Pedestrian Bridge Work Coming Soon to Innovation

Steel for roof at Loudoun Gateway going up in June

Some of the most challenging and exciting parts of construction of the Silver Line Phase 2 will begin in late May or early June. That’s when construction of the pedestrian bridges that will provide access to the stations along the 11-mile alignment from Reston to Ashburn will begin, according to John Kearney, the project’s construction manager for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

The first segments of those bridges will be put into place at Innovation Station, which sits in the median of the Dulles International Airport Access Highway east of Route 28, near the old Center for Innovative Technology building, the upside down pyramid-shaped structure on the north side of the Dulles Toll Road corridor. Specific dates will be announced later this month.

Cranes will be used for the installation, according to the contractor Capital Rail Constructors.

Installing these bridges will cause significant lane closures. Public notices will be issued on a weekly and daily basis before and during this work.

A schedule for installations at other stations is not yet available.

Also planned for the coming weeks:
- Continuing steel erection of the Reston Station roof.
- Beginning of erection of roof

Saarinen’s Purpose in Design

Atop of the list of considerations designers of Metro’s Silver Line extension through Dulles International Airport was the protecting the main terminal’s façade, the result of one of architect Eero Saarinen’s creative bursts.

Saarinen, the son of architect Eliel Saarinen, placed his mark on a number of familiar buildings despite living only to the age of 51. In fact, death came before many of his more well-known structures reached completion.

Eero (pronounced the same as arrow) Saarinen’s first major project came after he outperformed his father in a competition to design the St. Louis Jefferson Memorial. His design resulted in the St. Louis Arch.

“Architecture also has the purpose of marking and enhancing man’s time on Earth.”

— Eero Saarinen

“Our architecture is too humble. It should be prouder, more aggressive, much richer and larger than we see today,” Saarinen once said, according to The Architect Who Saw the Future, part of the PBS American Masters series. “I would like to do my Saarinen got his first big break when his “arch” design was chosen for the St. Louis Jefferson Memorial. Saarinen’s father was among the entrants. Photo courtesy of the Jefferson National Expansion Monument.
part in expanding that richness.”

The oval-shaped road that provides access to the airport and loops around the daily and hourly parking lots at Dulles Airport bears the architect’s name: Saarinen Circle.

A brain tumor took Saarinen’s life in 1961 at the age of 51, before many of his projects would reach completion, including the Dulles terminal.

“He already saw it in the model stage,” recalled Eric Saarinen in the film he created about his father. “He was like a giant looking down.”

Saarinen believed architecture was an important part of the human endeavor, not just a way to provide space and shelter.

“Architecture also has the purpose of marking and enhancing man’s time on Earth,” Saarinen once said, adding that the character of those occupying building should become part of the design.

“I hope that some of my buildings will have lasting truths,” he said. “I admit quite frankly I would like to have a place in architectural history.”

Since 1978, the Dulles terminal has been eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

When he designed Dulles, as well as the TWA Flight Center at JFK Airport in New York, he wanted to demonstrate a sense of traveling through the air. Dulles also credits Saarinen with developing the mobile lounge concept in which roving vehicles carried passengers between the main terminal and their gates.

A few other projects Saarinen designed:

- The TWA Flight Center at JFK Airport in New York was Saarinen’s attempt to “conquer gravity,” using a curved concrete design not used at the time.
- Deere & Company’s farming equipment showroom in Moline, IL.
- Saarinen-designed chairs were used in magazine ad campaigns for Coca Cola, Southern Comfort and others.
- CBS Building in New York City.
- Saarinen-designed pedestal furniture became popular in the ’50s, with features such as one-legged chairs.
- Built Miller House as a private project.

The Dulles terminal is also the reason a different design was chosen for the Silver Line’s Dulles Airport Station than for the other Phase 2 stations. The design resembles the shape of the terminal.

Rail Yard Happenings

At the 90-acre rail yard being built on Dulles Airport property off Route 606, lots of work is taking place, according to Dave Bonnellie, construction manager of the yard.

Rail special track installations are taking place along with, site grading, seedng, road construction, and installation of lighting and other systems.

Structural steel is going up for maintenance facilities and other structures, along with roofing and interior finishing and mechanical installations.

BRIDGES from Page 1

- steel at Loudoun Gateway Station
- Setting precast concrete sections of eastern end of Dulles Station.
- Ongoing construction inside the pedestrian tunnel for those going to or from the main terminal at Dulles to Parking Garage 1.
- Road repairs and paving at the Herndon Park and Ride lot near an entrance to the station.