

Community Focus Group Newsletter November, 2014

Rivers Edge, Riverside Estates, Riverside Overlook, River Glen and Holiday Hills

The State Highway Administration (SHA) recently concluded the last of its several meetings with the Community Focus Group, briefing our members on the only two remaining options considered by the State to be feasible for community access to US 29 when this highway is expanded. They include a US 29 underpass at Rivers Edge Rd. (design 1C), and a bridge over 29 at Vista Rd. (design 3). Both provide access to the US 29 northbound lane via a connection with Old Columbia Rd.

Summarized below are the SHA's "pros" and "cons" of options 1C and 3 as supplied to the Focus Group. The original SHA Fact Sheets and full color art concepts of both options are available on the community website at: <http://www.riversedgecommunity.org/>. These Fact Sheets also cite the fatal flaws in all previous designs considered for the Rivers Edge Rd. exit, including options 4 and 2B, favored by the community in a recent vote.

RIVERS EDGE RD. UNDERPASS (Design 1C)

VISTA RD. OVERPASS (Design 3)

Pros Keeps traffic at present location with most direct access on and off southbound US 29.

Least disruptive to maintenance of US 29 traffic during construction, requires less time to construct as compared to 1B, has safer crossing and a vertical grade less than that of 1C, and requires no extensive lighting or cleaning.

Cons Most disruptive to US 29 during construction.

Significant impact on maintenance of traffic in the community. The 8.5% grade at Rivers Edge Rd. is undesirable due to water freezing on pavement inside tunnel. The 150-foot underpass requires lighting and maintenance, and it needs routine cleaning due to accumulated auto exhaust. There are potential safety issues for pedestrians and bikers.

Driver sight distance needs to be considered in designing vehicular approach to the intersection with Old Columbia Rd.

The 8% vertical grade is not desirable for a bridge in the community.

Six residential properties affected, including two displacements.

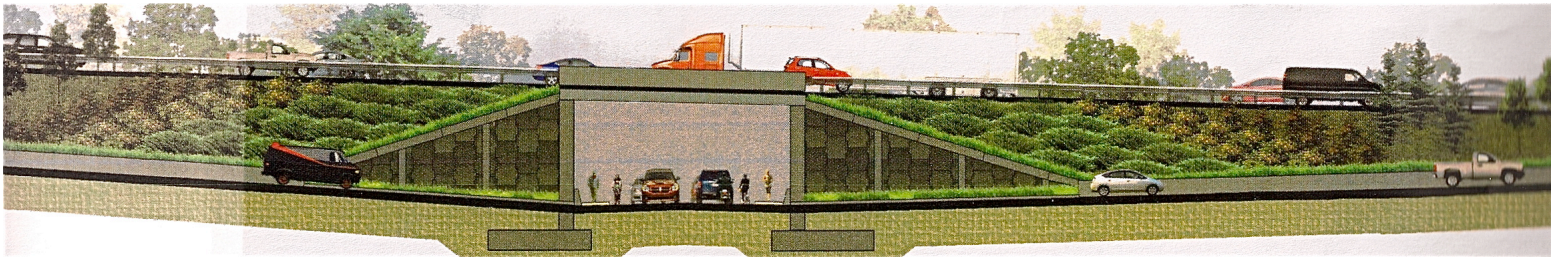
One residential property displaced.

This project is not expected to start before late 2018. It is estimated to take 24 months but could take up to 30 months. Under option 1C, major modifications would be made to the Rivers Edge Rd. entrance. Under option 3, the existing entrance at Rivers Edge Rd. would continue as is during construction. The construction of either option would include sound barriers along US 29.

If option 3 were ultimately chosen by SHA, Howard County would be responsible for sidewalks/lighting along Long View Rd, but only after the overpass is in place. A member of the Focus Group has volunteered to be the POC with the County regarding these issues. Updates will be provided on the website.

The Community Workshop that was to take place in late September has been postponed by SHA. It will be rescheduled possibly in the next few months, although a Spring, 2015 date is more probable.

Stephanie Cates-Harman
Focus Group Leader

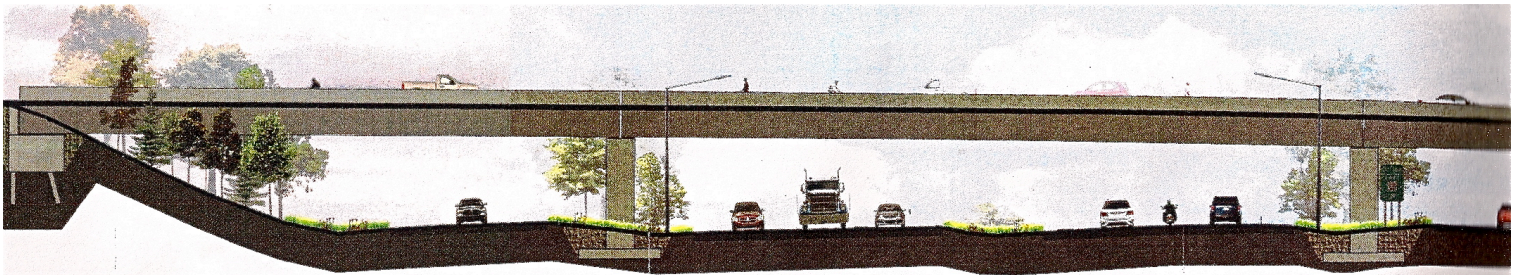
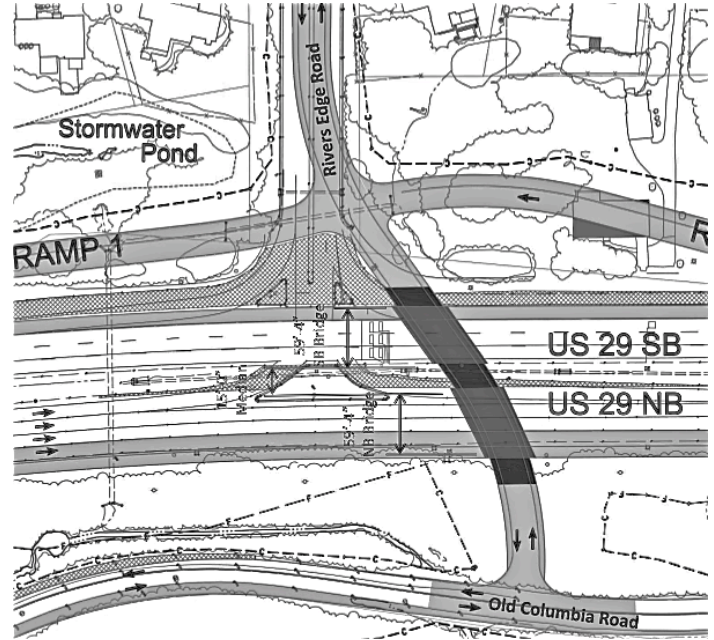


RIVERS EDGE ROAD UNDERPASS (1C)

provides community two-way access to northbound US 29 via Old Columbia Road. Improved ramps allow community access to and from southbound 29. The acceleration lane onto southbound 29 from Rivers Edge Rd. also would be improved and extended.

Throughout construction, all US 29 lanes would be maintained using lane shifts and crossovers. During first two of the three-stage construction project, access to and from northbound 29 would be detoured. In the third stage, the new connection to Old Columbia Rd. would be completed, allowing access to and from northbound 29.

The underpass would be skewed to provide maximum road clearance over other Rivers Edge Rd. designs.



VISTA ROAD OVERPASS (3)

provides community two-way access to northbound US US 29 via Old Columbia Road. Improved ramps would provide community two-way access to southbound US 29. The acceleration lane onto southbound 29 from Rivers Edge Rd. would be improved and extended.

All US 29 lanes and all movements at existing Rivers Edge Road intersection would be maintained throughout construction Existing traffic light at Rivers Edge Rd. would be removed only when construction is comple.

