

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
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IN RE: EMMET STREETSCAPE PROJECT
Design Public Hearing
Citizen Information Meeting
Tuesday, December 3, 2019
Held at Walker Upper Elementary School
Charlottesville, Virginia

Job No. 41357

Reported by Gwendolyn Sugrue

1 MR. MOTSCH: Good evening. We're about ready
2 to start the public hearing portion. So if you could
3 all take a seat, that would be great.

4 Welcome, thank you all for being here. I've
5 seen most of you before. We were hoping for more
6 people; we always do. But my experience is, the deeper
7 we get into a project, the fewer people show up.
8 Either they've been heard or they're tired of hearing.

9 In any case, this is the required
10 public-hearing portion of the evening for the project.
11 We have federal funds, and part of the public outreach
12 is this required meeting.

13 All the comments that have been given that
14 would be spoken and the comments that will come to the
15 website or by e-mail will be captured. They will be
16 tabulated and responses given. Please, if you speak or
17 give a comment in any way, shape, or form, be sure that
18 we have your e-mail so that we can respond directly to
19 you.

20 We will post the comments and responses. It
21 will take us probably a month to do that. They will be
22 posted on the website, but we do want to be sure we
23 reach out to you all individually, with your individual
24 comments.

25 I don't know if we have anyone signed up for

1 speaking. I don't think we do. We will keep it open
2 until 8:00 because that's what we advertised and we
3 need to do that. If you want to speak and haven't
4 signed up, I think we'll break protocol and allow you
5 to do that.

6 First, I'd like to -- you all know
7 John Stuart. He's going to tell you all how we got
8 here.

9 MR. STUART: Thank you, Tim. I'm not used to
10 a microphone, but that helps the transcribing.

11 So we're here at the public hearing. This is
12 essentially a sixty-percent-design stage at this point.
13 What we've got tonight, and also posted on the website,
14 is information about the current design. It's shown
15 here on the large board here and on a flat piece of
16 paper back here. And we have a set of design plans in
17 the back.

18 As Tim mentioned, we want your comments. So
19 you can fill it out on a comment sheet and either drop
20 it off right here in the comment box or e-mail them to
21 us within ten days.

22 This is not the be-all, end-all of the comment
23 process because we are going to be going into Planning
24 Commission approval and then before City Council at the
25 beginning of the year. So this is just a step in that

1 direction.

2 Receiving your comments now helps us
3 understand if we miss something or if you see something
4 on the project that causes concern. That's why we're
5 here. You can certainly engage myself. You can ask
6 the rest of our team.

7 I'll introduce Andy Payne, who is engaged
8 right now, working diligently as a lead design
9 engineer. Bishal Karki, who was back here helping with
10 the sign-in as well. We also have Bill Lynch here,
11 with BPR. They're doing traffic engineering, storm
12 water engineering, and a key part of our project team.
13 So if you have questions, please ask away, comments
14 through e-mail as well as comment sheets that you can
15 leave here tonight.

16 With that, some highlights of where we are
17 right now in the design includes, we're working with
18 the railroad and finalizing the tunnel design that you
19 see here because that is a key component of the
20 project, in making sure that we open up for pedestrian
21 and multimodal traffic. We're really refining the
22 landscape design and the configuration of the bike
23 lanes all the way up to Arlington Boulevard.

24 The University of Virginia has been a key
25 partner in helping work through this, as well as some

1 property owners. We have the owner of the corner hotel
2 property that's here tonight as well. They've been
3 engaged in helping with the design up to now, as well.

4 With that, I think, I'd like to open it up if
5 there are any questions or comments that people would
6 like to make right now. We do have a microphone here.
7 That way, we can make sure you're heard. It's not that
8 big of a room, but that's available.

9 MS. PEREZ: Good evening. I'm Gay Perez and I
10 work with housing and residence life at University of
11 Virginia. So I thank you for your efforts.

12 My questions kind of relate to the fact that
13 the east side of the street is where all the pedestrian
14 traffic is going to flow, from Lambeth and then
15 potentially future development. And as a 1984
16 residence of Lambeth Field Apartments, I know I
17 traveled that path to get to the Curry School every
18 day. There was a lot less traffic there.

19 So my question is: How are you going to
20 accommodate -- and I saw your pedestrian numbers for
21 today or last year -- to four years from now, when that
22 could potentially double?

23 And then, there is no real safe way that I see
24 the Lambeth folks being able to cross the road to get
25 to the beautiful tunnel because they're not going to go

1 up to Goodwin Bridge and then back down to get over to
2 that shared path.

3 I don't believe the sidewalks on that side are
4 wide enough for the student traffic, especially if
5 they're getting to classes and during class change.

6 And then, hopefully improving the safety at
7 the Emmett/Ivy crossroad, getting back towards central
8 grounds.

9 MR. STUART: Thank you.

10 That is a great question because improving
11 pedestrian and multimodal traffic on the corridor is a
12 big part of what we're trying to achieve here.

13 It did work out that on the east side, we have
14 a seven-foot sidewalk proposed. It's wider than a
15 standard, five-foot-preferred width. We also have the
16 new bike lane, which will -- the intent is to separate
17 the skilled bicyclists away from that pathway.

18 MS. PEREZ: But you got to get to it.

19 MR. STUART: Yeah. Wider would be better. We
20 did look at a mid-block crossing, which would -- and
21 still looked at the possibility of putting something
22 underneath the Goodwin Bridge as an at-grade method of
23 crossing the road.

24 But what we found initially is that the
25 numbers did not quite reach a level that would justify

1 putting one in at this time. I think it's something
2 that could certainly be revisited, if there's deemed to
3 be a need to have an at-grade, mid-block crossing at
4 that location.

5 MS. PEREZ: But the circulation from Lambeth
6 is not going to get there at grade level to cross the
7 road. It is coming down -- because I live right here.
8 It comes straight down to this corner where the
9 existing stairwells are. And it's cutting across the
10 parking lot because students take the most direct route
11 that they possibly can. So that leads it to this
12 point, which is right under the railroad trestle, which
13 becomes very narrow. Then you're asking them to cross
14 all the way over here to get to the tunnel.

15 So somewhere in the course of travel, it's in
16 this direction.

17 MR. STUART: That sidewalk path on the east
18 side is going to remain open.

19 MS. PEREZ: Yeah, I know that. But it's still
20 a safety issue because you come here, and this is still
21 not a very pretty sight after three years. And you
22 know, if it's going all the way to the new road, that's
23 going to delay pedestrians from going there once this
24 construction starts.

25 A VOICE: One of the residents --

1 (Discussion off the record.)

2 MR. STUART: We need to please keep the
3 comments to one person at a time. You can comment
4 afterwards with your name.

5 I understand your concern, but I think there's
6 a certain point of limitation of what you can do from
7 an engineering standpoint and a construction
8 standpoint.

9 That eastern pathway is going to remain open,
10 which is critical, as you said, for circulation on the
11 east side, from Ivy all the way up to Massie if they
12 don't use the Goodwin overpass.

13 So I think, within the design parameters and
14 budget we've got, we work to accommodate that with a
15 seven-foot sidewalk. If there's a specific concern, a
16 specific point that you want to discuss further, we can
17 do that. But I think we're doing our best to
18 accommodate with what we have available to us to
19 achieve that.

20 Hopefully the seven-foot sidewalk will be
21 utilized. And you know, we surely don't want anyone to
22 cross the road where there isn't a safe crosswalk.
23 That's just a dangerous for everyone, and use a safe
24 crossing is all we can do our best to encourage.

25 MR. PAYNE: John, about the east side, there's

1 also constraints with -- the tunnel has to be a certain
2 distance from the abutments. And you know, the city
3 controls the right-of-way. It's getting into property
4 that the city doesn't have control over. And also
5 storm-water-creek issues in that quadrant there.

6 MR. STUART: That was Andy Payne, design
7 engineer.

8 Did you have a comment you want to make? Are
9 there any other questions or comments? We're trying to
10 keep it to a two- to three-minute range.

11 MR. JEHLER: I'm Eberhard Jehle. I
12 participated in workshop at the now-deceased Cavalier
13 Inn. At that time, I was a strong supporter, and I
14 still think, as far as the student-pedestrian traffic
15 flow from Lambeth to central grounds, that a tunnel on
16 the east side would be massively preferable.

17 You have to get some sort of accommodation
18 from the hotel owner or the university, perhaps, and
19 the railroad need to work together to have a tunnel
20 further up. Because, you know, for students who want
21 to go from Lambeth to the architecture school, from
22 Lambeth to any of the -- the arts center, that would be
23 the logical path.

24 I realize that many will go, currently go up
25 the Colonnades and go on up Rugby Road, but there's a

1 project for the university.

2 MR. STUART: Thank you.

3 As a part of the early workshops, you saw
4 where we did study an eastern location of a tunnel
5 versus a western.

6 MR. JEHLE: I'm still convinced of an eastern
7 location and the hotel making accommodations to make a
8 nice, sort of facade, a walk-through with commercial
9 stuff there.

10 MR. STUART: Working through, again with the
11 constraints we've had from an engineering/construction
12 standpoint, we work to come up with an optimal design,
13 and the west side is what came out of that process.

14 Yes, if we had more funds and more
15 flexibility, putting one on the east side would be a
16 good idea, as well.

17 MR. JEHLE: It would be a better idea.

18 MR. STUART: Within the constraints we have,
19 we're working to provide an optimal project.

20 Thank you for your comment.

21 I'm looking for somebody to stand up in the
22 back and cheer or cajole, but if there's no more
23 comments, we'll be available here for the next hour.
24 We'll be happy to discuss any elements of the project
25 that you would like.

1 Thank you for coming tonight, as well. Please
2 be sure to leave your comments here in the box tonight
3 or e-mail them in within the next ten days. That way,
4 we can have them all compiled and included in the
5 public record of the project.

6 MR. MOTSCH: As you continue your discussions,
7 just note that the only way we can capture them as part
8 of the public record is if you request to be heard,
9 announce your name, and speak in the microphone.

10 We'll be here till 8:00 for that, but that
11 doesn't mean you can't have offline discussions if you
12 want. Just understand that we won't be getting all
13 those offline discussions. That's all. All right.

14 MR. STUART: All right. Thank you.

15 (No comments were made between 7:18 and
16 7:59 p.m.)

17 MR. MOTSCH: Okay, folks. It is 8:00. If
18 somebody has something they want to say for the record,
19 that is fine. Otherwise, we're going to close it.

20 Okay. The public hearing is closed.

21 Thank you.

22
23 (Hearing adjourned at 8:00 p.m.)
24

25 * * * * *

1 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA AT LARGE, to wit:

2 I, Gwendolyn O. Sugrue, Notary Public in and
3 for the Commonwealth of Virginia at large, whose
4 commission expires October 31, 2023, do certify that I
5 was the court reporter at the aforementioned
6 proceedings, and that the foregoing is a true, correct,
7 and full transcript of the proceedings herein.

8 I further certify that I am neither related to
9 nor otherwise associated with any counsel or party to
10 the proceeding, nor otherwise interested in the event
11 thereof.

12 Given under my hand and notarial seal at
13 Charlottesville, Virginia this 9th day of December,
14 2019.

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Gwendolyn O. Sugrue, Notary Public

21

Commonwealth of Virginia at Large

22

Notary Public Registration No. 7339814

23

24

Job No. 41357

25

WORD INDEX						
< 1 > 1984 5:15	associated 12:9 at-grade 6:22 7:3 available 5:8 8:18 10:23	Colonnades 9:25 come 2:14 7:20 10:12 comes 7:8 coming 7:7 11:1 comment 2:17 3:19, 20, 22 4:14 8:3 9:8 10:20 comments 2:13, 14, 20, 24 3:18 4:2, 13 5:5 8:3 9:9 10:23 11:2, 15 commercial 10:8 Commission 3:24 12:4 COMMONWEALTH 12:1, 3, 21 compiled 11:4 component 4:19 concern 4:4 8:5, 15 configuration 4:22 constraints 9:1 10:11, 18 construction 7:24 8:7 10:11 continue 11:6 control 9:4 controls 9:3 convinced 10:6 corner 5:1 7:8 correct 12:6 corridor 6:11 Council 3:24 counsel 12:9 course 7:15 court 12:5 critical 8:10 cross 5:24 7:6, 13 8:22 crossing 6:20, 23 7:3 8:24 crosswalk 6:7 crosswalk 8:22 current 3:14 currently 9:24 Curry 5:17 cutting 7:9	dangerous 8:23 day 5:18 12:13 days 3:21 11:3 December 1:12 12:13 deemed 7:2 deeper 2:6 delay 7:23 Design 1:10 3:14, 16 4:8, 17, 18, 22 5:3 8:13 9:6 10:12 development 5:15 diligently 4:8 direct 7:10 direction 4:1 7:16 directly 2:18 discuss 8:16 10:24 Discussion 8:1 discussions 11:6, 11, 13 distance 9:2 doing 4:11 8:17 double 5:22 drop 3:19	engineer 4:9 9:7 engineering 4:11, 12 8:7 10:11 especially 6:4 essentially 3:12 evening 2:1, 10 5:9 event 12:10 existing 7:9 experience 2:6 expires 12:4	Goodwin 6:1, 22 8:12 grade 7:6 great 2:3 6:10 grounds 6:8 9:15 Gwendolyn 1:25 12:2, 20	< H > hand 12:12 happy 10:24 heard 2:8 5:7 11:8 Hearing 1:10 2:2, 8 3:11 11:20, 23 Held 1:13 helping 4:9, 25 5:3 helps 3:10 4:2 highlights 4:16 hopefully 6:6 8:20 hoping 2:5 hotel 5:1 9:18 10:7 hour 10:23 housing 5:10
< 2 > 2019 1:12 12:14 2023 12:4	< B > back 3:16, 17 4:9 6:1, 7 10:22 be-all 3:22 beautiful 5:25 beginning 3:25 believe 6:3 best 8:17, 24 better 6:19 10:17 bicyclists 6:17 big 5:8 6:12 bike 4:22 6:16 Bill 4:10 Bishal 4:9 board 3:15 Boulevard 4:23 box 3:20 11:2 BPR 4:11 break 3:4 Bridge 6:1, 22 budget 8:14	< D >	< F > facade 10:8 fact 5:12 far 9:14 federal 2:11 fewer 2:7 Field 5:16 fill 3:19 finalizing 4:18 fine 11:19 First 3:6 five-foot-prefer red 6:15 flat 3:15 flexibility 10:15 flow 5:14 9:15 folks 5:24 11:17 foregoing 12:6 form 2:17 found 6:24 four 5:21 full 12:7 funds 2:11 10:14 further 8:16 9:20 12:8 future 5:15	< I > idea 10:16, 17 improving 6:6, 10 included 11:4 includes 4:17 individual 2:23 individually 2:23 Information 1:11 3:14 initially 6:24 Inn 9:13 intent 6:16 interested 12:10 introduce 4:7 issue 7:20 issues 9:5 Ivy 6:7 8:11		
< 3 > 3 1:12 31 12:4	< C > cajole 10:22 capture 11:7 captured 2:15 case 2:9 causes 4:4 Cavalier 9:12 center 9:22 central 6:7 9:15 certain 8:6 9:1 certainly 4:5 7:2 certify 12:4, 8 change 6:5 Charlottesville 1:14 12:13 cheer 10:22 circulation 7:5 8:10 Citizen 1:11 City 3:24 9:2, 4 class 6:5 classes 6:5 close 11:19 closed 11:20	< E > early 10:3 east 5:13 6:13 7:17 8:11, 25 9:16 10:15 eastern 8:9 10:4, 6 Eberhard 9:11 efforts 5:11 Either 2:8 3:19 Elementary 1:13 elements 10:24 e-mail 2:15, 18 3:20 4:14 11:3 EMMET 1:9 Emmett 6:7 encourage 8:24 end-all 3:22 engage 4:5 engaged 4:7 5:3	< G > Gay 5:9 getting 6:5, 7 9:3 11:12 give 2:17 given 2:13, 16 12:12 go 5:25 9:21, 24, 24, 25 going 3:7, 23, 23 5:14, 19, 25 7:6, 18, 22, 23, 23 8:9 11:19 Good 2:1 5:9 10:16	< J > JEHLE 9:11, 11 10:6, 17 Job 1:24 12:24 John 3:7 8:25 justify 6:25		
< 4 > 41357 1:24 12:24	< A > able 5:24 abutments 9:2 accommodate 5:20 8:14, 18 accommodation 9:17 accommodation s 10:7 achieve 6:12 8:19 adjourned 11:23 advertised 3:2	< F >	< H >	< J >		
< 7 > 7:18 11:15 7:59 11:16 7339814 12:22	< A >	< E >	< I >	< J >		
< 8 > 8:00 3:2 11:10, 17, 23	< A >	< E >	< I >	< J >		
< 9 > 9th 12:13	< A >	< E >	< I >	< J >		

<p>< K > Karki 4:9 keep 3:1 8:2 9:10 key 4:12, 19, 24 kind 5:12 know 2:25 3:6 5:16 7:19, 22 8:21 9:2, 20</p> <p>< L > Lambeth 5:14, 16, 24 7:5 9:15, 21, 22 landscape 4:22 lane 6:16 lanes 4:23 large 3:15 12:1, 3, 21 lead 4:8 leads 7:11 leave 4:15 11:2 level 6:25 7:6 life 5:10 limitation 8:6 live 7:7 location 7:4 10:4, 7 logical 9:23 look 6:20 looked 6:21 looking 10:21 lot 5:18 7:10 Lynch 4:10</p> <p>< M > making 4:20 10:7 Massie 8:11 massively 9:16 mean 11:11 Meeting 1:11 2:12 mentioned 3:18 method 6:22 microphone 3:10 5:6 11:9 mid-block 6:20 7:3 month 2:21 MOTSCH 2:1 11:6, 17 multimodal 4:21 6:11</p> <p>< N ></p>	<p>name 8:4 11:9 narrow 7:13 need 3:3 7:3 8:2 9:19 neither 12:8 new 6:16 7:22 nice 10:8 notarial 12:12 Notary 12:2, 20, 22 note 11:7 now-deceased 9:12 numbers 5:20 6:25</p> <p>< O > October 12:4 offline 11:11, 13 Okay 11:17, 20 once 7:23 open 3:1 4:20 5:4 7:18 8:9 optimal 10:12, 19 outreach 2:11 overpass 8:12 owner 5:1 9:18 owners 5:1</p> <p>< P > p.m 11:16, 23 paper 3:16 parameters 8:13 parking 7:10 part 2:11 4:12 6:12 10:3 11:7 participated 9:12 partner 4:25 party 12:9 path 5:17 6:2 7:17 9:23 pathway 6:17 Payne 4:7 8:25 9:6 pedestrian 4:20 5:13, 20 6:11 pedestrians 7:23 people 2:6, 7 5:5</p>	<p>PEREZ 5:9, 9 6:18 7:5, 19 person 8:3 piece 3:15 Planning 3:23 plans 3:16 Please 2:16 4:13 8:2 11:1 point 3:12 7:12 8:6, 16 portion 2:2, 10 possibility 6:21 possibly 7:11 post 2:20 posted 2:22 3:13 potentially 5:15, 22 preferable 9:16 pretty 7:21 probably 2:21 proceeding 12:10 proceedings 12:6, 7 process 3:23 10:13 PROJECT 1:9 2:7, 10 4:4, 12, 20 10:1, 19, 24 11:5 property 5:1, 2 9:3 proposed 6:14 protocol 3:4 provide 10:19 Public 1:10 2:2, 11 3:11 11:5, 8, 20 12:2, 20, 22 public-hearing 2:10 putting 6:21 7:1 10:15</p> <p>< Q > quadrant 9:5 question 5:19 6:10 questions 4:13 5:5, 12 9:9 quite 6:25</p> <p>< R > railroad 4:18 7:12 9:19 range 9:10</p>	<p>reach 2:23 6:25 ready 2:1 real 5:23 realize 9:24 really 4:21 Receiving 4:2 record 8:1 11:5, 8, 18 refining 4:21 Registration 12:22 relate 5:12 related 12:8 remain 7:18 8:9 Reported 1:25 reporter 12:5 request 11:8 required 2:9, 12 residence 5:10, 16 residents 7:25 respond 2:18 responses 2:16, 20 rest 4:6 revisited 7:2 right 3:20 4:8, 17 5:6 7:7, 12 11:13, 14 right-of-way 9:3 road 5:24 6:23 7:7, 22 8:22 9:25 room 5:8 route 7:10 Rugby 9:25</p> <p>< S > safe 5:23 8:22, 23 safety 6:6 7:20 saw 5:20 10:3 School 1:13 5:17 9:21 seal 12:12 seat 2:3 see 4:3, 19 5:23 seen 2:5 separate 6:16 set 3:16 seven-foot 6:14 8:15, 20 shape 2:17</p>	<p>shared 6:2 sheet 3:19 sheets 4:14 show 2:7 shown 3:14 side 5:13 6:3, 13 7:18 8:11, 25 9:16 10:13, 15 sidewalk 6:14 7:17 8:15, 20 sidewalks 6:3 sight 7:21 signed 2:25 3:4 sign-in 4:10 sixty-percent-d esign 3:12 skilled 6:17 somebody 10:21 11:18 sort 9:17 10:8 speak 2:16 3:3 11:9 speaking 3:1 specific 8:15, 16 spoken 2:14 stage 3:12 stairwells 7:9 stand 10:21 standard 6:15 standpoint 8:7, 8 10:12 start 2:2 starts 7:24 step 3:25 storm 4:11 storm-water-cr eeek 9:5 straight 7:8 street 5:13 STREETSCAP E 1:9 strong 9:13 Stuart 3:7, 9 6:9, 19 7:17 8:2 9:6 10:2, 10, 18 11:14 student 6:4 student-pedestr ian 9:14 students 7:10 9:20 study 10:4 stuff 10:9 Sugrue 1:25 12:2, 20 supporter 9:13 sure 2:17, 22</p> <p>4:20 5:7 11:2 surely 8:21</p> <p>< T > tabulated 2:16 take 2:3, 21 7:10 team 4:6, 12 tell 3:7 ten 3:21 11:3 thank 2:4 3:9 5:11 6:9 10:2, 20 11:1, 14, 21 thereof 12:11 think 3:1, 4 5:4 7:1 8:5, 13, 17 9:14 three 7:21 three-minute 9:10 till 11:10 Tim 3:9, 18 time 7:1 8:3 9:13 tired 2:8 today 5:21 tonight 3:13 4:15 5:2 11:1, 2 traffic 4:11, 21 5:14, 18 6:4, 11 9:14 transcribing 3:10 transcript 12:7 travel 7:15 traveled 5:17 trestle 7:12 true 12:6 trying 6:12 9:9 Tuesday 1:12 tunnel 4:18 5:25 7:14 9:1, 15, 19 10:4 two 9:10</p> <p>< U > underneath 6:22 understand 4:3 8:5 11:12 University 4:24 5:10 9:18 10:1 Upper 1:13 use 8:12, 23</p>
---	--	---	---	---

utilized 8:21

< V >

versus 10:5

Virginia 1:14

4:24 5:11

12:1, 3, 13, 21

VOICE 7:25

< W >

Walker 1:13

walk-through

10:8

want 2:22

3:3, 18 8:16,

21 9:8, 20

11:12, 18

water 4:12

way 2:17

4:23 5:7, 23

7:14, 22 8:11

11:3, 7

website 2:15,

22 3:13

Welcome 2:4

well 4:10, 14,

25 5:2, 3

10:16 11:1

We're 2:1

3:11 4:4, 17,

21 6:12 8:17

9:9 10:19

11:19

west 10:13

western 10:5

we've 3:13

8:14 10:11

wide 6:4

wider 6:14, 19

width 6:15

wit 12:1

work 4:25

5:10 6:13

8:14 9:19

10:12

working 4:8,

17 10:10, 19

workshop 9:12

workshops

10:3

< Y >

Yeah 6:19

7:19

year 3:25

5:21

years 5:21

7:21