

Fenwick Lane - Silver Spring Transit Center

This section describes the interim alignment recommended to avoid Transitway/Trail right-of-way constraints between Fenwick Lane and the Silver Spring Transit Center.

Existing Conditions

There are significant Transitway/Trail right-of-way and slope constraints between Fenwick Lane and the Silver Spring Transit Center. These constrained locations include:

- Two low-rise offices close to the CSX right-of-way and the edge of a very steep embankment. An interim trail would have to be later removed by the construction of the Transitway/Trail project.
- The District Courthouse is proposed for the south side of Apple Avenue next to Cameron Street and the CSX right-of-way. A trail easement is being negotiated as part of the design for the courthouse project.
- Space is tight between the Silver Spring Metro Plaza/Kariscan Building and the CSX live rail line. According to the Georgetown Branch Transitway Trail DEIS, a minimum of 13' is needed to accommodate a narrowed 8' pathway, and 5' of additional space to accommodate necessary clearances and barrier walls.

Proposed Improvements

The interim trail alignment will follow Fenwick Lane to the Silver Spring Green Trail along 2nd Avenue. The permanent trail alignment will

have to be constructed along with the Transitway project.

Interim Trail Improvements

Once under the Spring Street bridge the trail will need to be located slightly away from the CSX/WMATA right-of-way to accommodate the future construction of the Spring Street Transitway Station.

The trail can be accommodated at the edge of the post office parking lot by constructing a timber retaining wall to support the trail as it ramps up from under the Spring Street Bridge to the base of the parking lot. This timber retaining wall would need to be removed as part of the construction of the Spring Street Transitway stop. A drainage inlet would be needed to address stormwater flow along the east side of Spring Street.

The slope between the post office parking lot and the CSX/WMATA right-of-way is currently eroding. The timber retaining wall and trail could be designed to solve the eroding slope problem.

The interim trail alignment should utilize the west side of Fenwick by constructing a concrete sidewalk adjacent to the existing curb. A utility pole would need to be relocated. Utilizing the east side of Fenwick would require the demolition of a 1' high retaining wall and reconstruction of a seat wall/planting bed at the edge of the existing plaza.

The trail could be accommodated on the eastbound (south) side of 2nd Avenue by narrowing and shifting the existing traffic lanes to three 12-foot lanes (westbound, eastbound left turn, and eastbound through lane), approaching the 2nd Avenue intersection with Cameron.

The trail would then cross the street at the existing Cameron Street crosswalk and utilize the Silver Spring Green Trail in front of the Cameron Hills Townhomes. A one-block section in front of the existing parking lot would have to be constructed to a similar standard as the existing section at the Cameron Hills Townhomes.

Figure 55:
Looking south from
Spring Street Bridge



Pedestrian improvements are needed to cross Colesville Road. Pedestrian improvements required include an enlargement of the crosswalk cueing areas, an enlargement of the median refuge area, possible dedicated pedestrian crossing time and improvements to the visibility of the pedestrian crossing (distinctive pavement and/or markings, fluorescent green pedestrian/bike crossing signs, hazard identification beacons warning of the pedestrian crossing, and redesign of the intersection pavement to make the intersection area more visible).

Community Linkages/Construction

Bypass

The Fenwick Lane - 2nd Avenue interim alignment will serve as a construction bypass for the Georgetown Branch Transitway/Trail and the Silver Spring Transit Center construction periods. Once the Transitway Trail is constructed the Fenwick segment would continue to serve as a connecting linkage to the Capital Crescent Trail from the Silver Spring Green Trail.

A linkage to the permanent trail is needed from the Silver Spring Metro Plaza/Kariscan Building. This will need to be incorporated

into the design of the Georgetown Branch Transitway/Trail project.

Permanent Trail

Construction of the permanent trail will require a narrower trail and a splitting of the pedestrian and bicycle routes. Pedestrians should be encouraged to utilize the Fenwick/Silver Spring Green Trail. Bicyclists will continue through to the Silver Spring Transit Center by utilizing a bridge over Colesville Road constructed as part of the Transitway/Trail project or Transit Center Project.

The trail should be on an elevated structure through the Transit Center with access to and from the platforms. The structure should start behind the high rise Silver Spring Metro Plaza/Kariscan building at an elevation of 331.5. The structure should cross Colesville Road (at elevation 334), rise through to the Transit Center at 5% grade, and then descend once clear of the proposed Tier 1 entrance to the Metro. The structure should have a fourteen foot width (inside clear) and to the extent possible, maintain a level grade.

The design of the span should involve a public art consultant and artist to ensure that the

Figure 56:
Plan detail showing
Fenwick to 2nd
Avenue interim
route

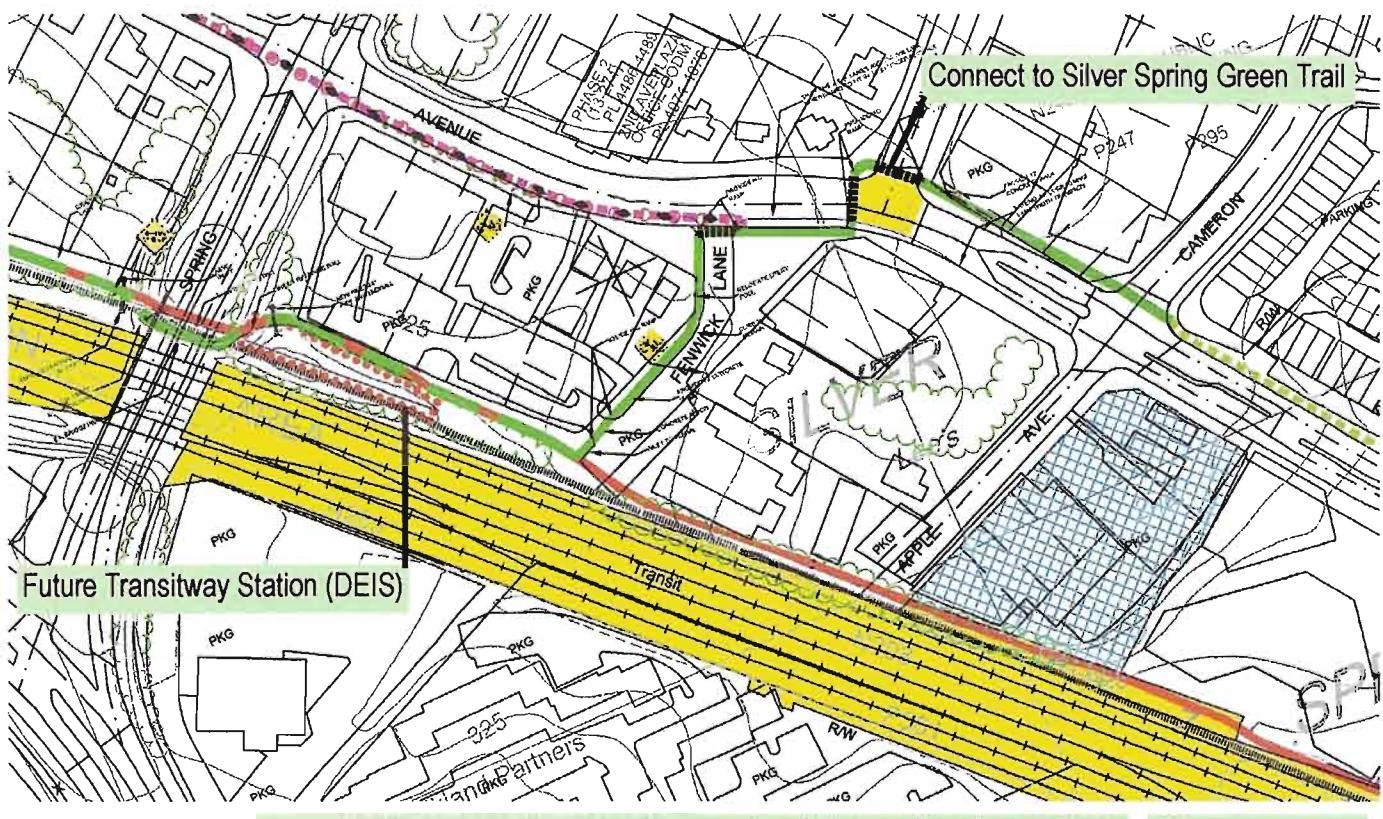


Figure 57:
View south towards
Silver Spring Metro
Station from just
south of Apple
Avenue



Figure 58:
View west of Silver
Spring Metro
Station and Transit
Center from
intersection of 2nd
Avenue and
Colesville Road

Figure 59: Sketch
illustrating concept
of incorporating
public art into the
Colesville Road
pedestrian span



bridge serves as an attractive landmark for the Silver Spring CBD.

Coordination Issues

- The design of the Silver Spring Transit Center needs to incorporate the space for the trail as an elevated and separate structure through the Transit Center. There should also be direct access to the trail within the Transit Center for rail and bus users.
- Construction of the interim trail will require lane narrowing on 2nd Avenue to accommodate 10 additional feet of shared pedestrian/bicycle path. Bicyclists should dismount between Fenwick and Cameron, since the available space is too narrow to separate the trail from the travel lanes by a minimum of five feet.
- Future design of the Transitway/Trail project must accommodate the permanent alignment of the trail between Fenwick and the Silver Spring Transit Center. In addition, direct connections to the permanent trail are needed from the Silver Spring Metro Plaza/Kariscan Building.
- Public art, or at a minimum, opportunities for public art should be incorporated into the design of the span over Colesville Road.

Ripley District

This section describes the interim alignment needed to connect between the Silver Spring Transit Center and the historic B&O Station building.

Existing Conditions

The Ripley District is the triangular area bounded by the CSX/WMATA right-of-way, Bonifant and Georgia Avenue. The District encompasses approximately 15 acres of land. There is approximately 1.1 acres of land for a 35' wide right-of-way for the Metropolitan Branch Trail. There are several constraints affecting the design of the trail immediately adjacent to the CSX/WMATA right-of-way. These constraints can be overcome by utilizing a multi-phase approach.

- The construction of the trail through the Silver Spring Transit Center requires coordination with the design and the completion of the Transitway/Trail project. As discussed above, an interim route will be utilized until the Transitway/Trail is completed (Fenwick to 2nd Avenue and the Silver Spring Green Trail).
- Progress Place is a social service provider that occupies space within a county-owned facility fronting on Colonial Lane. A loading dock was constructed at the rear of the building up to the edge of the railroad right-of-way making it impossible to construct the trail adjacent to the CSX/WMATA tracks. The loading dock provides access to food preparation areas and its immediate removal is not possible without major interior modifications and the provision of an alternate loading dock area.

- South of the Transit Center, CSX retains right-of-way in the approximate location of the existing chain link fence. The chain link fence should be replaced with a more attractive fence and gate system while the MARC platform is still in use. The trail plans would need to be reviewed with CSX engineers to make sure that there is a suitable barrier between the live freight rail and the trail.
- Montgomery Preservation also indicated that they need to put in a handicapped accessible ramp to access the historic B&O Station building.

Proposed Improvements

The permanent alignment is assumed to be along the CSX/WMATA tracks through the Silver Spring Transit Center and the Ripley District to Georgia Avenue. A pedestrian/bicycle span is proposed for the Georgia Ave crossing, separated from the existing bridge (see Figure 64). An interim route is needed around the Silver Spring Transit Center for the duration of the construction period. The interim route must also be coordinated with construction of the Discovery Headquarters across Wayne Avenue from the Silver Spring Transit Center.

Interim Trail Improvements

The interim trail will cross Colesville Road from 2nd to Wayne Avenue. It is assumed that construction of the Discovery Communications Headquarters will precede construction of the Silver Spring Transit Center. The interim route will cross Wayne Avenue to the eastbound side, turning right to utilize a portion of Dixon

Figure 60:
View north from
existing parking lot
towards Progress
Place





Figure 61: View south showing Colonial Avenue

Avenue, as an on-street bike way. From Dixon the on-street route will turn right onto Ripley and left onto Colonial through the public parking lot on the Little Tavern Track and connect back to the preferred alignment along the CSX/WMATA right-of-way.

Upon completion of the Silver Spring Green Trail segment along Wayne Avenue in front of the Discovery Communications Headquarters, the interim route will shift to the opposite

Figure 62: Plan detail showing Ripley District

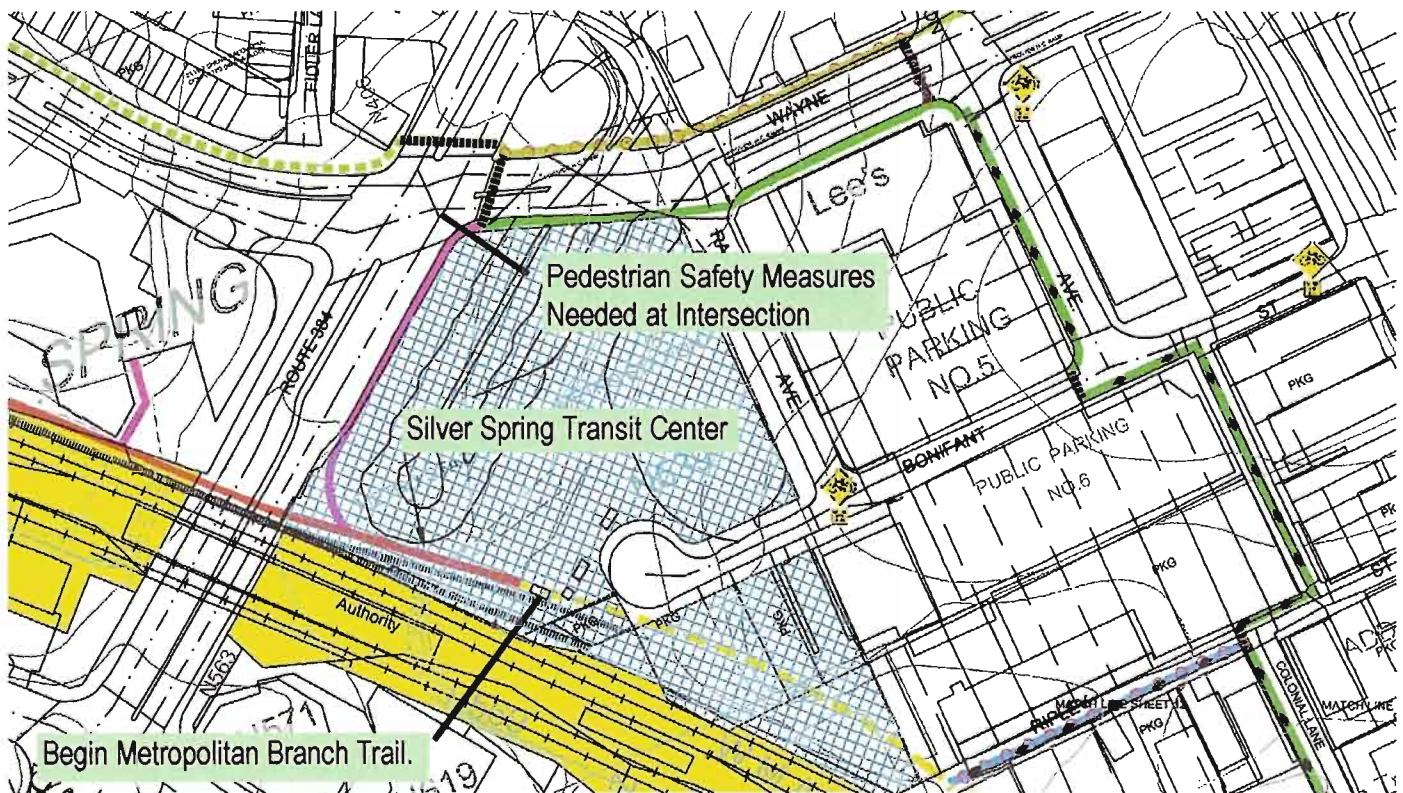
(westbound) side of Wayne Avenue and cross at Dixon Avenue to avoid the construction zone of the Silver Spring Transit Center.

Upon completion of the Silver Spring Transit Center and the Transitway/Trail through to Ripley, the trail will utilize an on-street route along Ripley to bypass Progress Place, until an addition can be constructed allowing for the relocation of the loading dock and the food preparation area.

The interim trail will then connect to the Permanent Alignment of the Metropolitan Branch Trail, south of the public parking lot at Progress Place. This will open the trail through to the historic B&O Station building.

Permanent Trail

The Metropolitan Branch Trail will proceed through to the historic B&O Station building. The trail design incorporates a single shared-use path with landscape and adjacent sitting areas, instead of two separate paths for bicycle and pedestrian use. This will allow for larger and more cohesive landscape areas providing a better growing environment for trees, shrubs and groundcover. The 35' wide right-of-way is envisioned as a long linear parklike area connecting Georgia Avenue and



East-West Highway businesses and offices with the Silver Spring Metro area. The design for this area will need to be completed when more information is available about the proposed adjacent uses.

Montgomery Preservation, Inc., now restoring the historic B&O Station building, envisions the building serving as an important point along the trail. The historic B&O Station building area will eventually provide bicycle racks, water, access to rest rooms, interpretive panels and displays and possibly a small community room.

Two options are possible for the trail: proceeding under the station canopy and connecting with the landing area for the new span over Georgia Avenue; or proceeding around the north side of the station.

The north side option requires an exchange of land with the adjacent development parcels to replace parking spaces that will need to be removed to accommodate this trail alignment.

The canopy option will require a significant barrier between the live freight tracks and the trail. For this reason, the north side option may be more appropriate.



Figure 62:
View north from the
historic B&O Station
building

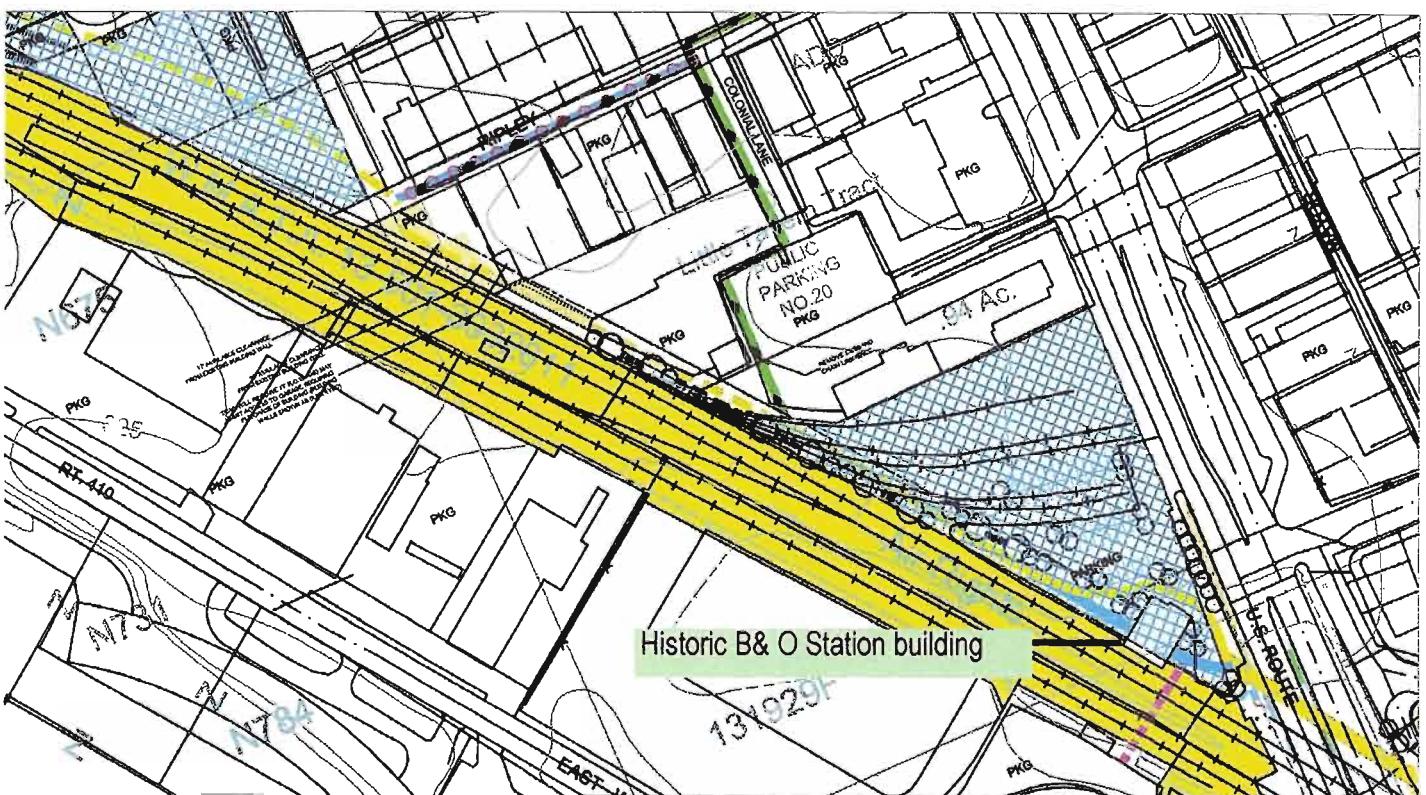


Figure 63:
Plan detail showing
historic B&O Station
building area

Coordination Issues

- The construction of the Silver Spring Green Trail in front of the Discovery Communication Headquarters needs to be completed as soon as possible to provide a construction bypass for the Silver Spring Transit Center
- MCDPWT will need to designate the on-street interim routes as bicycle routes and place appropriate signs to warn motorists and buses of bicycle use.
- MCDPWT (Facilities) needs to initiate work with Progress Place to purchase adjacent land and reconfigure the loading area and food handling operations so the existing loading dock can be removed. The time frame for this to happen should coincide with the planned completion of the Silver Spring Transit Center.
- Montgomery County needs to negotiate an exchange of land or an easement to provide parking spaces for the historic B&O Station building in exchange for a trail right-of-way on the north side of the station.