

ROUTE 18
TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

**COMMUNITY
PARTNERING TEAM**

CITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK

**CORRIDOR AESTHETICS GROUP
MEETING NO. 7 REPORT**

Meeting Date: August 28, 2002 9 AM-Noon

Location: Middlesex Cty. Planning Conference Room,
Elks Building, New Brunswick

Attendees:

Anna Aschkenes	Middlesex Cty Cultural	732-745-4489
Jim Campbell	City of New Brunswick	732-745-5112
Helen Erdey	Carpender Road	732-247-3391
Steven Hardegan	NJDEP/HPO	609-984-0141
Linda Hunter	Phelps Ave Rep.	732-249-5583
Thomas Loughlin	City of New Brunswick	732-745-5007
Rupal Parekh	Middlesex Cty Cultural	732-745-4489
Todd Smircina	Carpender Road	732-545-5771
Cathie Springer	Newell Avenue Rep.	732-828-7458
Seth Richter	Rutgers	732-445-2430 x642
Cindy Bloom-Cronin	NJDOT Urban Landscape	609-530-5676
Brenda Hammer	NJDOT Urban Landscape	609-530-5672
George Caruso	NJDOT Urban Landscape	609-530-3702
Sue Dill-Wendrzycki	NJDOT Environmental	609-530-2184
Paul Nowicki	Gannett Fleming	908-755-0040
Jeff Grob	Vollmer Assoc.	212-366-5600
Noriko Maeda	Vollmer Associates	212-366-5600
Craig Church	Vollmer Associates	212-366-5600
Bill Anderson	Vollmer Associates	856-234-0800
Nick Tufaro	Schlesinger Assoc.	609-924-1818
Martine Culbertson		M.A. Culbertson, LLC
85-795-8485		

Purpose of the Meeting

Items included an update from Meeting Number 6 on the signage and lighting issues, presentation of the George St. viaduct concept, and presenting options for corridor streetscape elements.



Points of Discussion:

On-going Business: Michael Morgan from Gannett Fleming will be meeting with NJDOT to discuss possibilities of smaller-than-standard green traffic signs on the CD roadway lanes, as the intention is for the CD roadways to blend with local traffic streets as much as possible. The proposed signs to be approximately 3'x5' in size with 10" lettering. Additionally, he will also be discussing options for the street lighting. Last meeting the group preferred a mongoose style fixture (a choice that's slightly smaller in scale than the cobra variety) with black poles. He will report back with possible alternatives with the mongoose style.

George Street Viaduct

Jeff Grob of Vollmer presented a newly conceived proposal for the George Street viaduct, which abuts the city docks area adjacent to Boyd Park. The top of the viaduct is the beginning of CD roadway northbound at George Street. The bridge is supported by a series of 9 arched spans, each span 66' long with 10' wide piers. In addition to providing drivers with a panoramic view of the Raritan River on the CD roadway, this design affords drivers on the main line roadway views of the river through each of the nine arched spans. Further, under the viaduct is usable roadway for the parking/marine launch area in the soon-to-be-former City Docks land. The design calls for entry down to the dock area as already planned at the Rutgers Boat house location with the road turning under the viaduct, then circling around to a boat launch and modest parking.

Major Issues and Discussion:

Tom Loughlin sited two:

1. Homeless Congregation: It is thought: that due to the increased lighting under the arched spans; and since the arches will be open to the mainline roadway; and that the area will now be more heavily trafficked, and that there will be no flat surface to stand or sit; that the vagrancy issues that now afflict this area will be lessened or eliminated.
2. Graffiti: Historically a problem with underpasses. This issue reflects back to the future on-going maintenance responsibilities. In the next several weeks the City will be meeting with DOT to iron out those maintenance responsibilities for all parties with a vested interest in the Route 18 corridor. Vollmer Assoc. agrees graffiti and vagrancy issues are a priority in this part of the project and will squeeze their creative juices to create a design to discourage both. However, in the end, these are on going maintenance and security issues, as is the case with the rest of the project.

Aside from these issues, the proposal met with unanimous approval from the group along with accolades for a design which:

1. maximizes limited space, allowing for greater greenery near the water and additional parking, by tucking a driveway under the viaduct;
2. affords drivers of both the CD and mainline roadway with views of the City's most dramatic backdrop;
3. transforms an otherwise out-of scale and high bridge structure into a highly functional and appealing one viewed from either the roadway or park side.

Simply put, great design.

Streetscape Elements

Jeff Grob then introduced the multi-use sidewalk/bike path challenges. Before unveiling design options for the paths, he displayed present New Brunswick sidewalk photos, as well as photos of other urban sidewalk treatments. The corridor contains various size paths from approx. 6' to 12' in width. In addition to the actual sidewalk, decisions need to be made on any accent striping, curbing, and gutter. Jeff presented various options and design combinations utilizing various materials including brick and other style pavers, concrete, concrete w/ scoring design, asphalt, stamped concrete, granite, and cobblestones.

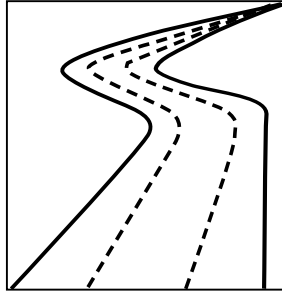
Issues and Discussion

1. Steve Hardegen who has reviewed most other DOT projects urged for a simple design, citing possible future repairs may make matching the original work difficult, particularly in the case of stamped and tinted concrete.
2. A lengthy discussion of the gutter area of the roadway--used by many speed bikers--ensued. It was agreed that this area--regardless of the final material--needed to be bike friendly (as well as the multi-use pathway). Seth Richter mentioned that Rutgers wants to encourage bike ridership between Rutgers campuses.
3. Many voiced concerns about how the walkway materials would blend with the adjacent sound and barrier walls.
4. Brenda Hammer reminded the group that DOT might try to cost-cut on sidewalk materials in various less-used areas of the multi-path system. It was discussed and agreed that the final design should take into account various issues including: how much usage a particular stretch of walkway will be used; whether the treatments should change in higher or lower usage stretches; how the walkway design might alter at intersections and street entrances; how varying the materials might be used to delineate crosswalks; and the melding of the walkways with any adjacent barrier or sound walls.
5. It was mentioned by several people that much of the design and material choice is dependent on future maintenance of the project area. Again, once the City, DOT and possible other interested parties agree upon long-term maintenance responsibilities throughout the project area, a final design choice could be made.

Seeing no consensus on a final design from the group, Jeff Grob then offered to prepare two or three design options to present at the next meeting for high use and low use areas of the walkway and how varying the designs might maintain our much desired continuity throughout the project area.

The next meeting of the Corridor Aesthetics Group is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 17th at 1 p.m.

Meeting Minutes prepared by:
Todd Smircina, CPT Community Representative



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AGENDA

August 28, 2002

Middlesex County Planning Dept. Conference Room
Elks Building, New Brunswick, NJ, 9:00 a.m.

Objective: To present streetscape elements and concepts for discussion; to review George Street viaduct, lighting and signage options; and to discuss architectural features for Boyd Park.

- I. Welcome and Introductions
 - Agenda and Goals
 - Corridor Aesthetics Mtg. No. 6 Review

- II. Corridor Aesthetics Discussion
 - Present Concepts for Streetscape Elements
 - Architectural Features for Boyd Park
 - The George Street Viaduct
 - Review Lighting and Signage Options
 - Group Discussion of Features and Elements
 - Group Recommendations

- III. Summary and Close
 - Action Items / Next Meeting
 - Feedback / Closing Comments

