 months. The closure is due to proposed grade differences resulting from raising Old Courthouse Road at the stream crossing. Besley Road will be detoured via Boise Avenue, Gelding Lane to Arabian Avenue or Trap Road. Old Courthouse Road will remain open to traffic during construction. Periodic, short term lane closures on Old Courthouse Road may be required at times. Any short term lane closures will be implemented during off-peak and/or nighttime hours.

Q8. Traffic Control and schedule during Construction: At the 31 May meeting, please provide a presentation as to how traffic along Old Courthouse Road will be maintained during construction.

Response: A 5 phase construction plan was presented at the meeting and includes: Phase 1- construction of temporary pavement north of existing road; Phase 2- shift traffic and construct south half of proposed road and bridge; Phase 3- construct temporary crossovers to connect existing road to south half of proposed road; Phase 4- construct north half of road and Besley Road connection; and Phase 5- shift traffic to final configuration and install ancillary features such as sidewalks, trail, curb and gutter, etc.

Q9. Erosion Control: Stream discharges of soil and other contaminants into the Chesapeake Bay is a major problem. What is the plan to prevent erosions during construction and afterwards from impacting the Chesapeake Bay?

Response: The project will be designed to satisfy all Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ), VDOT, and County requirements. Sufficient erosion and sediment control measures will be set in place to prevent impacting the stream and Chesapeake Bay. The US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) is currently reviewing the wetland and stream impacts. Any impacts to the stream and wetlands, as a result of the project will be mitigated in accordance with USACE permit requirements.

Q10. Environmental Study and Documentation: Wolftrap Run is a sensitive environmental stream. What is the status of the environmental documentation and/or review of the environmental impact of project # 35 by the Army Corps of Engineers? When will the civil engineers in our community who will be impacted by the project have the opportunity to review the environmental documentation?

Response: The preliminary environmental report, threatened and endangered species habitat survey report, and the wetland delineation report has been submitted to the USACE for review. The County, working with VDOT and the USACE, will develop a mitigation strategy to minimize any environmental impacts.

QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

After the presentation a further question and answer session was held. The questions and responses are summarized below. For tracking purposes, resident comments, questions, concerns, and collective points made are numbered below. Various staff member responses are listed as bullets.

1. Supervisor Hudgins said a lot of feedback has been received on the project. She added it is good to go through the different iterations and changes to plans that were heard at the last meeting and also the community's new feedback on them.
2. For Comment 1 and 3 on the handout provided, how did staff arrive at the designation of the local roadways as urban?
 - Although staff recognize the roadway has a rural feel, VDOT determines how the roadways are categorized for design purposes and considers all roadways in Fairfax County as urban roadways. VDOT classifies Old Courthouse Road as an urban minor arterial.
3. For question 6, 60 feet is a significant increase from one pipe that is 4-5 feet. You could put two pipes in that would reduce the size of the pipes needed. Are we looking at a larger pipe to meet just 25-year flood requirements?

- It is not just the 25-year flood requirements that we need to meet but also the 100-year flood elevations for this project. We are in concept design and as we get further along in design we may be able to reduce the width of the proposed stream crossing (a bridge or pipe). As we get more into the details, we'll understand more and design the crossing with that in mind. The County will complete a hydrology and hydraulic analysis and submit it to various agencies for review and approval before the design can be finalized. Since the stream crossing is in a FEMA designated and regulated Zone A floodplain, County code requires that any improvements in the floodplain shall not increase the 100 year flood elevation.
4. What phase of five phases, does the bridge get built? (Peter Soika)
 - The south half of the bridge would be constructed in Phase 2 and the north half in Phase 4. Two way traffic would be maintained on Old Courthouse Road at all times, except for short term closures as noted above.
 5. Two and half years ago staff sought input for projects. At the time, the community raised the issues of sight distance problems in the Beasley Road Valley and were told the issues would be addressed in this project. Will you address these in the project? If you expanded the project, could you address the sight distance issue?
 - Projects have limits and we can't extend those limits to address every sight distance issue that currently exists along the entire length of Old Courthouse Road.
 - All driveways within the project limits will be provided 240-foot sight limits. Properties outside of the project limits will not be addressed at this time.
 6. What are the results if you don't design to the 100-year flood plan requirements?
 - FEMA has jurisdiction over improvements in the floodplain and would not approve any construction that increased the 100 year flood elevation. The County is required, by law, to ensure that there is no increase in the 100-year flood plain as a result of this project.
 7. The left-hand-turn lane shown on the display boards serves only 17 properties but left hand turn lane is not provided at Besley which serves many more homes. (Carol Moore)
 - We did not design the turn lanes based on the number of homes, but to make it safer for people both turning and going straight.
 - The Left turn lane at Proffit is only added because the introduction of the pedestrian refuge island on the west side of the intersection provides enough space to permit a left turn lane pocket.
 - We are evaluating a crosswalk and pedestrian refuge at Besley and if this can be provided and it meets VDOT design criteria we could potentially add a short left turn lane here also.
 8. Expanded culverts could eliminate the need to do a bigger bridge.
 - The maximum width of a standard culvert, per VDOT criteria, is 48 feet (4 boxes of 12' each); if the hydraulic analysis indicates that an opening greater than 48 feet is required to accommodate the 25-year storm while not increasing the 100-

year flood elevation, VDOT will require some form of bridge be constructed, either a pre-cast arch or a standard bridge. Once span lengths get above 48 feet, it is more economical to construct a bridge rather than a series of box culverts.

9. A resident didn't understand why the project is adding another path on the north side of the road. They live on Besley and don't mind crossing over to use the south side path. They would rather continue doing that than have more pollution, less trees and more concrete. They don't see a north side path as a necessity. "As long-time residents, we have resisted having sidewalks to maintain our rural feel and not have as much concrete."
 - The County doesn't want to encourage people walking on/in the roadway, so the current design provides a sidewalk on the north side to provide safe pedestrian access along Old Courthouse Road to ALL residents, regardless of which side of the roadway they live on.
10. Where do the paths connect to?
 - Both paths will connect to the existing park paths.
11. During construction will you maintain two lanes? Will there be flagmen?
 - During off-peak hours approximately 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and during any nighttime construction, lanes on Old Courthouse Road may be reduced to one lane with traffic alternating, which would necessitate flaggers.
12. Are additional changes to the design anticipated after tonight?
 - After tonight, we will go from the conceptual design into more formal design, which will take a year and a half. We don't anticipate any major modifications to what was presented at the meeting. We will submit plans to VDOT and other agencies for review. When we reach 30 percent design another public meeting may be held to get further community input on design elements.
13. You introduced a new concept tonight regarding how the bridge will look. We care about how natural the bridge will look. Concepts look manmade not natural.
 - The County will present several architectural and aesthetic options for the bridge to the community for review and comment as the design is further developed.
14. Does the urban designation impact the flood elevation the roadway needs to meet?
 - The urban roadway designation does not have a direct impact on the flood elevation that the roadway must meet. However, since Old Courthouse Road is designated as a Minor Arterial, this portion of the roadway designation has a direct impact on what level of storm event must pass under the roadway. The 100-year flood plain elevation requirements are regulated by FEMA and County code and are independent of the roadway designation.
 - Urban designation actually helps us because we have more flexibility with lanes and widths. Rural design standards are much more stringent.

15. A resident observed that it would be a mistake not to provide a crosswalk also at Besley. There are far more houses that use Besley Road so it would seem ideal to provide a crosswalk here.
- We are evaluating a crosswalk and pedestrian refuge at Besley. If a crosswalk and pedestrian refuge can be provided at this location while meeting VDOT design criteria, the County will add it to the project.
16. Will there be a 240-foot sightline for Besley and Old Courthouse?
- Yes, it will be for people attempting to turn from Besley onto Old Courthouse and vice-versa.
17. How will we decide whether the bridge or the culvert is the best thing to design to deal with all the debris after each storm?
- We cannot provide a culvert if the opening is more than 48 feet. (VDOT has noted that large culvert openings are generally more difficult to keep clear of debris than bridges at similar locations.)
 - Based on the current design, the opening needs to be 60 feet which requires a pre-cast arch structure or a bridge. The design team will perform advanced hydraulic calculations to finalize the opening. We will reconsider a culvert if the opening is less than 48 feet.
18. Are you going to bury the utility lines?
- This is beyond the intent and scope of the project. Undergrounding of utility lines, particularly power lines is extremely expensive. However, some utility relocation may be required as part of the project due to conflicts between the existing utilities and the proposed design. In cases where utilities may need to be relocated, the utility companies will provide a design and complete the relocation of their facilities based upon their design requirements, service needs and cost implications.
19. We see one alternative at this meeting. Will there be more alternatives presented?
- At the January meeting, we provided the community with two design alternatives, which are still available on the project's Website. The current design, which is being presented tonight, contains the best of both of them with some additional modifications as a result of the January meeting.
20. I rode my bike here tonight and want to thank the county and VDOT for all bike paths and sidewalks it has provided to create a network of them. I want to challenge the notion that these would be paths to nowhere. Why are we not actually marking bike lanes? What's the harm in putting bike lanes? (Jennifer Madden, appointee to Fairfax County bicycle advisory committee.)
- Because the project extent is short, there is no striping to indicate an accommodation for bikes but they will be able to use the shoulders when the project is completed. At such time as the rest of Old Courthouse Road outside of project area is reconstructed to include bike lanes, the wider shoulder on this project will be restriped to connect to extended bike lanes on other projects.

- If we mark the bike lanes within the project limits, it may be misleading to bikers that there are accommodations throughout the corridor, when in fact they abruptly end.
21. Is there any reason why there isn't an opportunity to straighten the stream (Wolf Trap Run) at the Bridge?
- There will be some limited stream restoration that will be completed in the immediate vicinity of the proposed bridge/culvert. Straightening the stream further will have more impact on the stream itself and surrounding wetlands and forests.
22. Are you investigating and looking into culverts so they may be a viable option?
- Based on the current design, the opening needs to be 60 feet which requires a pre-cast arch structure or a bridge. The design team will perform advanced hydraulic calculations to finalize the opening. We will reconsider a culvert if the required opening is less than 48 feet.
23. Subdivisions on south side laid out in 1950s were done before there was a need for sidewalks. We lack curb and gutter and therefore we lack sidewalks. Where you can please put more proper crossings.
- See response to item 15 above.
24. What is a nutrient credit and who do we pay that to? (Linda Freeman)
- With every project we must provide best storm water management practices to reduce and treat the amount of runoff from the additional pavement that goes into the nearby streams. In some areas, we simply cannot add Stormwater management elements on-site due to limited space, so instead we buy Stormwater nutrient credits. These nutrient credits are purchased from private entities that construct and maintain man-made stormwater management facilities. These facilities are strictly maintained and regulated and are established specifically to off-set impacts to streams and wetlands resulting from projects such as Old Courthouse Road.
25. When will we be able to see minutes from this meeting?
- They will be posted later on the county website.
26. The audience was asked, "Do you want all the sight distance issues in the Besley Road Valley to be included in the formal project?"
- More than 10 people raised their hands.
27. The audience was asked, "Would you like to maintain the present curve at Besley Road and Old Courthouse Road?"
- County staff noted that if this project is built, the curve has to be changed to meet the VDOT standard.
 - 2 people raised their hands.