

Summary – Meeting #11

Community Advisory Group – I-5 Willamette River Bridge Project

June 17, 2008, 10:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Singer Room, Eugene Public Library (100 West 10th Ave.)

ATTENDANCE

CAG Members

- Pat French – Planner and CPC Representative, Willamalane Park & Recreation District
- Eric Gunderson – Former President, American Institute of Architects SWO Chapter
- Bob Kline – Chair, Harlow Neighbors
- David Sonnichsen – CPC for Whilamut Natural Area
- Scott Wylie – Springfield Resident
- Trevor Taylor – Natural Resources Supervisor, Eugene Parks and Open Space Division

Resource Team

- Tim Dodson – ODOT Project Liaison/CPM, ODOT Bridge Delivery Unit
- Lou Krug – Project Manager, Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners
- James Gregory – Environmental Task Leader, Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners
- Jamie Damon – Public Involvement Coordinator, JLA
- Kalin Schmoldt – Public Involvement Assistant, JLA

Other Attendees

- Chris Henry – City of Eugene
- Steve Turner – ODOT
- John Ferguson – TY Lin
- Megan Banks – LCOG
- Larry Fox – OBEC
- Kevin Parrish – Hamilton
- Nancy Mething – OBDP
- Doug Kirkpatrick – OBDP
- Larry Gescher – Slayden
- Fred Maurer

Handouts

- Agenda
- DRAFT Summary of CAG Meeting #10
- Final Summary of CAG Meeting #9

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Jamie Damon explained that the meeting was intended to give the CAG the opportunity to meet and ask questions of the A&E firm and other new contractors. The meeting will also include discussion of the web survey and the CS3 decision matrix.

Jamie led a round of introductions for newcomers. CAG members explained their relation to the project. Newcomers to the meeting included:

- Steve Turner – ODOT Assistant Project Manager to Tim Dodson
- John Ferguson – T.Y. Lin, Assistant Project Manager to Larry Fox
- Megan Banks – LCOG, Public Involvement for OBEC
- Larry Fox – OBEC Project Manager
- Kevin Parrish – Hamilton Construction Project Manager
- Nancy Mething – OBDP Environmental Design Coordinator
- Doug Kirkpatrick – OBDP Bridge Engineering
- Larry Gescher – Slayden Assistant Project Manager to Kevin Parrish

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Summary of Meeting #10 – Scott Wylie corrected the spelling of his last name on the summary attendance roster.

PROJECT UPDATE

Status EA/Land use coordination – James Gregory noted that the REA has been drafted and is nearly ready for internal review by ODOT and FHWA. The land-use plan amendment process has been proceeding. The joint planning commissions of Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County all voted to adopt the plan amendments as proposed. The amendments will now move to the governing bodies on June 24th and the process will hopefully be completed by July. The State Agency Coordination Act requires that approvals be gathered before the REA can be submitted for approval. The CAG will also be able to review and comment on the REA.

Eric Gunderson asked whether any serious issues had emerged during the review process. James explained that there have been no major changes to the project. Tim noted that the biggest change was the recommendation to add a soundwall in the northwest section of the project area.

Follow up with Arts community – Jamie recounted her conversation with Douglas Beauchamp (Lane Arts Council) regarding how to involve the arts community. Jamie noted the possibility of contracting with Douglas to serve as a liaison to engage the arts community at various intervals throughout the project. Tim noted that they would coordinate with the A&E firm to determine when an arts perspective will be the most useful. Jamie said she would create a mini-scope for Douglas to guide how an arts group can provide feedback in conjunction with the three planned workshop/events. Jamie noted that the details still need to be refined.

Bob Kline asked whether the arts group would report to the CAG. Jamie said it would. She noted that Douglas understands that the CAG and project team want to be involved in the arts process.

Trevor Taylor asked what “arts community” refers to. Jamie explained that the conversation had covered varying opportunities for art applications. Douglas indicated that he would call on artists who have experience with public art installations. Jamie noted that the question of how to apply art was also a question for the public.

Scott noted the vague boundary between art and architecture, and noted that he expected the applicability of different types of art to change based on the selection of a bridge type. Scott questioned whether it was appropriate for him to be involved in both the arts group and the CAG. Jamie encouraged all of the CAG members to get involved in the artist dialogue.

Eric Gunderson cautioned that art should be integrated into the design and not appear to be applied as an afterthought. Larry Fox agreed that aesthetics needed to be incorporated into the structure, but noted that surface treatments do create art opportunities.

Bob Kline suggested that lighting of the art could also be part of the artistic presentation.

Ann Sanders asked whether the mini-contract with Douglas could evolve into a full contract for the artistic features on the bridge. Jamie said that it was unknown at this point, but she noted that the CS³ guide does seek opportunities for local investment. Ann said that she wanted to make sure that any involvement with the arts group or the CAG would not inhibit Scott’s potential future work on the bridge.

Jamie reminded the group that Douglas Beauchamp is the director of the Lane Arts Council. Eric said that his understanding was that the Council was a nonprofit. Jamie offered to send out more information about the Arts Council to the CAG. Tim noted that the arts council was the only arts organization identified by the committee. Scott noted the existence of less formally organized arts groups and studios, but said that they are likely well represented by the Council.

Follow up with Laurel Hill Valley Citizens’ Association – Jamie noted that they had met with the Laurel Hill neighborhood to discuss bicycle access. The meeting had been organized by Rich Hazel and attracted 18 attendees, many of whom were bike commuters. The meeting resulted in a number of relatively low cost improvements suggestions for ODOT to explore in addition to more complicated suggestions such as adding a new pedestrian structure to the bridge or creating a tunnel. Tim said that the neighborhood would be developing an origin-destination study for the area, looking into “rails with trails” opportunities, and looking at the possibility of adding a shoulder path on the northbound onramp. Tim explained that it would not be cost effective or practical to build a structure high enough to cross over the tracks. ODOT expressed willingness to help with design exploration but not with actual construction. Any potential improvements would likely not be funded by the bridge project and alternative transportation funds would need to be found.

Scott asked whether it was a project goal to not preclude future pathway options. Tim said that the pathway issue is beyond the project footprint and would not be affected by the bridge.

Bob requested a summary of the meeting. Jamie suggested that Bob contact Rich Hazel for more information. Rich will also be taking the lead on the origin-destination study.

David Sonnichsen noted the history of the path discussion and complimented the involvement of the city and the study team. David corrected the reference to “Laurelhill” on the agenda, noting that the full name is the “Laurel Hill Valley Citizens Association.”

Follow up with Harlow NA – Bob complimented Tim on his presentation. The neighborhood was primarily concerned with the application of soundwalls. Bob asked whether it was possible for soundwalls to reflect sound into neighborhoods. Tim said that walls both reflect and absorb. He noted that the developer who originally built the neighborhood had already put in a soundwall that does reflect sound to the other side of the road. Tim explained that building a 16 foot soundwall for the Harlow Neighborhood would not be effective because a 25 foot wall already exists.

Scott asked about the use of sound cancellation technologies that don’t involve physical barriers. James noted that cost was a factor in considering sound reduction. Conventional soundwalls meet the cost effectiveness criteria.

Follow up Glenwood interchange – Jamie said that she had spoken with Terry Cole, the Project Manger for the Glenwood interchange project. Terry explained that the interchange project was being driven largely by Springfield. ODOT is currently supporting the City, but not much is happening at this point. Chris Henry noted that a public process on the area is about to begin. Jamie noted that Terry now has the CAG contact list for future reference.

CONVERSATION WITH THE A&E FIRM

Introduce firm – Tim explained that OBEC (Oregon Bridge Engineering Company,) is a local Eugene firm. Larry Fox will serve as the A&E Project Manager. John Ferguson represents T.Y. Lin, a partner with OBEC. Megan Banks from LCOG will manage public involvement on OBEC’s team. Kevin Parrish is the Project Manager for Hamilton Construction. Larry Gescher is with Slayden, which is working with Hamilton.

Larry distributed an organizational chart, noting that LCOG has been added to fulfill the PI component. Larry explained that OBEC has been in Eugene since 1956 and was started as an adjunct to Hamilton Construction. OBEC and Hamilton originally performed design/build work for the timber industry. OBEC separated from Hamilton in order to pursue other projects. OBEC has worked on many bridges in the community, including the structures in the Beltline project, the new cable-stayed pedestrian bridge over I-5, the Ferry Street Bridge project, and the DeFazio Bridge. Larry noted that OBEC had tried to create a team of local firms or firms with significant local experience. The decision was made to join with T.Y. Lin International in order to bring large-bridge design experience to the team.

Significant progress has been made since the beginning of May. Seven bridge alternatives are being considered and costs and designs are being refined. Larry noted a map that shows the alignment of six of the seven options. The through-arch design requires a different alignment because the bridge structure cannot accommodate a curved roadway to the same extent as the others.

Larry noted that they were looking at girder and arch bridge types. He explained that girder types require a thicker bridge profile, while arch structures allow for a thinner structure. Larry explained that Franklin Blvd. is the control point for determining the height of the structure and will determine how high the freeway must be raised.

Lou noted that the reference to seven alternatives is because OBEC has separated the concrete and steel versions of the types. The overall forms remain the same. Larry noted that it was important to differentiate between materials to determine whether any of the options will fall out of budget. Material costs vary and will change with time.

Q and A from the CAG – Ann Sanders asked whether the through-arch had a different footprint because it requires a straighter alignment. Larry said that while the alignment fits within the current ODOT right of way, the straight alignment does bring it closer to the nearby neighborhood. James noted that the EA team has been coordinating with OBEC in order to keep the designs within the EA envelope.

Pat French asked who on the team would attend meetings from this point forward. Jamie said that JLA would stay with the CAG at least through type selection. Tim is serving as the interim Project Manager through the end of August at which point an agency PM will be selected. Lou and James will not be directly involved when the EA is complete, though they will be available in a support capacity as needed. Larry, Megan, John, and OBBDP will remain involved throughout. Jamie noted that there could be opportunities to change the committee composition in conjunction with the design phase if the CAG members so choose.

Scott noted that the artist component would likely be long term and would likely want to remain involved through the architectural discussion.

David noted Larry's comments about the Through Arch and suggested that a third arch over Franklin Blvd. seemed unnecessary. Tim noted that the Through Arch offers a thinner deck than the girder options and allows the roadway over Franklin to be lower. Larry said that he had not considered a two-span arch. He noted that the noise effects of the closer roadway on the nearby neighborhood are largely a matter of perception and may not be measurably different. Some treatments such as pavement type can alter how noise is perceived, though they do not necessarily reduce overall noise. Noise analysts will review the road profile to make sure the soundwalls are adequately placed.

David asked whether the Through Arch raised the possibility of displacing residences. Larry confirmed that the bridge would remain within the existing right of way, though the variations could require changes to how retaining walls are used. He also noted the limitations imposed by nearby power lines. Larry noted that the location of the alignments did not present as significant a challenge as the issues raised by the bridge profile. He explained that the deeper decks of the girder structures would require raising the roadway grade by 15 feet and could lead to more traffic impacts during construction.

Ann asked whether ramps would need to be shifted as a result of the alignments. Larry said that a design exception would be necessary, though the ramp entry points would remain the same. Discussion is currently underway about raising the grade on the ramps. He noted that ramps have less space to move traffic and modifications could lead to possible nighttime or weekend closures to facilitate the necessary work.

Kevin Parrish introduced Hamilton as a Springfield company in operation since 1939. Hamilton has worked on many projects in the area and worked extensively with OBEC. Kevin introduced Larry

Gescher from Slayden, a firm out of Stayton with lots of municipal CM/GC experience. Kevin said that Hamilton and Slayden are currently working in a support role for ODOT and OBEC.

John Ferguson introduced T.Y. Lin as an international firm headquartered in San Francisco that specializes in signature bridges. T.Y. Lin has offices in Salem and Portland.

WEB SURVEY RESULTS

Kalin Schmoldt reviewed the survey materials that had been distributed electronically to the CAG prior to the meeting. The materials included a ten page survey summary, a hardcopy version of the survey, and a 96 page file with the full text of comments received. Kalin encouraged the CAG to review the full comments as the synthesis only provides a snapshot of the most popular responses.

The survey received 1,283 responses. Three-quarters of respondents indicated that they lived primarily in Eugene and Springfield. Although men outnumbered women by a 2:1 margin, the survey had good age distribution compared to other similar web-surveys. The survey indicated that respondents interacted with the bridge in a variety of ways, and at least 75% of respondents reported seeing or using the bridge once per week. Kalin noted that the survey appeared to successfully reach beyond the immediate project area to include other users of the bridge.

Kalin summarized the top values as indicated by the survey respondents, including: lifelong utility; sustainability; gateway elements; and unique character. These values contrasted sharply with the lowest scored values: minimizing visual impact and fitting in with new bridges and landmarks. Similarly, respondents indicated that the bridge should be “graceful,” “distinctive,” and “memorable,” as opposed to “heavy,” “industrial,” “metallic,” or “boxy.” Kalin reminded the group that the words were intentionally subjective and were intended to illustrate a spectrum of ideas.

Tim asked how many people provided open ended responses. Kalin said that responses varied by question, with as few as 200 on some, and as many as 600 on others.

Kalin noted that respondents were largely in favor of adding the specific named features to the new bridge, though the “color options” question may have been confusing to respondents because of the near tie between the “yes,” “no,” and “no opinion” responses.

Respondents generally prioritized views largely in the same order as how they described their normal interaction with the bridge. Notably, long distance views of the bridge were deemed to be more important than views for drivers on I-5, the most common use.

Kalin explained that the summary presented distilled comments on each bridge type. In general, respondents were more favorable towards the arched bridges than the girder bridges and many respondents emphasized the importance of above deck elements in their selection. Kalin noted that although the Through Arch bridge received the most first place votes, the Deck Arch had the fewest last place votes and more first *and* second place votes than the through arch. The I-Girder easily had the most last place votes. Kalin added that respondents had indicated that they wanted to understand the tradeoffs between the types, noting that clarification on environmental, maintenance, or visual impacts could change their minds one way or another.

Kalin noted examples of other issues raised in the survey. A number of questions were raised about the type selection process and why cable or suspension bridges were not being considered.

Respondents also used the opportunity to reiterate their preference for above deck elements. Other notable issues dealt with bridge cost and potential on/offramps to Franklin Blvd. Respondents also cited a variety of sample bridges to use as good examples. Respondents indicated that they liked the survey and found it to be educational. Overall, respondents indicated that they wanted a unique and attractive bridge, but many expressed concerns about minimizing impacts to the community and the environment.

Jamie explained that the team would meet with the A&E firm to discuss how to present the options at the summer meeting. The team will need to discuss – for example – what kinds of “graceful” options could be offered to the public. The team will also need to flush out questions about potential impacts. The goal for the summer is to winnow the options as soon as possible and have a type selected by September.

Chris Henry encouraged the group to look into the example bridges using Google image search.

Jamie offered to post the survey summary on the project website. She noted that the survey has helped to get information on the process out to the community and that 500 new people have asked to be added to the project mailing list.

Tim noted the possibility that narrowing the gap between the replacement bridges to six feet could allow for an alignment that facilitates completion of both replacement structures before it is necessary to divert traffic from the detour bridge. Larry noted that building both spans simultaneously would require moving the entire alignment about eight feet to the west. Bridge maintenance has indicated that they could accommodate a narrower gap. The goal of shifting the alignment would be to finish both of the main spans within a single in-water work window and could reduce the overall construction time by as much as a full season. Reducing the construction time could reduce the overall project costs. Traffic diversions and non-in-river work would still be necessary as most of the work involves making the connections between the bridge and the roadway.

Tim noted that maintenance had originally suggested 16 feet as a good space between the structures, and such a gap would allow light between the bridges. Pat noted that it was difficult to visualize the effects of a narrower gap on lighting conditions, and noted the importance of a long term design that accommodates users under the bridge.

Trevor asked whether it was at all possible to create a larger gap and still benefit from a shorter construction schedule. Larry said that increasing the gap would shift the alignment farther to the west. Larry noted that daylight may not be an issue because the bridge will be high and the sun will shine underneath as it moves from east to west.

Lou asked how the proposed alignment would affect the retaining walls. Larry said that a wall would be required on the northeast side, while the embankment on the northwest side would be removed.

Jamie asked Larry to clarify the tradeoffs and impacts in the context of the questions raised by the CAG. Larry Gescher suggested that the approach could save as much as \$2 million. Larry Fox asked the CAG what was valuable about the 16 foot gap. Trevor emphasized the experience for the traveler under the bridge and cautioned against creating a tunnel effect. He suggested that the

thickness of the deck could also play a role. Larry said he would try to work on a light model with their landscape architects. Jamie offered to add the topic as a discussion item at the next meeting.

Larry noted that there is not a six foot gap option for the Through Arch, as it is not compatible with the more restrictive Through Arch alignment.

CS³ DECISION MATRIX

Tim explained that CS³ (Context Sensitive and Sustainable Solutions) is part of the OTIA III program and brings five goals to bear on the project. The team has combined the goals and objectives created by the CAG and PDT with the CS³ goals in order to form a matrix to help guide the selection of a bridge type. Tim noted that some of the objectives help to differentiate between the types while others do not. These objectives and CS³ objectives that overlap with the CAG/PDT objectives have been yellowed-out. Tim asked the CAG for input on how to weight the importance of the selection criteria.

Jamie suggested that Kalin create a survey to give the CAG an opportunity to provide feedback on the goals and objectives. The committee agreed that such a survey would be a better option than rushing the discussion. Jamie offered to distribute the survey prior to the July 15, meeting.

NEXT CAG MEETING

- **Jamie will follow up with the Lane Arts Council**
- **CAG meeting (July 15)** – Trevor suggested that the July meeting serve as a working meeting with less emphasis on project updates.
- **Newsletter (Early July)**
- **Community workshop in the park (July 26)** – Jamie will work with Megan to arrange the event, anticipated to be a four hour event involving tent exhibits and tours. The workshop will be discussed further at the July 15, CAG meeting.
- **CAG meeting (August 5)** – A type recommendation from the CAG will be needed in order accommodate the A&E August 8, DAP deadline.

Ann asked what would happen between now and the type selection workshop. Jamie said that materials would be developed to present to the public. The workshop will help convey a sense of what design opportunities are available for the bridge types based on information from the community survey. Tim noted that previous bridge graphics have been very simple and the new images would better illustrate the potential for each bridge type. The images could take the form of actual renderings or images from other projects.

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