

Maryland Transportation Authority Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, January 4, 2017

Members Present

Jack Broderick, Chairman
Barbara Hitchings
Nick Deoudes
Nancy Wright
Tracy Schultz
Pat Lynch
Barbara Span-Obert
Delores Green
Dick Ladd

MDTA Staff

Tim Cooke
Melissa Williams
Richard Jaramillo
Michele Gross
Lt. Jason Pulliam

Other Attendees

John Narer (SHA)
Bob Rager (SHA)
Hilary Gonzales (SHA)

Opening Remarks

Mr. Cooke thanked the group for their generous donation to Ricky's family and how very much it was appreciated.

The meeting minutes from October were reviewed, amendments were made.

MDTA 10K Across the Bay

The Across the Bay 10K was another huge success. 24,210 people participated from 47 states and 6 different countries. The first wave started at 6:45 am and the bridge was cleared to open at 12:30 pm. Iron Man has acquired the organization but Sparrow will continue with the new organization in a consulting role. Mr. Deoudes asked if anyone has tried to sue the Bay Bridge run. Ms. Williams said no.

MDTA System Preservation Projects

Mr. Jaramillo gave a run-down of the on-going and near future Bay Bridge System Preservation projects.

- The cable rewinding and dehumidification that occurred last summer will be maintained and monitored by the contractor through 2018.
- Phase 4 painting has a Notice to Proceed (NTP) for April 2017
- Westbound suspension cable rehabilitation project had its NTP issued in July. The project will span two years and supplement existing cables. Work will be day and night, mostly done via access from the water

MDTA Bay Bridge General Discussion

Mr. Broderick spoke about the heightened traffic challenges during this time of the year because of the current construction. Mr. Jaramillo talked about an upswing in traffic on Sundays as well as the New Year's Eve traffic for Ocean City. Both holidays on the weekend in December were a challenge and the MDTA is always looking to make improvements. Ms. Lynch asked if screens could be put up so travelers don't slow down looking at the construction. Mr. Jaramillo responded that it's very complicated and MDTA has looked at it but it won't work right now. Ms. Lynch said people are more sensitive to it now and they are used to them elsewhere. Mr. Jaramillo said that screens over a four mile bridge is much different than on smaller bridges. Mr. Narer said SHA has used them in the past but only as last resorts. Mr. Jaramillo said when MDTA looks at when to use these, input is gathered from every division.

Mr. Ladd talked about the sea level rise in Annapolis and mentioned the low lands surrounding the bridge. He asked the MDTA if this was a concern at the moment. Mr. Jaramillo said people on Kent Island have seen this issue recently but the MDTA hasn't seen anything that is impactful to the bridge.

Ms. Lynch spoke about the concern with forecasted traffic numbers versus forecasted numbers. MDTA said they will provide a quarterly traffic report via Mr. Jaramillo.

Mr. Deodes asked about the recent accident during contra-flow. There was criticism locally but also questions as to whether it was a head on collision and if wind speeds were a factor. Mr. Jaramillo and Lt. Pulliam said the collision was not head on and wind speeds did not factor in. Lt. Pulliam said the MDTA could have done a little better with communication via social media and other outlets but that they had to use common sense to make sure it was handled correctly. The collision was alcohol related.

SHA Construction Updates – Western Shore

Completed work –

- Lots of paving on the Broadneck Peninsula this season.....45 thousand tons of asphalt went down on MD 179, Route 50 eastbound and Route 50 southbound from the Oceanic Drive to Whitehall Road.

Work To Begin –

- MD 50 from MD 665 to Severn River Bridge (AA8225174) with an estimated Notice to Proceed: Spring 2017
 - Mr. Ladd asked how community outreach will work for this project since it will have an impact. Ms. Gonzales said they are currently working on messaging which will include mailings, community updates, and social media. Ms. Lynch offered Ms. Gonzales the opportunity to update the Broadneck Council about this project.
- MD 50 Guardrail Project (AA4115177) with an estimated Notice to Proceed: Summer 2017
- MD 50 Concrete Median Barrier US 50 from MD 70 to MD 2 (AA2215170). New median on the bridge deck to add a 4th eastbound lane with an estimated Notice to Proceed: Summer 2017

SHA Construction Updates – Eastern Shore

- SHA will pave US 50/301 westbound from Queenstown to Bay Bridge/MdTA maintenance in 2017. Two contracts. The first will cover US 50/301 from Queenstown split to Kent Narrows bridge. This contract has been awarded to David A. Bramble of Chestertown (\$2.8 million). Expect night work beginning in the spring. The second contract (Kent Narrows to Bay Bridge) will advertise for bids by early February with work starting this summer or fall. Look for eastbound paving in 2018.
- Emergency pipe replacement may be necessary this winter on US 50 in Trappe. SHA is currently working out plan details. This work would likely require US 50 to run bidirectional (contraflow) on one side of the divided highway. A speed reduction would be necessary to accomplish this. Work could begin as soon as late January and take 4-6 weeks but schedule is not firm at this time. Much depends on availability of asphalt to construct median crossovers.
- US 50/13 Salisbury Bypass 11-bridge rehabilitation with bidirectional traffic is proceeding on-schedule. Expect shift out of bidirectional pattern and back to normal flow north of the US 50 Business interchange by May, in time for the beach season.
 - Mr. Ladd asked if SHA believes that traffic will divert on to US 301 from Delaware. Mr. Rager spoke about the Toll Diversion Working Group in Maryland Delaware and that RK&K did the study. Mr. Broderick asked if a truck weigh station could help
- US 301/MD 304 overpass – job is progressing on-schedule. Contractor may begin setting steel beams across US 301 in February. This will require several intermittent, short (about 15 minutes) closures of US 301 during overnight hours. About two weeks total needed to complete steel sets but this work may be spread out over several weeks depending on weather and site conditions.
- MD 404 dualization from US 50 to Denton – traffic shift coming in January to facilitate drainage work under the existing alignment which will become the new eastbound lanes. Work will continue through the spring and summer toward a substantial completion date of Thanksgiving 2017. This is an aggressive schedule and SHA will begin reaching out to motorists by late winter to encourage off-peak

beach travel and use of alternate routes. Motorists should expect multiple flagging operations and delays.

Bay Bridge Master Plan Study

Ms. Williams spoke about being named Acting Director and that Tim Cooke was the Assistant Project Manager for this study. Mr. Ladd asked about the name change and said that labels matter. Ms. Williams explained the differences between PEL, Master Plan, and Tier 1 NEPA. She said there is currently no change in schedule with the label of Master Plan study. Mr. Ladd asked if we could move the process along any faster. Ms. Williams said the study will be done in two phases. 45% of the work will be done in phase 1 and 55% in phase 2. The study team will narrow potential locations that span the full width of the bay.

Ms. Williams said that at the April meeting, she is going to have Tim Ryan come to talk to the group about the methodology in collecting and forecasting traffic data so that the group can better understand how the projected models work.

Ms. Williams talked about the schedule. NTP in January kicked off the project. Phase 1 will be to August 2018 and Phase 2 will be to the end of 2020. Public Involvement will begin in the fall of 2017. Ms. Lynch and Mr. Ladd said they will reach out to their elected representatives to try to get more money for this project in hopes of moving it along faster.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm

Next meeting Wednesday, April 12, 2017.