

Bridge Status Update, October 2018

A couple of Meadow Way residents recently informed the Town, via email, of the deteriorating conditions of the existing bridge. They reported loose timbers and the long screws holding them down, as well as bad dry rot in the deck timbers. Town staff and CIC visited the site on Friday, 10/19, and confirmed the visible deterioration of some of the deck cross-beams. Some of the screws that penetrated healthy wood before and held down the timbers stacked on them are also not holding because of dry rot. These new bridge defects are troubling and Town staff is currently in the process of having contractors visit the bridge to evaluate the extent of the repairs and submit quotes. Depending on the cost of the repair, staff may need to seek Town Council approval in November. In the meantime, driving on the bridge remains the same, but care must be taken to drive slowly on the sets of longitudinal timber pads acting as tire tracks. The Town will continue monitoring the bridge and provide ongoing updates regarding the upcoming repairs.

Caltrans has authorized the dollars to design the proposed natural revetment on the upstream-left bridge quadrant, and to split the wall there into a shorter one at the base of the embankment and another up on top of the bank, where the redwood fence for No. 333 Cascade Drive property is. The Council approved these project changes in its January 2018 monthly meeting. We consider the Caltrans authorization as welcome news, allowing us to introduce additional significant fish-friendly elements to the project as well as to break up the wall surface into two. The upper wall will ultimately be covered by riparian growth in front of it and the lower wall will also be covered by riparian growth, in front as well as the top. The creek bank where this is all happening will still accommodate an informal footpath down to the creek from the top. Shortly, CIC will be sending out its geotechnical crews to drill a couple of small-diameter holes to explore the subsurface conditions for the design of the upper wall and you may spot them in the field doing that.

Meanwhile, the environmental studies for both NEPA and CEQA, and the preliminary design are ongoing. CIC's environmental subconsultant is continuing the various biological, noise, water quality, air quality, and archeological and historical resources studies. This is happening while the preliminary engineering design of the bridge and other improvements are taking place. The draft environmental documents (ED) will be completed and CEQA will be circulated sometime in 2019 and the final ED issued after addressing the comments. This will then trigger applying for permits from US Army Corps of Engineers, Water Quality Control Board, State Fish and Game, etc. We don't think it's possible to complete all of this before the 2019 construction season begins. Therefore, we anticipate construction beginning in 2020.

CIC has also started the preliminary right-of-way process to sort out temporary and permanent easements, but this process can't start fully till the ED has been approved.