

Narberth Avenue Bridge Artistic Enhancement Project

Artist Request for Qualifications

Issued:	July 14, 2015
Responses due:	September 4, 2015
Deadline for questions:	August 15, 2015

Issued by:
Borough of Narberth, PA

Contact:
Todd W. Bressi
Urban Design • Place Planning • Public Art
PO Box 32
Narberth, PA 19072

narberthavenuebridge.blogspot.com

Introduction

The Borough of Narberth, Pa., is seeking an artist to create a site-specific, integrated artistic enhancement in conjunction with the construction of a new bridge over a railroad corridor that passes through town. The budget for the project, which will consist of two cast-stone bands on either side of the bridge, will be \$35,000. Artist qualifications must be postmarked by September 4; artist interviews and selection will occur in fall, 2015; and the project must be completed by September, 2016.

Project Description and Context

About Narberth, PA

Narberth is a suburb of the city of Philadelphia and is conveniently reached by commuter train from Center City. It is the third station on the "Main Line," which extends west from Philadelphia along the old Pennsylvania Railroad.

Incorporated in 1895, Narberth is about a half-square mile, with a population of 4,233. It is a small-scale, residential community, with a central business district and recreational facilities within walking distance of residents' houses.

The railroad corridor, which is used by Amtrak and SEPTA's Paoli/Thorndale Line (and an occasional freight train), separates Narberth's "North Side" from its "South Side." The bridge where this project will be located provides the main pedestrian and automobile connection between north and south Narberth.

About the Project

A new two-lane vehicle bridge over the railroad tracks is replacing an old bridge that has reached the end of its useful life.

The Borough hired Pennoni Engineers to design the structure of the bridge, with architectural design by Venturi Scott Brown, LLC (VSBA). According to VSBA: "We envisioned the bridge both as a connector between the downtown and residential neighborhood and as a gateway between them — as well as an opportunity to enhance the borough's identity."

Structural and functional improvements were key requirements for the bridge's replacement. At the same time, VSBA designed the bridge with attention to the context of the existing commercial and residential neighborhoods on either side of it. Sketches of the design, indicating the location and context for the artworks, are included with the RFQ.

Design is well underway and construction is expected to begin in early 2016.

Description of Art Opportunity

The architects have reserved a space on the interior face of each side wall on the central span of the bridge for an artistic enhancement. The artist will be asked to prepare a design for the cast-stone panels that will be placed into these spaces, and to oversee the fabrication of the panels.

Both of the spaces measure 54 feet, 4 inches long by 3 feet tall. Both spaces provide for a four-inch recess into the wall, and both are surrounded by a band of cast stone masonry. Both spaces are elevated approximately three feet over the sidewalk level, so that they can be seen by vehicles and people on the opposite side of the bridge, and will not be obscured by the concrete barriers that will separate pedestrians from traffic.

The hope is that the project can draw inspiration from the time when infrastructure was a matter of civic pride and when ornamentation was considered an integral part of building projects, to commemorate or communicate important civic concepts or narratives.

Artists are encouraged to explore a range of languages, including abstract and representational, for a frieze that would set into these spaces. Artists are asked to give thought to designs that can be produced in relief so that they can capture light and create a sense of depth. Incorporating color into the artwork, either through additives to the cast stone or by staining, are also options, budget permitting.

Scope of Work Budget

The budget for the artwork will be \$35,000. This budget will include all costs of creating the artwork, including but not limited to artist fees, community meetings, travel, insurance, overhead, design, engineering, fabrication and shipping costs. (Installation costs will be budgeted and contracted for independently of the artist's contract.) The artist will be expected to coordinate design, fabrication and installation with the project architects and contractor.

Selection and Concept Development Process

Artists are being solicited through an open call.

Artists will be invited to submit their professional qualifications, along with a letter explaining their interest in the project, relevant samples of their work and references. Artists will be asked to describe how they would respond to the opportunity. Artists may submit a sketch concept if they wish, but are not required to. All material that is submitted will be available for review by the general public.

The Borough will establish a Selection Committee to review the materials that are received from the artists and select three finalists. The Borough will contract with the three finalists to develop site-specific Design Concepts. The finalists will be invited to Narberth for a site visit, will be expected to submit a Design Concept by a given deadline, and will be expected to return to Narberth for a community presentation and an interview. Each artist will be paid a stipend of \$1,000 for this phase of the process.

The finalists will present their proposals at a Narberth community meeting for public comment.

The Selection Committee will review the Design Concepts and public comment, interview the artists and recommend an artist, based on the criteria listed below. The Borough Council's Public Works Committee and the Council will review the Committee's recommendation, with feedback and considerations from Borough residents.

Project Development Process

Once under contract, the selected artist will submit a revised design and budget, responding to comments as guided by the Borough's public art consultant and the bridge design team. After the revised design is approved, the artist will work with a fabricator to develop shop drawings.

Once the shop drawings are approved, the artist will be given a notice to proceed with fabrication. The artist will be responsible for fabrication of the panels and delivery of the panels to the site. Installation will be the responsibility of, and coordinated with, the bridge contractor.

Artist Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to select the artist:

- Demonstrated record of artistic practice, either through educational background, exhibited work or completed public art projects.
- Artistic excellence as demonstrated by past work and the submitted materials, as well as related exhibitions, reviews, awards and honors.
- A clearly articulated understanding of the project and the goals of the project as expressed in this RFQ.
- Ability to collaborate with architects, engineers, fabricators and contractors to realize the design, fabrication and installation of a durable public artwork.
- Demonstrated technical capability in creating durable public artworks in the media being sought.
- Availability to meet the project timeline and budget.

Project Review Criteria

The following criteria will be considered in selecting the concept:

- Quality. Quality of the design.
- Effect. Impact on the public.
- Relationship. Connection to the site or the adjacent community, or both; art that relates, in form or substance, to the cultures, people, natural or built surroundings, or history of the area in which the project is located.

Anticipated Timeline

July 14

RFQ issued

August 15

Deadline for questions.

Questions and answers will be posted at narberthavenuebridge.blogspot.com

September 4

Receipt deadline for artist responses

September

First round artist selection

September /October

Artist site visit

October 23

Concepts due

November

Concepts presented to community

Artist interviews and selection

December

Award and contracting

January

Additional artist community meeting(s), if necessary

February, 2016

Schematic design submitted

March, 2016

Schematic design approved

April – September, 2016

Final Design, Fabrication

September, 2016

Delivery and installation

Date to be confirmed with contractor

What to Submit

Please send, to be received by September 4, 2015:

- A brief letter describing your interest in the project, experience producing work of the type sought by the Borough, and your ability to meet the project timeline given current commitments.
- A CV/resume
- List of 3-5 references for whom the artist has created comparable works of art.
- Up to 15 jpeg images of previous artwork.
- A corresponding image list with title, medium, dimensions, brief description, location and date of work, commissioning entity and budget.

Where to Submit

Qualifications must be received by Todd W. Bressi, Public Art Consultant. Qualifications can be sent via mail, Federal Express, email or a file transfer service such as WeTransfer.

Mail

Todd W. Bressi
PO Box 32
Narberth, PA 19072
placedesign@verizon.net
610-667-0495

Federal Express

Todd W. Bressi
144 North Narberth Avenue, Box 32
Narberth, PA 19072
placedesign@verizon.net
610-667-0495

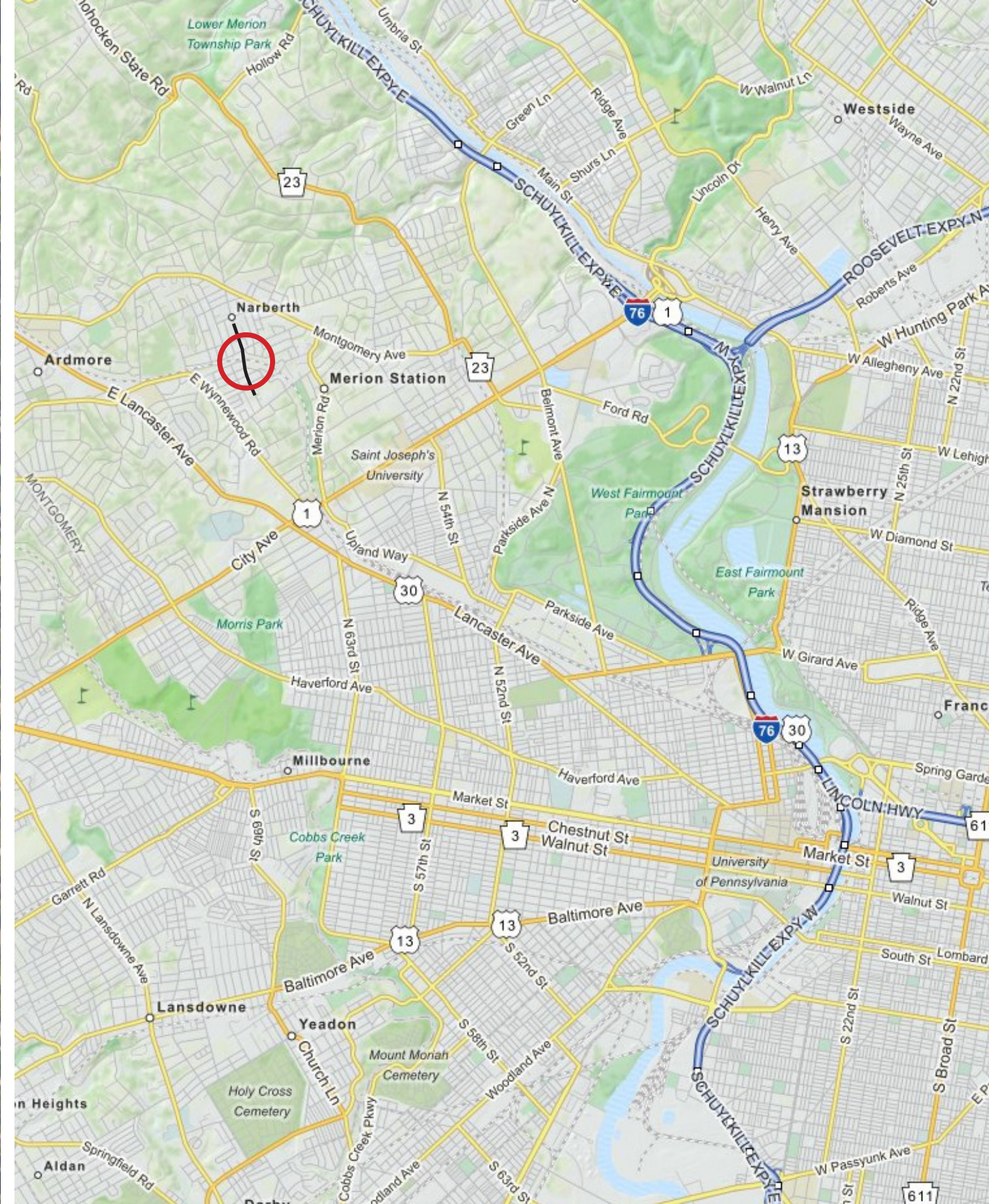
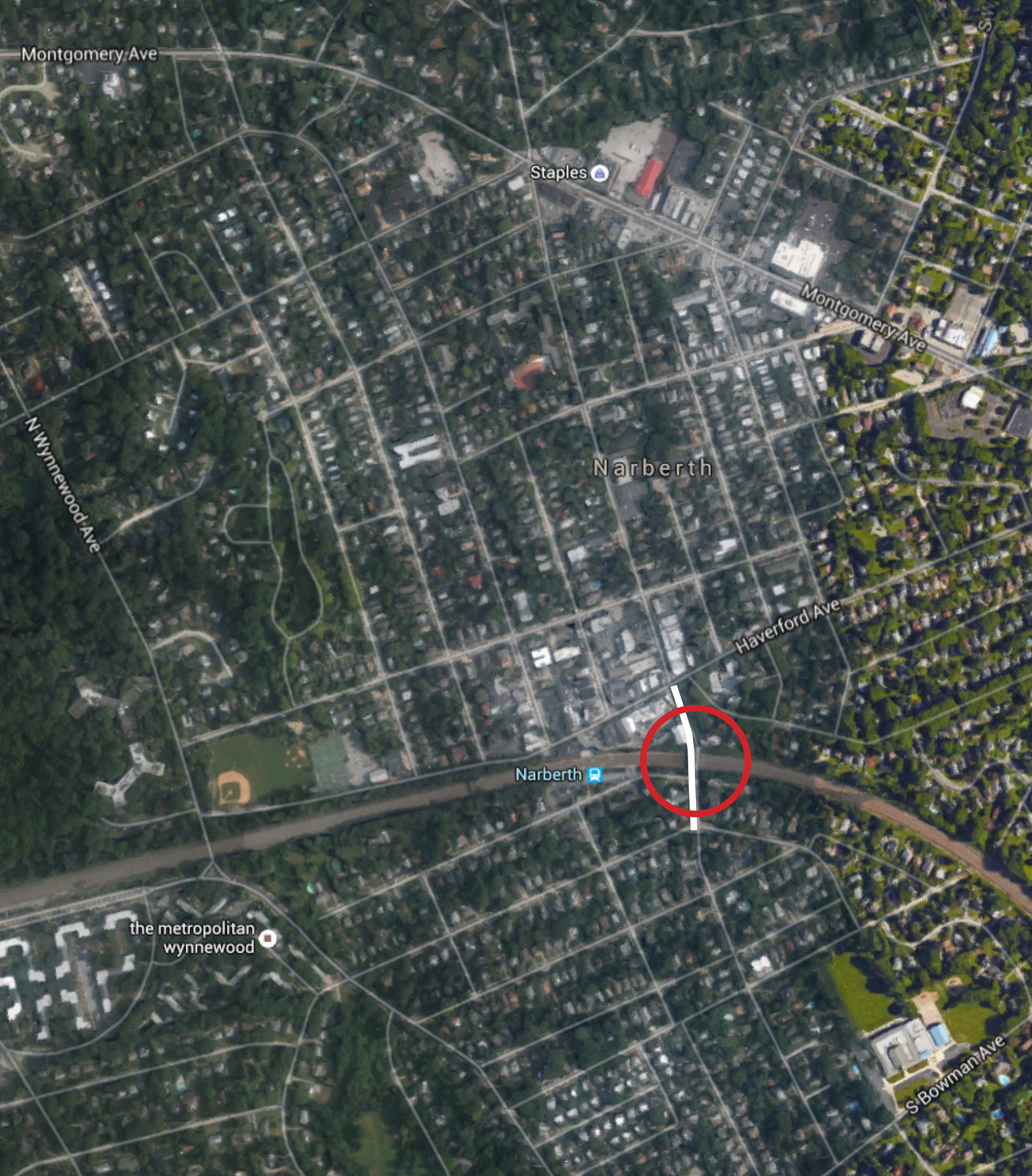
Email / WeTransfer

placedesign@verizon.net

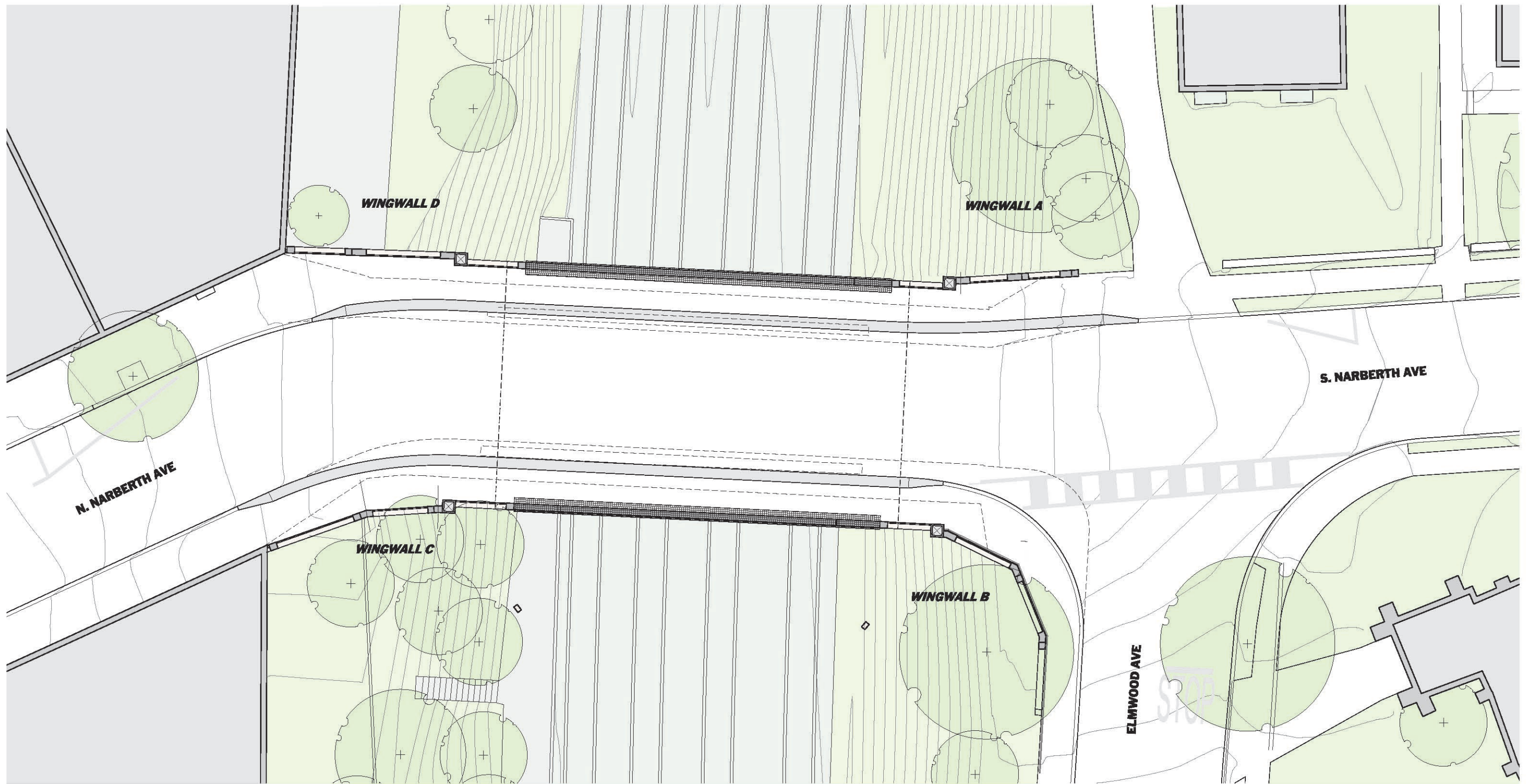
Inquiries

Todd W. Bressi
610-667-0495
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Deadline for questions is August 15, 2015. Questions, answers and project updates will be posted at narberthavenuebridge.blogspot.com



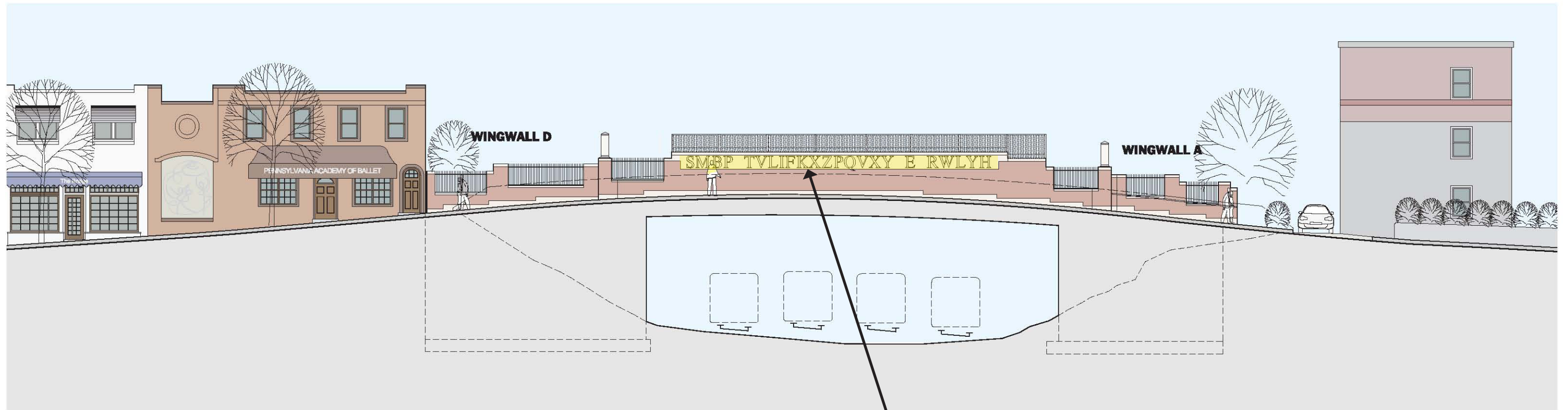
Narberth Bridge Art Enhancement Project • Bridge Location



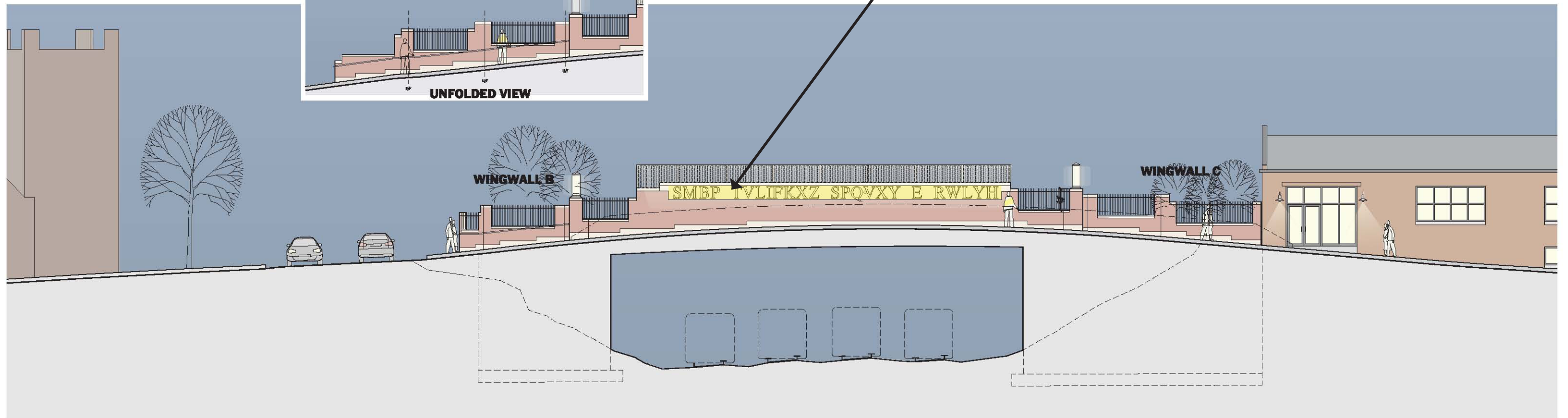
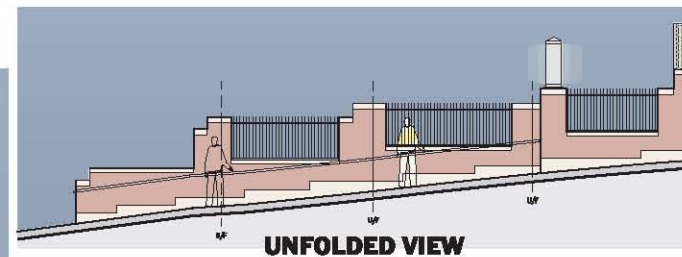
PLAN

Narberth Bridge Art Enhancement Project • Bridge Plan

Drawing Courtesy Venturi Scott Brown, LLC



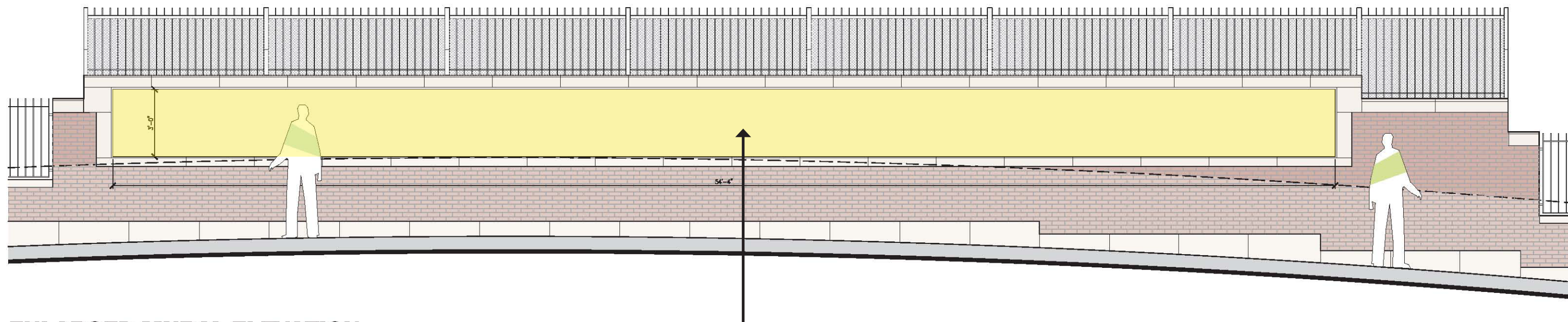
NORTH SIDE



SOUTH SIDE

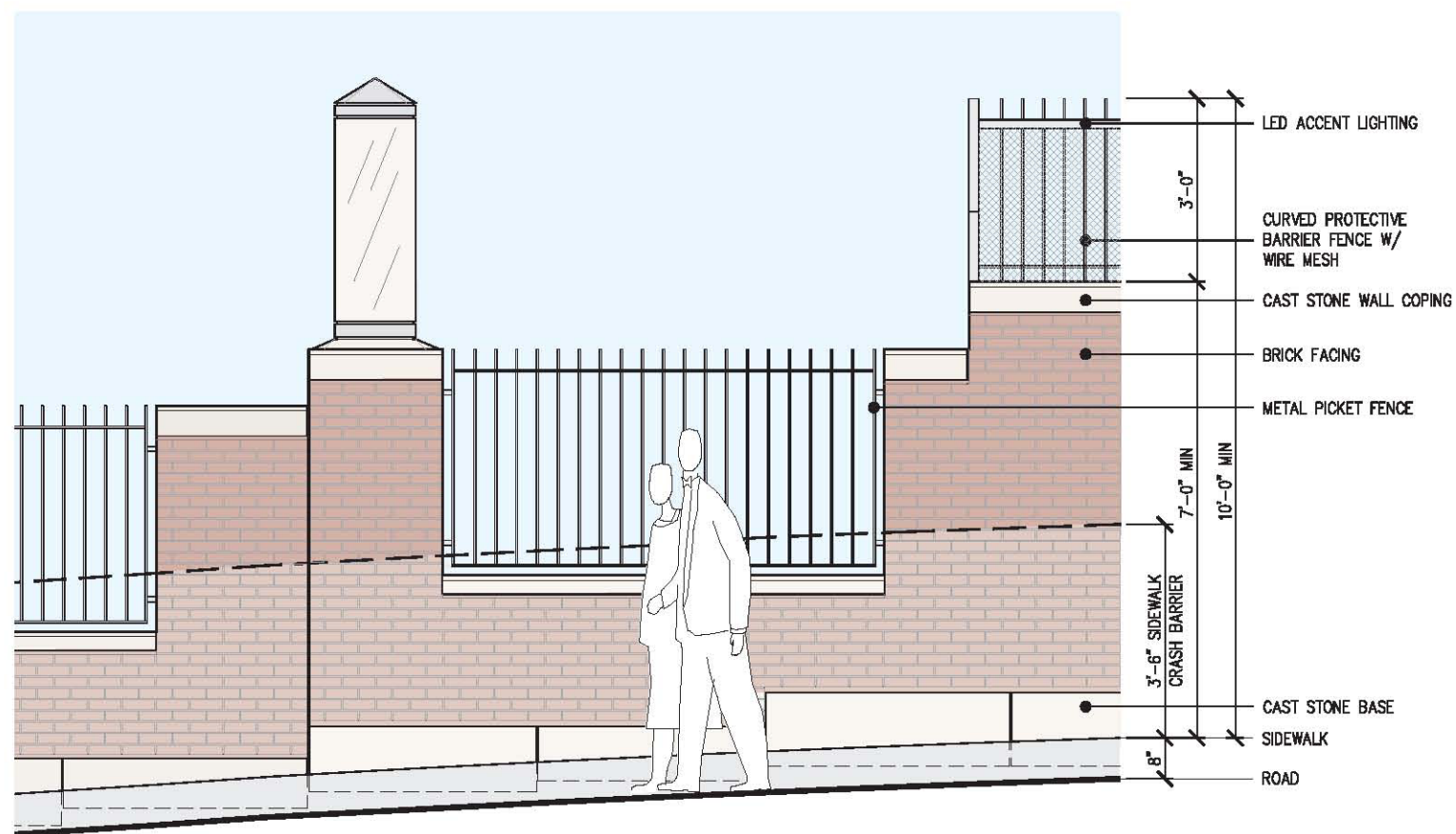
Narberth Bridge Art Enhancement Project • Wall Elevations

Drawing Courtesy Venturi Scott Brown, LLC

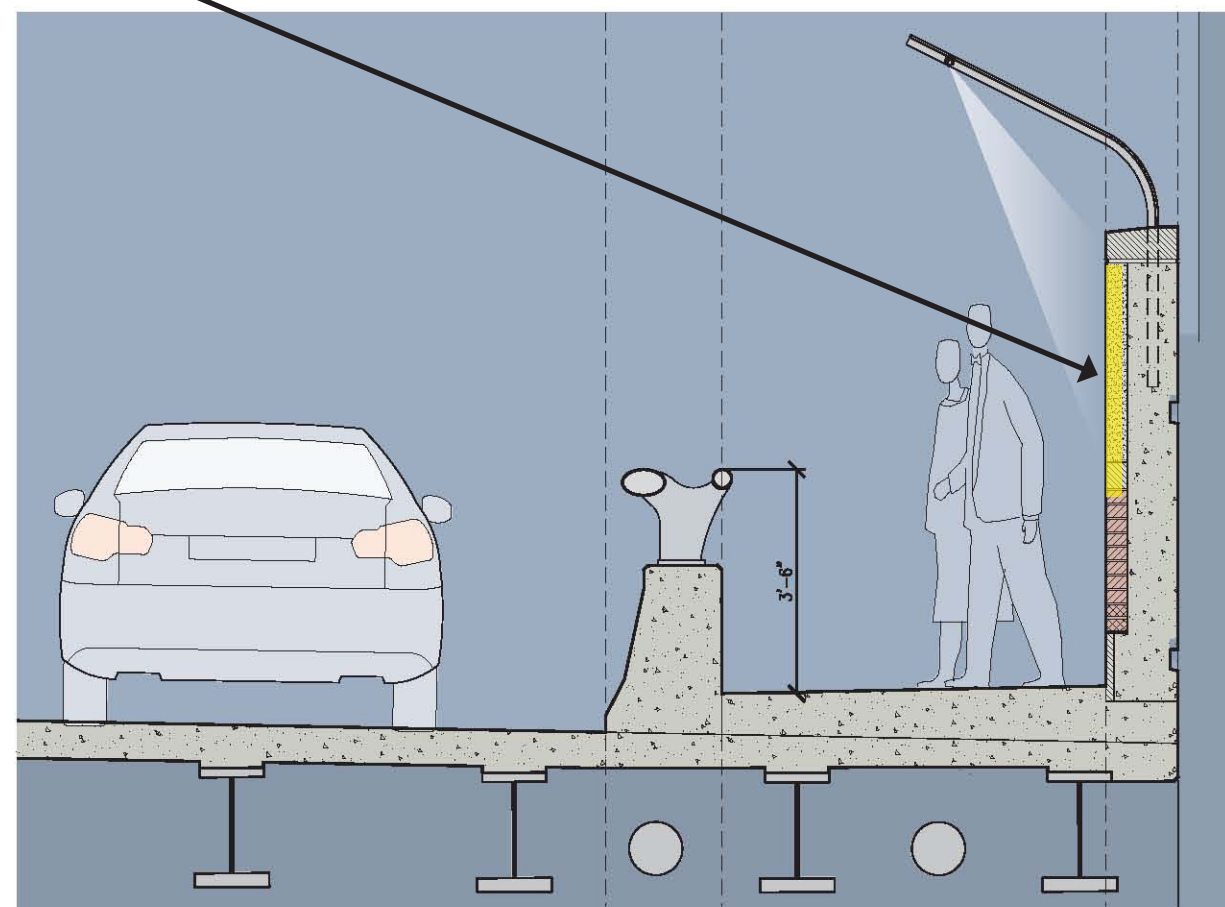


ENLARGED MURAL ELEVATION

Yellow areas indicate location of art panels. Locations are approximate and not to be relied on for design or construction.



ELEVATION DETAIL



CROSS SECTION

Narberth Bridge Art Enhancement Project • Wall Details

Drawing Courtesy Venturi Scott Brown, LLC