**PROJECT UNDERSTANDING**

The Newark Park Commission (NPC and owner of the project) is seeking to expand and improve the trail system in Newark, Delaware. Specifically, the NPC requests the completion of the Pomeroy Branch Rail to Trail Project, one of multiple phases of revitalizing the city's trail system. The development aims to upgrade mobility for both pedestrians and bicyclists and to build a north-south link beginning at the south side of Delaware Avenue to Creek Road and the University of Delaware's Laird Campus.

The NPC, formed ten years ago, primarily works with levels of government above and including the city of Newark to implement the design, construction, and operation of the trail system for the city. It does so in an effort to endorse safe and environmentally friendly alternatives to automobile use as well as provide a place of recreation for residents, commuters, and students living or working in the city of Newark. This is important for many reasons, some of which include (but are not limited to) rising gas prices and the need within dense cities for a feeling of freedom. The Pomeroy Branch Rail to Trail Project will not only provide the alternatives described above, but it will add to the city's character and become a vital part of the community.

The Pomeroy Branch Rail to Trail project consists of multiple components and goals. **Scope of these services (to achieve these goals) sought include:**

- 1.) Preliminary design for reconstruction of the Five-Points Intersection (Cleveland Avenue, Chapel Street, Paper Mill Road, and Margaret Street)
- 2.) Preliminary design for a multiple-user trail
- 3.) Preliminary design of a combination Transit Station Facility (UD/DART/Newark/NPC)
- 4.) Pedestrian bridge located at the Five-Points Intersection
- 5.) A large earth retaining structure located near Paul Run
- 6.) Observation tower
- 7.) Storm-water facilities
- 8.) Wastewater pumping station.

The proposed path of the trail closely follows the deserted (and neglected) corridor of the Pomeroy and Western Railroad. Formerly used for industrial purposes, this railroad is no longer operated. The railroad extends from Delaware Avenue and across the Five-Points intersection. The NPC already owns the right-of-way, defined by the alignment of the railroad corridor.

The central challenge involved in this project is to achieve each of the goals described above while minimizing unfavorable traffic conditions, reducing environmental impacts and minimizing impacts to existing utilities. An additional challenge associated with the project includes a $400,000 grant for the construction of the observation tower. (The observation tower should provide panoramic views of the White Clay Creek watershed.) The grant money, however, can only be used for the construction of the tower and the NPC requests the overall cost of the tower does not exceed the amount of the grant. Related issues may include limitations on material types, observation tower height and location.

Other issues will also need to be taken into consideration. The adverse traffic impacts described above not only include future traffic impacts (beyond project completion), but will include impacts during the construction of these project goals. The north-south route will need to be of recreational value, but will need to incorporate safety and low-maintenance. For example, one type of vegetation may require less maintenance than another, but will be just as aesthetically pleasing. Safety implementations include, but are not limited to signage, striping and ease of use of the trail system.

The eventual goal of the Newark Park Commission is to effectively integrate this project phase into the city's trail system. Currently, it seeks engineering services and proposals for the preliminary engineering of the Pomeroy Branch Rail to Trail Project.
Good Effort to Personalize & Put In Own Words

Project Understanding 9/20/2007

The city of Newark is a tough city to navigate by foot. There are large intersections and a lot of automotive travel, making crossing streets difficult for pedestrians. The Pomeroy Rail to Trail Project is a plan to enhance trails around Newark and make pedestrian movement easier and more desirable. This project spans from the southernmost side of Delaware Avenue all the way to Creek Road near the Laird Campus of the University of Delaware. There is an abandoned Pomeroy and Western Railroad section that serves no purpose at the moment, and is to be converted into a trail so that the residents of Newark can travel more easily and safely around campus.

This project is being enforced mainly to promote safe alternatives to automotive travel and to encourage residents of Newark to walk and bike. This stretch of trail will be a good route of transportation for people trying to navigate Newark, and will also be a good source of leisure for bikers, runners and walkers. Students of the University of Delaware, along with the Newark community will hopefully benefit from its implementation.

This project has many different aspects that must be completed and assessed if the trail is to be successful and benefit the community. The old railroad must be demolished and in its place a one mile long multi-user path will be built. Because this path is to be functional for bikers, runners, and walkers, a parking station for the bicycles and a transit station need to be built.

This new path will affect the five-way intersection of Cleveland Avenue, Margaret Street and Chapel Street. This intersection needs to be reconstructed and safety needs to be increased for all traveling there. Because of the enormity of this intersection, a pedestrian bridge will need to be built over the roads to fully allow for the safe travel of pedestrians.

Along with the pedestrian bridge, an Observation tower will also be constructed so that the residents of Newark will be able to look over the entire White Clay Creek region and enjoy the view. This will allow the community to see Newark in its entirety and appreciate the land. The funding for this part of the project has come from a very generous grant and the tower will not exceed this cost.

The wastewater system around the new trail is in need of an upgrade. For this reason, this project also includes a new pumping station for wastewater use and improvements to all existing wastewater components. These new elements will eliminate the recent wastewater storage and transport problems in the area.

With all of the construction and improvements being made, the soil and water runoff in the area of the trail may be affected. Impervious area is being added and the storm water will have to be managed. Paul Run may also be affected, and will have to be studied and improved if the need is found.

This project should benefit a great number of people in the Newark community. Everything must be done in such a way as to limit any harmful impacts that the construction may cause to the public, environment, and transportation in the area. This project will be a great success if all of the elements of the trail described above are completed effectively and efficiently.
Project Understanding

Pomeroy Branch Rail to Trail Project – Phase I

Introduction

The Newark Park Commission (NPC) wishes to construct a rail-to-trail facility (the Pomeroy Trail) in the City of Newark along the former right-of-way of the Pomeroy and Western Railroad. This trail will further open up the city to pedestrian and bicycle traffic, much as the already completed James F. Hall Trail has done along the southern edge of the city. The project consists of the following major components, to be discussed in the following pages: the trail itself, work incidental to the environmental and structural needs of the trail, construction of a downtown transit facility, improvement of the Cleveland Avenue – Paper Mill Road – Margaret Street intersection, design of a wastewater pumping and treatment facility, and design of an observation tower.

Trail Design

The core of the project is the design of a pedestrian/bicycle trail running through the abandoned railroad corridor from Delaware Avenue north to Main Street, then across to the Cleveland – Paper Mill intersection, and terminating at Creek Road north of the UD campus. Design will include the clearing, grading, and finishing required for the trail alignment. Design is also required for all intersections of the trail and existing roadways. These intersections should minimize disturbances to both the existing traffic and expected pedestrian traffic.

Items Incidental to Trail Design

Some design items also exist which are incidental to the trail design. A retaining wall structure and stream bank improvements are required in the area of Paul Run for both the structural and environmental impacts of the trail in that area. Erosion and Sedimentation controls and storm water management facilities are needed. Permitting for environmental impacts, structural design, and zoning variances should be provided for. Utility relocations, fire suppression systems, lighting, and other features that will enhance the safety and enjoyment of the trail’s users should also be included in the design.

Transit Facility Design

The NPC will construct a new multi-modal transit facility between Main Street for use by DART, the University, and the City to facilitate the multi-modal travel through Newark that the Pomeroy Trail will encourage. This facility will provide a minimum of 24 parking spaces, parking spaces for bicycles, and a shelter for users waiting to transfer between modes. Impact to the surrounding businesses should be mitigated during construction, with additional consideration given to existing utilities in the area.

Five-Point Intersection Improvement

The alignment of the Pomeroy Trail passes through the five-leg intersection of Cleveland Avenue, Paper Mill Road/Chapel Street, and Margaret Street. To provide for the safety of those using the trail, the NPC wishes to construct an ADA compliant pedestrian bridge over the intersection. Other ground-level pedestrian movements should be evaluated to ensure the safe passage of pedestrians through the intersection. The Margaret Street leg of the intersection will be eliminated, with consideration given to the need for a new traffic signal at the neighboring intersection of Creek View Drive and Paper Mill Road.

Wastewater Pumping Station

The wastewater treatment plant for the City of Newark, located along the project corridor, requires additional capacity to handle the sewage needs of the City. The plant will be redesigned to relieve current stresses on the City’s sewer system. Additional facilities will be designed for the treatment of the wastewater prior to discharge into the White Clay Creek.
Observation Tower
The NPC received a $400,000 grant for construction of an observation tower to offer views across the City of Newark and the White Clay Creek watershed. The tower needs a minimum height 10 feet above the existing tree line and should provide space for at least 20 visitors. The location and design of the tower should provide an optimal view while combining with the surroundings in an aesthetically pleasing manner. The NPC would also like to utilize as much of the grant money as possible in design and construction while avoiding the need to find other sources of funding for this portion of the project.

Concluding Remarks
In carrying out this project, the NPC would like to minimize impacts to existing businesses and traffic both during and after construction. The final facility should be low-maintenance, while providing a safe and enjoyable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.