

Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group (BBRAG)

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Scheduled 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Actual Meeting Duration: 6:09 – 7:32 p.m.

Members Present

Jack Broderick
Barbara Hitchings
Barbara Obert
Pat Lynch
Tracy Schulz
Bill Nevel

MDTA & MDOT SHA Staff

Melissa Williams, MDTA
Melissa Bogdan, MDTA
Richard Jaramillo, MDTA
Paul Bruce, MDTA
David Ramnath, MDTA
John O’Neill, MDTA
Will Pines, MDTA
Mary O’Keeffe, MDTA
Kellie Boulware, SHA

Other Attendees

Delegate Heather Bagnell, Anne Arundel County District 33
Luke Tudball, Office of Delegate Bagnell
Council Member Amanda Fiedler Anne Arundel County
Scott Haas, Queen Anne’s County DES
Steve Cahoon, Queen Anne’s County DPW
Sam Biddle, RMC

Media

N/A

Handouts

N/A

Opening Remarks – 6:09 p.m.

Mr. Broderick began the meeting by welcoming attendees and introductions were made around the room. It was determined that the last couple of months have been challenging and frustrating. Members have been asked to reapply for BBRAG. Most of the members have reapplied except for Bill Nevel and Nick Deoudes, who decided not to. Sent a sharp message to many at the state. There’s been an intent to reconfigure the BBRAG which was discussed among all members. The Westbound Bay Bridge Deck Rehabilitation Project is the biggest reconstruction project and BBRAG members feel that are at a loss to provide any advice regarding the project. Current BBRAG members would like to have a bigger role and shouldn’t have to learn about any future projects in the newspaper. BBRAG members feel they would not

have any information to take to their communities. Going forward, BBAG members want to be a part of the process and to be involved in a constructive future.

June 12, 2019 minutes were reviewed.

6:16 p.m. June 12, 2019 minutes were accepted.

Bay Bridge Westbound Deck Rehabilitation Project – 6:16 p.m.

Mr. Pines presented on the Westbound Bay Bridge Deck Rehabilitation Project which begin in September 2019 with construction completing in August 2021. Construction project includes:

- Inspections indicating that the Right Lane is significantly in need of repair
- Removing existing overlay and replacing with LMC, Full Time barrier separated lane closure, nighttime full bridge closures & daytime lane closures
- Contra flow begins at 8:00pm – full closure 9:00pm – 5:00am
- Complete deck repairs in Center and Left Lanes, Seal the entire bridge deck, Upgrading and Replacing Lane use signals and gantries, Replacing rail posts
- Actual deck condition demonstrate that work is needed now to avoid longer and more costly re-decking
- Traffic impacts indicated that typical weekday queues during construction period estimated to be up to 3 miles during normal conditions and worse during holidays, weather, or incidents. Volumes in 2006 are similar to current conditions and are expected too see similar congestion during construction
- Due to over traffic impacts, extensive public outreach campaigns will be required

Work operations for the Westbound Bay Bridge Deck Rehabilitation Project include Line Restriping and Traffic Devices, Barrier and Gawk Screen Replacement, Mechanical Milling and Chipping, Mechanical Cleanup and Hydro Setup, Hydro-Milling/Cleanup, Screening Setup and Pouring LMC, and 5-day cure. Width of eastbound lanes will be 13 feet and because of 5-day cure and milling operation – can't do a 5 day only operation

Mr. Broderick – Copies of briefings show 3 new different segments of the Jersey wall barrier, what is that?

Mr. Pines – The original 2 zones (zone 2 and 4) will reopen for Thanksgiving. To finish this project to explore leaving barrier for Thanksgiving.

Mr. O'Neill – Suggestions from QAC are being investigated now.

Mr. Pines – The contractor stated that they cannot finish in 1 year if they take down Thanksgiving Barrier. However, there will be significant delays.

Mr. Schulz – Get it done.

Mr. Broderick -

Mr. O'Neill – In the first Friday there were 7 incidents, but they had nothing to do with construction.

Mr. Broderick – Contra flow restrictions had massive impacts to the island.

Mr. Pines – Balancing the needs of everyone, this not a new problem at the bay bridge.

Ms. Lynch – What is the width of the final striping?

Mr. Pines – 13, 12, 13 as it was before the project.

Ms. Lynch – The contra flow cone setting is cumbersome. I don't see why technology wasn't implemented in anticipation of this project.

Mr. Pines – We project to deploy an automated gate system. Lessons learned is we don't do experimental at the bay bridge. Gate system took time to research and test.

Ms. Lynch – The Gate system could have been done earlier.

Mr. Pines – It's the first time in Maryland. Takes time.

Mr. Jaramillo – It takes a thorough investigation.

Mr. Nevel – Will gates make a big difference?

Mr. Pines – It'll deploy contra flow faster. But Governor stated the real solution is a new bridge.

Mr. Jaramillo – This also resolves safety to staff to deploy contra flow.

Ms. Hitchings – When is the decision about Thanksgiving?

Mr. O'Neill – Soon.

Ms. Hitchings – What is the timeframe for gate system?

Mr. Pines – Completion planned in 2021. Only for the Eastern Shore Side. Western shore with AET.

Mr. Schulz – When is AET?

Mr. Pines – We don't have a date yet – looking at as soon as possible.

Ms. Hitchings – Eastern shore side for both bridges?

Mr. Pines – That is correct.

Ms. Hitchings – Will closures be needed for gate projects?

Mr. Pines – They will be installed during night work hours.

Ms. Hitchings – What about the impact of trucks being so close to the curing process?

Mr. Pines – FMT is similar so it's typical.

Mr. Broderick – 2005/2006 didn't cause backups.

Mr. O'Neill – No it caused major backups.

Mr. Broderick – BBRAG was involved in the repaneling. BBRAG could articulate the need to community. I wish we would have had this presentation 6 months ago.

Mr. Pines – August 6 Jim Ports didn't like the social media strategy. We are making an effort for face to face. We agree with you and heard that from the governor today. We are committed.

Mr. Jaramillo – We have worked with EMS meetings.

Ms. Lynch – The county executive wasn't alerted about BCS 3 bridges. Travelling eastbound with the toll booths while merging into traffic seems dangerous from wide toll booth lanes.

Mr. Pines – 70% reduction in accidents when toll booths are removed.

Mr. Pines – These things are going to help but doesn't address the volume.

Ms. Lynch – Why were Hatem and FSK converted to AET first?

Mr. O'Neill – This is our first conversion and we chose those locations due to the low volumes. More E-ZPass penetration. More controlled environment. People will stop at the plaza even though we are not taking cash which causes backups and creating accidents.

Ms. Bogdan – Sign up at Granicus.

Mr. Broderick – Send to BBRAG members to push out.

Ms. Hitchings – Forward suggestions and new BBRAG members should build contact list. Great job getting notification from schools to parents.

Ms. Hitchings – We haven't effectively created plans as a collective of all the jurisdictions, so it doesn't all fall on MDTA. Future BBRAG members need to address.

Mr. Broderick – Whose barrels on Kent island?

Mr. Pines – Our contractor. We've gotten feedback around Duke street, so we made adjustments. It allows us to mobilize 2-way operations.

Mr. Broderick – Will contra flow be possible on the other bridge?

Mr. Pines – It is not feasible.

Mr. Schulz – People would rather you work through thanksgiving than work 2 years.

Mr. Pines – Backups will be similar to now.

Mr. Schulz – Have you considered additional crews?

Mr. Pines – We are looking into additional crews.

Mr. Broderick – Why wasn't BBRAG involved?

Mr. O'Neill – As an active procurement, we can't discuss it. We are looking at how we can better share information given the complexity of the planning process.

Mr. Pines – There is a list of projects given to QAC and on their website.

Mr. O'Neill – That information can be shared.

Ms. Lynch – We are smart people and have advice to give you as you plan the new bridge. Tappan Zee bridge is a huge lane for buses.

Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study Tier 1 NEPA Update – 7:41 p.m.

Ms. Williams provided the following updates on MDTA Chesapeake Bay Crossing Study Tier 1 NEPA:

MDTA is hosting a series of Open House Meetings to provide updates on the Bay Crossing Study. We have 7 meetings scheduled, with 6 completed earlier this month and our last meeting is on Monday, October 28th at Annapolis High School at 6:00pm-8:00pm.

At the meetings, we shared information about:

- The environmental review process
- The overall study schedule
- Public comments received to date
- As well as the alternatives development, screening process and results.

The meetings have been very well attended, with about 1,000 attendees total to date. Following the Public Meetings, MDTA will be refining the CARA (corridor alternatives retained for analysis) and prepare to come back out to the public in the fall of 2020 with a preferred corridor alternative. With an anticipated selected corridor alternative, in the summer of 2021.

To date, we have received over 300 public comments from the 6 meetings. We are working diligently to get all comments redacted to remove personal information so that we can add the comments to the web page. As of this summer, about 50% of our comments received focused on specific crossing locations the environment/land use.

At the Public Meetings we are sharing the 14 identified corridor alternatives. These corridor alternatives:

- Are approximately 2 miles wide
- Are generally perpendicular to the shorelines
- Generally, avoid towns and developed areas
- Extend from a freeway or major state highway on the western shore to US 301 or US 50 or 13 on the Eastern Shore.

The 14 corridor alternatives were narrowed down according to which corridors best meet the purpose and need of the project. The CARA are:

- 6: MD 100 to US 301 between Pasadena (AA Co) Rock Hall (Kent Co) and Centreville (QA Co)
- 7: (where the existing bridges are located) US 50/301 to US 50 between Crofton (AA Co) and Queenstown (QA Co)
- and 8: US 50/301 between Crofton (AA Co) and Easton (Talbot Co)

At the Public Meetings, displays are available for viewing in large poster board format with staff available to answer your questions, a narrated video also explains the displays at the Public Meetings. The video is also available online at www.baycrossingstudy.com

If you haven't had a chance to make it to one of the Public Meetings, we encourage you to join us on October 28th at Annapolis High School.

Ms. Lynch – You did a super job on that video.

Mr. Nevel – Can you give us a rough timeframe of what happens next?

Ms. Williams – A further detailed analysis on corridors 6,7,8 will be discussed at our Public Hearing in the Fall 2020.

Mr. Schulz – Trump wants to reduce NEPA process and would be a 2-year process.

Ms. Williams – Our goal is 2 years from NOI to ROD.

Mr. Nevel – ROD for both Tier 1 and 2?

Ms. Williams – Yes, Tier 2 is a whole new process.

Ms. Williams – Corridors 6,7,8 are seeking Federal Approval.

Ms. Hitchings – We do not have the infrastructure for another span, not being taken care of as it is now.

Ms. Williams – As part of the NEPA process, you have to consider it.

Mr. Nevel – Did you look at the amount of infrastructure you would need?

Ms. Williams – High level now. Tier 2 is more detailed.

Traffic and Community Roads – 7:57 p.m.

Handout from Barbara Hitchings (written prior to WB project)

Crownsville Renaissance Festival – trial basis proposal example

Request feedback from BBAG members.

Ms. Williams – Sign up for alerts via text or email - Commercial Vehicle Notifications #BayBridgeWork

Ms. Lynch – Send the sign-up information to the BBAG group.

Discussion of traffic management coordination among jurisdictions.

EMS: Bussing problems in QAC is due to traffic backups on the 2nd pick up.

Mr. Cahoon – We need to measure the impact not just in miles of backups but the residual impact.

Ms. Obert – Stressed the importance of scheduling workshop w/ SHA, MDOT, Government and County Law enforcement.

Ms. Hitchings - Motion to for MDTA facilitate a discussion involving other necessary agencies, local representatives to address the community road problems on both sides of the Bridge.

Mr. Nevel: Second.

Announcements/Concerns/Updates – 8:30 p.m.

Ms. Lynch – Thank you Heather Bagnell.

Mr. Broderick – Tonight was very constructive. Information was very helpful and informative. Thanks to all the BBAG members for the many years we've worked together. Thank you for the opportunity that BBAG provides.

Meeting Adjourned – 8:35 p.m.