



Design Advisory Group Meeting #11
Magnolia United Church of Christ, February 4, 2004, 4-6 PM

Summary Minutes

Agenda

- I. Welcome
- II. What's Happened Since Our Last Meeting?
 - a. Alternative H/Port's activities
 - b. Park property
 - c. Discipline report update
 - d. Business interviews
 - e. IDT
 - f. November 20th Open House/Galer briefing
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Adjourn

Attendees

Design Advisory Group

- ✓ Dan Burke
- ✓ Fran Calhoun
- ✓ John Coney
- Eric Fahlman
- ✓ Erin Fletcher
- ✓ Bob Holmstrom
- ✓ Lise Kenworthy
- ✓ Doug Lorentzen
- ✓ Jose Montaña
- ✓ Mike Smith
- David Spiker
- Dan Bartlett (alternate)
- Robert Foxworthy (alternate)
- Janis Traven (alternate)

Project Team

- ✓ Lesley Bain, Weinstein A|U
- ✓ Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues
- Richard Butler, Shapiro
- ✓ Hadley Greene, EnviroIssues
- Brad Hoff, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Katharine Hough, HNTB
- ✓ Steve Johnson, Johnson Archts
- ✓ Kirk Jones, City of Seattle
- ✓ Anthony Katsaros, Shapiro
- ✓ Teresa Platt, City of Seattle
- ✓ Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates
- ✓ Lamar Scott, KPFF
- ✓ Peter Smith, HNTB
- ✓ Marybeth Turner, City of Seattle

Meeting Handouts

- ✓ Agenda
- ✓ DAG #10 Summary Minutes
- ✓ Park Transfer Parcels Map
- ✓ Galer Meeting Summary
- ✓ November 20, 3003 Open House Summary
- ✓ Final Study Plan



I. Welcome

Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues

Kirk Jones welcomed the group and asked for comments on the November DAG meeting minutes. After a brief discussion, Sarah Brandt said the team would be happy to entertain further comments after group members had a chance to review the summary, but hoped to post the final summary on the Web soon.

Discussion:

Kenworthy The viewpoint report should reflect the committee's desire to encourage federal funding. DAG members want the visual quality package to reflect the committee's desire to have the photos show the magic and beauty of the study area for potential reviewers and funders in the east. The minutes should reflect the group's consensus.

Conclusion: The November 5, 2003 DAG minutes were accepted with above consensus noted and pending any further comment received from DAG members by Friday February 6th.

II. What's Happened Since Our Last Meeting?

Kirk Jones, SDOT Project Manager

Alternative H/Port's Activities

Kirk Jones said that many things have happened since the last DAG meeting. He said that most of the discipline reports are in the second review cycle, except for the traffic report because the team has run into difficulties with Alternative H that have required further traffic analysis on the Alaskan Way W connection with the Galer Flyover. The results, so far, suggest a fatal flaw in this alternative. If the team determines that there is a fatal flaw in Alternative H, then it will not carry that Alternative through into the EIS.

Kirk also mentioned that the Port of Seattle has told the City that the Magnolia Bridge Project's traffic projections do not match their projections for the amount of traffic that will be accessing their North Bay property in the future. In particular, elevated signalized intersections may not work with the amount of traffic they project. Kirk said the Port's development may have an impact, but restrictions on the capacity of 15th Avenue W and Elliott Avenue limit the amount of traffic that the area can handle. Dan Burke said the Port is also concerned that in Alternative A-Ramps the volume of traffic merging on the new bridge could result in a weaving problem.

Because of these concerns, Kirk explained, the Port is looking at how things can be done differently to allow for future flexibility. The Port has proposed a general scheme that is similar to Alternative D, although it swings farther north. The Port's proposed alternative connects to the same location at 15th Avenue W as Alternative D, but touches ground near the north end of the existing cold storage buildings and then runs along the surface, thus avoiding existing businesses (such as City Ice and Trident). The surface road will

make it easier to adjustment the intersections in the future if needed. The alignment becomes an aerial structure to the west of the existing buildings to get up to Galer Street on the top of the bluff.

Dan Burke emphasized that the Port's North Bay team is still developing the proposed alignment, and will present it to the Port Commission on February 19th for approval. If the Commission approves it, the Port will then make a formal request to the City to include the new alignment in the Magnolia Bridge Project EIS. Kirk said that if the alignment becomes a new EIS alternative, it will have to undergo the same analysis that has been done on the other alternatives. It will take approximately four to six months to do the additional technical work, such as bringing the new alternative up to the same level of design as Alternatives A and D and completing the additional geotechnical and environmental drilling, and to rewrite the discipline reports. Some models, such as the noise model, will have to be run again, but traffic impacts will most likely remain the same. The two projects plan to work together, and will coordinate before construction begins.

Kirk told the group that the team plans to have definite direction on these issues by the March DAG meeting, including how the Magnolia Bridge Project's schedule may be modified.

Discussion:

- Coney** How does the fatal flaw on Alternative H play out on Alternative D?
- Jones** Alternative D does not use the Galer Flyover.
- Coney** Why not use the current 15th Ave W connection in Alternative H instead of insisting on using the Galer Flyover?
- Jones** Because then the alternative would touch down on the surface for a very short distance (just enough for an intersection) and then start back up on a structure to connect to Galer at the top of the bluff.
- Coney** Would it be possible to substitute Alternative D for the south part of Alternative H?
- Jones** With the capacity of Alternative D there would be no need, or enough demand, for the north portion of Alternative H.
- Coney** What will happen when the one bridge in Alternative D goes down? What would be the alternative access route?
- Jones** The new bridge will be built to current design standards, if it went down in an earthquake, the whole city would have serious problems.

- Coney** SDOT is trying to deny people a fourth access point. The arguments against the north part of Alternative H are not adequate.
- Jones** SDOT needs to design something that will get federal funding and, right now, Alternative H will not.
- Kenworthy** Will the Magnolia Bridge team be a part of the February 19th presentation to the Port Commission?
- Jones** No.
- Kenworthy** What are the Port's issues with Alternative A?
- Burke** The Port's biggest problem is that the City has been looking at the existing conditions zoning as the basis for all the project's analysis. The Port feels that to assume the zoning will stay industrial for decades to come is to limit future development possibilities. The Port has specific concerns about merging trucks with general traffic on a single facility, as right now many trucks use the Galer Flyover instead of the Magnolia Bridge. The Port also wants to look at future land use potentials, which could mean more traffic. The Port is concerned that something will be built that cannot be adjusted in the future and wants to be sure that what is built is useful for whatever land use possibilities may arise.
- Kenworthy** I would like a list of specific problems, from a traffic perspective, from the Port. We need to come up with a constructive alternative that works.
- Kenworthy** Are the rumors true that, instead of feeding into Thorndyke, the Port's new alternative will feed into a ramp that connects up to the bluff?
- Burke** One of the variations the Port is considering takes into account that connecting to Thorndyke might be politically difficult. The Port is thinking of modifying the north part of Alternative H and having it connect the north portion of the Port's project at 20th Avenue W. There would also be the option to tie into the hillside where the current bridge connects.
- Jones** The Magnolia Bridge Project would only be looking at the Port's alternative that is similar to Alternative D, but farther north. Other connections to 15th Avenue W may be required if denser development comes to North Bay, but they would be included in the Port's analysis as part of the North Bay project. The Magnolia Bridge Project is looking at North Bay development that could happen under existing zoning. The Port is looking at higher density development and the modifications to the City's project that may be required with the higher density.
- Kenworthy** When will the Port share their schematics?

Jones After getting the go ahead from the Port Commission. Under the current timeline, the Magnolia Bridge Project should have the Port's recommendation by the end of February.

Kenworthy Will the schematics be released before the Port has to amend their Comprehensive Plan changes?

Jones I don't know.

Coney Alternative H went away because of the problems with connecting to the Galer Flyover, now it is coming back because the Port's development might warrant it? The Port is thinking holistically, and SDOT is not. SDOT is only thinking of replacing the Magnolia Bridge, which is only one of the projects going on in the BINMIC area. A new monorail station will bring new traffic and people and create bottlenecks at the Dravus Street connections. Eventually, this area has to be fixed. These issues are important for jobs for Queen Anners, and they will cause problems for the whole area. By throwing out the twin bridge idea, we are hastening the day when the Dravus Street Bridge becomes unusable.

Park Property

Kirk Jones referred the group to a handout showing parcel outlines of the former Navy property at the west end of the Magnolia Bridge. The parcels are labeled according to how they were identified in the City Ordinance that accepted the parcels. Parcel G is still owned by the Navy, Parcels A-E were originally City property and were returned to the City at no cost, and the City purchased Parcel F from the Navy. There is an existing park property north of the former Navy property. Originally, the bridge alignment swung into the former Navy property to avoid the park property to the north and thus any "Section 4(f)" considerations, which say that to be eligible for federal funding, projects must avoid park property if at all possible. Originally, the property was to be acquired by the City for general municipal purposes. However, because it was purchased with park levy funds, it could only be accepted as park property. This triggers having to deal with 4(f) considerations.

Alternative A has more impact on Park property, and more 4(f) considerations. The team will try to write the discipline report in a way that keeps Alternative A on equal footing with the other alternatives. There may be some exemptions that the team can work with since the City already has right-of-way through the park property. The team will be looking into the issue and working with the Parks Department as the project continues.

Discipline Report Update

Kirk Jones reported that out of 14 discipline reports, eight have gone through a second rewrite. The rest of the reports will be reviewed by the middle of February. The

economic report is taking longer than the other reports because of the number of business interviews the team is conducting.

Business Interviews

The team has finished talking to all the businesses that are impacted by the project to find out more about their operations. This has been an interesting process. While City Ice and others have greater impacts, all businesses in the study area will be impacted.

IDT

The IDT is an inter-disciplinary team of specialists from the City of Seattle. At their last meeting they adopted the Magnolia Bridge Project Final Study Plan. The plan will now be sent back to WSDOT and FHWA for approval. Copies of the plan were distributed to all DAG members.

Open House/Galer Briefing

There was a good turnout at the November 20, 2003 public open house. On December 10, 2003, the City held a small meeting at a private home on the corner of Galer and Thorndyke to discuss traffic operations problems that neighborhood is having. SDOT will be making some changes to help slow down traffic coming off the bridge. The improvements plan to be implemented later this spring or early summer.

Discussion:

Holmstrom How will the issues with the park property adjust the bridge alignments?

Jones This does not change the alignments, but creates more work to assess the impacts to park property.

Holmstrom Will this affect the project, even though the preliminary reports are already complete?

Jones The project team is hoping to work out a joint agreement with the Parks Department, which should result in little effect on the project.

Smith Throughout the project, the goal has been to avoid closing the existing bridge except for the final connection to Galer. How long will the bridge have to be closed?

Jones Approximately six months.

Conclusion: **Without further questions from the group, Sarah Brandt asked for public comment.**

III. Public Comment

Member of

- the Public** Does the team have traffic information for Thorndyke Avenue yet? Is the information available to the public?
- (Author's note: Commenter joined meeting late and did not hear the earlier discussion regarding the potential fatal flaw in Alternative H. Kirk Jones explained the potential fatal flaw for Alternative H. He said traffic on Thorndyke might become a moot point, if this alternative drops off the table.)*
- Kenworthy** When will the Port share their schematics?
- Jones** After getting the go ahead from the Port Commission. Under the current timeline, the Magnolia Bridge Project should have the Port's recommendation by the end of February.
- Montaño** Does the Parks Department have any plans for the former Navy property?
- Jones** Not as far as we know other than doing some grass planting and developing a parking area.
- Conclusion:** **At the March 3, 2004 DAG meeting the team will give a brief overview of the preliminary economics report as well as provide updates to issues discussed at the February meeting. Without further business, the meeting was adjourned.**