



**MEETING DATE:** April 23 & 24, 2003

**TIME:** 3:30 PM (4/23) and 3:00 PM (4/24)  
**LOCATION:** Ocean City, City Hall  
**PURPOSE:** Route 52 Public Officials Briefings

**ATTENDEES:**

*4/23 & 4/24* – David Lambert (NJDOT), Anthony Marsella (NJDOT), Marshall Robert (Baker), Mike Sidani (Baker), Bill Felix (Baker), Carol Beske (ACT), Georgia Arnold (Ocean City).

*4/23 Only* – Michele Bernate, Francis McCall, Rich Deaney, David Swift, Michael Datillo, Council Member Ron Denney (all of Ocean City).

*4/24 Only* – Mayor Henry Knight, Council Members Alice Wolf & Jody Alessandrine.

**MEETING SUMMARY**

Representatives from NJDOT, Michael Baker Jr. Inc. and ACT Engineers, Inc. met with two separate groups of Ocean City officials in Council Chambers on April 23 and 24 to brief them on the particulars of the Route 52 Causeway Replacement Project. These briefings were held to advise local officials about the details of the project that would be presented to the general public at a May 20, 2003 Public Information Center. The same topics were presented at both meetings.

**Overview:** The NJDOT Project Manager and Baker provided an illustrative review of work progress to date; including minor shifts in the alignment of the roadway, scenic enhancements along the Causeway and beyond the Ocean City and Somers Point touchdown points, the Rte. 52 circle elimination, public outreach efforts, pertinent environmental issues and the construction schedule.

**Plan Updates:** Baker summarized adjustments that had been made to the plan since the last Community Partnering Team (CPT) meeting of March 26, 2003. The most significant change involved the shifting of the sidewalk/bikepath from the northbound side to the southbound side. This adjustment provides the following benefits:

- 1.) Eliminates need to acquire an end condominium unit at 9<sup>th</sup> Street/Bay Avenue
- 2.) Aesthetics: bridge lighting, pier configuration, bridge railings.
- 3.) Ties the Rte. 52 bikepath/pedestrian facilities into similar improvements proposed by Ocean City south and east of 9<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 4.) Results in one continuous sidewalk from Ocean City to Somers Point that passes through the Visitor Center.

**Environmental Issues** – Baker discussed minor design adjustments to the IPA to avoid endangered species impacts as well as steps taken to minimize impacts to both maritime channels.

- 1.) An easterly alignment shift at the Visitor Center Island to avoid impacts on the Coastal Heron nesting habitats.
- 2.) Compressed construction schedules to avoid impacts upon migratory fish and bird breeding periods
- 3.) Malibu Beach Restoration to provide combined mitigation solutions.
- 4.) A Section 208 modification is needed to provide sewer service to the new Visitors Center.
- 5.) Relocation of parking lot on Rainbow Island from underneath the bridge to an area just adjacent to the bridge to address homeland security measures.

**Public Involvement** - Baker summarized the efforts being taken in both Ocean City and Somers Point to encourage the general public to attend the two Public Information Meetings (May 20 and May 28):

- 1.) DOT approved press releases have been distributed to the administrative offices of both communities. These agencies, in turn, will post public meeting announcements in area newspapers and public cable TV channels.
- 2.) Individual residential notices have been printed and mailed to residents within 200 ft. of the project.
- 3.) The Ocean City Chamber of Commerce and the Ocean City Office of Public Information will distribute 1,000 flyers to the general public.
- 4.) NJDOT website has been updated to contain a notice of the May 20 and May 28 public meetings. The public is encouraged to provide comments.

**Maintenance of Traffic during Construction:**

- 1.) NJDOT will provide regular traffic advisories on its website.
- 2.) Construction will be minimal during the tourist season. During the construction season, it can occur around the clock.
- 3.) With the exception of occasional minimal closings, NJDOT will maintain two lanes of traffic in each direction during construction in peak season and one lane in each direction during off-peak season.
- 4.) There could be minimal closings of the highway for no more than 1-2 hours at a time, during night hours (i.e. to hoist beams, etc.).
- 5.) Businesses will have advance notice of any closures.
- 6.) Marine traffic for large vessels along Ship Channel and Beach Thorofare (ICWW) will be restricted between 30-60 days in the off-peak season during construction, as it will be necessary to relocate the channels and demolish the old bridge. Large vessels must relocate during this period if they are to reach the open sea.

**Lighting/Railings/Pier Configuration** – Baker presented various options that are under consideration for the lighting, railings and pier configuration to be used on the causeway. For the lighting, a fourth option is also under consideration that was not part of the PowerPoint presentation. NJDOT encouraged all participants to offer their suggestions on the lighting/railing options.

The briefings were well received by both audiences.