

The current proposal is:

Preservation Department – Item 7, LPC-25-03952

**Macomb's Dam Bridge – Macomb's Dam Bridge (originally Central Bridge) and 155th Street Viaduct) – Individual Landmark
Multiple Boroughs**

Note: this is a Public Meeting item. No public testimony will be received today as the hearing on this item is closed.

Macomb's Dam Bridge over Harlem River

Protective Coating



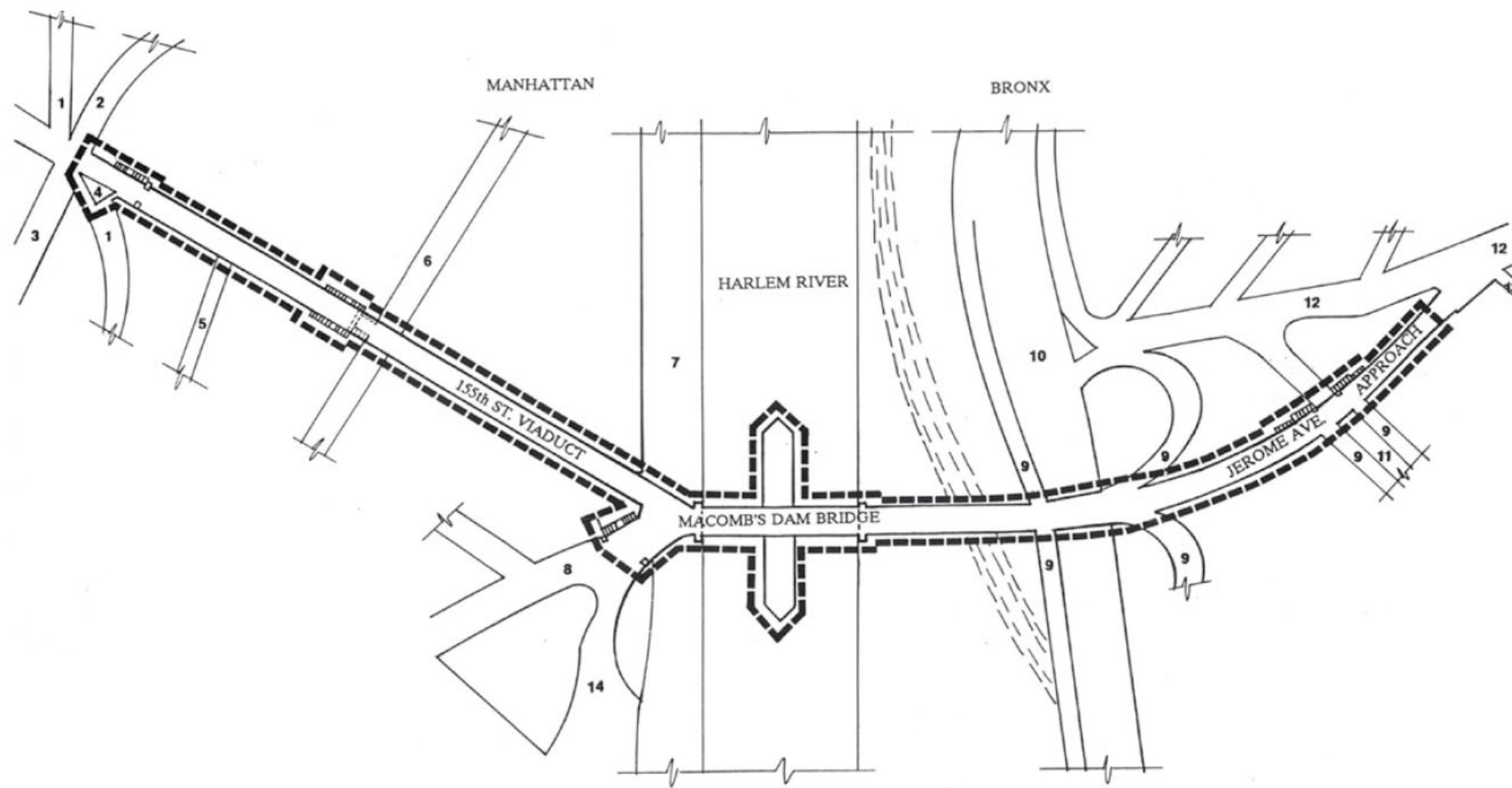
Landmarks Preservation Commission

December 2025

Current Site Photos



Designated Historical Landmark



Landmarks Preservation Commission: 10/21 Public Hearing Feedback

- Requested DOT to explore color options that are maintainable but relate more closely to the original paint scheme and distinguishes the bridge as a landmark.



PDC Paint Analysis – Further Prior Color Schemes

Sample #5, Bridge, Latticework

Top Coat

moderate blue	10B 4/6
moderate orange	2.5YR 6/10
heavy dirt layer	
moderate blue	10B 4/6
moderate reddish brown	10R 4/6
moderate blue	10B 4/6
moderate orange	2.5YR 6/10
very pale blue	2.5PB 8/4
heavy dirt layer	
yellowish white	2.5Y 9/2
heavy dirt layer	
moderate yellow green	7.5GY 6/6
heavy dirt layer	
yellowish gray	2.5Y 8.5/2
moderate orange	2.5YR 6/10
heavy dirt layer	
yellowish white	2.5Y 9/2
heavy dirt layer	
yellowish white	2.5Y 9/2
heavy dirt layer	
light olive	10Y 6/4
heavy dirt layer	
yellowish white	2.5Y 9/2
yellowish white	2.5Y 9/2
heavy dirt layer	
light grayish yellowish brown	10YR 6/2
yellowish white	2.5Y 9/2
light yellowish brown	10YR 7/4
moderate orange	2.5YR 6/10
black	N 2.5/4.6% R
metal	

Original Coat
Primer
Shop Primer
Substratum



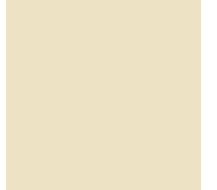
10B 4/6



10R 4/6



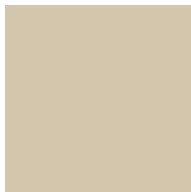
2.5YR 6/10



2.5Y 9/2



7.5GY 6/6



10 YR 6/2



10Y 6/4



10 YR 7/4

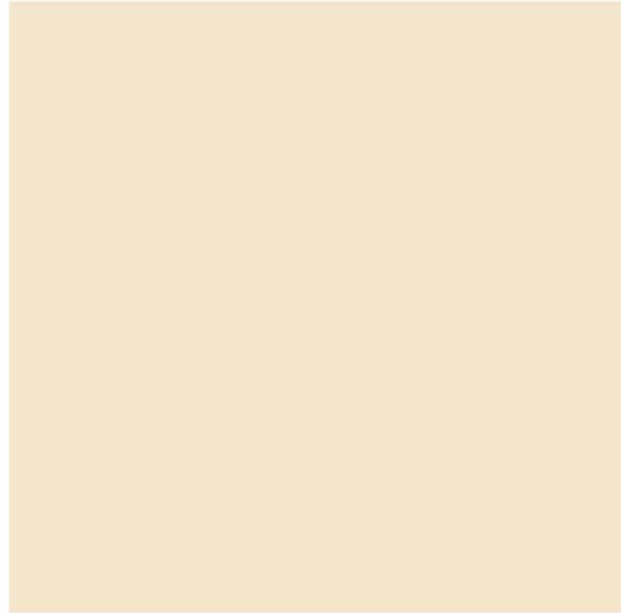
Paint Color Considerations

Munsell-10 YR 7/4



Original Color

Munsell-2.5y-92



Existing Color

Munsell Gray Fed. #26173



Previously Proposed Color

Review of Individual Landmark Bridges Paint Color



Brooklyn Bridge: Stone/Tan



Carroll St Bridge: Blue



University Heights Bridge: Green



Queensboro Bridge: Brown/Tan



High Bridge: Munsell Grey



Washington Bridge: Munsell Grey

Review of Custom Bridge Colors



- Willis Avenue

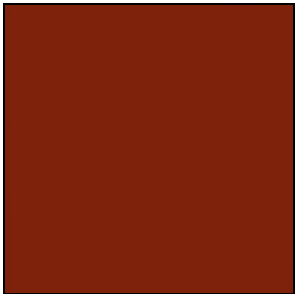
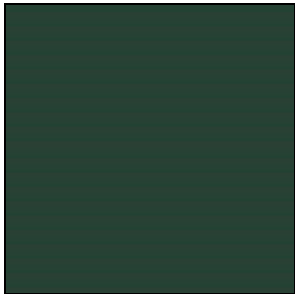
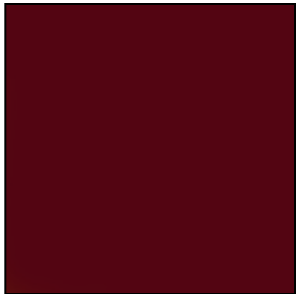
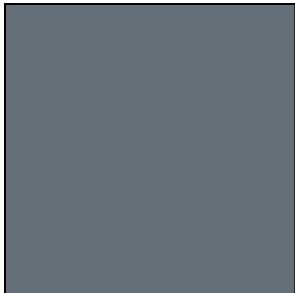
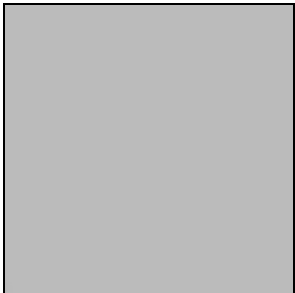
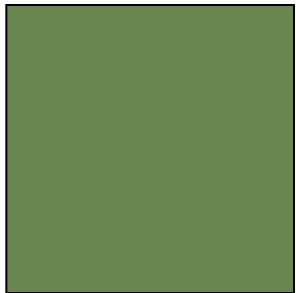


- Manhattan Bridge

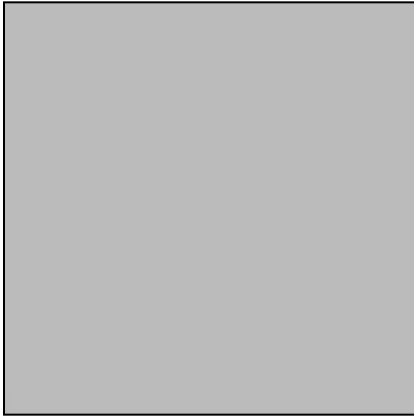


- Williamsburg Bridge

PDC Approved Colors for NYCDOT Bridges Citywide

<p>Blue</p>  <p>FS 15095</p>	<p>Pulaski Red</p>  <p>Custom</p>	<p>Dark Green</p>  <p>FS 34092</p>	<p>Deep Cool Red</p>  <p>Custom</p>
<p>Munsel Gray</p>  <p>FS 26173</p>	<p>George Washington Bridge</p>  <p>Custom</p>	<p>Green Aluminum</p>  <p>FS 34300</p>	<p>Sage Green (NYSDOT)</p>  <p>Custom</p>

Proposed Revised Color Options



GWB Grey

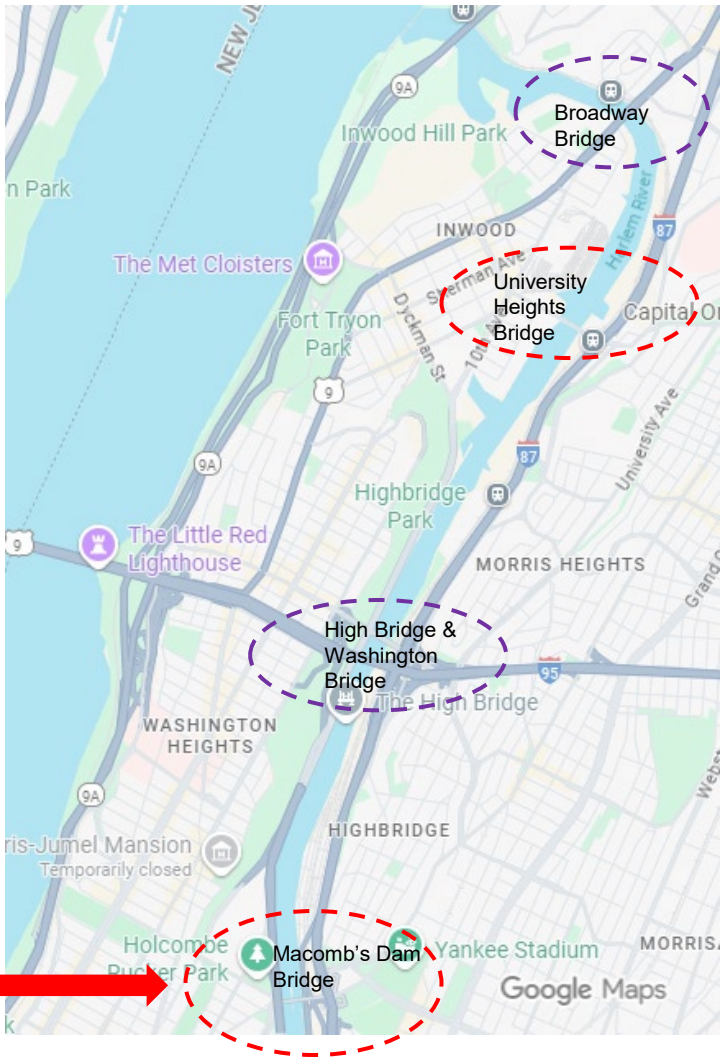
- Light color akin to the existing color for visual impact
- Utilizing this color would keep the Macombs Dam Bridge visually distinct from the other Harlem River Bridges



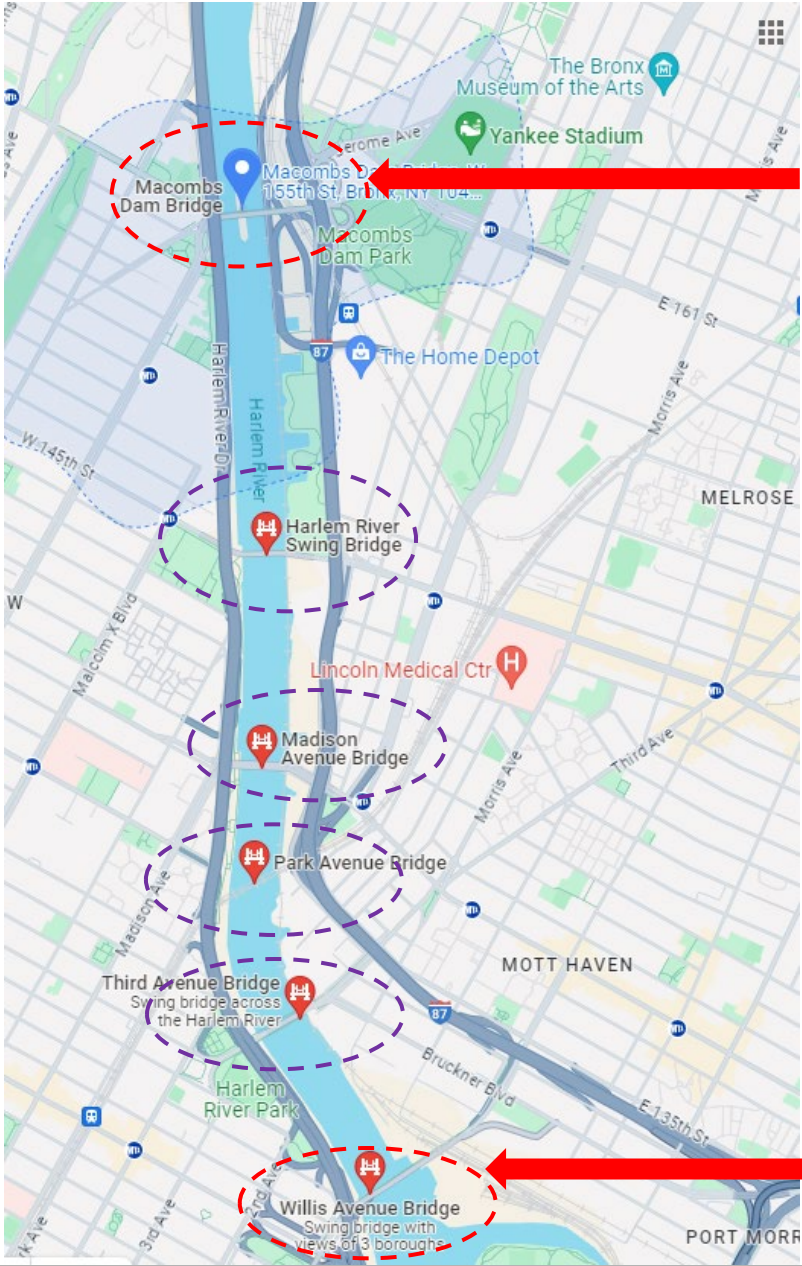
Willis Ave Taupe

- Color is essentially a match for the original Macombs Dam Bridge paint color (the current color was the second coat).

Harlem River Bridges



Macomb's Dam Bridge



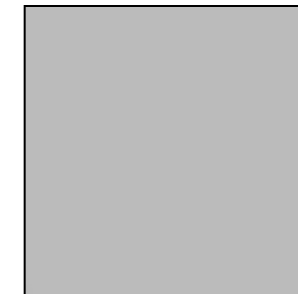
Macomb's Dam Bridge

Willis Avenue Bridge

Precedent Examples: GWB Grey (Recommended)



New Corlear's Hook Pedestrian Bridge over FDR



- Lightest color available
- Distinct from other Harlem River Bridges

Precedent Examples: Willis Avenue Taupe



Willis Avenue Bridge over Harlem River



- Very similar to the original paint color, Munsell 10 YR 7/4

Munsell-10 YR 7/4

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Appendix

Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation

Landmarks Preservation Commission
January 14, 1992; Designation List 241
LP-1629

MACOMB'S DAM BRIDGE (originally Central Bridge) **AND 155TH STREET VIADUCT**, from Jerome Avenue and East 162nd Street, the Bronx, crossing the Harlem River, to West 155th Street and St. Nicholas Place, Manhattan. Built 1890-95; Alfred Pancoast Boller, consulting engineer to N.Y.C. Departments of Public Parks and Public Works; Passaic Rolling Mill Company, contractor (bridge); Union Bridge Company, contractor (viaduct); and Herbert Steward (Steward & McDermott), contractor (bridge masonry and viaduct).

On September 15, 1987, the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation of the Macomb's Dam Bridge and 155th Street Viaduct and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 5). The hearing had been duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Three speakers appeared at the hearing: representatives of both the N.Y.C. Department of Transportation and Modjeski & Masters, engineering consultants, took no position with regard to the designation, while a representative of the Municipal Art Society spoke in favor of the proposed designation. In addition, the Commission received letters in support of designation from Congressman Charles B. Rangel and Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer.

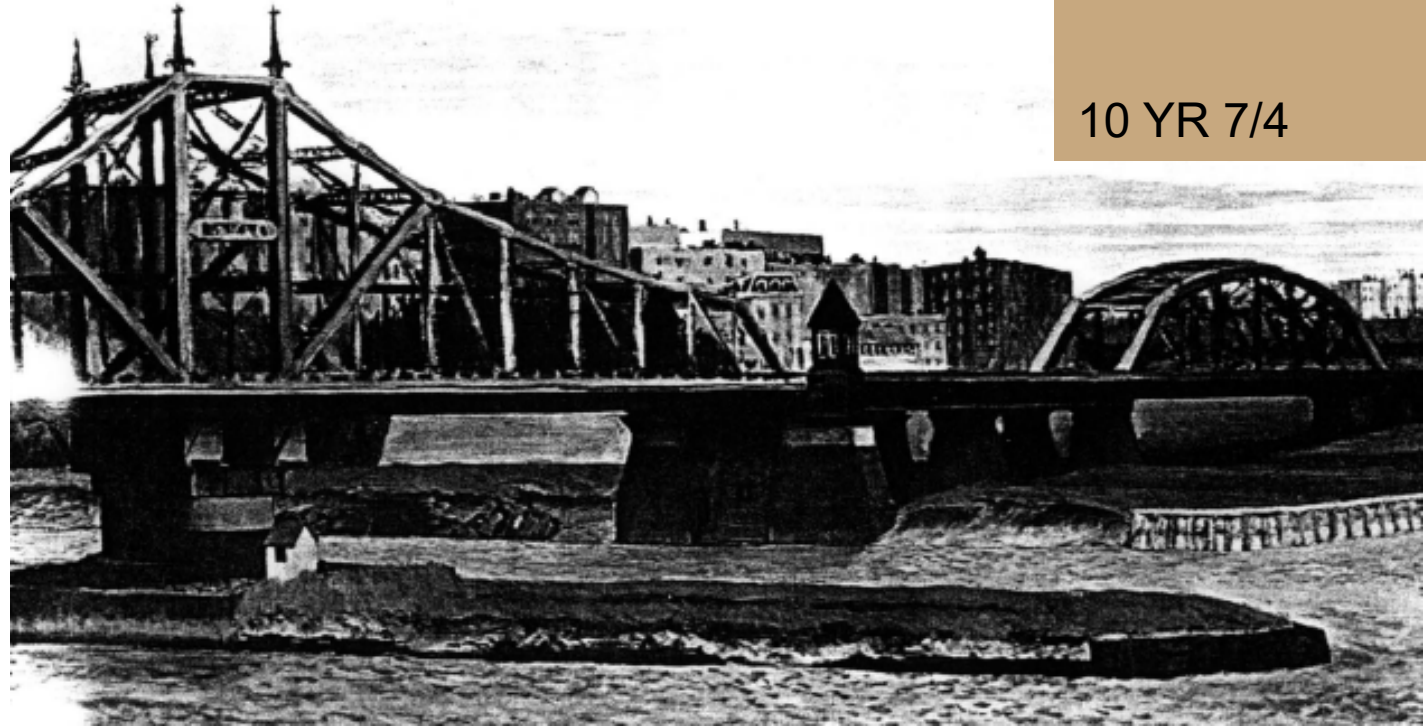
Landmarks Preservation Commission Designation

LPC Designation emphasizes **structural components** of the bridge, rather than paint scheme

The long steel 155th Street Viaduct provides a gradual descent toward the bridge from the heights of Harlem to the west, while the long Jerome Avenue approach viaduct of the bridge, consisting primarily of steel deck truss spans carried by masonry piers, with a subsidiary camelback truss span, was built over what was then marshland in the Bronx. The appearance of the bridge and viaduct is enhanced by the central swing span truss outline, the steel latticework, the steel and iron ornamental details (including the Eighth Avenue stairs, sections of original railing, and several lampposts), and the masonry piers, abutments, and shelterhouses. Following in a succession of bridges at this site since 1815, the Macomb's Dam Bridge and 155th Street Viaduct continues to provide an historically important connection between upper Manhattan and the Bronx.

Paint Scheme Evolution

- A PDC paint analysis noted the **original 1895** paint scheme for the bridge was likely a light yellowish-brown similar to Munsell Number 10YR 7/4.
- The analysis then noted the painting scheme following the original was a two-color scheme of **yellowish-white** (2.5Y 9/2) and **moderate reddish brown** (10R 4/6).



10 YR 7/4

Paint Scheme Evolution



Finally, in 1935, the Macomb's Dam Bridge was immortalized in the painting "Macomb's Dam Bridge" by eminent American artist Edward Hopper [fig. K].³³

Interestingly, the **1935** oil painting by Edward Hopper of the bridge shows it in a **grey tone**.

Macombs Dam Bridge is a 1935 oil painting by the American Realist artist Edward Hopper. The work depicts New York City's Macombs Dam Bridge

Paint Scheme Evolution



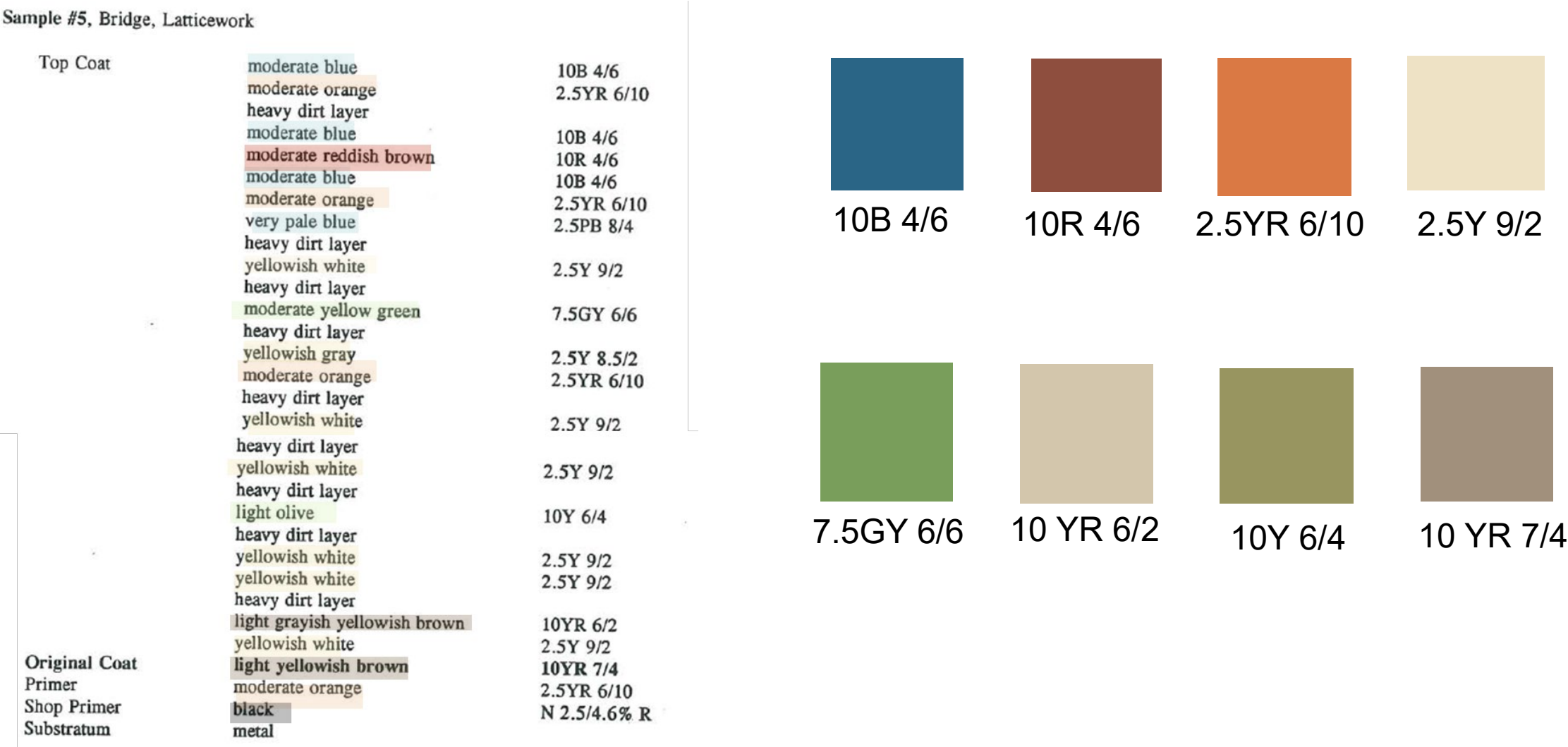
Prior to the repainting in the late 1990's, the bridge was painted a **moderate blue** (approved by PDC in 1979).

Paint Scheme Evolution

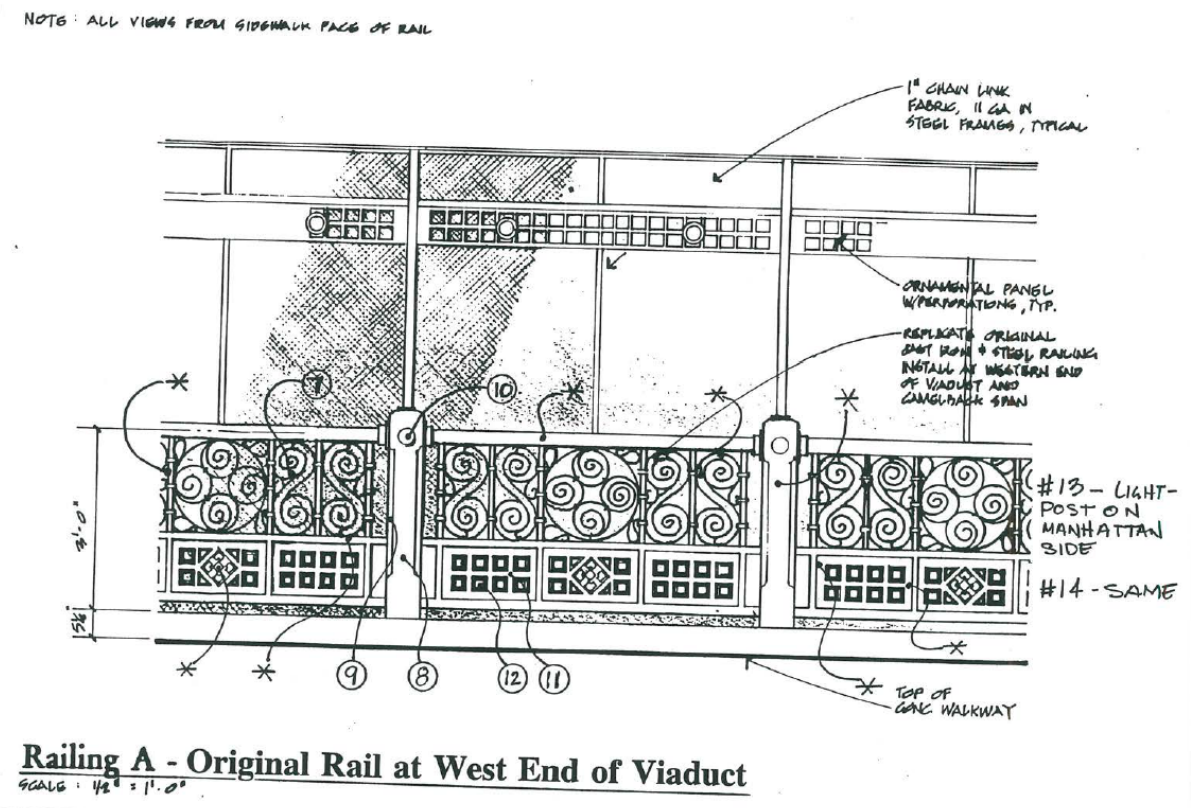
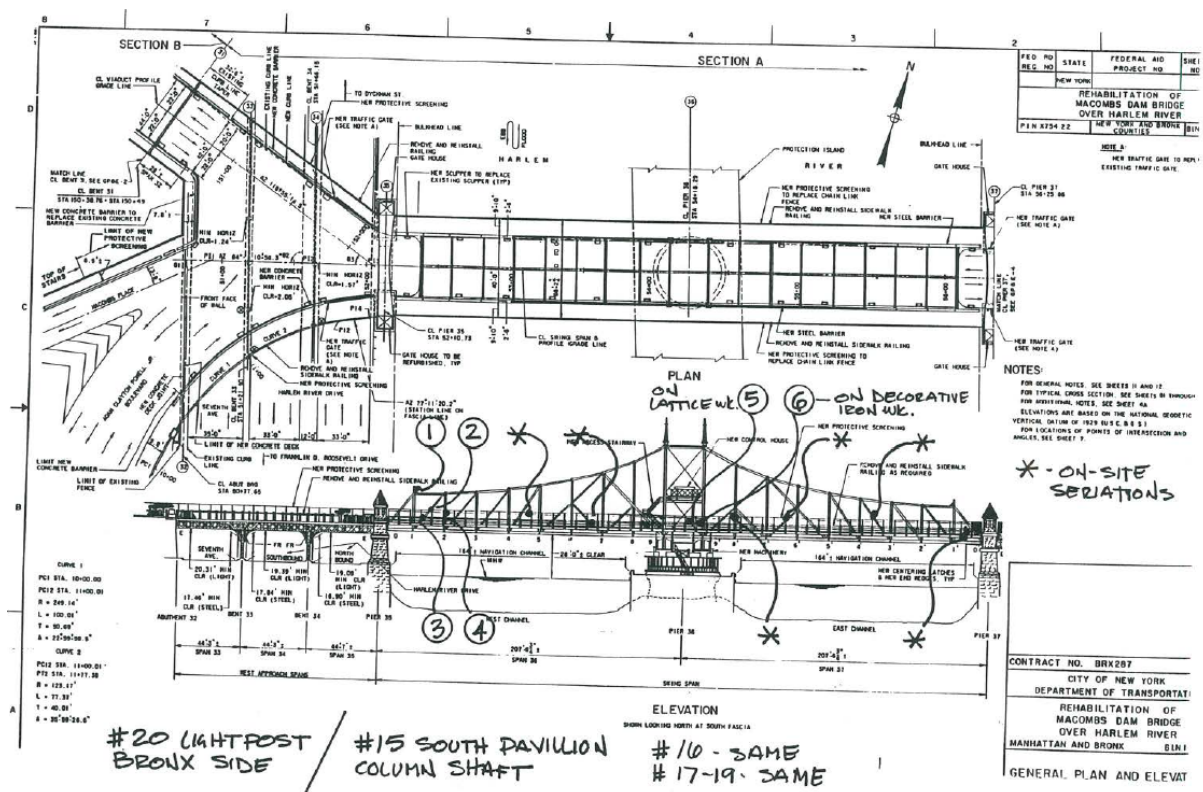


PDC approved the pale yellow-white color (#2.5Y 9/2) in **1995**. Since then, the pale yellow-white color **has significantly deteriorated** and is very difficult to maintain.

PDC Paint Analysis – Further Prior Color Schemes



PDC Paint Analysis – Scope of Research



PDC Paint Analysis – Similarities to Proposed Color

- Discounting the samples taken on the lampposts, of the remaining 17 samples, a grey tone (N 4.5) similar to the proposed Munsell Grey was found on
 - #12 (Viaduct - Lower Screen)
 - #11 (Viaduct – Lower Screen)
 - #10 (Viaduct – Newel Post)
 - #9 (Viaduct – Newel Post)
- A silver color (not corresponding to the Munsell chart) was noted on
 - #15 (Viaduct – Pavilion - Column Shaft)
 - #16 (Viaduct – Pavilion - Reeded Shaft)
 - #17 (Viaduct – Pavilion)
 - #18 (Viaduct – Pavilion)
 - #19 (Viaduct – Pavilion – Ironwork)
- On the Bridge, sample 1 notes a light olive grey (5Y 5/1) that is not far off from the proposed Munsell Grey

Munsell Gray Fed. #26173



Proposed Color



N 4.5/



5Y 5/1

1995 PDC Approval and NYT Article

ART COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

February 21, 1995

CERTIFICATE 18927

RESOLVED, That the Art Commission, having considered designs for the repainting of the Macombs Dam Bridge over the Harlem River, Manhattan, submitted by the Department of Transportation, represented by exhibits 4208-K & L of record in this matter, hereby gives to the same unanimous preliminary and final approval.

Final approval is conditioned upon the commencement of work before February 14, 1997, and the submission of an 8" X 10" black and white photograph of the completed project.

A true copy of resolution adopted by the Art Commission at its meeting on February 14, 1995.

Vivian Millicent Warfield
Vivian Millicent Warfield
Executive Director

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Art Commission Raises Cry Over Hues in Picking Colors for Bridges

By ANNA QUINDLEN

Beneath the somber stares of former commissioners frozen in portrait and a grandfather clock that stopped long ago, the city's Art Commission was riven by disagreement yesterday over what the correct colors for city bridges should be. In fact, there was even disagreement over what color Yankee Stadium was.

What has come to be known as the great bridge controversy came down to a question of shades for three Harlem River spans. But it raised larger questions: whether the commission should develop a comprehensive esthetic policy for the color of city bridges, and whether the structures are handsome enough to be emphasized, ugly enough to be disguised, or even important enough to merit such scrutiny.

"The Macombs Dam Bridge will be blue because

Continued on Page B8



Ekkehart S

City Art Commission Spans Gap of Discord On Colors for Bridges

Continued From Page B1

Yankee Stadium is blue," said Ekkehart Schwarz of the Department of Transportation, who had presented photographs of that bridge, the Broadway Bridge, and the Madison Avenue Bridge to the members of the commission.

"Yankee Stadium is not blue," said Norval White, vice president of the commission, in a loud voice. "It is cream."

"The accent colors are blue," said Joseph Princiotto, also of the Transportation Department.

Despite Mr. White's objections, the plan to paint the Macombs Dam Bridge Yankee Blue was approved by the commission, 5-2, with one abstention. The tan aluminum shade for the Broadway Bridge was a great favorite, and passed unanimously, while the transportation officials were sent back to the drawing board on the rust color for the Madison Avenue Bridge.

In particular the commission members, who are empowered to pass on any alterations made to city buildings or structures, were unhappy with the conditions under which they were expected to agree upon color. Mr. Schwarz presented each with a color swatch, not unlike those found in a paint store, as well as the rather small photographs. Various commission members suggested that at the very least he should have brought an enlargement.

"I think we should take a bridge tour," Clara Coffey, a landscape architect, said earnestly.

"I think they should take us on the Circle Line," said Mr. White, to polite laughter.

This is an early venture into creative coloring for bridges, an innovation that which had been highly touted by Councilman Henry Stern. He had asked the Koch administration earlier this year to consider a variety of shades for bridges, saying, "We can have bridges that span the rainbow."

Mr. White and several other commission members also noted that bridges had begun to come under scrutiny with the recent paint job of the Manhattan Bridge, which is now rather blue. Mr. White called it "an atrocity" and said he was "very disturbed" about the color. That blue made him wary of the blue suggested for the Yankee Stadium span, which he voted against. He was, however, in favor of the rust color for the Madison Avenue Bridge, which in turn was derided by Raquel Ramati of the Urban Design Group.

"It is not an industrial color," said Miss Ramati. Mr. White disagreed.

"I frankly think it's marvelous," he said.

In fact, while other members expressed some pleasure at the ideas of bridges in primary colors, such as the brightly hued Queensboro Bridge, Mr. White was the most vocal member of the group in his distress about possible large esthetic mistakes spanning the city's rivers. "I live in Brooklyn, near the Brooklyn Bridge," he told his colleagues, "and I'm looking through this tan and cream bridge to this blue and silver bridge to another bridge which has yet to be decided but which may be vermilion and taupe."

"I really object to them being in designer colors," he added.

The New York Times/Neal Borenstein
ges to Art Commission

The New York Times
Published: November 20, 1979
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