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To: Planning Commission  
From: Urban Design Committee  
Date: March 16, 2015  
RE: **Conceptual Location, Character and Extent Review of a new section of roadway connecting two sections of Deepwater Terminal Road**

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**I. APPLICANT**

Manouchehr Nosrati, Department of Public Works

**II. LOCATION**

Connecting two sections of Deepwater Terminal Road

**Property Owner:**

City of Richmond, Sonoco Products Company, Florida Rock Industries Inc., Vulcan Lands Inc.

**III. PURPOSE**

The application is for conceptual location, character, and extent review of a new section of roadway connecting two sections of Deepwater Terminal Road.

**IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

This project involves the establishment of a new section of Deepwater Terminal Road, connecting two existing sections of that road. The new section of roadway will be approximately 0.7 miles long and will consist of two travel lanes, curbs and gutters, shoulders, lighting and drainage improvements. The proposed connector will provide additional access to the Port of Richmond and importantly, will provide access for taller trucks, which are restricted by the height of the Interstate 95 underpasses at Bells Road and at the Deepwater Terminal connector just south of Bellemeade Road.

The proposed roadway is in an area that is very industrial in nature and will not be widely used by the general public for the foreseeable future. The Urban Design Committee did ask that the applicant consider providing bicycle sharrows in the new section given the roadway width. The Committee finds that the improvements are consistent with the recommendations of the citywide Master Plan and with the industrial zoning of the adjacent properties. The Committee further finds that the proposed roadway will provide an immeasurable benefit to the Port of Richmond, as it will be able to safely accommodate larger vehicles that are becoming increasingly utilized at the Port. Therefore, the Urban Design Committee recommends that the Planning Commission grant conceptual approval, with the following conditions:

- That the applicant consider including sharrows on the new section of roadway.
- That the proposed cobrahead lighting fixtures are full cutoff.

**Staff Contact:**

Jeff Eastman, (804) 646-6348

**V. FINDINGS OF FACT**

**a. Site Description and Surrounding Context**

The proposed right-of-way would connect two sections of Deepwater Terminal Road. The southern portion of Deepwater Terminal Road currently terminates at the Luck Stone quarry (roughly east of Bellemeade Road), while the northern portion of Deepwater Terminal Road terminates at the Vulcan Construction Materials quarry, south of Goodes Street. The properties in the project area fall within the M-2 (Heavy Industrial) zoning district and are used for industrial purposes.

To the west of the proposed roadway is Interstate 95 and a CSX rail line. To the east are privately-owned industrial properties and then the James River beyond.

**b. Scope of Review**

The project is subject to location, character, and extent review under Section 17.07 of the Richmond City Charter as a new street.

**c. UDC Review History**

Staff was unable to identify any previously reviewed UDC projects in the area.

**d. Project Description**

This project involves the establishment of a new section of Deepwater Terminal Road, connecting two existing sections of that road. The new section of roadway will be approximately 0.7 miles long and will consist of two travel lanes, curbs and gutters, shoulders, lighting and drainage improvements. The proposed connector will provide additional access to the Port of Richmond and importantly, will provide access for taller trucks, which are restricted by the height of the Interstate 95 underpasses at Bells Road and at the Deepwater Terminal connector just south of Bellemeade Road.

The typical section on the two existing sections of Deepwater Terminal Road features one 13' wide travel lane in each direction, with a grassy shoulder on either side leading to a drainage swale. There is no center median, but the centerline is striped. The proposed typical section for the new roadway includes two 13'6" travel lanes and a 1'6" gutter pan on each side of the roadway, for a total width of 30' from face-of-curb to face-of-curb. The eastern shoulder alongside the road will be graded to allow for future sidewalk development, and beyond that a standard VDOT guardrail will be required on portions of the roadway, which will be set back 8' from the curb face.

No landscaping is proposed along the new roadway. Cobrahead lights atop wooden utility poles will be provided along the new roadway approximately every 150'. An unused railroad spur will be removed along portions of the project corridor to allow for construction of the roadway. The project will also require the relocation of a number of utilities.

Construction of the roadway will require acquisition of 1.9 acres of right-of-way from the following private property owners adjacent to the proposed roadway: Sonoco Products Company (1.30 acres), Florida Rock Industries Inc. (0.46 acres), and Vulcan Lands Inc. (0.13 acres). Additional easements will be required from these and additional property owners for drainage and construction. Discussions with those affected property owners has already begun.

The estimated construction cost for this project is \$3,250,000. Currently, only \$500,000 has been funded, which will go towards engineering, right-of-way acquisition and some utility relocation. Since construction is unfunded, there is no timetable for when the new section of roadway will be complete.

**e. Master Plan**

The project area is located in the Broad Rock and Old South districts as defined by the citywide Master Plan. The proposed roadway straddles the line between land recommended for Industrial uses in the Master Plan, and land recommended for Public and Open Space uses. Primary uses in the Industrial land use category include a wide variety of manufacturing, processing, research and development, warehousing, distribution, office-warehouse and service uses (page 135). The Public and Open Spaces category refers to land designated for publicly owned and operated parks, recreation areas, open spaces and libraries among other uses (page 135).

The Plan identifies two rock and gravel quarries in the vicinity for future re-use to accommodate public recreational facilities such as marinas and/or other water related facilities and activities and also advocates for the establishment of a linear park along the west side of the James River between Ancarrow's Landing and the Port of Richmond (page 154).

**f. Urban Design Guidelines**

The Urban Design Guidelines state that "all transportation projects should have adequate provisions to address the needs of the pedestrian in a safe and efficient manner. Streetscape elements, such as street trees and street lighting, should be used to encourage pedestrian activity (page 6).

In a section on Street Design, and in regards to lane width, the guidelines state that "the width of a street should respond to the volume of traffic it carries. An 11 foot travel lane should only be utilized along corridors designed for speeds in excess of 40mph" (page 6).

**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

- a. Vicinity Map**
- b. Application**
- c. Plans**