



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
320 EAST MOSBY ROAD
HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA 22801
(540) 434-5928

STREET MAINTENANCE
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
REFUSE/ RECYCLING
CENTRAL STORES

TO: Eric D. Campbell, City Manager
FROM: Thomas Hartman, PE, LEED AP, Director of Public Works
DATE: April 9, 2019
RE: Garbers Church Road – Shared Use Path Project Update

Summary: The Department of Public Works will provide an update on the Garbers Church Road Shared Use Path Project.

Background: The Garbers Church Road Shared Use Path Project began as an initiative to connect schools, parks, and residential neighborhoods on the southwest side of the City. On November 9, 2017, the Department of Public Works (DPW) held a design public hearing at Bluestone Elementary School. The public hearing was an opportunity for DPW staff to share with citizens the initial right of way plans for this project and collect comments from citizens concerning the project. Following that public meeting and subsequent City Council presentation, it was determined that alignment changes were needed due to citizen input. The two primary areas of alignment changes were the section between Garbers Church Road and Hillandale Park, and Wyndham Drive to Thomas Harrison Middle School.

DPW staff worked with VHB, our consultant engineer, the Harrisonburg Department of Parks and Recreation, and the Harrisonburg City Public Schools to revise the alignment. The revised alignment utilizes portions of Bluestone Elementary School property, Heritage Oaks Golf Course, private property within the Wyndham Woods neighborhood, and Thomas Harrison Middle School property. All parties involved in this realignment process were very open to design alternatives proposed by the design team and the end product is a shared use path alignment that utilizes existing City property as best as it can, while still providing these needed connections (see attached overall map).

While this alignment utilizes City owned property as best as it can, there are still easements needed from a few private citizens in order to make the connections. City staff have met with all impacted property owners to share the initial concept and potential impacts. We have heard their concerns and made adjustments to the design, where possible, to accommodate those concerns. We have not yet made any formal offers for the easements needed, but plan to begin this process later this month. It needs to be mentioned that the easements needed from private property are a key component to this project, and without them we jeopardize the ability of DPW to complete the project as designed.

Key Issues: Easement acquisition

Environmental Impact: None.

Fiscal Impact: None. All required funding is secured.

Prior Actions: None.

Alternatives: None.

Community Engagement: January 11, 2017 – DPW held a Citizens Information Meeting to present conceptual plans for the path alignment and collect feedback from the public.

November 9, 2017 - DPW held a design public hearing at Bluestone Elementary School. The public hearing was an opportunity for DPW staff to share with citizens the initial right of way plans for this project and collect comments from citizens concerning the project.

2017-2019 – met with affected property owners, individually, as alignment and therefore right-of-way/easement need changed.

Recommendation: Proceed with easement acquisition with alignment presented.

Attachments: Garbers Church Road Shared Use Path Overall Map, and Council Presentation.

Review:

The initiating Department Director will place in Legistar, in sequence of transmittal, the names of each department that must initial their review in order for this item to be placed on the City Council agenda. The completion of review only addresses the readiness of the issue for Council consideration. This does not address the recommendation for approval or denial of the issue.

###