



December 9, 2013

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

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RE: MassDOT Highway Division
Fore River Bridge Replacement
5th Public Information Meeting
Meeting Notes of November 21, 2013

Overview

On November 21, 2013 members of the Fore River Bridge design/build team and MassDOT staff associated with the job held a regularly-scheduled quarterly project progress meeting at the Abigail Adams Middle School in Weymouth. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the project's progress over the past several months and provide a preview of upcoming operations during the winter of 2013 with particular regard to traffic impacts associated with construction operations. In addition, the meeting provided the opportunity for residents and stakeholders within the project limits to meet MassDOT's design/build team for the construction phase of the project and address any comments or concerns they had. While the meeting summarized herein was lightly attended, the tenor of the audience was broadly positive.

Meeting Minutes¹

Presentation

C: Good evening, my name is Matt Kelly. I'm with White Skanska, the contractor that was selected to do the Fore River Bridge replacement project. Tonight we will provide you a short briefing on the project's progress. Also from the team we have Kevin Lampron, the project area manager and Craig Bateman, the project site superintendent. Between the three of us we should be able to answer any questions you have.

Here's a brief overview of the project and today's presentation. We'll go over the latest renderings of what the bridge will look like upon completion, we'll go through the construction status of the work we have done over the past couple of months, we'll take a look at what lies ahead and what work will take place in the next couple of months. We will then speak about the ongoing public involvement, web and social media updates, as well as planned outreach and email database revisions. After we go through the program we'll have a question and answer session to address any questions or concerns you have. If there is a question that we don't have the answer to tonight, we will certainly try to have an answer for you at our next meeting.

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

Let's start with the renderings. Here's a view of the bridge while you're traveling over from one side to the other. Here's a view of the bridge while it's in the down position. Off to the side you can see that there are dolphins and fenders that protect the bridge from the passing of shipping traffic, those are the circular structures you see off to the left in the foreground. Here's a shot of the bridge at night with the *USS Salem* in the background, this perspective is taken from the Weymouth side. Again, in this picture you can see the reinforced dolphins. You can also see the concrete plinths, currently under construction now, as well as the towers and aesthetic lighting that are incorporated with the project. Here is a daytime view of the bridge during the winter from the Quincy side with the bridge in the down position.

So where are we today? The last public information meeting was held on September 25th in Quincy. As of right now the project design is 100% complete, the approvals have been finalized, the major elements and components of the bridge such as the bridge towers, the lift span, and the operating machinery, all of these elements are in various stages of fabrication across the United States. Construction operations are ongoing as you can see just from crossing the existing bridge. Since the last meeting we have completed the Quincy tower foundations. The Quincy tower foundations were comprised of precast concrete segments that were barged in from a concrete fabricator in Virginia. They were offloaded at the Fore River Shipyard which meant no trucks were required to bring those elements to the site. When the concrete segments are put together they are similar to a bathtub which is placed over the drilled shafts that support the bridge's foundation. We've filled those tubs since we've last met with reinforced concrete and we're now beginning the process of building the concrete plinths which hold the structural steel tower legs for the bridge. On the Weymouth side of the water, we've completed the north side drilled shafts. Those shafts go down into the riverbed to bedrock and support the weight of the bridge and lift span. We have one of the Weymouth side dolphins complete and we are in the process of backfilling that with gravel material. When filled, we will finish it off with a reinforced concrete cap. The Weymouth tower foundation third shift which was required to assist in completing the drilled shaft operation was completed at the end of October and we are currently running normal shifts on the project.

Let me now give you the view ahead for the next few months. Projected activities include completion of the Weymouth tower footings, there are a few elements that remain to be completed that we are working on currently at that location. We have begun installing the approach roadway drilled shafts. Those will form the foundations that will support the structural steel for the approach ramps. We continue to work on the tower plinths on the Quincy side and will soon be underway with that work in Weymouth as well. We anticipate the beginning of utility installation in the upcoming months that will include some partial off-peak lane closures to accommodate construction equipment but there will be no major shutdowns or no major traffic impacts during this time frame. There is a chance of some nighttime closures of lanes but there will be two-way traffic over the bridge at all times. The approach wall renovations have started on the Quincy side on Frontage Road which runs just north and south of the existing bridge approach. There has been a small traffic reconfiguration that has been done there so we can access the wall and its footing and make repairs to them. That's the beginning of the process that will ultimately place new concrete walls around the existing approach structures. Abutting intersection improvements will begin in the spring of 2014. Throughout the course of the project there will be continued close monitoring of the performance and safety of the temporary bridge as well as any maintenance that structure needs.

Here are some recent views of the project, these were obtained yesterday. This is looking at the Quincy side of the job and here are the precast footing boxes that I spoke of earlier. Those are located in this area here which has been filled in with concrete to support the tower legs. This is a look at the Quincy side from the south showing the first lift of reinforced concrete for the plinth. This first lift was approximately 19 feet high, 60 feet long, and roughly 20 feet wide. We're planning on placing the next lift for this area in the upcoming weeks so you'll begin to really see things coming up out of the ground. On the top of the picture, you can make out the yellow crane, if you drive over the bridge I'm sure you've seen it, this is the area where we're beginning to install the land shafts that will support the approach structure. That is the entire operation in this area here. Just to remind you, this structure projecting out into the water is a temporary work trestle that we built, it isn't a permanent structure, but for now it's being used to access each of these locations. These trestles will also be used to erect the tower steel and place the machinery in the tower machine rooms.

This is a photo from the Weymouth side of the job taken yesterday. This circular structure here is the Weymouth north dolphin. These are the sheets that make up the foundation of the dolphin and you can see the backfill material that has been placed inside the dolphin itself. In the upcoming weeks and months we will cap that dolphin with a reinforced concrete cap; it also will receive some rubber fendering material that will protect both the dolphin itself as well as the bridge foundation. There will also be some plastic members that will run along that dolphin to help protect the structure as well. Here's the Weymouth temporary trestle that we have installed to gain access to the tower footings of the Weymouth side of the job. This is the Weymouth north foundation box; again these precast elements were floated up from Virginia. The overall box is composed of five individual sections. This is actually a pretty good view of the empty box and the bath tub effect as we call it on the job. This box will be filled with reinforced concrete which you can see is in the process of being installed. This is the reinforcing steel that will be used inside the box to strengthen the concrete in the towers. You can see the drilled shafts that are inside the box. On the south side of the future tower location we are continuing on with drill shaft installation.

This is a photograph taken yesterday of the Fore River Shipyard, it's a little tough to see everything going on, it is a large area, but we use this area for a lot of things; right now we receive a lot of our deliveries there. This is where we received the precast footing boxes that were used for the tower foundations. In this area you can see one of the cranes we have set up. In the foreground here are the reinforcing cages. These rebar cages go inside of the drilled shafts to add strength to them. We fabricate all of these cages for the shafts over at the shipyard. There are also other various elements in the back of this image. Recently, we have started receiving rubber fendering material which is being preassembled over at the shipyard.

In terms of project schedule we are roughly 30% through the job. For the next couple of months through March or so, we will be continuing the deep foundations and building the concrete plinths that support the towers steel material. Throughout the next 12 months, we will be working on the approach walls that are at the base of the ramp that take you up to the bridge. The wing walls actually received a new 12" cast in place wall over the front on the existing wall that is there now. Starting in the winter 2014, sometime after the first of the year, structural steel erection for the towers and for the machine rooms will begin in Quincy followed by the Weymouth side. Generally the job has sequenced that way. The operating machinery that moves the lifting span of the bridge is housed at the top of the legs and spans across the legs, unlike the existing temporary bridge where the operating machinery is exposed to the elements. All these mechanical elements will be protected up in the machine room.

Over in Weymouth, if you look at the chart on the screen behind me, this is the bar that represents the work on the deep foundations, the drilled shafts, as well as the footings coming out of the water, and the concrete plinths that support the towers. We'll be following that with work on the Weymouth concrete wing walls and approach steel. The movable lift span will be fabricated at the Weymouth shipyard, in the space where we have the drilled shaft cages stocked piled now, ready for use for the land drill shafts. The plan is to construct the lift span in the shipyard and float it over from the shipyard into place, rest it down on the bearings, and install it over a couple of days. That's currently scheduled for early 2015. Also shown for that time period are the northern dolphins and fenders. The installations of the dolphins and fenders that will protect the bridge are staggered. We will install the northern half of the fender and dolphin system now while the existing temporary bridge is in place. After the new bridge is operational and we remove the existing temporary bridge, we will then complete the remaining elements of the southern dolphins and fenders. That will end up being two dolphins and fenders that are done now and two that are done in late 2015 and early 2016. Last item on the page is the submarine cable. The part of the bridge on the Quincy side will communicate with the part of the bridge on the Weymouth side. That takes place with the use of the submarine cable that passes under the channel and that work is scheduled for the next coming months.

Based on our last few meetings, we have some frequently asked questions. These will all be posted to the project website,² but let me take you through them this evening in advance of our own Q&A period.

² <http://www.massdotprojectsforeriverbridge.info/askedquestions.html>.

- Who maintains the new bridge when it is completed? Once the bridge is completed and accepted by MassDOT, the agency will operate and maintain the new bridge.
- What are the bicycle accommodations on the new bridge? There will be a bicycle lane on the new bridge on each side; one heading towards Weymouth and the other heading to Quincy. They will both be five feet wide.
- Will there be a physical barrier between the roadway and the bicycle lanes? There has been extensive research conducted on this topic and the answer is no. The main reason is that a barrier would result in a loss of space for the cyclist. It also creates a hazard for snow removal and adds weight to the lifting span.
- Could there be a rumble strip between the roadway and bicycle lanes? Again, the answer is no. It creates a problem with snow removal and it is not applicable to this location per MassDOT and FHWA guidelines?
- Could the new bridge be raised partially for smaller vessels to allow a faster cycle time? United States Coast Guard regulations stipulate that the bridge must be opened to its full air draught for passing vessels.

We take these public information meetings very seriously as does the entire team. Nate does, we all do and I know it's important to you. We have ongoing coordination with our abutting municipalities. The project hotline is up and running with the number on the website and posted at various places around the project. Last week we had no calls to the hotline. We maintain routine updates through the project website. If you put "Fore River Bridge" into Google, it's easy to find; we're the first thing to come up. Right now the website has the November update in place and we expect the December update shortly after Thanksgiving.

We tentatively have the East Braintree Civic Association meeting set for March, 2014. There's been a request from the Town of Weymouth for a traffic meeting and we will work with the abutting municipalities, Quincy, Braintree and Weymouth to make those plans available. We had a recent clean-out of old email addresses that weren't working in the stakeholder database. If you think you have signed up for the database, but have never gotten an email, make sure you see Nate and give him your address. He's responsive, quick to act and we thank him for that. Here again is our project hotline 617-504-2924. If you have any questions or concerns, please call that any time work is happening on the bridge. General questions and comments can go to Donny Dailey at the MassDOT office of public affairs. With that, let's do the Q&A.

Question and Answer Session³

Q: How many federal dollars have flowed into this project thus far?

A: I'd have to inquire about that Gary, that's really not my end of the project. As you know, both Jack and I are really involved in the construction end of things.

Q: Could you make that information available to me please?

A: Yes, we can try to have that made available to you.

C: Thank you for that.

Q: Can you tell me about any green space that will be associated with the new bridge?

A: Yes, ma'am there will be new landscaping and park space on the Weymouth side of the river where the existing park space is now. That will be restored and reconfigured with new walking paths and landscaping.

³ Audience members did not universally provide their names and as such, comments are presented anonymously. Answers were provided by Matt Kelley unless otherwise noted.

Q: What about improved landscaping in South Weymouth? I know there's work taking place further down along Route 3A in South Weymouth. Would there be any changes associated with that? Would there be any changes to intersections?

A: Our limits of work cover right around 0.96 miles, so roughly a mile. It starts just at the fire station in Quincy, goes through the rotary at the base of the bridge, includes the Bridge and goes over to Evans Street in Weymouth. Intersections in that area will receive upgrades such as new sidewalks and crosswalks. Everything will be brought into compliance with ADA requirements for handicapped accessibility.

Q: I'm concerned about the rest of Bridge Street heading towards Hingham. People go too fast there and there are things that could be improved. Is there anything this project could do to address that?

A: As far as the rest of Bridge Street, I know there are concerns. The issue here is that the Commonwealth comprises the project to a certain limit. This is a bridge project and generally speaking, the work we're doing has to specifically address the bridge or its immediate surroundings. I represent the contractor and our goal is to replace the bridge. I understand your concerns, but we don't have any control over the limits of work we have been given.

Q: In the FAQ document it says that "all comments received are incorporated into the design to the greatest extent possible." I've read through all the documentation on this project and I don't know how much if anything of the public comment has been included. I've reached my own conclusion: I've sent in a number of comments and suggestions and I don't think anything from the public has really been incorporated.

A: (Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis): Michael, that's a good question. I don't know off the top of my head how many we have received. I know the Environmental Assessment document, which is on the documents portion of the Fore River website has some recounting of that, but as you know, the public comment on this project goes on for pages and pages; you've sat through most of it as have I. Give me some time to go through all that and we'll get back to you. It can be hard to track these things down. Sometimes a suggestion can come from two different places at once and in a slightly different format so it becomes hard to say whether it was truly incorporated or not, but we'll do our best for you.

Q: Overall the construction has been going really well. I just have a question about whether you foresee any more 24-hour shifts in the next three months.

A: We don't have any 24-hour shifts scheduled right now. At times the situation dictates that we have a 24 work period. One of those times is when we float in the lifting span and certain elements of the drilled shafts require for constructability and safety reasons that we work the 24 hour shift, but right now we have nothing planned. If that changes, there would be outreach to address it.

Q: And do you have anything coming up that's especially noisy? I'd say that over the past year that the project has been underway, things have been pretty good, but I know noise is always a concern for me and my neighbors.

A: There will be some demolition that will take place on both the Weymouth and Quincy sides of the 1936 bridge abutments. We do have a noise plan in place that will monitor the noise produced by that operation. We are restricted to a lower noise level between the hours of 6:00PM and 7:00AM. So there is some on the horizon, but we're not demolishing the whole structure and so the duration for those activities isn't extensive, it's not months and months of pounding but there certainly is a little bit of that in the coming months and the bulk of that work will be done during the day.

Anyone else; are there any other questions? No? All right, well if there's anything we failed to answer tonight, please come on up and ask us. We'll stay as long as people would like to speak. Thank you all for coming. Good night and have a good Thanksgiving.

Next Steps

The FAQ page of the Fore River website has been updated with the question and answer pairs outlined by Matt Kelley in the meeting summarized herein. Users can see those Q&A pairs at <http://www.massdotprojectsforriverbridge.info/askedquestions.html>.

At the time of this writing, the next public information meeting associated with the Fore River Bridge has yet to be scheduled. It will take place within the first quarter of 2014. A meeting for the residents of East Braintree, as represented by the East Braintree Civic Association has been pushed to March, 2014 in part due to a scheduling conflict with elected officials seeking to address that body's late 2013 meeting. Readers are encouraged to visit www.mass.gov/massdot/foreriverbridge for additional information.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Mike	Lang	Braintree
Anne	Hubert	Weymouth
Brian	Kowalski	Weymouth
Edward	Hancock	Weymouth
Jim	Clarke	Weymouth
Becky	Haugh	Weymouth
Bob	Gillon	City of Quincy
Geoff	Potter	Weymouth
Owen	McDonald	Quincy
Gary	Petters	Weymouth
Nate	Curtis	HSH
Kristin	Grazioso	Boston