



**ROUTE 52 CAUSEWAY REPLACEMENT PROJECT
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING NO. 4 REPORT**

DATE: June 26, 2003
 TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
 LOCATION: Office of Michael Baker, Jr., Princeton, NJ - Conference Room

ATTENDEES:	REPRESENTING:	PHONE:
Carol Beske (CB)	ACT Engineers, Inc.	609-918-0200
Shay Burrows (LC)	FHWA	609-637-4239
Nick Caiazza (NC)	NJDOT, Environmental Services	609-530-2991
Martine Culbertson (MC)	M. A. Culbertson, LLC	856-795-8485
Sylvester Fryc (SF)	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.	609-734-7971
Fred Gottemoeller (FG)	RG&A	301-490-6088
Dave Lambert (DL)	NJDOT, Div. of Project Mgmt.	609-530-4235
Tony Marsella (TM)	NJDOT, Community Relations	609-530-6116
Ahmad Qureshi (AQ)	NJDOT, E-Team	609-530-3716
Marshall Robert (MR)	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.	609-734-7946
Mike Sidani (MS)	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.	609-734-7964
Phyllis St. Onge (PS)	M. A. Culbertson, LLC	856-795-8485

1. PURPOSE OF MEETING

To provide project status and schedule, review Public Information Center meeting results, discuss task force project items, and identify next steps for CPT meetings and outreach efforts. (Agenda attached)

2. MEETING SUMMARY

I. Project Status

(MS) opened the meeting and provided a summary of the public information center meetings. Both meetings were well attended and both communities favorably supported the proposed bridge replacement concepts.

(DL) noted the scale mapping and model were very helpful at both meetings. They were both useful and well received by the general public in understanding the proposed design improvements.

(CB) reviewed the PIC questionnaire results. She distributed a summary of the questionnaire response data and of the comments received at both meetings. The Steering Committee reviewed each item.

1. Piers - The Y-shape is narrower at the base so it is easier to permit since less land impact, however at low elevations it may be better to have only a column structure. It was questioned if either option is better for pre-casting and if costs are equal. It was agreed by the committee that either design can be refined where in high elevation the Y shape may be used but in low-level areas, it would not be effective. The cost needs to be determined and the design of the base. Functionality must also be given consideration in the selection of piers. The Y-shape has a more "signature" look. This led to a discussion on historic considerations.

2. Pedestrian Railing - The preference was for contemporary style. Determine if it is a stock item. Both are custom railings however the maintenance of the contemporary may vary from the classic style. A perceived safety concern by the public was that children may use the classical style as something to climb on easily. There was the suggestion to use one type of railing in areas where there are high volumes of pedestrians and perhaps a variation on railing may be possible in other areas. It was noted to give historic consideration and to be consistent with MOA documentation. For example the fishing areas, dock areas, and touch down may vary to remain within the guidelines. Need to further examine the inside roadway railing in contrast to the outside railing if either is visible at the same time.

3. Bridge Lighting - Railing lighting is not recommended by NJDOT. Light spillage must be minimized for the heron rookery areas. Light pollution with indirect lighting must be examined. Underlighting of piers can be directed down with cut off lights where the lens refracts light. Preference for Option D gives the best continuous sense over the whole structure, but modify to have no roadway spillage, but ample lighting for safety. Directed lighting is preferred.

The options for the pier shape, railing and lighting need to be reviewed with SPHO on historic context. The Steering Committee agreed that Baker draft the design guidelines as a context statement for the project acceptable by SHPO and then examine which of the proposed aesthetic options are consistent with the guidelines and historic compliance. The project must maintain historic consistency by means of establishing a historic context statement and design guidelines. Baker to set up meeting with Charles Scott and Steve Hardegen from SHPO. (*ACTION*)

4. Other Comments -

A barge owner indicated that he may not need the 55' foot vertical clearance under the bridge. However, it would be easier to use a span adjacent to the main channel. So if possible, it was suggested to provide fendering in other span areas aside from only the main channel.

The Pleasure Avenue comments need to be addressed by Ocean City since that roadway is under City jurisdiction, not NJDOT. People were directed to send comments to the Mayor for review. Coordination with the City to review Pleasure Avenue circulation issue.

The comments pertaining to the Mays Landing issue reveal a perception that more traffic will occur with the improvements to MacArthur Boulevard. Some comments expressed a wish to have Exit 30 moved to the county road, Mays Landing road. That option was considered and rejected in the EIS due to high impacts to residential and business properties.

The question was raised as to whether the data from the questionnaires should be placed on the web site. The Steering Committee agreed that a summary of each of the Public Information Center meetings should be posted. The questionnaire data needs to be examined and taken into consideration with the NJDOT and SHPO requirements prior to a determination and resolution of the options can be made. (CB) and (TM) to create brief summaries of the PIC meetings for posting on the web site. (ACTION)

II. Project Status and Update

Causeway Aesthetics Task Force Items

- There was a suggestion to provide a rumble strip by saw cutting of deck surface to reduce speed. This can only occur if there are no rattle noises due to the close proximity of residential homes at the 9th Street Bridge. Rumble strips will not be provided.
- John Austin has been reviewing the median issue with neighbors. They support the median concept. Additional work by Baker is needed to meet drainage and determine grading and landscaping options. (ACTION)
- Visual screening issues will require another task force meeting during Final Design to determine options such as work by local artists or provision of gateway signage. Historic consideration must be given. (FG) has seen plans for the 9th Street business streetscape design. Maintain on-going coordination with CPT representatives during Contract B design phase.
- Somers Point businesses are concerned that landscaping coordination be in balance with the amount of parking available. Water quality is another issue regarding the amount of space given for parking verses green area. Drainage design to be completed by the Fall 2003.
- Diner has sign relocation needed. (CB) to contact Diner to discuss signage relocation. (TM) and Baker will assist in the coordination and discussion of relocation options.

Mobility, Access & Circulation Task Force Items

- Chinese Restaurant issues are under coordination with Right-of-Way. A draft is needed for justification of acquisition - including a description of how this acquisition evolved. Baker to send to (DL) and to (TM). (ACTION).
- Theater site coordination needed to examine designer's plans. Baker to contact property owner to review plans. (ACTION).
- Hotel to coordinate with joint shared access to property (TM) to contact hotel owners to review shared access and design plans. Baker will assist in coordination. (ACTION).

- Shoulders widths in Somers Point were reduced from 10 ft. to 8 ft. due to access limitations.
- The traffic signal at Somers Avenue and Shore Road does not conflict with future plans for the area. It is an added design element.
- Baker is working with Somers Point on the Gateway connector road to Route 52. If they add a light, then the one at Braddock Ave would be removed. Need to review with traffic safety officer in Somers Point and NJDOT Traffic Bureau.
- There was a suggestion to place utilities on MacArthur Boulevard underground. This would be a substantial cost that is not required for this project. It would have to be considered as a betterment project. It may be that underground utilities in front of the Somers Mansion might be warranted due to a possible historic visual impact.

Traffic Staging and Management Task Force Items

- Once the contract has been awarded, this task force will meet to review traffic management plans and signal timing coordination is needed between the communities and the counties.

Public Information and Awareness

- The web site has received an average of 1500 hits per month.
- PIC summaries to be placed on the web site. *(ACTION)*
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs) should be reviewed and updated as needed for example the estimated construction cost and schedule. *(ACTION)*
- On July 8th there is a presentation to the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce scheduled. Dave Lambert, Mike Sidani and Marshall Robert are to attend. *(ACTION)*

Environmental Process Task Force Items

- Complete environmental re-evaluation technical report. This is needed to justify ER. Baker to send drafts to NJDOT in the next week. *(ACTION)*
- SHPO coordination needed for MOA process to date. (FG) to send documentation to Baker. Need to add coordination for extended footprint to remove Shore Road bridge and put in signal. *(ACTION)*
- Historical Society of Atlantic City - expand parking for a historic building at north side of Park. Need coordination with State Site Council on encroachment of Bay Historic District and historic impact to Somers Mansion. There are no takes, but potential visual impacts. *(ACTION)*
- Need to review with DEP the heron rookery data. Added flight surveys to determine size and use of rookeries. Preliminary studies indicate that both are active. Information from the study will go into the NEPA document/report. Need to enforce rule that dogs be leashed at the Visitors Center as well as other considerations to protect the heron rookeries. *(ACTION)*

- Malibu Beach aerial photos and delineation will be available in digital mapping format next week. New analysis including erosion study to determine mitigation opportunity. Baker to provide (NC) with copies of mapping and graphs. *(ACTION)*
- Green Acres currently estimating the land acres for mitigation or just preservation for DEP. Protection credit meeting with DEP, NJDOT to buy property or give land as use off-site wetlands mitigation scheduled for July 18.
- Coast Guard comments and final responses to comments are due within the next few weeks. Vertical clearance is to be verified. Coordination during final design for 55-foot clearance.
- There is an outstanding issue of minimal depth of channel for the ship channel (9 ft.) and the Intracoastal Waterway (12 ft.). The Army Corps of Engineers indicates only a six-foot requirement for the Intracoastal Waterway (ICWW). The proposed nine feet means additional dredging at Ship Channel is required, so the amount to be approved must be finalized to determine project costs. The Ship Channel is under NJDEP jurisdiction. (NC) to obtain official letter from NJDOT to DEP regarding the Ship Channel requirement. Draft to (DL) to send to DEP. (SB) offered FHWA assistance with the Corps if needed to finalize the approved channel depth. (NC) noted that if dredging is required in areas other than those indicated in the EIS, they must be reported in the documentation. *(ACTION)*
- The Bioengineering Group to start fieldwork to determine conditions for shoreline protection (5800 feet). Protect islands to get credit for mitigation and manage man-made effects. Coordinate with Green Acres, meet with Dave Smith, Stuart, Nick, Dave and Mike. Must include mitigation approval of DEP. *(ACTION)*
- Scour coordination and determination of any profile changes. (MR) to email comments to (NC). *(ACTION)*
- Two issues to resolve with DEP - design of Visitors Center next to the rookery and bump outs on causeway for fishing use. Dave Jenkins to discuss land use increase of possible wetland impact and mitigation. (NC) to review on fishing limitations on the sidewalks so to prevent conflicts with boaters in the water below. (MR) to send letter to (NC) regarding bump out areas - some may be rest areas only and other may be shared for fishing use. ADA compliance may not be possible at some of the areas due to the grade. There will be no fishing over the main channels.

III. Project Items and Next Steps

CPT Items

- (MC) to distribute Steering Committee meeting reports after approval by committee members and to send them to Bill Felix for posting on the web site. *(ACTION)*
- Steering Committee members to review the CPT flow chart and team charter so they may also be distributed to CPT members and posted on the web site. Team charter will be modified to include additional signatures. *(ACTION)*
- (MC) to send CPT display board electronic file to Bill Felix for posting on the web site. *(ACTION)*

IV. Summary and Close

For next steps, Mike Sidani mentioned that the next Steering Committee meeting would be in September or October once a number of the design issues have been examined and studies completed as discussed during the meeting. The next CPT meeting would be no sooner than late fall / November 2003. Courtesy calls and emails will be used to maintain communication with CPT members as needed over the summer.

Dave Lambert adjourned the meeting acknowledging the progress the project has been and the team's contributions in having successful public information center meetings and community support for the project. The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

3. NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Date : September/October, 2003

Time : 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Location : New Office of Michael Baker, Jr., Princeton, NJ

We believe the foregoing to be an accurate summary of discussions and related decisions. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to the minutes within three (3) working days of receipt. Without notification, we will consider these minutes to be record of fact.

Martine Culbertson
RT52 CPT Facilitator