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Martin's Point Bridge Advisory Committee : Meeting Minutes, February 17, 2011

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Martin's Point Bridge Advisory Committee
Martin's Point Health Care Center
Minutes of February 17, 2011 Meeting
6 to 8 pm

Attendees:

Committee members

Ann Tucker	Julie MacDonald
Roger Berle	Richard Weare
Cheri Juniewicz	Mike Bobinsky
Kathi Earley	Ann Goggin
Suzanne Foley-Ferguson	Paul Niehoff
Mayer Fistal	Holly Winger
Adrian Fox	Don Gower
Hilary Bassett	Alex Jaegerman
Donald Hamilton	

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 by explaining the goals for the meeting were to discuss MaineDOT's response to the bridge cross section options that were developed at the November 30 meeting, come to a general sense of agreement on one or more options and to review the envelope proposed regarding alignment options to identify elements to encourage in the RFP regarding the alignment and constraints important to Advisory Committee members for the three options presented. Sally asked for any comments on the minutes from the November 30, 2010 meeting. There were no comments and the minutes were approved.

Tony Puntin of The Louis Berger Group described how a design-build (D-B) team is formed and responds to an RFP such as is proposed for the Martin's Point Bridge replacement project. He explained that Berger has done 3 design-build projects in Maine but that this is the first time the firm has worked directly for MaineDOT in developing an RFP. He explained that his firm will not make a proposal in response to the RFP because of the role they are currently playing to assist with developing it. Design-build teams are always led by a contractor because the majority of the funds expended will go to the contractor. The RFP will identify the envelope for the project and some of the specific design parameters. The D-B team will look for the most efficient way to accomplish the requirements. Tony does not believe that the D-B approach necessarily saves dollars but thinks it does save time.

Maine uses a best value system to evaluate proposals. The evaluation incorporates scores related both to the design/construction cost and to a technical score based on the response to requirements outlined in the RFP. It could be that one team would get the highest technical score by providing a better response to what's in the RFP that reflects the Advisory Committee's preferences, for example, but if this then results in the project costing more, it could disadvantage the team when the technical score is weighted with the cost. The incentive to teams is to respond to issues in the RFP that impact on the technical score but to do so without unduly adding to the cost. Tony said the more answers to critical questions are provided in the RFP the better for teams to enable their response. This is particularly true of permitting, right of way and utilities issues.

In response to questions about scoring, both who participates and what criteria are used, Leanne responded that there are generally 3-5 scoring categories. Leanne provides guidelines to the scorers in their task. Ann Goggin asked whether there would be one or more representatives of the Advisory Committee on the scoring teams. She said that just the fact that there would be involvement from advisory committee members in the scoring, would change the behavior of D-B teams in their response. Leanne will choose the scoring committees. Wayne indicated that in similar projects in the past advisory committee members have participated on scoring teams and he expects this will be the case here. He said that generally the names of those on the scoring teams remain confidential as this is important to the integrity of the process.

In terms of how scoring works, Leanne indicated that if cross-section option C2 with a separated multi-use pathway were adopted by a team and resulted in increased costs by comparison to a team that might choose another cross-section option, if the increase was not too great, say 1-2%, it might not impact the resulting scoring too greatly but if the cost increase was great, it could negatively impact the team in the final scoring. Sally asked a clarifying question about whether the expectation is to provide just one option as a required approach regarding cross-section elements or to provide more than one option from which D-B teams could choose. Wayne indicated his preference to allow D-B teams to respond creatively to general requirements while acknowledging that it is possible to include one specific requirement rather than allow for multiple options in terms of design solutions. Leanne indicated that we will have a larger scoring range on this project, which will be 20%, as compared to the 15% scoring range used on the Veteran's Memorial Bridge project. The minimum score will be set at 80 and the maximum score will be set at 100 for each category. This will allow a broader spread in scores and thus allow more flexibility and creativity in the Design-Build technical proposals.

Leanne then presented four cross-section options responding both to preferences voiced at the last Advisory Committee meeting and to subsequent guidance from MaineDOT's senior management team. That team has placed a requirement that the bridge width not exceed the current width of 54.2 feet.

- Option A incorporates 2-6' bike lanes, 2-12' lanes and a 12' multi-use path.
- Option B incorporates 2-5' bike lanes, 2-12' lanes, a 5' sidewalk on the upstream side and a 10.5 to 11' multi-use path on the downstream side.
- Option C incorporates 2-5' bike lanes, 2-12' lanes and a detached 12' multi-use path with about 2'7" between the two structures.

- Option C2 is similar to Option C but calls for the multi-use path to angle out at a wider angle providing more separation from the main structure.

Having clarified that the Advisory Committee might recommend either a single option or multiple options for the cross-section treatment, Sally called for a vote as a means to determine how to focus the discussion, to indicate among the four options outlined by Leanne which ones Advisory Committee members favored. Members of the group voted in equal numbers for Option B and Option C2. The discussion proceeded focused on these two options.

Several questions were asked about lane width requirements. One addressed the lane width requirement for a snooper truck (under bridge crane) for inspection of the underside of the bridge. Wayne said this requirement needs to be examined further. Another addressed whether it is essential for buses to have a 12' lane. Both Kathi Early and Jeff McEwen said this is the case, particularly for newly acquired buses that are apparently wider than those in previous use. Others pointed out that in other jurisdictions and states 11' lanes have been adequate for bus needs. Alex Jaegerman asked that we confirm the actual needs, mirror to mirror, for the buses in use. Mike Bobinsky agreed to check into these requirements and report back.

There was much discussion about fishing needs, particularly concerning what dimension separation of a detached multi-use path would be needed to allow anglers to fish both upstream and downstream sides of the path structure rather than fishing from the upstream side of the bridge if there is no sidewalk provided. Alex asked that we get more factual information on this subject. Additional ideas were offered: could there be a bumped out platform for fishing on either side of the detached multi-use pathway? Jeff McEwen suggested that MaineDOT consider the possibility of including a sidewalk on the upstream side just to the channel from the Portland side with a bumpout platform for fishing at this location. Paul DeStefano confirmed that the needed spans could allow for this.

Sally called for a vote based on the additional perspectives offered in the discussion to indicate preferences among the options. She counted 15 votes for Option C2 with a detached multi-use path and no votes for Option B. MaineDOT staff will work with this strong indication of preference regarding the cross-section, will seek (with the help of Advisory Committee members) better factual information about lane width needs and anglers' needs, and will consider what approach to this issue might work best in the RFP to be responsive to the multiple needs and preferences articulated and report back to the Advisory Committee.

Tony Puntin then presented the work Berger has done at MaineDOTs' request to identify an envelope addressing alignment options to include in the RFP. Tony described the upstream, downstream and on-alignment options (actually calling for about a 6' shift to the east). Berger has been asked to assume a 40-mile per hour design speed. He indicated this could be posted at 35 mph though a decision about posted speed has not been addressed as yet. The project limits would likely start at the Martin's Point signal on the Portland side and extend 200 to 300' beyond the causeway at the Falmouth end. He stated the upstream alignment would require the longest bridge structure and therefore likely be most costly. Timing, accessibility, and cut and fill factors would differ for the different alignments. The downstream alignment would take off on the Portland side approximately at the point of the current abutment from an earlier bridge.

Tony indicated that Berger staff is currently looking at the sideslope limits for each of the conceptual alignments in order to identify the amount of wetland impact area needed for the environmental permit applications. Sally asked a clarifying question of Wayne to confirm her understanding that the D-B teams would work within this envelope to propose the alignment they thought best met the project needs rather than being constrained to respond with one of these three drawn alignments. Wayne confirmed this is correct.

Sally then asked the group for their questions or comments regarding elements to encourage in the RFP regarding alignment as well as constraints important to Advisory Committee members for the envelope and options shown. Questions, responses to these questions, and comments included:

- Who owns the land downstream & upstream from the current bridge? MaineDOT is researching this now. The US government appears to own portions of it.
- Among the different possible alignments, there will be different factors of time to build the bridge depending on whether the proposed bridge is on or off the current alignment.
- For the upstream alignment, Cheri Juniewicz voiced strong concerns about losing a buffer for the adjacent neighborhood. This alignment would result in the loss of many trees. She cautioned MaineDOT to look carefully at the topography. She believes it won't be easy to work with. Consider noise and other environmental issues. Cheri believes this area is shore land zoned. Cheri believes these constraints should be noted in the RFP. MaineDOT, however, is not subject to shore land zoning.
- There is a small stairway at the abutment. But this is very tidal area – likely not safe - so don't encourage small boat usage here.
- Ann Tucker raised a question about Martin's Point Health Care Center's (MP) land ownership: Would there be impact in the downstream alignment? MP has concerns re their new egress. How close would this be to the bridge in the downstream alignment?
- Hilary Basett asked if you could use the existing bridge structure for the bike/ped facility. Wayne responded there is an issue of timber piles, but it would need to be examined as to whether it could be used for bike/ped.
- Alex asked about the area of the old abutment – Could this provide an opportunity for a pocket park?
- Consider moving upstream alignment as close as possible to existing so as not to encroach on open lands that buffer the neighbors.
- If the upstream alignment is used, think of the implications at the project limits for both Portland and Falmouth. Consider whether there will be any area for parking. Holly Winger spoke up to reiterate MaineDOT's point made at an earlier meeting saying this isn't a parking project. It is a bridge project.
- For the landing of the bridge on Portland side – consider multi-use functions in this area.
- Holly raised the question of ownership to low tide watermark of homes on the Falmouth side. Does this affect the downstream option? Leanne indicated MaineDOT is researching this question.
- Adrian raised a question as to whether you will see entire bridge length. He indicated when there is fog over the bridge, issues of the vertical alignment could pose an increased safety hazard. A straight alignment could be best.

Sally thanked the group for the wide range of input regarding alignment issues. She then spoke briefly about plans for the next meetings on March 22 and 29 that will address issues of aesthetics. She said the group will spend a portion of the first meeting discussing how to address aesthetic issues. What level of guidance should be put into the RFP to get the result that MaineDOT and the Advisory Committee seeks? Wayne indicated that MaineDOT was not entirely satisfied with the experience on the Veterans Bridge project in regard to aesthetic issues and is seeking to identify a better approach to aesthetic issues and public involvement on this project. Holly asked that MaineDOT staff provide information to help Advisory Committee members understand the vocabulary and choices of addressing aesthetic issues regarding this bridge.

Sally thanked everyone for their input and their time, reminded participants of future meeting dates (below), and adjourned the meeting.

Action Items:

- Sally will send an agenda and background information prior to the next meeting.

Next meeting: Tuesday, March 22, 2011
Time: 6:00-8:00 pm
Location: Martin's Point Health Care center, 331 Veranda Street, Marine Hospital Building

Future meetings: Tuesday, March 29, 2011
Tuesday, April 26, 2011