



Braddock Road Comments from Friends of Accotink Creek

February 25, 2017

"Begin with the premise that the automobile must accommodate the earth, rather than vice versa."

We appreciate the decision not to add lanes.

Our planet is on fire! However much we wish it would go away, Climate Change is real - it is happening. Making room for yet more automobiles while sacrificing the beneficial effect of existing tree canopy and simultaneously amplifying the heat island effect bequeaths an unhappy legacy to the not-very-distant future. Neither this project nor any other undertaken by Fairfax County should be undertaken without incorporating climate considerations from the outset.

What will be our solutions in the fairly predictable future when traffic again becomes an issue? Why not examine such solutions now? Why not find solutions for the future instead of the past?

We needn't look very far for ideas:

- See the "Great Street" plans Fairfax City has in mind for Old Lee Hwy
<http://www.fairfaxva.gov/home/showdocument?id=5395>
- See the "Greening DC Streets" concept
<http://ddot.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddot/publication/attachments/2014-0418-DDOT-GI-GreeningDCStreets.pdf>

Please further consider:

- **A thorough natural resources and stream impact study** should be conducted before proceeding further. These considerations must not be afterthoughts.
- **No net loss of habitat or tree cover** should occur inside or outside the right of way. If clearing of wooded areas is unavoidable, then the loss should be mitigated by equal nearby replanting.
- **Invasive species control** should be a part of any landscaping plans, avoiding invasive species in seed mix or plantings during and after construction and incorporating removal of the extensive existing infestations along the corridor.
- **Limit planting to species native to this region of Virginia**, allowing regrowth in harmony with surrounding habitats and wildlife that will also help minimize upkeep and mowing expense.
- **Consider the impact on impaired waters** in the study area and their tributaries, including Accotink Creek and Long Branch, both currently the subject of a TMDL process. Any solution should enhance the health of the waters crossed by Braddock Road, rather than further compromise them.
 - **The proposed realignment of Danbury Forest Drive**, in particular, seems to propose obliterating a significant portion of the Resource Protection Area directly on the banks of Long Branch, an impaired stream currently under TMDL study.
- **Wetlands mitigation**, where impact on streams cannot be avoided, should be within the watershed of those same streams, not by purchase of credits at some distant "wetlands bank".
- **Full restoration of old Danbury Forest Drive** to a wooded condition should be part of any realignment.
- **Stormwater reduction**, not just for new pavement, but for existing pavement, should be a feature of this project, which crosses two impaired streams.
- **Locate stormwater ponds in the power line easement**, rather than forested areas to avoid tree loss, but innovative stormwater management practices would be even better.
- **Widen the concept of the corridor** to find opportunities for enhanced stormwater controls outside the right of way, such as installing nearby green roofs and pervious parking lots.
- **Stream restoration projects**, already contemplated on Long Branch, should be incorporated, both as mitigation and as a cost saver.
- **The environmental value of bike paths is clear**, but the irony of clearing away wooded areas just to add them cannot be overlooked. Consider enhancing the existing path, which currently stretches from 495 to 28.
- **Road and lane diet design elements** should be considered for the benefits they can provide without road expansion.
- **Lighting equals light pollution.** Lighting along the corridor should be designed to preserve the benefit of darkness for wildlife, human health, and observation of the heavens.
- **Pedestrian overpasses should be aesthetic gems**, not brutalist Soviet eyesores.

The Friends of Accotink Creek are a stakeholder in any and all projects proposed in the Accotink Creek watershed. We should be routinely included in notifications of proposed projects at the earliest stages, as should other watershed protection groups in other watersheds.

Sincerely yours,

Friends of Accotink Creek : : www.accotink.org : :

<(((o>...>(((o> "Find just one other person who cares." >(((o>...>(((o>...>(((o>