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(617)482-7298 fax:(617)482-1837

Meeting Date: April 27, 2009

MassHighway Project Name: Fore River Bridge Replacement, Quincy-Weymouth
Bridge No. Q-01-001= W-32-001

MassHighway Contract No.: 50281

MassHighway District: 6

Designer: STV Incorporated

Minutes Prepared By: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates

Meeting Place: Whipple Senior Center, 182 Green Street, Weymouth, MA

Persons in attendance: Meeting attendance lists have been removed to protect the privacy of audience members.

Purpose: This meeting served as an initial briefing regarding the project for local elected leaders and their senior staff members.

Items Discussed:

Mike O'Dowd (MassHighway) welcomed the group of attendees. He explained that the Fore River Bridge is one of the spans to be replaced under Governor Patrick's Accelerated Bridge Program and that the purpose of the meeting would be to introduce the replacement project to key elected and appointed officials representing Quincy, Weymouth, and Braintree.

Highlights of the Presentation

At this point, Mike introduced Mark Pelletier (STV), who briefed the group on the current phase of the project. Highlights included the following:

- The Fore River Bridge carries Route 3A and connects Quincy and Weymouth.
- The replacement bridge will be in roughly the same footprint as the previous bridge, slightly north of the current temporary span.
- The goal of the replacement project is creation of a new, permanent, moveable bridge over Fore River that:



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- Addresses vehicular and pedestrian issues;
 - Is economical to build and maintain; and
 - Is aesthetically pleasing to abutting residents and businesses.
- The Fore River Bridge is a key component of the Accelerated Bridge Program;¹
 - Highlights of the Accelerated Bridge Program include:
 - Faster construction techniques;
 - Advanced project scheduling and estimating;
 - Streamlining of the environmental process; and
 - Innovative delivery mechanisms such as design/build and single-phase construction.
 - The following elements make up the current project team's scope of work:
 - Coordinate among key stakeholders and agencies;²
 - Conduct a type study to determine the preferred bridge type for the river crossing and approach spans;³
 - Selection of a preferred alternative;
 - Conducting the environmental assessment;
 - Advance of the work to the 25% design level; and
 - Creation of the design/build procurement package.
 - In conducting the type study, the design team will be guided by:
 - The shipping channel width selected by the Coast Guard;
 - MassHighway's preference;
 - Public preference;
 - Site conditions;
 - Engineering parameters;
 - Cost; and
 - Aesthetics.
 - In terms of the bridge profile, the design team is looking for one that will minimize the number of openings required to facilitate the passage of ships. The

¹ This program commits \$3B over the next eight years to reduce the number of structurally deficient bridges in the Commonwealth and ensure that additional bridges are not added to the list.

² The lead federal agency on this project is the Federal Highway Administration. The Coast Guard is also a major player, since it will ultimately dictate the required width of the shipping channel. The selected width may impact the type of bridge chosen.

³ The two types studied will be a vertical lift bridge with 2 lifting segments or a bascule bridge with 4 lifting segments. In either design, there will be 2 lanes of traffic in each direction. Also evaluated will be width of sidewalks, shoulders, and possibly bicycle lanes.



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profile currently favored has a 60-foot vertical clearance.⁴

- As part of developing the procurement package, the design team will create a traffic management plan to mitigate the traffic impacts of construction. During construction, the public will be updated regarding major project milestones—particularly those impacting commuting patterns.
- The current phase of work, begun in October 2008, will run to April 2011, when the design/build procurement package will be completed. Major milestones in this phase will include:
 - MassHighway review of the design (December 2009);
 - Completion of the 25% design (August 2010).

Question and Answer Session

Q = Question

A = Answer

C = Comment

Q. Victor Pap (VP):

Will there be bike lanes on both sides of the bridge or just 1, and how far will work on the bridge spread west and east?

A. Mark Pelletier (MP)

Bike lanes would be on both sides of the bridge, 1 for each direction. On the east side of the bridge, we want to go no farther than the intersection of 3A and the Monatiquot Street. On the west, we want to go no farther than the rotary.

Q. Jeff Bina (JB):

When would the Towns see design plans?

A. Mark Pelletier (MP)

That would be at the 25% design hearing.

Q. Rick Collins (RC):

When do you anticipate doing public meetings?

A. Mike O'Dowd (MOD)

We wanted to start our process with the elected officials and solicit your thoughts, particularly who you think the stakeholders in your communities are. As we start to

⁴ Although Panamax tankers, the largest users of the channel, will require openings for any feasible alternative, achieving a vertical clearance of 60 feet could reduce the number of openings for recreational sloops by 80% compared to the original span.



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develop alternatives, we will provide you with more details as well as working directly with the communities involved. We are happy to give additional presentations to any stakeholder groups you can think of, even if that means going to individual groups of people.

C. (RC):

Stakeholder groups I can think of include the abutters, both merchants and residents, along 3A, and the commuters who use it every day.

A. (MOD)

The type study will be completed by December 2010, so we will have plenty of time for public meetings. Again, if there are any additional stakeholder groups that you can think of, please let us know.

Q. (VP):

Generally, which bridge type takes longer to raise?

A. Mark Ennis (ME)

Generally, the bascule bridge is considered the fastest moveable bridge type to raise and lower; however, with good electrical and mechanical systems, a vertical lift bridge can be raised and lowered with comparable speed.

Q. (RC):

Which bridge type tends to be more expensive?

A. (ME)

Depending on mechanical and electrical systems, bascule and lift bridges tend to be similar in cost. For spans under 250 feet in length, the bascule bridge is generally the cheaper option, but above 250 feet of channel span, bascule bridges are no longer a feasible type. Given the channel width we anticipate on this job, we will have to see which type lends itself best to the site, since both would be applicable.

Q. (VP):

You had mentioned that the Coast Guard might seek a shipping channel width of 250 feet. Do you think that's what the width will be?

A. (MP)

The current channel width is 175 feet. We have suggested a number of shipping channel widths to the Coast Guard, but ultimately they will decide what the width is going to be. It will probably be somewhere between 225 and 250 feet.



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A. (MOD)

Right now MassHighway feels confident that the proposed width of between 225 and 250 feet will be acceptable to the Coast Guard. This is why we still have both bridge types on the table.

Q. (RC):

Will there be additional dredging?

A. (MP)

Whichever type of bridge we choose, there certainly will be some dredging to widen the channel. That would be part of the project cost and something that needs to be worked out with the Army Corps of Engineers. We've done some studies as to the type of vessels using the channel; the Panamax ships serving the Citgo facility need to wait for the right tidal conditions because of the depth they need. Widening the channel beyond the proposed 225 or 250 feet does not make sense, because vessels requiring that channel width would require a channel depth greater than the 35 feet maintained by the Army Corps through the Weymouth Fore River.

Q. (RC):

I remember that in years past there had been issues regarding the dredging of the channel because MassHighway wanted one thing, Citgo wanted something else, and neither party wanted to pay for it. Do you see that happening again?

A. (MOD)

We hope the Coast Guard will address any issues regarding the channel width or depth, since it is the agency that interacts with maritime users. Right now we've shown the Coast Guard that the wider the channel, the greater impact on the approach areas. We want to address the needs of all users equally. We think the Coast Guard will tell us the channel span sometime in May.

Q. (MOD):

MassHighway takes the needs of pedestrians and cyclists very seriously, and we want them to be included in the new bridge. With regards to both the current and original bridges, is there now or was there in the past substantial pedestrian or bicycle traffic?

A. (RC)

I think there's generally more pedestrian use than bicycle use.



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A. (VP)

There's pedestrian traffic across the bridge even in its current state; I'd say it's important.

A. Jaime Lynn Ryan (JLR)

Our office gets occasional calls that the temporary bridge feels uncomfortable for pedestrians to cross.

A. (RC)

I drive the bridge every day and I see at least a couple of pedestrians a week.

Q. (MOD):

What about traffic impacts during the demolition of the original bridge? Were there problems?

A. Tom Koch (TK)

I think you ought to have some meetings with the merchants on either side of the bridge just to be sure, but I wasn't aware of any major difficulties during the demolition. I will speak to my City Councilors about it. It would be nice if we could limit the use of pile drivers, given the noise.

A. (ME)

There are methods we can use to limit the use of pile drivers. Thank you for that comment.

A. (MOD)

We are looking at using as many heavy lifting techniques as possible. One option is to site the lifting machinery on a barge in the channel. That would speed things up and reduce traffic impacts during construction.

Q. (MOD):

What about impacts on the marinas and yacht clubs upstream of the bridge?

A. Christine Stickney (CS)

There are 2 yacht clubs upstream of the bridge. They should be considered stakeholders. What about the heavy lifting techniques, could those be done in the winter time?

A. (MOD):

We could stipulate in the design/build procurement package that the channel be kept open to recreational users from May to October. We will also work closely with the Coast Guard to determine who would be responsible for alerting maritime users.



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A. (MP):

With regard to the marinas, we are trying for a vertical clearance of over 60 feet to allow recreational sailboats to go through without triggering a bridge opening.

Q. (MOD):

On the Weymouth side of the bridge, a small park looks to have been built as a mitigation for construction of the new NStar plant. Is it heavily used?

A. (RC)

It's not the most frequently used park in the area. I'd say the primary users are recreational fishermen casting lines.

Next Steps

At this point, the design team will begin developing conceptual drawings of what the new bridge could look like. The next public involvement milestone will be a meeting in June to share these concepts with the public. Before closing the meeting, Mike O'Dowd noted that, while the design team would prefer to have a single public meeting for all 3 Towns, the team would entertain the idea of single Town meetings if it were suggested they were needed.



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End of Meeting

Note to the Reader: the materials made available through this section of the website have been developed by the project team to support the public involvement process. As the materials cover roughly a years worth of meetings, the reader should assume that all materials reflect the project team's best understanding of the project at the time prepared. Later materials offer the reader a deeper and clearer look at the project and should be assumed to supersede earlier materials.

These minutes are a close representation of what transpired at the meeting summarized herein, but should not be considered a verbatim transcript. Contact information provided by meeting attendees has been removed to protect their privacy.
