

Fort Attaway site visit
December 11, 2002

At GDOT's request, Ray and I met on-site with GDOT (Harvey Keeper, Mark Grindstaff, two designers, a couple of surveyors) and FHWA (Jennifer Geirsh) to discuss the proposed retaining wall along the railroad near the rifle pits. GDOT remains concerned about the cost, effectiveness, and appearance of the proposed wall.

After examining the site, we reiterated our concerns, in priority order:

- (1) Protection of the rifle pits from physical disturbance during construction.
- (2) Protection of the rifle pits after construction from erosion, subsidence, etc.
- (3) Retention of as much of the downslope setting of the rifle pits as possible.
- (4) Preservation of the existing views of the fort from the valley floor.

GDOT engineers believe that the rock substrate between the rifle pits and the railroad may support a much steeper cut than originally proposed—probably not straight down, but perhaps close to it. At worst, this would encroach less than half the distance of the originally proposed cut slopes and a maximum of eight feet more than the proposed wall. It would also likely require less disturbance of the ground between the cut and the rifle pit because there would be no need to excavate a construction trench and provide access for equipment and materials to build the wall. GDOT also believes that a rock cut would be less visually obtrusive than a concrete retaining wall.

We agreed to consider a revised proposal from GDOT for a steeper cut rather than a wall, following further soils/rock tests.

GDOT also agreed to the following:

To preserve as much of the existing vegetation and slope between the cut and the new railroad right-of-way by restricting access during construction and prohibiting heavy machinery or storage of materials in this area.

To survey and photograph the front edge of the rifle pit to accurately locate this feature and to establish a baseline to determine if any physical damage is caused during and after construction.

Notes prepared by Richard Cloues

P.S. Both Ray and I were even more impressed with the extent and condition of Fort Attaway than we thought we would be from the documentation. Because the leaves were down, the fortification was much more visible, and many features were clearly apparent.