



# Pennsylvania Avenue Flood Repair Open House and On-Line Public Comments

02.14.14

## Purpose of Meeting

- *Pennsylvania Avenue was damaged during the September 2013 flood and the City of Boulder is evaluating different options for repairs of the section of road between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> streets, where Gregory Canyon Creek crosses the roadway. We asked members of the community to choose one of two alternatives or share another alternative with us.*
  - *Alternative 1: Replace the existing culvert (drainage pipe) and rebuild the roadway to pre-flood conditions.*
  - *Alternative 2: Remove the culvert and roadway above the creek, close the road to through traffic and build a pedestrian bridge over the creek.*

## Summary of Public Comments

### General Comments

- **Alternative 1: 3 in favor**
  - Traffic on the road and school access is better mitigated on option 1. Option 2 looks like it would cause more blockage.
  - There would be through traffic, less congestion, a paved road, and less mud. School parking traffic will be decreased if back to pre-flood conditions. There would be less speeding traffic to suddenly stop at the closed road and dead end to turn around.
- **Alternative 2: 56 in favor**
  - Alternative two is much better for our neighborhood.
  - The culvert will continue to get clogged and spill over.
  - This has the greatest opportunity to mitigate future property damage from structure blockage and volume.
  - The culvert narrowing the creek bed at Pennsylvania caused the flooding west of the creek; Therefore if it is restored as it was there will be a problem of liability. It also seems that option two is less expensive.
  - Regardless of the alternative, the type of maintenance upstream to the head waters is critical for safety. The flood in September 2013 highlighted the limitations of culverts. Alternative two is consistent with City Council's goals of encouraging pedestrian traffic as opposed to vehicular traffic.

- I would like the peaceful space and green belt. There would be calmer traffic during school when kids are walking and a significant water flow improvement during flood episodes.
- It's very nice to see the creek again from the bridge. We can manage very well without this street and have been doing so since mid-September. Thank you for finding some funding to get started on the Gregory Creek flood plain mitigation. We know there are lots of mitigation needs elsewhere, but please don't forget that Gregory Creek needs more attention sometime in the future.
- Adequate access exists without Pennsylvania. Why rebuild it?
- The chance of the road washing out again will be lessened. A pedestrian bridge would be nice for the neighborhood. We walk our dog in the neighborhood a lot. Option two is a safer alternative. The children at Flatiron Elementary will have to contend with less traffic on Pennsylvania. Option one would risk rocks getting caught in the culvert again.
- If option two is selected, please move the west-side cul-de-sac further west.
- Great for habitat/wildlife restoration and a safe route for bikes, pedestrians and flood mitigation.
- Use the east side of the bridge area as a family meeting area for walking and cycling families. Pennsylvania can be a riding route to 6<sup>th</sup>. 6<sup>th</sup> should be a marked bike route to University and down to the Boulder Creek Path. Benches and bike racks should be provided. Thanks!
- This will not eliminate future flooding. The culvert under 7<sup>th</sup> gets blocked every time we have a severe thunderstorm. The grate catches debris and blocks very quickly.
- Pedestrian friendly.
- Better neighborhoods.
- This street hardly has any traffic to begin with. The pedestrian bridge close to the school would be a great addition!
- Option #2 sounds like a much better fit for the neighborhood!
- This would be so nice for walking my kids to school!
- This culvert caused my house to flood! Rebuilding it the same way is just plain stupid! Having a pedestrian bridge and cul-de-sac is the best idea I have heard from the city in years!
- I think a pedestrian bridge here would be a great addition for no extra cost! These kinds of options continue to make Boulder the special place it is.
- It seems like option 2 is clearly the right solution. Why rebuild something that will be blown out again? Let the stream run naturally as it was intended. Thanks for the opportunity to provide this input.
- I visit the neighborhood often and would enjoy walking over the foot bridge and seeing the stream below. There doesn't seem to be enough traffic to warrant rebuilding the road/culvert.
- Having seen firsthand the devastation that the clogged culverts caused throughout Boulder with the floods in September, I'm inclined to say where

there is an opportunity to allow water to flow in a more natural manner and still allow access to communities, this is the appropriate way to proceed.

- I am a fan of anything to improve pedestrian access to our beautiful creek.
  - As someone who grew up in the neighborhood and still lives in town I like the second idea. Seems to be a much better idea for flood control and the idea of an open creek bed through there seems kind of nice. If it floods again you're going to have the exact same problem if you build it back.
  - Let the stream flow!
  - The pedestrian bridge option is a great one for this neighborhood!
  - Pennsylvania Ave has a number of issues that make for an accident waiting to happen. These issues include: Icy conditions - due to lack of snow removal and direct sunlight, steep grades - west side, blind corners - Dean Pl. Reducing the amount of traffic by replacing the culvert with a foot bridge would lessen the risk of an accident on this street.
  - I live on Pennsylvania and Gregory Creek goes under my deck. I would LOVE Option 2 with a pedestrian bridge. I think it offers a safe route to school for students walking or biking as well as slows down and/or lessens the traffic impact before and after school. In terms of emergency vehicles, since Pennsylvania only runs between 6th and 7th, it is already confusing and difficult to find so improved mapping and signage could effectively bring attention as to how to reach us on the West side via 6th or Dean Place. I also really like that this option allows for better wildlife and habitat restoration along with flood mitigation, in particular for the folks downstream.
  - I am a big proponent of Alternative Two. I think any chance to restore a stream corridor should be capitalized on. There are ecological/habitat benefits, safety benefits regarding flood control and aesthetic benefits for those living there. I'm all for number 2!
  - Very hopeful that we can begin a small step of prioritizing people traffic over car traffic.
- **Other options: 5 in favor**
    - Reduce parking on east side of stream. Turn that area into a gathering place for kids and parents. Allow residents to access their drives, but reduce traffic and parking.
    - Car bridge or better yet, a draw bridge.
    - Square opening (rock wall exposed in flood) with roadway over (open to cars).
    - Build a vehicular/pedestrian bridge or street and keep flow way open.
    - Car bridge.
    - Re-engineer the culvert to convey flow consistent with expected flow from culverts above and open street to vehicle traffic as well as pedestrian traffic. Flatirons Elementary School has been open well over 50 years and will be most affected by the decision. It is considered by Flatirons staff that closing the street would have a negative effect on the traffic flow relative to school operations.

- The biggest push to close the street thus far has come from a resident who moved in to the neighborhood 8 months ago and has stated he was "tired of having cars from the school park on Pennsylvania" and was going to try to get the street shut down.