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Martin's Point Bridge Advisory Committee : Meeting Minutes, April 26, 2011

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Martin's Point Bridge Advisory Committee
Martin's Point Health Care Center
Minutes of April 26, 2011 Meeting
6 to 8 pm

Attendees:

Committee members

Roger Berle	Julie MacDonald
Patrick Costin	Paul Niehoff
Gene Gillies	John Woodcock
Cheri Juniewicz	Donald Hamilton
Don Gower	Alex Jaegerman
Mayer Fistal	Holly Winger
Hilary Bassett	Sue Ellen Bordwell
Kathi Earley	Mike Bobinsky
Jay Reynolds	

Other attendees

Leanne Timberlake, MaineDOT
Wayne Frankhauser, MaineDOT
Ben Condon, MaineDOT
Sally Oldham, Consultant to MaineDOT
Anthony Puntin, The Louis Berger Group
Paul DeStefano, The Louis Berger Group
Jeff McEwen, Federal Highway Administration

Sally Oldham opened the meeting and explained that the goals for the meeting were to reach consensus recommendations where possible about aesthetic design issues in the RFQ and RFP processes and to begin discussions in small groups about desired public involvement efforts throughout the remainder of the project process. Sally asked for any comments on the minutes from the March 29, 2011 meeting. There were no comments and the minutes were approved.

Sally asked Leanne to comment for MaineDOT on the cross section and alignment issues discussed at previous meetings. Leanne said she expects to bring to the next Advisory Committee meeting information about how the Department proposes to handle the cross section requirements in the RFP based on the Committee's recommendations as well as other inputs.

Leanne asked Tony to explain the revised drawings showing the alignment envelope that would be included in the RFP. He explained the upstream and downstream alignments have been tightened up. The downstream alignment, in particular, is now more parallel to the existing alignment than in previous versions, so there should be no permanent taking of property in this area, given that adjacent land is either affected by historic designation or by federal government ownership. It may be that MaineDOT would seek an easement for purposes, for example, of

grading. Tony acknowledged that choosing to build on the existing alignment may not be the most economical choice.

Tony pointed out that the road coming off the bridge on the Falmouth side would likely come into the existing alignment at Bay Shore Road. The transition will be aided by the width of the existing road. On the Portland side, the new construction will likely tie in at the new traffic light at the entrance to the Health Care Center. John Woodcock asked whether the Department will provide an allowance in the proposed height of the bridge for future sea level rise. Leanne indicated this is standard practice at the Department for bridges of this type.

The discussion then turned to areas of possible consensus for recommendations to MaineDOT based on the small group reports from the March 29 meeting. Advisory Committee members indicated they were in consensus supporting the following statements:

- Not looking for a specific style. Bridge aesthetics should be treated as a holistic and complete package. It should result from a partnering of civil engineering design with architectural/aesthetic design from the very beginning of the design effort. Make the bridge simple and elegant to complement the landscape and environment. The design should be fully “integrated” with its context and itself. Conceptually the bridge design should be based on a compelling generative idea that guides the design from the largest to the smallest detail. Each part should contribute to the whole with no extraneous or superficial elements.
- The bridge should be slender, elegant and refined with graceful proportions.

Paul DeStefano indicated it would be possible to include specifications in the RFP regarding the required span to depth ratio that would seek to yield the “slender” effect that the Committee seeks. He said that a slenderness ratio in the range of 25 to 30, for example, would yield a more slender result than a slenderness ratio in the range of 10 to 15. Sally asked if Paul could bring to a future meeting a graphic example to illustrate this point. Paul also indicated the quality of slenderness (the span to depth ratio) could be part of the criteria used to rank the proposals.

The next statement considered for consensus was the following statement that had been reported by one discussion group:

- The design elements should recognize the different scale of Portland and Falmouth and make some differentiation between the treatments on either end of the bridge.

A committee member asked for a description of what this would mean. Holly Winger suggested that it might be that the spans of the bridge could vary in height reflecting the distinctions between the different character of Portland and Falmouth. Cheri voiced East Deering neighborhood residents’ desires that the section of the road on the Portland side reinforce a neighborhood scale rather than a high speed and volume urban character and suggested that the RFP remain silent on this point of encouraging Design-Build teams to differentiate between the aesthetic treatment of the two ends of the bridge. Sally asked the group as a whole as to whether all members were in consensus on remaining silent on this point and received an indication that they were.

Jeff McEwen pointed out to the group that the primary transitions between the bridge and the adjacent roadways won't actually be located on the bridge itself, but will be on the causeway on the north and from the end of the bridge to the signal on the south.

Sally tested for consensus on whether there was agreement on not identifying a theme for the bridge. The group indicated that there is not a desire for a theme beyond the concepts related to how the bridge fits into its context and environment in the aesthetic design statement above that was adopted by consensus.

Sally directed the discussion to the topic of lighting. Several Committee members spoke in favor of having lighting for the multi-use path but most comments called for the light to be limited to the minimum needed to provide light for users of the path. Holly Winger indicated she favors minimal lighting or none at all and that if there is lighting, her preference is that lights not be lit at times when not justified by use. In response to questions, Leanne indicated that while it is common to light a sidewalk, she doesn't believe there is a requirement to do this. Jeff McEwen stated that it is his understanding that FHWA does not require lighting and suggested that if lighting is not used, it would be wise to build the pathway to allow for lighting in the future if needed. Jeff said FHWA is using LED lights for almost all street lighting now.

Mike Bobinsky suggested the RFP include language asking that lighting proposals reflect the latest in equipment and technology, be of high quality and be standard enough to allow for routine maintenance. He related that some of the lighting on Veterans Bridge is non-standard and MaineDOT is therefore taking responsibility for maintenance rather than having Portland accept this responsibility. Portland is using timers to activate lights in some cases or lights may be eye activated. Sue Ellen Bordwell added that bikers who ride after dark or before sunrise are required to have a light on their bike that radiates 200 feet. Cheri voiced concerns about light pollution and spoke in favor of having minimal down lighting from the railing shining in toward to inner barrier of the multi-use pathway.

Regarding a desire for "bump outs" on the pathway voiced by one reporting group at the March 29 session, Leanne said she was not sure if MaineDOT will require them but they will likely "encourage" them in the RFP.

Regarding the request for cross walks or a separate crossing such as an under bridge passage, Committee members suggested two examples to look at. One of these is an under bridge passage added in a retrofit project at Tukey's bridge. The other is at Pride's Bridge between Portland and Westbrook, Route 302.

One member suggested there could be a crossing added at the northern entrance to the Martin's Point Health Care facility. Kathi Earley pointed out that the practice in Portland is to discourage mid-block crossings. There is a committee in Portland that has to approve proposed mid-block crossings. Tony suggested that a crossing on the Falmouth side might be easier to accomplish.

John Woodcock asked what the RFP would contain about requiring marking of some type of the channel for nautical travel. Leanne assured him that the RFP could include a requirement for marking. She is checking with the Portland Harbor Master on this issue.

Leanne responded to the last two bullets on the agenda under “Additional suggestions” that the Department intends to ask that Design-Build team proposals provide for connectivity with existing and planned trails and intends that the alignment will be such that it provides minimal impact on adjacent properties.

Sally then reviewed briefly the elements of public involvement both pre and post-project award that she would request that breakout groups discuss and divided the Committee into four work groups. The questions that these groups were asked to discuss are attached to these minutes.

Group 1

Public Involvement Pre-Project Award

At the Public Information Meeting proposed prior to releasing the RFQ, clearly define the purpose of this meeting. Frame the discussion at the meeting to respect all the input provided by the Advisory Committee members and others to date. Explain who has been involved and how recommendations were made. Address issues of concern to attendees and plan to get back to attendees with answers if questions arise that can't be answered at the meeting.

Public Involvement During Proposal Period

The group agrees Leanne should be the point of contact for any information. The group supports having a meeting required for all bidders where the Department explains the Advisory Committee process and recommendations and establishes the Department's expectations for public involvement post bid award.

Public Involvement Post Bid Award

The group anticipates there would be 1-3 public information meetings with the general public to inform them about the chosen bridge design and the project process and schedule.

The group anticipates that there would be a continuing defined role for the Advisory Committee or perhaps for a sub-committee of this group. The group recommends that the bridge architect or aesthetic design professional be a part of all public involvement meetings from the start. They recommend that the RFP call for a package of design elements so there would not be options for the Advisory Committee to choose from regarding design elements post project award although there would likely be design details to address in Advisory Committee meetings. They would ask that the RFP require Design-Build (D-B) teams to make the case for their choice of the package of design elements and that teams respond with a description of their architectural vision to be achieved through this choice.

A smaller sub-committee to continue meeting through the final design and early construction period may not be needed, but it seemed productive in the Veterans Bridge project. Perhaps such a group could be identified but meet only as needed.

Group 2

Public Involvement Pre-Project Award

RFQ qualifications should include the following:

- For the aesthetic design professional should include requirements about how this person works within the team both during the proposal preparation and during later project phases.
- Require that the team demonstrate knowledge of Context Sensitive Solutions and expertise in this method of transportation planning, design and construction.
- Require community involvement expertise both in facilitating public input from an Advisory Committee and in providing information to the public throughout the project.

Decisions on which teams to short list should include the criteria discussed by this Advisory Committee.

Public Involvement During Proposal Period

Public Involvement Post Bid Award

This group suggests that proposers not be asked to present a single holistic package of aesthetic design elements but would rather provide a price for the basic superstructure and then an allowance for design elements to be identified and negotiated with an Advisory Committee after the project award. A concern about asking proposers for 2 or 3 holistic aesthetic design packages is that likely the ideas presented will be less well developed than if teams focused on a single acceptable choice.

Group 3

Public Involvement Pre-Project Award

Public Involvement During Proposal Period

This group recommends that a D-B bidders meeting be held to communicate clearly the recommendations from the Advisory Committee effort to all teams as they begin their work to develop proposals.

Public Involvement Post Bid Award

This group recommends that the existing Advisory Committee should continue to meet for whatever meetings are necessary to provide continuity of understanding about public input to the project. The group believes the approach to requiring proposers to identify 2 or 3 options for aesthetic design elements would work well. There will be a need for public input on traffic impacts, safety issues, business interruptions, etc. A smaller sub-committee could work well to address some of these questions.

Lighting

The multi-use path should have minimal lighting. The channel under the bridge should be marked somehow. The aesthetic design packages/options should include options for lighting.

Group 4

Public Involvement Pre-Project Award

The current process being used is strong. Continue this process as it is envisioned incorporating into the RFQ and RFP the various recommendations from the Advisory Committee. One question to consider: Because some Advisory Committee members have stepped out of the process, consider whether we are hearing from a full range of perspectives to get the public input we need to this effort.

Public Involvement During Proposal Period

It is important during the proposal period that D-B teams receive a consistent message and information. This group agrees that Leanne is the best person to respond to questions during this period.

Public Involvement Post Bid Award

There should be 1 to 3 initial public meetings once the winning team is chosen to provide clear information about the project, the process and schedule. There needs to be good on-going information provided to keep the public informed as the project proceeds, including as needed use of a website, email, etc. It would be fine to use the current Advisory Committee to address issues where input is needed or a smaller sub-committee could be identified for this purpose.

Additional Comments from Committee members at the end of the meeting and afterwards.

Alex Jaegerman asked whether it would be possible that D-B teams each be asked to provide two designs for the bridge, one with a contiguous multi-use path and one with a separated path.

Mike Bobinsky, Hilary Bassett and Patrick Costin talked after the meeting and voiced their recommendation that based on Jeff McEwen's observation that the connections from the bridge ends to the project limits are important transition areas where the design should reflect the Committee's Vision and goals, it is important to include on the team a landscape architect.

Regarding communications about the public information meeting in July, these Committee members recommend that notice be provided to the public broadly including, for example, an ad in the Forecaster newspaper.

Mike Bobinsky also raised the importance of the RFP requiring models and/or visuals that will ensure that the proposals presented are clearly understood by those judging them.

Holly Winger raised concerns that if the public information meeting to be held before release of the RFQ is held in July, many people will be gone during the summer and multiple means of informing the public should be considered. She wondered if information could be provided at voting sites during upcoming elections, for example.

Action Items:

- Sally will send an agenda and background information prior to the next meeting.
- Leanne will check to see what specific requirements MaineDOT may have regarding lighting the multi-use pathway and sidewalk.

- Leanne will check out under bridge passage examples – Tukey’s bridge and Pride’s Bridge to respond to whether it would be reasonable and desirable to encourage an under bridge passage.
- Paul DeStefano has pointed out that there is a discussion of slenderness regarding bridge appearance in the RTA “Bridge Aesthetics: Design guidelines to improve the appearance of bridges in New South Wales” (http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/constructionmaintenance/downloads/urbandesign/rta_bridges_final_1.pdf) pages 23-24, Section 3.2 Form

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2011
 Time: 6:00-8:00 pm
 Location: Martin’s Point Health Care center, 331 Veranda Street, Marine Hospital Building

Future meetings: Tuesday, June 14, 2011

Martin’s Point Bridge Advisory Committee Discussion Topics

Public Involvement Pre-Project Award

- Any comments in addition to the types of topics outlined to be covered in our remaining Advisory Committee meetings?

Public Involvement During Proposal Period

- Possibility of D-B bidders meeting to educate them about CSS and the community/Advisory Committee process and to establish MaineDOT’s expectations for how D-B bidders should address public involvement

RFP Requirements Regarding Scope of Public Involvement Post Bid Award

- A public information meeting will be required to introduce winning team and outline anticipated final design/construction process and timeline.
- What form should additional public involvement take?
- Should the current Advisory Committee continue to function?
- Should a different/alternate Advisory Committee be formed?
- Should the RFP call for a small sub-committee to be identified to continue to work with MaineDOT and the D-B team to address final design choices (as has happened on Veterans Bridge)?
- What topics should the public involvement address?
 - Suggestion: It may be that the RFP calls for a 2-3 holistic packages of design details that impact the bridge aesthetics (railing, lighting, etc.) that will fit within the D-B teams’ budget. The AC or other group would review the 2-3 package options offered by the winning team and choose what they feel is the

best choice given their consensus opinions about what will best fit the Vision and context.

- Are there suggested approaches other than that outlined above, that you would suggest for addressing aesthetic design choices that you believe should be addressed through public involvement post bid award?
 - List issues that you suggest be addressed through post bid award public involvement.
- Are there additional topics regarding post bid award public involvement that we should consider?

Lighting issues: Picking up from our discussion at the last AC meeting

- Should lighting be provided for the multi-use path but not the vehicular lanes? (Note: We've had no discussion yet with the towns as to whether they are willing to sign an agreement to maintain and pay the ongoing cost of lighting.)
- Should there be lighting from underneath?

If lighting is used, what criteria or performance standards should apply? Would D-B teams be asked to provide options for lighting as part of a holistic aesthetic package that would be judged following bid award through a public involvement process? Or is there another approach to lighting