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

Meeting Date: May 3, 2010

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

Meeting Place: Weymouth Town Hall, 75 Middle Street, Weymouth MA

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

Purpose: At the request of Weymouth Mayor Susan M. Kay, members of the project team met with Mayor Kay and senior members of her staff to discuss the project and its potential impacts on Weymouth in general and North Weymouth in particular. Meeting minutes appear with the kind permission of Mayor Kay.

Items Discussed:

On May 3, 2010, members of the MassDOT Fore River Bridge Replacement project team met at the Weymouth Town Hall with Mayor Susan M. Kay and key members of her staff including the Traffic Engineer, and representatives of the planning, fire, and police departments.

During the course of the meeting, which generally took the form of a free-flowing discussion between the town officials and members of the project team, members of the project team referred to a printed version of the PowerPoint presentation shared with the community at a meeting held at the Fore River Clubhouse on April 12, 2010, this being the most recent public information meeting at the time of the discussion summarized herein. As such, the highlights of the presentation section, is drawn from the summary of that meeting.



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Highlights of the Presentation¹

Mark Pelletier, Mark Ennis, and Nikole Bulger (STV) briefed the group on the current phase of the project, as follows:

- The Fore River Bridge Replacement Project is at roughly the 10% design level. The project is moving as quickly towards the 25% design level but is still actively seeking input from members of the community.
- The Fore River Bridge carries Route 3A over the Fore River between Quincy and Weymouth, Massachusetts. Key elements of the Fore River Bridge's context include:
 - Location in a heavy industrial area.
 - Visibility from surrounding neighborhoods and from Germantown.
 - A vital link in a major commuting corridor, serving roughly 32,000 vehicles per day.
 - *USS Salem* museum ship site.
 - Public amenities surrounding the Weymouth end of the bridge.
 - MassDOT has already entered into an agreement to restore these amenities at the end of construction.
- Key issues in the Fore River Bridge Replacement project include:
 - Community input.
 - The community process for this project has been particularly intense and has included six public meetings prior to the one summarized herein, briefings for specific stakeholder groups such as maritime users of the Fore River Channel and briefings for local elected officials.
 - Environmental concerns.
 - Addressing these concerns has been in part handled through In frontloading coordination with concerned agencies including the Federal Highway Administration, United States Coast Guard and the Office of Coastal Zone Management.
 - Selection of a span and approach types based on the needs of road, pedestrian and maritime users.
 - Construction staging to minimize impacts on the surrounding community.
 - Developing a bridge aesthetic that is visually pleasing.
 - Ensuring that the bridge type chosen is cost effective to both build and maintain.
- The scope of the work for the project team includes the following elements:

¹ This presentation can be viewed at www.mass.gov/massdot/foreriverbridge/documents.html



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- Coordination with stakeholders and agencies including all public and stakeholder meetings to date.
- Evaluation of structure options for the movable and approach spans.
- Selection of the preferred alternative.
- Preparation of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) filing.
- Establishment of permitting requirements.
- Advance of the schematic design to the 25% level including design, construction staging and traffic management plans.
- Preparation of the design/build package.
- The schedule for the 25% design process includes the following:²
 - Notice to proceed – October 29, 2008.
 - Basic design – Fall 2008 to Winter 2008/2009:
 - Project development/environmental assessment including test borings, sampling of soil and survey.
 - Basic highway design.
 - Functional design reports.
 - Bridge type study reports.
 - MassDOT Highway Division review.
 - 25% design – Spring 2010-Spring 2011:
 - Federal and state permit filings.
 - Highway plans.
 - Bridge sketch plans.
 - MassDOT Highway Division review.
 - Design/build procurement package – Fall 2010-Spring 2011:
 - Bridge and highway plans, specifications and final estimate.
- Replacement of the Fore River Bridge is subject to the NEPA process. Within this process, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead agency. The Coast Guard (USCG) is a major coordinating agency. The project team is currently in the process of developing an EA. The EA:
 - Analyzes alternatives.
 - Assesses existing conditions.
 - Identifies potential impacts and proposes mitigations if required.
 - Documents public outreach.
- Once the EA is filed, there is an additional public comment period. Following this period, FHWA will make its final determination with regard to the environmental impacts caused by replacement of the Fore River Bridge.

² Schedule items noted in bold are either completed or in progress at the time of the meeting summarized herein.



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- As a footprint bridge, that is a structure that runs along the same alignment and that is functionally equivalent,³ to the replaced bridge, the Fore River Bridge is exempt from MEPA, Chapter 91 licensing and the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act. This exemption is so that bridges to be rebuilt or replaced under Section 32 of Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2008, also known as the transportation bond bill can be completed on a timely basis to ensure public safety.
- While the Fore River Bridge Replacement Project is exempt from some Massachusetts environmental permits, it must obtain:
 - A USCG bridge permit.
 - A MassDEP Section 401 Water Quality Certificate.
 - A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 permit.
 - A Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management consistency determination.
- Prior to demolition of the 1936 bridge, MassDOT signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) under the National Historic Preservation Act. This MOA requires archival documentation of the 1936 bridge, allowing state and local historical commissions to comment on the proposed design, and salvage of commemorative plaques from the 1936 span.
- As noted above, the Fore River Bridge carries roughly 32,000 vehicles each day, sitting as it does, astride a major commuting corridor connecting Boston and the South Shore. Bridge openings have a major impact of commuting times and create congestion in the communities to either side of the bridge. Alternate routes to bypass the bridge are long and involve already congested intersections. As such, two key goals of the project are to:
 - Reduce the number of bridge openings.
 - Reduce the duration of bridge openings when they do need to occur.
- The new Fore River Bridge will include two traffic lanes, a bike lane and sidewalk in both directions.
- In designing the new bridge, the project team has developed a roadway profile that is as high as possible, to minimize bridge openings, while:
 - Maintaining the maximum ADA-compliant grade of 5%.
 - Maintaining the roadway design speed of 40 miles per hour.
 - Avoiding any permanent takings of abutting homes or businesses.
- The design team has considered several approach structures for the new bridge including steel box girders, an I-girder and a New England bulb-T which is

³ Functionally equivalent means the same number of vehicular travel lanes.



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concrete structure. From a layman's point of view, all of these approaches look largely the same. Based on cost and constructability, STV has recommended that MassDOT use steel box girders for the new bridge's approaches.

- The fact that the Fore River is a navigable channel has major impacts on this project. The Fore River is a designated port area (DPA) under the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management and as such commercial interests that use or could use the port and channel must be taken into account in designing the new Fore River Bridge.
- Currently, the Fore River provides access to local yacht clubs, the Fore River Shipyard, and the Citgo tank farm. The largest vessels currently using the channel are Panamax class oil tankers. The horizontal clearance afforded by the current temporary bridge of 175 is universally regarded by mariners and USCG as inadequate. As such, a major goal of the project is to improve navigation access to the Fore River.
- Looking towards the needs of future shipping, USCG has indicated that the *bare minimum* horizontal clearance that could be considered as acceptable would be 225 feet at the fender line; the more generous horizontal clearance of 250 feet has been identified as a preference by both USCG and the maritime community.
- In evaluating bridge types to replace the current temporary structure, the design team has analyzed two types:
 - The bascule bridge – suited to crossings of 225 feet or less, provides unlimited vertical clearance when open, though this would not be possible here due to the projected size of the bridge.
 - The vertical lift bridge – able to span crossings up to 500 feet. Provides a single span configuration with a lower roadway profile.
- Criteria on which the two bridge types have been evaluated include:
 - Agency acceptance of the channel width.
 - Acceptance of vertical channel clearance in the closed position to minimize the required number of openings.
 - Site conditions and impacts.
 - Engineering parameters.
 - Permitting agency constraints.
 - Bridge aesthetics.
 - Capital, lifecycle and maintenance costs.
- If a new bascule bridge were to be constructed to span the Fore River with a horizontal channel clearance of 225 feet, it would be the largest bascule bridge in the United States. It would have several challenges associated with it due to its size. These include:



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- Engineering and maintenance difficulties due to the size of the counterweights needed to move the bridge’s leaves or lifting segments.
 - Because of the size of the bridge, four leaves would be required, each with its own set of machinery.
 - Bascule bridges are theoretically capable of providing unlimited vertical clearance, at the fender line, when in the open position. Due to the size of this bascule bridge, the leaves would not be able to open to the point of being perpendicular to the roadway thereby negating this advantage.
- If a new vertical lift bridge were to be constructed to span the Fore River with a horizontal channel clearance of 250 feet, it would be well within the normal capabilities of this type. It would have several advantages associated with it including:
 - A single roadway span with a lower profile. This is the case because the supporting members of the lifting truss are above the roadway deck. This provides for both simpler construction and operation as well greater vertical clearance in the closed position.
 - Two sets of lifting machinery, as opposed to the four required for the bascule bridge, provides for simpler construction and maintenance.
 - The following table shows the impact of the proposed bascule and vertical lift bridges with regard to required bridge openings.

Bridge	Vertical Clearance above MHW at Fenderline	Navigation Channel Width	Number of Annual Openings	Approx. change in # of openings/year	Approximate average weekly change in summertime openings
1936 Bridge	33 feet	175 feet	646 (2002)	-	-
Temporary Bridge	55 feet	175 feet	587 (2007)	-	-
Proposed Bascule Bridge	43 feet	225 feet	612 (interpolated)	+25 as compared to temporary bridge	+1.6 as compared to temporary bridge
Proposed Vertical Lift Bridge	58.5 feet	250 feet	560 (2007)	-27 as compared to temporary bridge	-1.7 as compared to temporary bridge

- The vertical lift provides a range of significant advantages as compared to the bascule bridge. These include:
 - Greater closed position vertical clearance leading to fewer openings and reduced traffic impacts.



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- Smaller pier footprints mean a lighter environmental impact on the Fore River including reduced scour potential.
 - Greater opportunities for accelerated bridge construction techniques. For example, the lifting span can be built off-site and floated into place. The deck of a bascule bridge must be constructed in the closed position.
 - The vertical lift bridge has fewer sets of machinery to maintain.
 - The lifting machinery for a vertical lift bridge at this location would be constructed using standard off-the-shelf components, at the low end of the spectrum with regard to size and complexity. For a bascule bridge at this location, the lifting machinery would be at the outer edge of what is available for size and complexity. Not many manufacturers produce this type of equipment. Therefore the vertical lift bridge has better maintainability in the long-term.
 - The swapping out of machinery parts on bascule bridges typically requires the bridge leaves to be locked in the open position (closed to roadway traffic). However, vertical lift bridges can have the spans left in the closed position during parts replacement and other maintenance activities.
 - The vertical lift bridge will offer better rideability with a standard, noise-dampening concrete deck.
 - The vertical lift bridge is less susceptible to high winds.
 - The vertical lift bridge is inherently more resistant to seismic events because it is a lighter, more flexible structure.
 - The vertical lift bridge does not restrict future economic development at the Fore River Shipyard.
 - The vertical lift bridge is ultimately the most efficient bridge for this location.
- Additionally, as is shown by the following table, a new vertical lift bridge will be nothing like the current temporary structure.

Criteria	Temporary Structure	Permanent Vertical Lift Bridge
Design life	15 years	75 years
Basis for mechanical design	Crane construction	AASHTO specifications
Operation in high winds	No	Yes
Wire rope lubrication	Constant maintenance requiring daily off-peak closures	Normal maintenance, 50 year life.
Navigation channel width	175 feet	250 feet
Ease of ship transit through the bridge	Difficult	Easier
Deck system	Steel (loud)	Concrete (quiet)



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Average opening time	21 minutes	13 minutes (est.)
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- The project team has clearly heard the community’s concern with regard to the aesthetics of a vertical lift bridge. The well-known and regarded firm of Rosales + Partners has been retained to give the bridge a pleasing aesthetic and will work community input into their design to the fullest extent possible.
- The project team also understands that traffic management is a significant community concern.
 - New traffic data has been collected.
 - Traffic management measures will be built into the design/build package to minimize the impact of construction traffic.
 - Permanent VMS signage to alert motorists to bridge openings will be placed during the first phase of construction.
 - The traffic management plan used during construction of the temporary bridge is being reviewed at this time.
 - A truck route, possibly the one used during construction of the MWRA facility, will be used to keep trucks out of residential neighborhoods around the bridge.

Question and Answer Session

Q = Question

A = Answer

C = Comment

Q. Mike O’Dowd (MOD): Thank you for inviting us, Mayor Kay. Would you like to start by you telling me what you know about the project already?

A. Mayor Susan Kay (SK): I know you are moving quickly, that you are leaning towards the vertical lift bridge and that you’ve dismissed the idea of a tunnel. I know I have some anxious residents in North Weymouth. They’ve been abused with the MWRA construction, the power plant and the temporary bridge, though I understand all those things had to happen when they did. Route 3A itself can be a bit of a nuisance. I know you are fast tracking this project, though it seems to me to be within reason.

A. MOD: Based on the community input we’ve had, and residents have strongly expressed their displeasure with the triple construction of the power plant, temporary bridge, and MWRA facility, we are doing everything possible to make sure that we don’t repeat that experience. There are as you know many complexities with a project like this one and we have had an intensive public involvement process. There are a number of residents who have formed themselves into the Fore River Bridge



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Neighborhood Association and they have expressed some displeasure with us, I think perhaps because they are not sitting at the table in meetings like this.

- A. SK: I understand that you have had a lot of meetings and I know it's not the most efficient process. The Fore River Bridge Neighborhood Association membership met with me after your public meetings. I can ensure that they remain calm provided we share information with them. Their concerns are legitimate up to a point. I don't want them against your project, but I am trying to ensure that we are fair with them and that they are kept informed as best we can.
- A. MOD: We certainly appreciate that. At our last meeting, I'd asked them to tell me what had transpired in the past. Certainly there are ways to minimize the traffic and noise related to construction. One thing the Fore River Neighborhood Association is pushing for is to get involved and review all of the materials. They will have that opportunity through the Environmental Assessment document we are filing under NEPA. We have certain exemptions and so do not have to go through the MEPA process, but NEPA is very similar.
- A. SK: I understand that, but I think the different process causes a certain level of agitation in and of itself.
- A. MOD: We are preparing all of what would usually go into the state Environmental Impact Report for the federal Environmental Assessment. Federal Highway will review that document and if they require amendments, we will make them. You are of course welcome to comment on that document as well once it comes out.

Q. SK: How long is the comment period for the Environmental Assessment document?

- A. MOD: It's between 30 and 40 days. All written comments are reviewed by Federal Highway, MassDOT and the other permitting agencies. We're required to submit the written comments and answers back to their originators. It's not until then that FHWA will give us a ruling. One thing people get confused about is that we are doing an Environmental Assessment which is actually more of a thorough investigation than most highway projects under similar circumstances would get. When FHWA reviews the EA document, they can come back with a FONSI, which is of course what we'd like, but there have been times where FHWA has directed MassDOT to go to an EIS. I'll be honest with you and say that I do not want to see an EIS and am taking every precaution to avoid one since it can take 6-7 years to work through one.



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- A. **SK:** I've said that to Gary Peters and his group. I think their concern is that they've waited so long for this to happen and now that it is happening, everything feels rushed.
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- Q. **George Bezkorovainy (GB):** By the way, in Weymouth, 3A is called Bridge Street. I never see that on your materials. More seriously, the last time I spoke with HSH they said there would be no closures of the bridge during construction.
- A. **Mark Pelletier (MP):** With regard to the title, I think that really stems from the title of the contract we have with MassDOT. We don't expect any complete closures of the bridge at this time.
- A. **MOD:** Let me just put a stipulation on that. This bridge will be built under a design/build contract. We try to take every opportunity to encourage them to build off-line to avoid traffic impacts. Ultimately the design/build entity will construct the project based on the base technical concept we give them. Within that flexible framework, they might come back to us with some sort of brief closure that we would review and possibly entertain if it were to significantly shorten the construction duration.
- C. **GB:** We had sent in some traffic counts of our own. We thought that the volumes you showed were a little low.
- A. **Joe Pavao (JP):** HSH did not reanalyze that data. They came to the conclusion that results of analysis of full closure of the bridge with their counts the intersections on the detour route already dropped to LOS F. The new counts just would have made it a worse F.
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- Q. **SK:** So is this design set right now? People still think they have a say.
- A. **MOD:** They do still have a say. We want people to know that we as a transportation agency see the vertical lift bridge as the preferred choice from our point of view but that it's not decided yet. I've had Howard/Stein-Hudson review our meeting minutes for key themes. One theme that keeps coming up is that the public wants to see fewer and shorter bridge openings. The only way for us to do that is to provide a new bridge with the highest possible closed position vertical clearance. The type that does that for us is the vertical lift bridge.
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- Q. **Robert Leary (RL):** The previous and current bridges were built to accommodate the shipyard. Now the only ships you need to accommodate are going to the Citgo



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terminal. Would it be more prudent to build a simple bridge and have Citgo build an off-short terminal with a pipeline to their tank farm?

- A. MOD: We did bring the idea of an offshore terminal to the Coast Guard and the rest of the mariners such as the harbor pilots and the idea did not go over well. From an environmental and shipping standpoint, they didn't think it would ever happen at this location. We couldn't fund its construction since it would be outside our purview for this bridge project and we cannot build a bridge that won't support current industries. Representative Mariano initiated conversations with Citgo about paying for some portion of this work and was rebuffed.

As far as we, MassDOT, are concerned, the Coast Guard has told us we have to do something about this bridge. It's ours, we own it, and we need to fix it. It provides access to a designated port area and that means there are certain stipulations. If we don't meet those stipulations, USCG won't even look at our application. The Vollmer Report set a baseline of 300 feet for the horizontal clearance at this location. We went back to USCG and said that 300 feet was impossible because of the utility tunnel in the riverbed. We set our minimum horizontal clearance with USCG at 225 feet. At 225 feet, we are at the absolute upper limit of what we can achieve with a bascule bridge. It would be enormous. STV doesn't feel comfortable with it and neither do we. We don't want to give you a bridge that presents an ongoing maintenance headache like what you have now. That's why we come back to the vertical lift bridge: it provides the maritime stakeholders with a 250-foot horizontal clearance, 25 feet more than the USCG minimum, it doesn't disturb the utility line, and it can accommodate almost all recreational water traffic without an opening so traffic keeps moving.

Q. SK: What percentage fewer openings would you have with the vertical lift bridge?

- A. Mark Ennis (ME): Well, that is something of a tricky exercise, in part because the bascule bridge actually winds up giving you more openings than the current temporary bridge because of the bascule's structure depth. Based on our current information, the vertical lift bridge will decrease the number of openings from the current situation by 27 openings per year or 1.7 per week.

Q. SK: So have you submitted the vertical lift bridge as the preferred type?

- A. MP: We recommend it in the Environmental Assessment document, but we will also fully discuss the bascule bridge in that document.

- A. MOD: The EA will be available to the community in September. We will present the vertical lift bridge as the recommended type. It only becomes the preferred



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alternative once FHWA approves it. Once we have that approval we can move forward with the 25% design process. While that is underway and the EA is out for public comment, we will define the scope of work and develop the preliminary design. That will allow us to go out to the contracting community and start telling them about the project and asking for their qualifications to build such a project. That's the Request for Qualifications or RFQ, a term you have heard. We will probably get around a dozen RFQ's packets that will be analyzed by our in-house evaluation team. Based on their evaluation we'll shortlist 3-5 teams. We will then give those teams the base technical concept and ask them to develop technical proposals to fit the concept. We expect to have a contractor on board in 2011.

Q. SK: Tell me about the highway plans, is that where you address traffic issues?

A. MOD: We're looking into those right now. That's part of the type study that STV is resubmitting to us now. They address the roadway alignments of the facility and how it will impact traffic operations elsewhere. All traffic data will be discussed in the EA. I am willing to work further with George on traffic issues. Anything we develop right now with regard to traffic will give both the vertical lift and bascule bridges a full hearing. The roadway geometry of the bridge itself won't be impacted by type.

A. MP: To elaborate on what Mike said a little bit further, this is a footprint bridge. You will have two eastbound and two westbound lanes. We won't impact the Quincy rotary or the properties on the Weymouth side along Bridge Street.

Q. Jeff Bina (JB): When is the firm cutoff date for further input from us?

A. MOD: We're still in the 25% design phase, really it's just starting now. There's plenty of time for you to give us input, right up until spring 2011.

Q. RL: I worry about head-on collisions. Can you put a rumble strip down the center of the bridge?

A. MOD: We could install a rumble strip. I've asked STV to discuss this. We had considered a physical obstruction down the center, but we struggled with the taper. There just isn't a great place to end the barrier and you have to either terminate it in an impact attenuator or taper it down to the road which can create a launching pad. I was surprised when we pulled the accident data to see so few head-on collisions.

C. RL: Yes, but I think we've had some bad accidents on the bridge, maybe not the center span, but on the approaches.



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- A. **Nikole Bulger (NB):** We looked at both the temporary bridge and the old bridge with regard to accidents. We didn't see too many head-on collisions so we didn't pursue the barrier for the reasons Mike articulated.
- A. **ME:** One thing that will help is that we won't use an open grid deck. We will have a standard paved road surface across the whole bridge which should help traction issues.
- Q. **GB:** MassDOT has a traffic safety division. Do you think they should be asked to look into the issue of median versus no median?
- A. **MOD:** Our records don't go back as far as yours that is why we looked at the local communities' data to pull together our information about accidents.
- A. **JC:** I would be willing to take a look at our accident data and see what there is regarding head-on collisions.

Q. **SK:** Are we eliminating a lot of environmental review by only going through NEPA?

A. **MOD:** The lowest level of environmental permitting under NEPA is the categorical exclusion. We took it upon ourselves to go through at the mid-level of permitting, the EA. FHWA feels that the EA is right level for us to use. We cannot drop back down to the level of the categorical exclusion as we've already taken ourselves to the EA. From a time standpoint, it can only get longer, not shorter.

Q. **SK:** So, will you monitor noise?

A. **MOD:** Absolutely. We are already looking at that.

Q. **SK:** You mentioned the EIS as the highest level of permitting. What would an EIS project look like?

A. **MOD:** We haven't had to do too many of them. There would have to be huge public controversy. Something like widening an interstate corridor for more lanes with big property takings or wetlands impacts.

C. **JP:** Well, if you went for a tunnel or fixed span to cross the Fore River, you would definitely need an EIS.

C. **MOD:** Mr. Peters would like to create a Citizens Advisory Committee. Those are consistent with an EIS. What we have done thus far is consistent with the EA we are



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pursuing. We have prepared all the reports and we will make them available to you and you can comb through them during the public comment period.

- A. SK: I am happy to put myself in there as a buffer. I would be happy to bring their concerns to you. I know that in the end you'll be trying to speed this up.
- A. MOD: We face this now on a lot of projects. We tell people its Accelerated Bridge and they are worried that we're circumventing all sorts of permitting agencies like USCG, DEP and FHWA, but we're not. We streamline the process, but we can't go around any of those agencies. Public participation is a big part of what we do; our Administrator is committed to it.
- A. SK: I agree, public participation is wonderful and of course needed although sometimes people think you're not writing back to duck their question.
- C. MP: From an engineering standpoint, we feel this project really needs to go ahead. The temporary bridge will only last so long and if we are forced to go through an EIS, there are legitimate questions as to whether the temporary bridge will last long enough.
- C. MP: We keep hearing from the Fore River Neighborhood group that they want a different environmental process, but they have yet to give us their specific concerns.
- A. SK: I can get that information for you; I'd be happy to help.
- A. MOD: I actually got a little information out of Gary on that; he's really worried about construction noise.
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- Q. GB: About five years ago, I looked at the bridge logs and developed some statistics for this bride. I found out that 8% of bridge openings take place during rush hour. All of us feel that vessels should be discouraged from passing during rush hour. Until you have a taller bridge in 2015, is there anything we can go to stop rush hour openings?
- A. MOD: Its colonial law, any mariner who approaches the bridge and asks for an opening from the tender is entitled to it. USCG has been able to negotiate with the maritime users that anything under 10,000 tons cannot access the channel during rush hours.
- A. ME: The tankers will always need to travel during daylight hours according to the harbor pilots and they are also dependent on tides assuming they are fully loaded.



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- C. JP: One thing that will help you is that the total cycle time for the bridge will be reduced significantly, down to around 13 minutes. That's a good subtraction from the 22 minutes it takes now.
- C. MP: The mariners have also indicated they would like an air gap sensor. These broadcast how much space there is under the bridge and it's made a number of movable bridges in New York work much better.

Q. SK: Are you sure about the reduction in cycle time?

- A. NB: In terms of cycle time we are expecting 2.5 minutes to raise the bridge, 8 minutes to transit the ship, and 2.5 to lower it.
- C. JP: Once the mariners are confident with the operation of the new bridge, they should be able to move through more quickly. It's really the operation of the bridge that causes problems not the ships.
- C. RL: With a wider channel, you should also get faster transit times for the ships.
- A. MOD: Correct. The mariners say they would be able to move through quicker with a wider channel.

Q. John Concannon (JC): If you make the bridge opening wider, can bigger ships access the channel?

- A. MOD: The shipyard used to build ships that had to be greased to get through the fender system of the 1936 bridge. Right now the tankers transiting the temporary bridge have a 110 foot beam. What the mariners are really concerned about is the side-to-side motion of the ship caused by the changing tide. With a 250 foot horizontal clearance, they would feel comfortable taking a 130-foot beam ship through the bridge.

Q. JC: What about the height of the ships?

- A. MOD: The one being installed right now at Chelsea Street in East Boston has an open position height of 175 feet. That's consistent with other USCG-approved bridges around the country right now. The point is that we cannot restrict the ships that can go through the bride, but really our efforts are about making the bridge safe for *current* shipping, not to attract bigger vessels. The electrical tunnel down there represents an additional constraint; it's only 10 feet below the mud line.



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Q. SK: How does the NPDES permit impact our storm water management system?

A. NB: That permit is specific to the project site. You won't need to change your storm water system just for this.

Q. SK: Is there anything historic out there?

A. NB: Not much at this point, but part of the memorandum of agreement says the historic commissions for the two towns will be able to review the design of the new bridge. We are also under agreement to refurbish the green space at the Weymouth end of the bridge after we complete our work.

C. RL: Speaking of that park, we would really like a place to launch a boat. When the power plant was built, we requested a place to launch the boat. The power plant people complied, but they couldn't really make it work because of the tidal rise and fall and the steepness of the beach there. So, they bought us a boat that we really can't launch.

A. MOD: We'll take a look and see what we can do, but I imagine we'll run into some of the same difficulties they did.

Q. SK: What will the width of sidewalk be?

A. NB: 6.5 feet; perhaps a bit wider. There will be granite curbs on the approaches and a 5.5 foot shoulder for cyclists.

Q. JB: Is there an anti-missile fence at the back of the sidewalk?

A. MOD: There would be a crash-tested 42" rail to protect pedestrians, but no missile fence. You go through the process of figuring out the nicest bridge possible and then you put a screening on it that totally changes the look – generally not for the better. I'm sure emergency responders want that "suicide fence," but the general public doesn't really like them. How many jumpers do you get anyway?"

A. JC: We had one about three years ago. She missed the water and hit the pilings. It was really messy.

Q. RL: How will you build the piers for the new bridge?



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- A. ME: That is actually another advantage of the vertical lift bridge we're recommending. The foundation and piers can be built without cofferdams because we could use drilled shafts. With the bascule bridge, we would be forced to use cofferdams and there would be substantial work in the water.
- Q. JC: What is the weight of the deck system?
- A. ME: I'm not sure how that breaks out, but the whole bridge comes in around five million pounds.
-
- Q. SK: Aesthetics-wise, is there anything that you could do with color to help this bridge blend in?
- A. MOD: The architect is now beginning to look at that very question. The community feedback we've received will definitely feed into what he does.
-
- Q. SK: Is there ever a moment at which 3A over the Fore River is completely shut down with no traffic moving?
- A. NB: We do not anticipate there being a point at which 3A over the river is completely shut down.
- A. ME: We could possibly leave the flexibility within the design/build package to allow the contractor to shut down the whole roadway for a single day if it would greatly speed up the work.
- Q. JP: When the temporary bridge was built, did they ever go down to a single lane?
- A. JC: Yes, and they did a lousy job of it because they didn't have enough people and equipment in place to keep the shift to a single lane and then back again moving at a reasonable pace.
- C. SK: We're concerned because if there is a full shutdown, the traffic has no choice but to go through Weymouth Landing and frankly we already have a problem in that area. How long do you anticipate your demolition of the temporary bridge taking?
- A. NB: its five to six months in addition to the creation of the new fender system. Pieces of the old bridge could go out on trucks or barges.
- C. ME:⁴ Would you suggest an alternate truck route?

⁴ Referring to the MWRA truck route displayed in the 4/12/10 public informational presentation.



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- A. SK: I guess this one makes sense, but it's far from ideal. This is the route I remember from when the MWRA facility was under construction. The trouble is that it really places the entire truck burden on Weymouth. I know that when the MWRA facility was under construction Braintree wouldn't take any of the trucks over Union Street, even though it's a more direct route to the highway because of hazardous materials. George, can you follow up with Braintree to see if they would take a portion of these project trucked trips?
- A. GB: Of course.
- C. MOD: One of Mr. Peters' bigger concerns is the truck traffic and so we are trying to find ways to satisfy his concerns. If the town has some ideas on this, we'd be happy to hear them.
- C. RL: I think it is worth discussing this with Braintree because Union Street really is that much more of a direct route to the highway.
-
- C. JP: Going back to the period when we tie in the approaches to the new bridge, we are currently developing how best to achieve that. We're struggling with accomplishing the tie-in and keeping two lanes open. We did a plate survey and about 60% of the bridge users are commuters that are coming from somewhere south of Weymouth and going through towards Boston. If we could provide them with some information in advance, and perhaps go to a single lane for say six months to really expedite things, shorten the schedule in exchange for a little temporary pain, would you be comfortable with us doing that?
- A. JC: How many shifts would you work?
- A. JP: Right now we envision working at least two shifts?
- A. GB: Why don't you do the traffic analysis and show us? We're willing to at least entertain it.
- C. JP: If we can divert 550 vehicles in the a.m. peak and 350 vehicles in the p.m. peak we could operate at an acceptable level of service on the bridge with a single lane in each direction. We could do something for Weymouth Landing with signal re-timing.
- C. GB: During the DNC in 2004 there was a tremendous fear of traffic. MassHighway gave people plenty of advance notice and cars disappeared by the thousands. There's history to suggest that if you provide enough advance warning it will work out.



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- A. SK: I can meet with my counterparts in Quincy and Braintree about this. I do need a better sense of how many trucks are on your truck route, how often and at what times of day. I am in favor of keeping the trucks diverted from 3A.
 - C. JC: When you talk about the truck route, just bear in mind that some of that route is weight restricted.
 - A. MOD: One thing we need to be clear about is that a lot of the dredge will go out by truck. It's not enough spoil to be economical to take out by barge. If there's another truck route you'd prefer, please tell us about it.
 - C. GB: We really could use some estimates for the volume of trucks.
 - A. JP: We can sit down and meet with you about this further.
-

Next Steps

The next public involvement milestone will be a public information meeting to be held at the Abigail Adams School in Weymouth on June 14, 2010. The meeting is scheduled to run from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.



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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 year's worth of meetings, the public 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.
