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Remember this? The Carlton Street Footbridge, a blight on Olmsted's Riverway Park, an abandoned formal entrance from the Longwood neighborhood and boarded up for 45 years. Contentious debates and endless reports and meetings for the last 20+ years over restoration will finally be resolved.



Photo by Hugh Mattison

A new day – in this case it started at 11PM on Oct. 13 when the 550 ton crane to lift a restored main span arrived at the Park Drive entrance to Riverway Park. Over the next 4 hours, 3 flatbed trailers with ballast would back down the pedestrian path for 2/10 mile to the bridge site.



Photo by Hugh Mattison

5AM – the main span arrives from Coventry, RI where it has been undergoing restoration for the last 15 months.

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With extreme care, the 12'-wide main span is backed down the 12'-wide path.



As dawn approaches, the crane is in place. Under floodlights, the main span is lifted.



Up over the 80' red oaks, this could almost be termed a "flying bridge".

See tinyurl.com/csf-flyingbridge

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Guy ropes are used to maneuver the span through the trees. Fortunately, there was little wind.



Photo by Hugh Mattison

By 8:00 AM, the main span of the bridge has been lowered. Welders from Aetna Bridge Co. now work to fit the ends of the span into the vertical steel posts.



Photo by Hugh Mattison

This is the most critical point – if it doesn't fit, they can't take it back! The painstaking work of adding steel re-enforcement plates and re-welding the horizontal ends to fit the vertical posts must meet the final test.

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Well, everything did fit – finally. Two days later, the wooden decking is almost complete – just in time for the end of the week-long pause in MBTA service.



Drone photos display a “new” bridge, and a new life of service.

For a bird’s-eye view, see tinyurl.com/csf-birdseyeview

Next steps: complete restoration of the stairways, the south ADA ramp, and landscaping.

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