

Summary – Meeting #13

Community Advisory Group – I-5 Willamette River Bridge Project

August 5, 2008, 10:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

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

ATTENDANCE

CAG Members

- John Barofsky – Co-Chair, Fairmount Neighbors
- Charlotte Behm – Representative, Springfield Neighborhood (and member, CPC for Whilamut Natural Area)
- Dave Carvo – Vice Chair, Glenwood Neighborhood Group
- Pat French – Planner and CPC Representative, Willamalane Park & Recreation District
- Eric Gunderson – Former President, American Institute of Architects SWO Chapter
- Rich Hazel – Co-Chair, Laurel Hill Valley Citizens Association
- Bob Kline – Chair, Harlow Neighbors
- Chris Ramey – Director and Architect, University Planning Office, University of Oregon
- David Sonnichsen – CPC for Whilamut Natural Area
- Trevor Taylor – Natural Resources Supervisor, Eugene Parks and Open Space Division

Resource Team

- Ann Sanders – ODOT Project Lead
- Tim Dodson – ODOT Project Manager, ODOT Bridge Delivery Unit
- Lou Krug – Project Manager, Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners
- Jamie Damon – Public Involvement Coordinator, JLA
- Kalin Schmoldt – Public Involvement Assistant, JLA

Other Attendees

- Larry Fox – OBEC
- Kevin Parrish – Hamilton
- Larry Gescher – Slayden
- Chris Henry - City of Eugene
- Steve Turner – ODOT
- John Ferguson – TY Lin
- Sonny Chickering – ODOT
- Lynn Iaquinta – ODOT
- Megan Banks – LCOG
- Charles Biggs – CPC for Whilamut Natural Area (CAG Alternate)
- Fred Maurer – Interested citizen

Handouts (emailed ahead of time):

- Agenda

- CAG meeting summary draft #12
- CAG meeting summary final #11

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Jamie Damon invited the CAG to take a Bridge View booklet and refer to the Bridge View design elements posters around the room. The focus of the meeting will be on the evaluation matrices and reviewing data received to date in order to form a bridge type recommendation to the PDT when they meet on Friday, August 8.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Fred Maurer commented that he had attended the Bridge View and commended the team on the event.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Summary of Meeting #12 – There were no comments.

PROJECT UPDATE

Tim Dodson said that ODOT was working with the engineering firm to meet the aggressive schedule. He noted that the numbers that will be available at the meeting are quite recent. Tim commended the A&E and CM/GC groups for their efforts.

Status of the REA - Lou Krug said that the Revised Environmental Assessment (REA) document has been reviewed by the internal study committee. The REA will go to ODOT and on to FHWA and the Department of Justice for their signoff. Lou reminded the CAG that FHWA will not sign without requisite land use amendments and agreement from Eugene Parks. Final approval is anticipated by the end of August.

Land use coordination – Lane County and the Springfield city council unanimously approved the proposed land use amendments. The amendments were approved by a 6-2 vote in Eugene.

Coordination with parks – Steve Turner said that changes to the Intergovernmental Agreements for how to deal with park impacts and manage land swaps have been incorporated and passed to ODOT for final comments. The documents are expected to be sent to DOJ by Friday. Tim explained that parkland that will be occupied longer than 18 months must be replaced under Section 6(f) rules. The land swap allows for wetlands that were acquired for the West Eugene Parkway to be transferred to the city.

Highlights from the “Bridge View” – Jamie noted highlights from the Bridge View event held on July 26. Many of the CAG members attended as did approximately 200 members of the public. Around 150 booklets and 125 hotdogs were given out, and the public filled out 50 comment cards. Input from the comment cards was consistent with the results of the web survey. New input came in the form of comments about design details such as lighting, artistic treatments, above deck features, and pier types. Attendees were heavily interested in the arch bridges, with 95% selecting the through arch and 93% selecting the deck arch as their first or second choice. By contrast, 12% of respondents selected the box girder and 10% selected the I-girder as their first or second choice. Attendees were generally positive about the event.

Jamie noted that CAG members were present at the view stations in the parks. Rich Hazel said that there was generally low traffic at the canoe canal and that comments were mostly concerned with the span at the canal, improving the embankment, and removing blind curves on the path. He noted that it was interesting to observe the number of people recreating in the canal during the event. David Sonnichsen said that they were aggressive about interacting with passersby about the bridge and he noted that many were not aware that the bridges would be replaced or that the canoe canal would be affected. Bob Kline agreed that people were generally positive about the event and he noted public interest in the through arch bridge type.

Lou asked how many people came specifically for the event. Jamie surmised that the people who attended via the Jenkins Drive area probably came specifically for the event, though others came to the main area after encountering the view stations in the park.

Charles Biggs asked about media coverage of the event. Jamie said that two crews came and that Steve and Ann were interviewed. The crews tended to focus on the bridge features images. Jamie also noted articles in the Register Guard before and after the event. David Sonnichsen said that he was disappointed in the pre-article about the event because it did not include the event logistics. David noted that the anchor of KMTR had said that he liked the through arch.

Larry Fox noted that he had received questions about building ramps to Franklin and most people seemed to accept the explanation that ramps would not be precluded by what is being done today. Larry also agreed that the public response to the information was positive.

PRESENTATION OF EVALUATION MATRIX

Jamie emphasized that much of the information used in the matrix has only come together recently and much is still new to the team. Jamie reminded the group that the matrices should be considered in the context of the larger process and alongside feedback from the public as the CAG forms their recommendation.

Feedback from the public – Jamie encouraged the group to consider input from the EA, the public survey, and conversations heard in the community. She summarized that the community seems to clearly want a bridge with arches or curves that fits the setting and that is not too big or heavy. Many people were also interested in sustainability and maintainability. The public seems to want a balance between a bridge that doesn't detract from the surroundings and a bridge that pops out as a significant structure. The through arch has been a popular choice and the deck arch has been a consistent second even though the team has not been able to show extensive above deck elements. Interest in above deck elements has been reflected in public feedback.

Dave Carvo noted that he felt the public values were consistent with those expressed by the CAG.

John Barofsky asked whether there had been interest in bridge color at the bridge view. Kalin Schmoldt noted that while the first survey indicated a mixed response to color choices, attendees at the Bridge View reported more interest in color options. Tim summarized efforts to involve Douglas Beauchamp with Lane Arts Council in developing an approach to arts in the bridge. Larry reiterated the need to select a form before focusing on specific adornments and textures/colors. He noted that with the exception of the through arch, potential above deck features were not type-specific.

Agency (ODOT) – Tim explained that six people scored the matrix as individuals and then the group spent time reconciling their different opinions to arrive at consensus. Blank lines on the matrix were considered to be non-differentiating factors. The top three bridges were the through-arch (511 points), the steel deck arch (506 points), and the concrete deck arch (486 points).

Tim explained the scoring. The larger profiles of the girder bridges would result in greater impacts to the ramps on the south end of the project and would more significantly affect commuters. Other significant impacts included the amount of falsework and concrete foundations in the river, risk of concrete pouring over the river, and impacts to the mill race. The agency used the community survey to score the aesthetics component and reflecting the opinion of the community was used to score how the options impacted relationships with the community.

Trevor Taylor asked whether material types were a factor in the scoring. Tim noted that while pouring concrete over the river is undesirable, steel is expensive, and those considerations did factor into the scores. Lynn Jaquinta noted that they also considered the additional traffic from concrete trucks entering the site during construction.

Eric Gunderson asked whether there is a sense of whether concrete or steel would last longer. Tim said that concrete is more easily maintained and that steel is more susceptible to weathering. He noted that maintainability did not appear to greatly influence the scoring.

Rich Hazel asked how the range of scores was established. Tim said that the scores were fairly subjective and relative to the scores for the other types. Lynn noted that in most cases the variations were small and the scores were similar for that reason. John Ferguson noted that the scores were intended to serve as a baseline for comparison. Lynn noted that the interaction during the scoring process proved to be enlightening for the participants.

Trevor asked for details on the scoring process. Tim said that six people filled out the preliminary matrix, and then others – including bridge engineers – helped to refine the scores.

A&E – Larry Fox explained that the nine A&E scorers were bridge engineers who have been involved in developing one or more of the alternatives. An average score was calculated for each type. Larry explained that there were different point totals for different scores because there was a difference of opinion regarding which factors were differentiators. Some people felt that the temporary impacts were more significant, while others were more concerned about permanent impacts. Eleven points separated the top three choices: the concrete deck arch, segmental, and through arch. Alternatives that required more falsework received lower scores with regard to impacts on the park and the environment. Steel alternatives were ranked lower because of the cost and efficiency of the structure. The arch structures were considered to be more efficient in their use of materials than the girder style bridges. The girder alternatives with deep structure depths required a higher grade and received lower scores because of mobility and right of way impacts. Some engineers downgraded the box girder type because the deck can't be replaced after tensioning and the through arch also received some lower scores because of maintenance for the steel arch which would require painting every 20-30 years. Lynn noted that the A&E team considered which bridges were the least popular as they scored aesthetics, noting that the deck arch was the last choice of the fewest people. Larry noted that steel options were downgraded for stimulating the economy because it could not be guaranteed that the steel would be produced in Oregon.

Charles Biggs asked whether any of the types were more upgradeable if seismic standards change. Larry said that while the deck arches were likely more resilient, it was not a factor in their scoring. He noted that upgradeability would depend on the extent of the retrofit. A Phase I upgrade would only affect the superstructure while a Phase II upgrade would include the substructure. Such upgrades are rare and costly. Lynn noted that the current seismic code reflects high standards and is not likely to be revised within the lifespan of the bridge.

Chris Ramey asked about the projected lifespan and lifecycle for the different types. Larry said that all of the types had a lifespan of up to 75 years and that lifecycle was often not as influential to cost. Chris asked whether it would be possible to replace the bridge in the future without rebuilding the foundations. Larry said that it was not out of the question, but noted that it would be hard to anticipate future needs. Using the existing foundations would require signoff from an engineer who trusts the structure. Chris suggested that it would be a missed opportunity if future needs aren't considered. Larry noted that as-built plans will be available to inform future decisions, though it is hard to know what future loads will be and whether the structure will be compatible. Chris asked about the interchangeability of the foundations based on the bridge type. Larry noted that all of the options being considered were covered within the EA, though some have larger foundations than others. He noted that it might be difficult to justify using larger than needed foundations when regulators are more interested in minimizing immediate impacts. He added that all of the types were equally capable of being retrofitted if needed.

Dave Carvo asked whether any of the types would perform significantly better from a structural and maintenance perspective for a slightly higher investment. Larry noted that steel structures tend to have maintenance concerns. He also noted that tensioned bridges (the girder types) typically suffer more fatigue than compression bridges (the arch types). He offered to continue the discussion of how the structure can be over-designed to accommodate future needs, though he noted that the general emphasis thus far has been on finding an economical and efficient design.

CM/GC – Kevin Parrish explained that the CM/GC matrix included scores from Hamilton and Slayden. The top types were the concrete deck arch, the segmental, the steel deck arch, and the through arch. Kevin explained that they were considering how constructible each type was relative to the others. As each alternative uses a similar footprint and poses the same general impacts to the surrounding community, the scoring focus was predominantly based on temporary impacts during construction. Some factors included: ease of future interchange improvements, maintaining bike connections, and which types would require more falsework. The risk of material contamination was considered, though it was perceived as easy to address. Kevin noted that concrete production is easier to control than steel when it is prefabricated elsewhere. He noted that delays were often inevitable with prefab materials. Differences with grade and staging were minimal though deeper structure depths would be more expensive. While types with more temporary impacts were scored lower, Kevin said that many of the issues could be dealt with regardless of the bridge type.

Dave asked about the scoring of Objective E-7: *Provides a bridge with a cost effective initial project construction cost*. Kevin explained that steel is perceived as more expensive and not used if possible. Larry Gescher added that use of concrete helps stimulate the local economy. John Ferguson noted that actual costs were reflected in Objective E-1, and that E-7 reflects whether the option is efficient in terms of cost for span type.

John Barofsky asked whether profitability was used to score the matrix. Kevin said that the CM/GC fee is pre-established and that the project costs are set by open book estimating.

Bob observed that the use of local labor appeared more likely with concrete. Kevin said that concrete also creates reliability. Larry Gescher noted that there is less choice with regard to steel mills in the US, steel costs are more variable, and steel delivery dates can be more inconsistent.

Charlotte Behm asked about the use of a non structural deck arch. Lynn said that it would be the most cost effective to create weight bearing arch and more costly to add a non-functional arch.

Charlotte raised the question of what above deck options would be available on a deck arch, noting that people want a “wow” effect above the deck and there is currently little to show for it. Rich agreed, noting that the CAG doesn’t have a good sense of what above deck elements could look like. Eric suggested that the CAG could issue a recommendation with a stipulation for the use of above deck features. Charlotte noted that the only way to guarantee above deck features is to pick the through arch. Lynn said that it will be easier to decide on enhancements once a type is selected. Chris Ramey agreed with Charlotte that the above deck options are not clear. Jamie said that the CAG’s interest in above deck options has been clear and she reiterated the challenge of how far to take non-structural elements on each type without carrying out a full conceptual design for all four types. She noted that the CAG would be integral in developing the above deck options if the through arch is not selected.

Pat French noted that the above deck elements that have been shown thus far have been minimal and she asked for guidance on the scope of what is possible. Larry explained that the only rule is that above deck elements must be four feet behind a crash tested rail. While this precludes pylons built into the railings reminiscent of Condi McCullough bridges, there are few other restrictions.

OBDP – Lynn Iaquina explained that the construction budget is finite and important to consider. The budget is \$150 million and surplus funds are not currently available for any of the OTIA III bridges. Lynn explained that initial cost estimates were based on standard previous observations about inflation, though the economy has changed since the initial estimates were made. The A&E cost estimates look at economic changes over the past nine months and in that time, the steel industry has gone through a worldwide consolidation and steel prices have increased. Increased construction in the Pacific Rim is escalating the demand for raw and scrap materials and higher fuel prices affect all aspects of construction. The result is an estimated 21% rate of inflation this year.

Lynn distributed a budget sheet that showed estimated construction costs for the bridge, costs adjusted for inflation to the mid-point of construction, and added costs of the roadway and other expenses. A 20-25% contingency is built into the figures. OTIA III economists are reviewing the costs using an inflation model on a per bid-item basis beginning with the top three options. Better cost estimates should be available by Friday. Lynn noted that the concrete deck arch was the least expensive. She noted that although the first through arch alternative was found to be over budget, variations on the approach spans and arches were proposed to provide more affordable alternatives.

Trevor observed that all of the options appeared to be out of budget except for the concrete deck arch. Lynn acknowledged the tight budget and said that alternative funding options were scarce.

Charles asked whether concrete prices were likely to be as volatile as steel. Lynn said that concrete does have some volatility and often depends on overseas construction. Larry Gescher said that concrete tends to hold its price better than steel and hasn't increased as much.

Charlotte noted that the deck arch appears to provide more opportunities for above deck creativity and she requested a sense of how much money would be available for the above deck architectural treatments and what constraints would be placed on those options. Larry Gescher said that a wider bridge would be necessary to accommodate above deck elements. Larry Fox said that all of the types could use elements such as reveals, columns, and pedestals if desired. He noted that the deck arch was being designed without transverse bracing so as to make a clean, modern looking structure that doesn't look cluttered.

Bob asked about the segmental "short" bridge. Lynn explained that one segmental option would use the same segmental form throughout the bridge while the other, the short option, uses a different form over Franklin.

BRIDGE TYPE DISCUSSION

CAG recommendation – Jamie emphasized that the CAG recommendation is the CAG's own and can be crafted as they like. The CAG was directed to use red, yellow, and green cards to indicate which types were their first (green), second (yellow), or "do not build" (red) choices.

John Barofsky asked whether the recommendations from the A&E and CM/GC were made without cost information. Larry Gescher confirmed that costs were available and considered during the scoring. Tim explained that although the scorers knew that many of the alternatives exceeded the construction budget, they still scored the matrix in accordance with the original intent, a score of how closely each alternative met the goals and objectives of the project as established by the CAG, PDT, and the OTIA III Program goals.

Charlotte again asked whether there would be funding for above deck features if a deck arch is selected. Lynn said that \$10 million of the project budget was set aside for aesthetic improvements and is included in the contingency. Tim noted that the funding from DeFazio allowed consideration of more complex and aesthetic bridge forms, and is not solely for architectural treatments applied to the selected form. He added that the use of pylons, lighting, and fences will not cost much in comparison to the benefit to the community, and that Agency would not miss that low-cost opportunity to build good relationship with the community.

Jamie asked the CAG to provide initial responses to the seven options. The results were as follows:

	<i>Concrete Deck Arch</i>	<i>Steel Deck Arch</i>	<i>Through Arch</i>	<i>Concrete Haunched Box</i>	<i>Steel Haunched Box</i>	<i>Haunched Steel Girder</i>	<i>Segmental</i>
<i>1st Choice</i>	5	0	5	0	0	0	0
<i>2nd Choice</i>	4	1	4	0	0	0	0
<i>Do not build</i>	1	8	1	10	10	10	10
<i>Abstain</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Jamie asked about the value of retaining the steel deck arch. Trevor said that while he liked the option, he would not object to removing it from consideration.

Jamie asked the committee to explain their votes.

Ann Sanders said she felt the concrete deck arch meets the commitment to the community and fits the budget.

Chris Ramey said that a through arch bridge meets the committee's criteria. Baring the through arch he said he would like to see a second choice that includes above deck features.

Pat French said that while she liked the through arch, she voted for the deck arch because it appears to provide more above deck options. She encouraged above deck features as possible and she raised questions about above deck elements obstructing views of the river from the bridge.

Trevor Taylor said that he selected the concrete deck arch as his first choice though liked both types. He said he felt an obligation to benefit the experience of travelers under the bridge and he expressed skepticism that funding would be available to provide for aesthetic treatments with the more expensive through arch. He expressed concern that the above deck features could look added-on and misplaced and cautioned against insulting the form of the bridge. Trevor reiterated his concerns about long term sustainability and maintenance costs.

Charlotte Behm said that she voted for the deck arch after learning about the costs. She also expressed interest in ensuring that funding is available to benefit other elements such as impacts to park and canal. She noted that the through arch appeared to offer fewer opportunities for creativity and community involvement and that the deck arch seemed like more of a fun challenge.

David Sonnichsen said that he agreed with Chris Ramey. He said he felt that the deck arch was ugly and that people would be likely to climb on the below deck structure. He felt that the through arch was the only bridge that fulfills the commitment to create a signature bridge.

Dave Carvo said that he wanted a bridge that is acceptable to the community and more than a freeway in the air. He said that he did not want a through arch to distract from the sky, trees, and river, and that he was concerned about maintenance costs. He indicated that through arches were more reminiscent of the Oregon Coast and fit well there.

Rich Hazel said that he thought the through arch looks more like a bridge than a viaduct and would serve as a destination if well designed. He said he was torn between the two types and felt that the through arch could be diminished by reducing the arches and other required cost cutting measures.

Eric Gunderson said he was a dyed-in-the-wool fan of the through arch. He suggested that the other option is to have a longer lasting option that isn't preferred. He said it was important to have an impressive and sculptural bridge that doesn't require adornments to look good. He encouraged consideration of the full bridge lifecycle.

John Barofsky said that his first choice was through arch. He said that he felt the CAG was being led to the deck-arch. John agreed with Chris Ramey, noting that he wanted to stay true to what was originally interesting to the community and to himself despite the additional funding needed. He added that if the project goes over budget, the above deck structure on the through arch would be guaranteed.

Bob Kline said that he preferred the three arched through arch although he felt that removing the arch over Franklin would be a good compromise if necessary. He expressed disappointment that the cost information emerged so late. He said he could consider an option that creates the appearance of a through arch.

Jamie asked whether two or three arches should be included in the recommendation. John Barofsky said he preferred three. David Sonnichsen said he favored two.

Jamie reiterated that the cost breakdown was not made clear until very recently. Tim noted that much of the increased cost for the through arch comes from unanticipated roadway changes resulting from the bridge alignment and not from the bridge type itself.

Dave Carvo reminded the CAG that the steel through arch was initially considered infeasible and that it should not be a surprise that its affordability is now being questioned.

Jamie polled the CAG to see if any opinions had changed. The deck arch received five 1st place votes, four 2nd place votes, and two last place votes. The through arch received six 1st place votes, three 2nd place votes, and two last place votes. Jamie noted that the sum of the feedback from the committee would be forwarded to the PDT.

NEXT STEPS

Jamie said that she would be present at the PDT and would characterize the CAG conversation with Charlotte's help. Tim said that the PDT would consider the CAG recommendation alongside the same data that had been presented to the CAG. The PDT recommendation will then be presented to Tom Lauer who will either sign the recommendation or engage elements of the agency as he sees appropriate. A bridge type announcement is anticipated for Thursday, August 14 and the PDT will develop and release a statement of what the recommendation is and why it was selected. *[Note: Since the meeting, refinements of cost data are still in process. At the time of the PDT meeting, a 2-span deck arch appeared to possibly fit within the construction budget and the PDT recommended that option to Tom Lauer. Tom Lauer has indicated he will be making a type-selection announcement in mid-September. He will be considering risks to the project schedule and additional cost estimate refinements and he will be consulting with local stakeholders.]*

Charlotte asked for guidance from the CAG as to what her vote should be. Both John and Chris said that given the close vote, it made sense for Charlotte to form a decision based on the circumstances presented at the PDT.

Jamie noted that the next steps for the CAG are currently unknown. She said that the team will be in touch regarding the next meeting as soon as a recommendation is reached by the PDT.

John Barofsky suggested that it would be a good time to discuss transitions within the CAG. Jamie agreed. She praised the groups currently represented at the table and encouraged that the CAG consider additional representatives if necessary. She suggested that CAG members consider whether they would like their organizations to send new representatives.

Pat requested that the team keep the CAG informed regarding the PDT recommendation. She also requested copies of the most recent PDT meeting summaries.

Chris Henry said that Eugene would support the CAG recommendation on the PDT. He said that while the city approved of both arch bridges, they would vote for the through arch first.

Jamie praised the group for coming to consensus regarding the use of an arch bridge. Larry Fox also applauded the group for selecting a type that meets most of the goals of the community.

CLOSE