



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION

Division of Capital Development Forest Glen Pedestrian Bridge

PROJECT UPDATE NO. 3

FALL 2007

INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

This newsletter is to update you on Montgomery County's progress towards implementing security enhancements along the Forest Glen Pedestrian Path.

In January 2007, representatives of the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) and the Police Department attended a meeting with representatives of the Linden Civic Association. At that meeting, DPWT committed to investigate three different potential security enhancements and report back to the community. These included:

- Enhanced Lighting underneath I-495;
- Installation of Emergency Call Boxes along the Path, and;
- Installation of Security Cameras along the Path.

ENHANCED LIGHTING

Enhanced lighting has been operational since May 2007. The new light fixtures increase light levels under I-495 by a factor of four and provide a more uniform distribution of light. In June 2007, a circuit in the I-495 lighting system failed. The I-495 lighting system

provides power to a portion of the lights along the Forest Glen Pedestrian Path. This failure interrupted operation of four lights under the overpass. The lights did not function for approximately three days while the State Highway Administration and the County worked to identify and correct the fault. There have been no interruptions in service since the June 2007 outage.

EMERGENCY CALL BOXES

Final design of the emergency call boxes is now complete. A sample image of the actual unit that will be installed is attached to this letter. The call box installation will begin in September with the final installation and activation set to the end of November.

SECURITY CAMERAS

An investigation into the feasibility of security cameras has been performed. This investigation concluded that it is possible to install security cameras along the path, however there are significant technical and budgetary issues that still must be resolved. The existing data network in the vicinity does not have the capacity to support live video, and the system must be designed to interface with existing infrastructure. This effort requires more detailed study and design, and

will require a significant capital outlay. There is not sufficient funding for this project at this time. Therefore, this element of security discussions, like all existing and proposed projects countywide, will compete for funding as part of the biennial Capital Improvements Program budget process, which is currently underway.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS

Over the past several months, the community has made additional suggestions to enhance security along the path. Suggested enhancements include:

- Fencing to enclose the area between the path and the abutment of the I-495 overpass;
- Painting the bottom of the I-495 overpass white to reflect more light; and,
- Adding additional exit points from the path to Georgia Avenue.

These suggestions have been carefully considered by experts from several departments, including Public Works and Transportation, Police, and Homeland Security, to name a few. Each has been eliminated from further consideration for various reasons. Additional fencing obstructs sight lines and provides a blind spot for walkers. Painting the I-495 overpass white may initially increase the reflectivity of the overpass; however, the effectiveness of this measure would quickly disappear. Bridges are inherently dirty and the white paint would turn gray, causing any benefit in reflectivity to be temporary. Additional exits to Georgia Avenue create exactly the kind of pedestrian safety concerns this project was conceived to eliminate.

MAINTENANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Montgomery County is committed to maintaining the Forest Glen Path. County

Maintenance crews have responded to remove snow and graffiti from the structure, and will continue to do so. Pedestrians using the path may note deterioration of various elements of the structure, as well as landscaping and grass that has failed to survive the dry summer. These deficiencies are the subject of disputes between the County and the contractor that constructed the work. The County is pursuing the satisfactory correction of these deficiencies by the contractor using means stipulated in the construction contract and applicable County regulations. The construction claim process may be protracted. In the interim, DPWT will continue to monitor the infrastructure and will take action as appropriate to ensure the structural integrity of the path remains sound. However, items of a cosmetic nature will likely not be addressed until all disputes are resolved.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the status of the proposed security enhancements, please contact DPWT at 240-777-7210.

WHO IS RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER?

This newsletter is being sent to all citizens, homeowner's associations, and businesses within the immediate vicinity of the project. Please share this information with your neighbors. If they want to receive future newsletters, please have them contact the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, Transportation Construction Section, at 240-777-7210, to have their names added to the mailing list.

WEB SITE INFORMATION

For information on this, and other transportation projects in the County, please visit our Web site at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/dpwt/capital/dcd/index.asp>

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

If you have any questions, feel free to contact the appropriate County representative at one of the following numbers:

<u>Questions About</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Construction Activities	Chabiram Deoraj	240-876-1531
Mailing List	Jackie Earp	240-777-7210

For alternative formats of this newsletter, please call the Division of Capital Development at 240-777-7210.