

Record of Meeting

Purpose of Meeting: North Hero-Grand Isle Local Concerns Meeting

Date: 5/29/2014

Location: North Hero Elementary School

Time Started: 6:05 PM

Time Ended: 6:50 PM

Participants

Dannyl Landry (VTrans Project Manager)	Marilyn Lagrow
Bethany Remmers (NW Regional Planning Commission)	Dan Clark (Marina Owner)
Pete Davis (HDR Project Manager)	Blake Allen (Sheriff's Department)
Mark Zydel (HDR Project Principal)	Mary Jane Healy
Charles Swanson (HDR Engineer)	Jeanine Pratt
Mary O'Leary (EIV Public Outreach Manager)	Larry Pratt
Jacqueline Dagesse (EIV Public Outreach Coordinator)	Ella Stolarczyk
Katelyn Dagesse (EIV Staff Scientist)	Richard Stolarczyk
Ken Bassett	Bobbi Weaver
Don Weaver	

Topics to be discussed

- Project Background
- VTrans Project Development Process
- Constraints / Limitations
- Project Outreach
- Questions / Concerns

Topic #	Presentation
1.	<p>Introductions of the Project Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pete Davis, Project Manager, HDR Engineering • Mark Zydel, Project Principal, HDR Engineering • Dannyl Landry, VTrans Project Manager • Jacqueline Dagesse, Public Outreach Coordinator, EIV • Mary O'Leary, Public Outreach Manager, EIV • Charles Swanson, Deputy, HDR Engineering <p>The purpose of tonight's meeting is to solicit public opinions regarding the project to take into account in developing alternatives.</p>
2.	<p>Project Background</p> <p>The original bridge was constructed in 1953, and is approximately 60 years old. This structure is at the end of its useful life. It's a two leaf bascule bridge with two 11' travels lanes.</p>

	<p>The project development process started in 2000 and was halted in 2004. It was re-awarded to the HDR Engineering Team in 2013 for completion of the scoping report.</p> <p>This work includes: survey, public outreach, environmental and cultural resource investigation, developing alternatives, and completion of the final scoping report.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Project Development Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phase 1 Problem Identification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gather Preliminary Information ○ Survey ○ Traffic Information ○ Public concerns ○ Purpose and Needs Statement ▪ Phase 2 Initial Scoping report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare and evaluation matrix ○ Agency coordination ○ Develop alternatives and rate them against the evaluation matrix <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Build • Rehabilitation • New Bridge – existing alignment • New Bridge adjacent alignment ▪ Phase 3 Final Scoping report
<p>4.</p>	<p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve mobility for pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular traffic • Be sympathetic to the local concerns • Minimize impacts to the local community during construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Traffic impacts ○ Navigation impacts ○ Noise, etc. • Provide a structure with a 75 years design life that is safe and reliable • Minimize life cycle costs of the project
<p>5.</p>	<p>Project Constraints</p> <p>If the bridge was unable to cross with vehicular access, there would be a substantial detour. We need to determine how to minimize that condition.</p> <p>This bridge is not unique to the Nation, but it is unique to Vermont. There is a visual relationship with this bridge and the community. The bridge needs to be built in the context of the community.</p>

	<p>Other constraints include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigation traffic has precedence over vehicular traffic. • Fiscal constraints • Agency and permitting requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ US Coast Guard/Army Corps of Engineers ○ US Environmental Protection Agency ○ US Fish and Wildlife ○ Federal Highway (FHWA) ○ Vermont Agency for Natural resources ○ Vermont Department of Agriculture ○ Vermont Division of Historical Preservation
<p>6.</p>	<p>Public Participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Concerns meeting • Public Survey • Public Comments can be made at: nhgi.vtransprojects.Vermont.gov • Alternatives Meeting <p>Our team has a dedicated public outreach coordinator that you may contact for this project by the following:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jacqueline Dagesse jdagesse@eivtech.com 802-497-3653</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Questions / Comments</p> <p><i>Do you envision a live gate keeper at the bridge or will it all be remote / automatic?</i></p> <p>We anticipate continuing with a person operating the bridge. A lot of railroad bridges are remotely operated, but as far as we know there is no plan to do that here</p> <p><i>Are there any current deficiencies in the bridge pushing the project to be replaced sooner?</i></p> <p>The bridge is inspected annually, and there is an underwater inspection every five years. During the last underwater inspection there were significant concerns. While it's clearly aging and corroding, the bridge is fundamentally sound. We recently completed a load rating to ensure that the bridge could carry certain loads. With it coming to the end of its useful life there are reliability issues with the opening and closing of the bridge. We have a first-hand person there in the operator's house monitoring the bridge.</p> <p><i>How long would this project take?</i></p> <p>It really depends on the selected alternative. I will tell you that depending on the design approach, these bridges can be changed out relatively quickly. It becomes a tradeoff between dollars and outages. As we develop this evaluation matrix, those are some of the key factors that we will put in there.</p> <p>What we can do is minimize the roadway impacts. We can do it in one winter outage. We try to strike the</p>

best balance.

Is this a total replacement for both mechanics and substructure?

If we look at the rehabilitation alternatives, that may include the concrete structure and up. However, we may determine that the substructures needs to be replaced.

Has the inspection shown any issues with the substructure?

We are doing the inspection next week, so we can't answer that at this time.

Can the bridge open quicker?

Safety is a very big issue with movable bridges. There is a sequence that needs to be followed before opening the bridge. Typically a bridge opening is 7 min. between opening and closing the gates. Often times the opening time is dependent on how quickly the bridge is cleared and how long it takes for navigation traffic to transit the channel. Typically the code that governs moveable bridges dictates the machinery opening and closing is within 90 seconds. We understand, we want to make it as quick as we can.

Right now there is no white lighting on the bridge. The lighting is currently muted light colors, and that's a positive. I can see this from where I live, and I would like the project to exclude white lighting.

We won't be able to determine at this point if there will be white lighting. The only reason to dictate this would be for safety, but we haven't gotten the impression that this would be needed.

The decking on a new bridge, would it be similar to the decking that is there now? I'm concerned with how it would sound.

Typically these would be concrete, sealed decks to preserve the bridge. It will be better for noise and plowing. The existing bridge does not have the capacity for a concrete deck.

Would traffic be maintained during the construction and maintenance period? It depends on the alternative selected. I will tell you that I understand that issue. We will look at alternatives to putting in temporary bridges in order to minimize impacts to vehicular traffic. It's a safety issue.

Are the dimensions something that you will talk about tonight?

The existing bridge matches state standards. It does not have to be any wider. The navigable channel is governed by the coast guard. This will let us know the requirements for height and width. Typically the channel width is determined on commercial navigation traffic, not pleasure craft.

Who would the project be funded by? 80% federal, 20% state.

One of the alternatives for a new bridge in a new alignment would be the most dramatic impact. What would make that a potential alternative?

This would allow for the elimination of impact to vehicular traffic while a new bridge is constructed adjacent

to the existing bridge.

As part of the sheriff's department, we were wondering if speed limit could be reduced.

We typically don't look for a speed reduction. It's a state law and there is no reason to reduce.

Follow up comment: We get many accidents at this straight away.

Regional Planning Commission (Bethany Remmers): The town can request a reduction. This will need to come from the town selectboard.

HDR Engineering Team: Gates and signage can be updated.

Are other designs being considered aside from a drawbridge?

At this point, no, we are looking at a moveable bridge.

I'm a master mariner, and this is the only bridge that does have an air draft board.

This will be included in the new bridge on both sides of the channel.

Is fishing access being looked at? No, not part of scope.

Is it part of your plan to have a bridge that is similar to what its appearance is now?

That is part of the context of the bridge within the community that will be considered. We design new bridges that look old, and new bridges that look modern. It's not the design, but the treatments of the bridge that impact appearance. This is the kind of information that we could use from you folks to include in the alternatives.

This may be down the road, but what will be the messaging for construction of the project?

There will be message boards on the interstate, outreach and publicizing notifications for the maintenance and protection of traffic.

Is it a realistic option that this will be closed to through traffic completely?

We can't promise anything at this point, but we are going to look at every reasonable approach to minimize impacts to the vehicular traffic.

I've seen a lot of temporary bridges along the main route.

That is a potential option and that will be included during construction.

Does the temporary bridge add a great deal to the total cost of reconstruction? It can.

As the island population is developing into an older population where emergency transportation and access

to hospitals is necessary. We understand the need to maintain access for emergency services.

You said that the bridge was unique to Vermont, have you got any inclination that you can't replace the bridge based on historic resource requirements?

We will be working with the 106 folks to determine the criteria. When we received a letter from the deputy SHPO, they said they would focus more on the buildings rather than the bridge.

Action Items						
ID	Short description	P	Owner	Target Date	Date Completed	S
001	Posting Presentation and Minutes of Meeting to the project website.	L	Jacque Dagesse	6/4/2014		I

ID: Action identifier **P:** Priority - High/Medium/Low **S:** Status – Open/In Progress/Closed

Jacqueline Dagesse

From: Burke, Kevin <Kevin.Burke@state.vt.us>
Sent: Thursday, May 29, 2014 12:29 PM
To: 'Jacqueline Dagesse'
Cc: Burke, Kevin
Subject: RE: N.Hero Drawbridge Meeting

Hi Jacquie,

With everything else going on and some deadlines we are up against, I'll have to pass on tonight's meeting. If things were a bit slower, I would have certainly accommodated. I hope you understand.

With that said, I believe at this stage of the project, I can offer some comments in light of my absence. I should add that I've been provided little to no detail of the project thus far so my comments are general in nature. You can however share my comments with the attendees and include in the record.

Reconstruction of the drawbridge will likely trigger the need for a Lake Encroachment permit, which will need to consider any adverse impacts to public use of the water, along with any potential impacts to water quality, aquatic and shoreline vegetation, fish and wildlife habitat, and will consider the cumulative impact of the encroachment in light of other existing encroachments, along with the project's consistency with natural surrounding and applicable municipal shoreland zoning and applicable state plans. If there are other activities planned as part of the project, temporary bridge, bridge approach work, these may also be considered. In review of the application we would weigh any impacts against public benefits.

New shoreland protection regulations may be in effect when the project is designed/proposed, and though certain transportation projects may be exempt from permitting, it would be expected that all efforts be made to minimize impacts to the lake and the lake shoreland. If it would be helpful to meet to review project design at any point, I can be available for meeting.

Thank you,

Kevin



Kevin Burke

Lake Encroachment Permit Program

1 National Life Drive, Main 2
Montpelier, VT 05620-3522
802-490-6165 / kevin.burke@state.vt.us
www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov

From: Jacqueline Dagesse [mailto:jdagesse@eivtech.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 28, 2014 5:01 PM
To: Burke, Kevin
Subject: Re: N.Hero Drawbridge Meeting

It's always a pleasure to have you at these public meetings, however I understand how busy this time of year is. If you would like to submit a comment by email expressing any concerns or feedback for this project I can include that with the meeting minutes.

If you can attend the meeting - yes it's still on for 6 PM tomorrow at the North Hero Elementary School gymnasium.

Jacquie

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On Wed, May 28, 2014 at 4:55 PM, Burke, Kevin <Kevin.Burke@state.vt.us> wrote:

Hi Jacquie,

Is the drawbridge meeting still on for 6 PM tomorrow, and if so do you think that it would be helpful that I attend? I have on my calendar but wanted to make sure. It has been tremendously busy and just want to check in.

Thanks,

Kevin



Kevin Burke

Lake Encroachment Permit Program

1 National Life Drive, Main 2

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802-490-6165 / kevin.burke@state.vt.us
www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov

Jacqueline Dagesse

From: Mary Berney <bskutel@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2014 7:52 PM
To: jdagesse@eivtech.com
Subject: [your-subject]

From: Mary Berney Skutel <bskutel@gmail.com>
Subject: Comment from northherograndislebridge.com

Apt./Suite No:

Town:
North Hero

State:
Vt.

Zip:
05374

Phone:

Email Address:
bskutel@gmail.com

Agency/Affiliation:

Add to Mailing List:
Email

Bridge Comment

It is our wish that we retain a drawbridge...either refurbish the original or replace it with a similar drawbridge.

General Comment

My husband and I will not be able to attend the informational meeting at the NorthHero School on May29th.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on North Hero - Grand Isle Bridge (<http://nhgi.vtransprojects.vermont.gov>)