



March 29, 2013

To: Jack Pecora
Fore River Bridge Replacement Project White-Skanska-Koch JV
Project Manager

Trish Foley
MassDOT Office of Public Affairs

From: Nathaniel Curtis
Howard/Stein-Hudson
Public Involvement Specialist

RE: **MassDOT Highway Division
Fore River Bridge Replacement
Public Information Meeting
Meeting Notes of March 27, 2013**

Overview

On March 27, 2013 members of the Fore River Bridge design/build team and MassDOT staff associated with the job attended a meeting held at the Fore River Clubhouse to discuss the progress of construction, upcoming operations at the site, and to introduce the Trish Foley, MassDOT's Officer of Public Affairs. The meeting was arranged with the assistance of Representative Ronald Mariano City and Quincy Councilor Brad Croall. Also in attendance was Lindsay Robinson from Representative Mariano's office and Kristen Grazioso from Senator Keenan's office. This meeting represents one of many which have and will continue to take place to inform the community about the project throughout the course of the design/build phase.

Meeting Minutes¹

Presentation

C: Jack Pecora (JP): Good evening everyone, my name is Jack Pecora and I am the project manager representing White Skanska. Here with me tonight I have my colleagues Kevin Lampron from White Skanska. Also with us are Nate Curtis and his assistant Nick Gross from Howard/Stein-Hudson and our newest member to the project team, community liaison, Trish Foley from MassDOT. We are going to give you a quick update tonight but before we begin, I'd like to pause for a moment of silence to honor Lieutenant Edward J. Walsh and Firefighter Michael R. Kennedy who passed away earlier this week.² Thank you very much.

So, here is tonight's agenda: we'll start with a brief overview, followed by an introduction of Trish Foley, bridge renderings, project progress, community concerns, previously asked questions, ongoing public involvement and then we'll leave some time for questions and answers. Trish Foley is here to my right. Trish has been appointed as the new MassDOT liaison for the Fore River Bridge project. Trish's name,

¹ Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix A.

² Here, a moment of silence was observed to honor the firemen lost.

email and contact information is here on this slide. From a MassDOT perspective, this is a new face and certainly prettier than Donny Dailey. Trish is there anything you'd like to say?

- C: Trish Foley (TF): I'd just like to thank you all for being here tonight and tell you I am excited to take over for Donny Dailey on this project. I am looking forward to working with you all. Thank you.
- C: JP: As far as the renderings go these haven't changed since they were first premiered at our 75% public information meeting last spring. Here is a view looking over the bridge. Here is the view from the Quincy side and here is a view from Weymouth looking back towards the Quincy bank of the river. The final image here is from the Quincy side looking back towards Weymouth with the *USS Salem* off to the left.

I'll now move on to a quick rundown of where we are today. We held a community briefing at the East Braintree Civic Association just a week ago. The 100% project design plans, issued from the construction documents have all been completed. There is one final package remaining which is a Federal Highway sign off. Progress since we last met includes the ongoing work of the Quincy tower, pier caps, and plinths. The tower plinths are nearing completion. The Quincy land shafts are complete. Those, as you might recall are part of the foundations for the approach roadways leading up to the bridge. The Weymouth tower and the tower plinths are on their way as well. There is ongoing work on the dolphin and fender system in the navigable channel. Currently, the project is running its normal two-shift schedule from 7:00AM to 11:00PM.

Here's our view ahead. Operations will continue through the spring and summer months. Major elements include completion of the tower plinths and Weymouth land shafts. Ongoing will be construction of the land shafts, approach ramp renovations, utility installation along the approach roadways and abutting intersection improvements. We will also begin our next round of preparations in the Fore River Ship Yard which will be in advance of the steel for the lift span beginning to arrive on site. The lift span will be built in the shipyard and floated into position. Throughout all of this, we will continue to maintain the temporary bridge.

This is a recent photo taken at the beginning of the month. This is a view from the Quincy side. These tall blue structures are the tower plinths. The towers will be constructed on top of these concrete structures. If you can make out the vertical lines on the plinths, you can see the finish which the concrete has been given. That's to give it the appearance of having a granite facade. That appearance is achieved with a form liner which goes in the cement form while the material cures. We will complete the granite look by staining the concrete. The elements you see here in the center of the image are the lag bolts. You'll see them at four locations on each tower plinth. Ultimately, the steel legs of the towers will be connected to those bolts. Zooming in, this image shows one of the dolphins on the Quincy side. These are part of the bridge's protection system helping to ensure that it isn't damaged by passing ships. On the Weymouth side there are similar activities happening but a little further behind compared to the Quincy side which is typical of how we have staged the job. As you can see, the dolphin sheeting on the Quincy side is nearly complete. Eventually, this will be tied into a system of pilings which will run along the edge of the navigation channel, under the bridge and to another dolphin on the bridge's in-board side. We have used this slide in the past year when referring to the general project schedule overview. As you can see, the foundation work was recently completed. The assembly and preparation of the truss structure will be ongoing throughout the summer months of 2014.

I'd like next to speak to some community concerns. Noise is always a big one, but our last noise complaint over the hotline was in December of 2013. Truck routes have been noted as a community issue. We are still using the truck route from the base technical concept (BTC) which uses Route 3, Route 18 and Route 53 to get to the site. We have been asked to investigate alternate routes for 2015 when we expect the lane reductions on the temporary bridge and we will look into that. At present time, there are no peak hour reductions on the temporary bridge. We have none scheduled in the immediate future either. When we do get around those lane reductions, we have many tools to help us get the information out such as the ongoing public outreach, variable message boards, police details,

and road section improvements on the roadways around the bridge. Now we'll move onto some of the community questions that have come up in the past.

- C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NNC): Here are some questions that have come up in previous meetings, both the most recent briefing in East Braintree and in other meetings prior. The first question, "Is the project generally on schedule?" Yes it is, however like most large scale projects there are some scheduling challenges. I think we can all agree that this past winter was a difficult one. "What is the height of the new bridge pedestrian rail?" The rail is 3 feet 6 inches above the sidewalk surface. One of the things we were asked about at the East Braintree meeting was, and I'll use the slightly nicer term, the "antimissile fence." Essentially that's one of those chain-link fences you see at the edge of bridges that comes up and curves over at the top. You often see them on highway and pedestrian overpasses. There are a couple reasons why that a fence like that is not included in the final design. One of the things we heard a lot about prior to the 25% design was, "We don't like the temporary bridge, it looks like a cloud of steel parts. Give us a structure that looks clean." The bridge architect for both the 25% design team and the one with the design/build team heard those comments and felt that a fence would detract from the bridge aesthetics. The serious question that came up in the recent Braintree meeting was, "What if someone is going to jump?" As Mike O'Dowd made the point before 25%, if someone is truly determined to jump, 10 feet of chain linked fence is not going to stop them and if they are bound and determined to take that step, they make opt to run into traffic. This is all a long way of saying "no fence." "Will the replacement bridge have standard asphalt for specialized quiet driving pavement?" The new bridges lifting span will have a concrete riding deck and the approach ramps will be paved with standard asphalt. "Will there be two operators on the bridge?" Yes, there will be two operators on the bridge. "What's the width?" The width of the bridge is 76 feet 5 inches wide, that's two 12 foot travel lanes in each direction with a 5 foot shoulder, and a 6 foot sidewalk. We also had question about federal funding. So far, the Fore River Bridge project has expended \$105 million and just about \$103 million dollars will be taken care of by the FHWA.

It says on the website that community input is very important and one of the questions that we received was, "How much community input was actually used?" We don't want to be constantly looking backwards, this phase of work is about getting the project done, but I just wanted to give people a sense of some of the things that got into the project prior to 25% design. We were asked, "Are we going to have lots of chances to talk to the project team?" There have been 7 public information meetings and additional briefings before 25% design. We were asked to use social media in project communications and indeed we have done that. MassDOT has been using Twitter and that actually brings up a good point. My assistant Nick came in to the office this morning and said, "Nate, check out my Twitter feed." Both the Prudential Tunnel Project and the Fore River Bridge public information meeting announcements were there and back-to-back so we were pleased to see that. We were asked some time ago by a selectman from Hull that the advertisements be placed in newspapers further south. The public notification announcements have been placed in local papers as far as Scituate. We were asked to improve the bicycle accommodations on the bridge. The bridge in its final condition will now have full bicycle lanes, before 25% it was just a bicycle accommodating shoulder. We were asked to allow the community to provide input and that is why we are here tonight and why we have continued to hold public information meetings throughout the progress of the project.

As Jack mentioned earlier, we have a new MassDOT liaison for the project, Trish Foley. Her contact information is here on this slide and also on the website.³ We also have the project hotline for immediate concerns. We encourage you to call it if you have a problem, but it's always nice when it doesn't ring because we know that things are going well. We were asked to keep contracting vehicles off local streets. It states this clearly on the website and all construction trucks are designated to specific routes when traveling to and from the project site. Jack is very serious about that too. My favorite story from this project so far is Jack chasing down some guy in a dump truck and giving him a bit of a talking to for being off-route. If you see what you think is an off-route truck, pick up the phone and call the hotline. When you do call, please have the license plate number and that way we can get to the bottom

³ This information can be found at <http://www.massdotprojectsforeriverbridge.info/contact.html>.

of the issue. As a friendly reminder, not every truck in the area is connected to this project. Finally we were asked to shift the VMS boards further south to try to notify motorist before they are committed to entering the project work area which was duly done.

Ongoing public involvement: we have had continued coordination with abutting municipalities. There have been routine updates to the project website including the most recent March update. We have and will continue to let you know in advance via social media, email, and the website when third shifts are coming. This is the hotline number and I'll read it slowly: (617) 504-2924. The line is staffed at all times when the job is in operation. Nobody has called since the middle of February. The next quarterly meeting we would expect to see somewhere in Weymouth since we ping pong back and forth between Weymouth and Quincy. You can expect this meeting to be sometime in late spring, early summer. We have had specific requests by the Weymouth community to hold a traffic meeting and this will be planned as we get closer to the traffic shifts sometime in 2015. I do believe that is the end of the presentation and now we will open it up to the question and answer period.

Question & Answer Session⁴

- Q: Thank you very much for the update. I would like to hear some more discussion about the closures that will be scheduled for some time in 2015. When I originally read the presentation it sounded as though there would be total closure of the bridge for a certain period. What is the schedule now and please explain the layout for vehicular traffic.
- A: Regarding the closure period, there will be one lane in each direction for vehicular traffic. It's better to think of it as a reduction period. To answer your question specifically, there will not be full closures to the roadway. We are able to accomplish this because much of the work on the new bridge happens off-line in the original 1936 alignment. The reductions come in when we have to connect the approach ramps with the new bridge. There will be some closures to the navigable channel when the lifting span is floated into position.
- C: I guess the reason I'm asking is because I am concerned about the traffic coming further south from Route 3A. Currently, anytime the bridge is up, the entire area of Route 3A is a gridlock. I just wanted to know what kind of analysis has gone into the alternatives and how to encourage people to use alternative transportation. I think it is very important that there be a spectrum of opportunities and I wanted to make sure that you're not going to get into a gridlock because it's already bad enough as it is.
- A: Unfortunately there aren't a ton of alternative options for people traveling along the corridor and through the project area. We have been pushing and encouraging the use of the commuter rail and I do believe the water shuttle from Quincy will be back online by the time of the closures in 2015.
- C: A few things I'd like to add to that. When we talk about Weymouth Landing as the detour route, that's not necessarily what we want people to do. You may have heard about the ongoing work on the Prudential Tunnel. The Prudential Tunnel on these upcoming weekends is going down to a single lane in each direction. People can still go through the Prudential Tunnel but really that's the last resort. We don't want people using the Prudential Tunnel; we want people on the planned detour routes. We have done a lot of public outreach for the Prudential Tunnel; we have been in touch with towns, newspapers, local public access cable and even the Travel and Tourism Bureau. We will be doing the same thing for the Fore River Bridge when the time comes and really, the idea is to capture people before they get committed to driving through the project work zone and redirect them to some other route.
- C: We have had some conversations with abutting communities and there has always been a plan to have police details with a preference in having local police who know the area and the problematic intersections.

⁴ As not everyone in the audience provided their name, questions and answers are provided anonymously. Answers were generally provided by Jack Pecora and Nathaniel Curtis.

Q: I want to ask you about the bicycle lanes. At this point, is the only separation between cyclist and vehicles simply a painted line?

A: That is correct

C: I'm going to reiterate what I said at the last public information meeting, that's not sufficient. I was a bicycle commuter across that bridge for over 20 years. I've crossed it thousands of times. I rode on the sidewalk every time. I'm telling you now, even with the proposed bike lanes, I'll still take my bicycle on the sidewalk because a bicycle lane with a painted stripe is virtually useless. A rumble strip would offer some protection to a distracted driver. It is impossible to see any bicycles as a driver when the sun is setting.

A: It is a good point; we will talk with MassDOT about the rumble strip.⁵

Q: I have one more question that is not related to bicycles. Will there be channel closings because of construction on the bridge or will people still be able to get their boats up and down the river?

A: There will be some closures on occasion. There will be some periods when we occupy the channel. The most restricted time will be when the span is floating into position.

C: I'm talking about extensive closings, as in more than a day or two.

A: For the longer closure periods there will be a temporary navigational channel to allow boats to travel the river.

C: Thank you.

C: I'm Councilor Margaret LaForest representing Quincy, Ward 1. I want to recognize the great job of the police details thus far. Obviously, floating the lifting span into place is a major part of this job. That is something that realistically can only happen one way as has been laid out. Lastly I just wanted to say that the coordination efforts with both Quincy and Weymouth have been great and I wanted to thank you for your attention and communication with both sides.

Q: Gary Peters, resident of Weymouth. I have a question for Nate. My question is regarding the federal funding for the project. How many dollars have been received to date?

A: The way it all works is something that neither Trish nor I would like to explain because it is complicated and we could possibly get it wrong. It is also something that is difficult to explain in the context of a PowerPoint slide. We ask that you contact Victoria Sheehan who is expecting a call from you at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. She is the program manager for the funding aspect and will lay that all out for you. Is that fair enough?

C: Yes.

Q: Can you explain in further detail the noise control plan?

A: We have acceptance of our noise control plan from MassDOT. We have been adhering to it and our last noise complaint was in December of last year.

Q: In terms of existing concrete wall, will that be changed or better yet, can it be changed?

⁵ Previous address: Question 5&6 <http://www.massdotprojectsforriverbridge.info/askedquestions.html>

A: There are a few select portions of the wall that are coming down. The majority of the existing wall will remain. The approach roadway with the girders will be retained behind the wall.

Q: Will the buoys that hold up the sedimentation curtain be visible on my drive home tonight?

A: Yes, you should be able to see the buoys that mark the edge of the floating curtain. Depending on the tide, on the Weymouth side you might actually see them resting on the mudflats.

Q: I have a real concern about the area around the bridge. The Quincy ferry property is being sold by the MBTA. I don't see how they can do it because there is an agreement with MassDOT for several acres to be used to hold staging during construction. It's also a significant piece of property. I wonder if there is some way MassDOT can hold the property from being sold and use it for staging for the construction of the bridge and possibly move things more efficiently. I just think it is a huge mistake and I would like someone to step up and have it taken off the market.

A: There are certain properties for this project that are in the MassDOT right-of-way. We are also renting property in the shipyard.

C: Jack, correct me if I'm wrong, your principal staging area for big materials such as the lift span and the drilled shafts are in the shipyard.

C: Correct.

C: But you do have easements on the end of the property. I don't know how they can sell it to somebody else. I've seen it on the bid documents. It's under the bridge, you have easements and it's in the bid document.

C: Anything underneath the temporary bridge or the new structure will still be accessible to us through our construction easements.

C: Just to follow up on that, I'm not familiar with the terms of the sale, if there is a sale, or who's involved with the sale. Any contract easement agreements must be honored. There is a laydown area, a work zone area, and anything relating to that would have to be held from any sort of sale.

C: We just received some additional information. The property is for sale. The MBTA is making sure that the property contains easements for the Fore River Railroad to cross it so they'll be able to continue to move through that space. Part of the project is to keep trucks off the roads and bring goods in via water and rail so that space would be kept available for the project.

C: I just thought there may be some way you could do the job more efficiently like having the staging area adjacent to the bridge and keep the land in the public domain rather than having it sold off to the private sector.

C: Chapter 91 states that this property is a designated port area. When you refer to the public domain, this space would not end up being a landscaped park because the entire Fore River Shipyard area is a designated port which means it has to be retained as some sort of commercial, maritime related activity.

Q: The brown structures that are going to be built to protect the bridge, what do you call them?

A: Dolphins.

Q: They seem to be just steel sheets?

A: That is right. It is steel sheeting filled with a sand and gravel aggregate mix.

C: It seems that those structures would have a very short lifespan?

C: That is a good point. We do have the steel structures protected similar to the way you would have a gas line protected. We have a sacrificial anode which is similar to the one in a household hot water heater, just much bigger. It's pretty cool, but it protects the steel from corrosion through an electrical process with the salt water.

Q: What is the expected life of the bridge?

A: The expected lifespan of the bridge structure is 75 years.

Q: Did you look at the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA) route for when they ran trucks to and from the shipyard?

A: I'm reaching into the time machine here but I do believe that the truck route being used has been planned based on the MWRA. What we did through the 25% design period was approached the community and said, "We think the MWRA route is probably the best route for trucks. Do you prefer something else?" We kept pushing that question and saying, "Is there somewhere else you would like to have it?" We never got a response until last June when a Braintree resident said, "When you reach the phase of having a lane reduction, maybe you should look at a different route such as Hannon Parkway." When we do get to the reduction period, it is definitely something we will look at.

C: O.K. well, if there are no more questions, we'll wrap it up here. Thank you all for coming.

Next Steps

The design/build project team will continue to progress the construction of the Fore River Bridge throughout the spring and summer months of 2014. Upcoming public involvement milestones will include the next quarterly update meeting, which will be held in Weymouth in late May or early June. Information about project progress will continue to be provided through the project website. Any third shifts will be announced via the project website, email blast, and MassDOT social media.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Ed	Burke	Resident
Ron	Clough	Resident
Nate	Curtis	HSH
Ennis	Elerteni	Resident
Brian	Foley	Resident
Kristen	Grazioso	Senator Keenan
Nick	Gross	HSH
Jim	Halpin	Resident
Ed	Hancock	Resident
Becky	Haugh	Resident
Ronald	Hawes	Resident
Margaret	Laforest	Resident
Owen	McDonald	Resident
Sio + Gail	McDonough	Resident
David	Oliva	Resident
Dave	Patnavde	Resident
John	Penny	Resident
Gary	Peters	Resident
Lindsay	Robinson	Rep. Mariano's Office
Frank	Robinson	Resident
Fren	Sandozto	Resident
Lee	Toma	Film
Mr + Mrs.	Zeppi	Resident