



City of Havre de Grace

711 PENNINGTON AVENUE, HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND 21078
WWW.HAVREDEGRACEMD.COM

410-939-1800

Susquehanna River Rail Bridge Project Advisory Board Of the Mayor and City Council

Advisory Bulletin #11 Bridge Abutment Area – First Update January 26, 2015

Background

The Advisory Board met on October 21, 2014, to examine the immediate area around the westerly landing of the proposed rail bridge complex in order to determine the most favorable placement of the new bridge abutment. Advisory Bulletin #3 was issued by the Board on October 24, 2014, based on the assumption that the new high-speed bridge of the proposed twin bridges would be installed on the downriver (south) side of the existing bridge, with the lower-speed bridge taking the place of the existing bridge. It was also assumed that the new bridges would be elevated significantly at the landing abutment.

As feasibility studies and preliminary design with regard to track elevation and alignment have been developed further by the SRRBP study team since October, it appears that the most favorable track alignments would now place the lower-speed bridge of the proposed twin bridges along the upriver (north) side of the existing bridge, with the other bridge taking its place. It also appears now that little or no raising of the track elevation will be necessary at the landing abutment. This information was obtained at the special meeting between the Board and the Project Team in November, and at the public outreach session in December.

Revised Site Recommendations

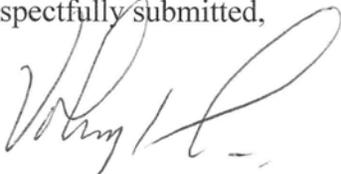
1. The new bridge abutment should be retracted westward toward the Freedom Lane tunnel underpass, to prevent further crowding of the immediate street intersection area, and more particularly the direct conflict with Otsego Street that would be caused by a new bridge landing at the north edge of the existing one.

2. Under the current assumption that new bridge spans will increase from the current 200 feet to about 240 feet, center to center, retracting the new landing abutment too far westward would cause the first pier to conflict with the new intersection alignment. Therefore, the new abutment should be retracted only far enough to avoid conflict with Otsego Street and to allow for the following street intersection improvements.
3. The sharply curving, semi-blind intersection of Otsego Street and Union Avenue should be improved to a much wider radius of turn that would align directly with Saint John Street. This would allow longer and more generous turn lanes and greatly improved sight lines.
4. The Water Street intersection should be sufficiently relocated to meet the new Union/Otsego street alignment and to avoid the first new bridge pier.
5. Railroad property under the bridge complex and situated between the two city parks should, by special agreement, be made available for public use and maintained by the City of Havre de Grace to appear as part of the park complex. This area should contain landscaping and walkways, but should have no structures, to allow full access for bridge maintenance.
6. Railroad property under the bridge complex, situated between the proposed Otsego/Union street curvature and the relocated bridge abutment, should likewise be made available for public use and maintained by the City of Havre de Grace as open space with landscaping and walkways, but should include no permanent structures that would interfere with bridge maintenance.
7. The monumental gateway signage that exists under the current bridge should be relocated to a more favorable gateway vantage point, and should include a beautiful and enlarged landscaping feature.
8. The much higher new bridge understructure would result a brighter and more open streetscape, which should be enhanced with ornamental tree plantings wherever possible without blocking sight lines or interfering with bridge maintenance operations.

Recommended Action

The Advisory Board requests that the Mayor and City Council take necessary steps to consolidate these recommendations into a formal communication to the SRRBP project team as soon as possible. The abutment location is an engineering and track alignment issue that must be resolved by the SRRBP team very soon.

Respectfully submitted,



Volney H. Ford