



Memorandum

To: Liz Stout, City of Minneapolis
From: Jeff Weiss, Barr Engineering
Subject: Bassett Creek Main Stem Stabilization Project – Project Update
Date: September 10, 2019
Project: 23271579

The Bassett Creek Main Stem Stabilization Project includes stabilization areas between Cedar Lake Road and the Bassett Creek Tunnel, and another area near the Fruen Mill. A significant portion of the project was scheduled to be completed on the property of Pioneer Paper Stock Co (Pioneer Paper); however, Pioneer Paper is no longer willing to provide access to complete the project. This memorandum provides a summary of recent developments and the project implications.

Background

Bids were received on this project in March 2018, and construction was scheduled to begin in the summer of 2018. Construction was delayed due to requirements from the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office to investigate potential historic resources within the project area. After completing the required investigation, construction was scheduled to begin in the summer of 2019.

The stabilization areas for this project are located on both public and private property. Barr Engineering Co (Barr) maintained contact with private property owners during the construction delay to try to continue to coordinate schedules that would be acceptable to the private landowners. The landowner most significantly impacted by the project is Pioneer Paper Stock Co at 155 Irving Ave N. BCWMC, Barr, and the City have met with representatives from Pioneer Paper multiple times through the feasibility study through design and in preparation for construction. Pioneer Paper had consistently expressed concerns with logistics for accommodating the project due to limited space at their facility; however, they also consistently expressed a willingness to make necessary adjustments and allow access so the project could be completed.

Recent Developments

In preparation for anticipated construction in 2019, the City, Barr, and the contractor (Sunram Construction) met with Pioneer Paper on July 19 to review details for access, staging, and construction. One of the primary obstacles is the need to find temporary storage for trailers currently stored on Pioneer Paper property. The trailers need to be moved to provide access to the eroding bank and complete the stabilization project. Another concern is allowing construction vehicle access in an otherwise busy area

with Pioneer Paper's own trucks entering and leaving the facility. During the meeting, an agreement was developed that would provide temporary storage for the trailers while minimizing the potential disturbance to regular operations at Pioneer Paper; however some details needed to be finalized before the agreement could be formally completed.

In early August, Pioneer Paper informed Jeff Weiss at Barr about some complications with access to the property. Pioneer Paper had been storing other trailers on City streets, and the City was requiring Pioneer Paper to move the trailers. While the trailers parked on the City streets were not in conflict with the project, the need to move the trailers reduced Pioneer Paper's ability to find temporary storage for the trailers that are in conflict with access for the project. Barr and the City attempted to resolve the issue through August; however, on August 26, Pioneer Paper sent an email stating that since the trailer storage issue could not be resolved, then they would not be able to provide access to complete the stabilization project.

Project Implications

Without access through Pioneer Paper, there are two primary options for moving forward:

- 1) Find an alternative access route
- 2) Remove the portion of the project on Pioneer Paper

An alternative access route is possible; however, there are additional obstacles to overcome. It would require negotiating access through the City of Minneapolis Impound Lot. It would also require either working more directly within the stream channel or clearing a significant amount of trees on a steep slope on the opposite bank from Pioneer Paper. Due to higher than normal precipitation in 2019, flows in the creek have been high for most of the summer, and recent flows have not been low enough to provide access within the creek channel. The option for clearing trees on the steep slope opposite of Pioneer Paper was previously considered to be infeasible due to the desire to minimize tree clearing, and the complications for working on a steep slope. If an alternative access route is finalized, then the stabilization measures installed would likely be modified. The proposed stabilization at Pioneer Paper included Vegetated Reinforced Soil Stabilization. This approach typically requires excavation into the bank, and is most easily done from the top of the bank, i.e. on the Pioneer Paper property. Without access to the main part of the Pioneer Paper property, it would not be possible to install this approach; however, may still be possible to install a riprap toe stabilization and all or some of the cross vanes proposed in the same area.

If the project continues without stabilizing the slope on Pioneer Paper, then the overall project costs would be reduced by approximately half. The bid for the project, including the base bid and the accepted alternative bid, was \$399,909. The estimated cost for the stabilization work on Pioneer Paper is estimated to be approximately \$193,000.

Next Steps

Due to the late change to access and the current high flows in the creek, Barr and the City agreed it would be best to delay the start date to later in the fall. This would hopefully allow flows to be reduced to make work in the creek easier, and it provides time to determine if another access route to the Pioneer Paper area can be worked out.

At this point, the portions of the project between Irving Avenue and the Bassett Creek Tunnel and the stabilization near Fruen Mill are expected to proceed. The feasibility of completing the portion of the project between Cedar Lake Road and Irving Avenue will depend on the alternate access route. See the images below.



Figure 1 Project area between Cedar Lake Road and Bassett Creek Tunnel. The blue box indicates the area of the project that may be excluded from construction due to access issues.



Figure 2 Fruen Mill Area. Project work on bank opposite of Fruen Mill is expected to proceed