

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Project: CDOT Region 3 – SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment

Purpose: Combined Meeting PLT #11 and PWG #9

Date Held: June 7, 2012

Location: CDOT Glenwood Springs Maintenance Video Conference Room
CDOT Grand Junction Video Conference Room 308

Attendees:

CDOT:	Josh Cullen, Joe Elsen, Roland Wagner, Sean Yeates, Zane Znamenacek, Mike Vanderhoof
City of Glenwood Springs:	Dave Betley
Colorado Bridge Enterprise:	Charlie Trujillo
FHWA:	Eva LaDow, Stephanie Gibson (via telephone)
Pitkin County:	Brian Pettet
Glenwood Springs Chamber Resort Assoc.	Suzanne Stewart
Downtown Development Authority:	Leslie Bethel
Historic Preservation Commission:	Gretchen Ricehill
Glenwood Springs City Council:	Bruce Christensen, Shelly Kaup
Glenwood Hot Springs	Kjell Mitchell
Jacobs:	Craig Gaskill, Jim Clarke, Mary Speck, Nitin Deshpande
TSH:	George Tsiouvaras, Dave Woolfall
Newland Project Resources:	Tom Newland

Copies: PLT Members, PWG Members, Other Meeting Attendees, File

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

PURPOSE OF MEETING

1. To share what was heard at the meetings held on June 6 and discuss how to proceed between now and August.

SWG WORKSHOP DEBRIEF (6/6/12)

1. There were approximately 70 stakeholders invited to the meeting, plus the study team, PWG, and PLT – 31 people, plus the study team, attended. Four break-out groups were

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asked key value questions – what they liked and disliked and what is important about the four alternatives still under consideration.

2. Alternative 1
 - a. Concern about traffic impacts during construction - # lanes, how long?
 - b. How close to buildings?
 - c. Storefronts – where is bridge going to be?
 - d. Bridge height impacts a concern.
3. Alternative 3 with Intersection Option A
 - a. Concern about the complicated roundabout.
 - b. Opportunity for an entranceway to Glenwood Springs
 - c. 6th St change/tradeoff – three people had businesses on 6th (two very opposed to it). Depends on traffic. On the other side, there's so much traffic on 6th – can't get in and out. What information would help you better understand this? Economic study – long-term impacts of different alternatives.
 - d. Positives – SH 82 to I-70 traffic.
 - e. Shell Station – clear preference for Alternative 3 over Alternative 4. Better to die quickly than die slowly.
 - f. Construction staging – need more details – need clear scenarios.
 - g. Do you really need a roundabout? Why a roundabout, instead of a signal? Need to explain better.
4. Alternative 4
 - a. On the south side – issue of width and construction impacts
 - b. Two bridge/one bridge aesthetics – concerns about the two bridges being disjointed.
 - c. Splitting the baby on traffic issue. Still half of traffic on 6th Street.
 - d. Not as disliked as Alternative 3.
 - e. Weird combination – not getting the best of any alternative.
 - f. Positive with Laurel functionality.
 - g. Dislike for the structure.
 - h. Walkaway – most everybody disliked Alternative 4. The way it lands confuses people.
 - i. Desire to get traffic operation data on how everything would work.
5. Alternative 6
 - a. Stronger dislike.
 - b. Concerned about downtown circulation.
 - c. The couplet spreads the “traffic disease” to multiple streets and multiple intersections, causing people to drive extra.

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- d. East-west pedestrian access an issue.
- e. Are we incorporating the 8th Street connection to make this work better?
- f. Will only work if 8th Street is straight through.

PWG/PLT Group Discussion

1. Is there a way to close the gap on what 6th could look like? People are imagining their own visions.
 - a. City Council – needs to commit to redeveloping 6th . Put forth a master plan – contribute certain things, such as investments.
 - b. City has a budget for roads and streets – could be redirected.
 - c. City could weigh in on which alternative would better support their comprehensive planning.
 - d. Council looking at DDA board as more quick-moving than the Council. Could recommend that a visual plan be prepared in 6th St Area.
 - e. Hotels have gotten complaints from noise on street and have to move people away from rooms.
2. North side redevelopment – some response needs to come through the City. Problem – a City plan is at least six months out in the best scenario. It would be difficult for the City to amend their current plans to fit a potential bridge alternative.
 - a. Sense that City is kind of silent – need more participation.
 - b. Project connections to Council good and ongoing.
3. Do any of the options preclude a bypass? Can't just assume the river corridor bypass – there could be others.
 - a. Alternative 3 – wouldn't preclude, but would make more complicated, but only if a bypass started at Exit 116.
 - b. City resolution in March 2011– directs bypasses or relocated SH82 away from the confluence area. (north of 13th Street)
 - c. There are numerous issues with putting bypass on RFTA corridor, including RFTA opposition, historic impacts, the City Resolution, and costs.
 - d. City's Comprehensive plan – says the alternate or bypass route should be studied but also supports reconstructing the Grand Avenue Bridge.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE DEBRIEF (6/6/12)

1. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting; 80 were present for the presentation made at 6:00 p.m. The question and answer period lasted until 7:30 p.m. when the meeting ended.
2. David provided some initial feedback from the 14 comment forms handed in at the meeting. Other comment forms are anticipated to be returned either on-line or through the mail.
 - a. Which attributes got most likes and most dislikes by alternative?

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- i. Alternative 3 had more likes than any other alternative.
 - ii. Importance of View sheds – most responses said from downtown area. Able to see from 7th.
 - b. Additional comments on the forms:
 - i. Impacts to businesses – important.
 - ii. Opportunity to redevelop 6th St area – important.
 - PLT member comment: Some people in town want the 6th Street redevelopment to happen. People may have a special interest one way or the other.
 - iii. Duplicate 7th Street on the north side of River – and connect north and south.
 - iv. Businesses – differing comments – taking traffic away – some good and some bad.
 - v. What happens between Pine and Laurel on 6th Street?
 - vi. Alternative 3 comments – what is the roundabout going to look like and how will it operate? Biggest concerns are the pedestrians.
3. General discussion from folks who attended the meeting and talked with the public:
 - a. Still interest in bypass, so need to keep bypass options open, or not precluded. But, people recognizing the need for the bridge. Maybe not an either/or question.
 - b. Split bridges – why split traffic up?
 - c. How does Alternative 3 work? – how do I get from A to B from I-70?
 - d. Project team members spent time talking to Jim Denton about his proposed alternative. He is very interested in seeing it fully evaluated and considered. Was interested in presented to City Council
 - e. Keep the City in the conversation. Fold 7th St improvements into the process.
 - f. Is there compensation for businesses during construction? Answer is, no.
 - g. Rationale for elimination of rehabilitation alternative – documentation/report isn't clear enough although the information is there. Article in paper a week ago. We need a press release. Explain the decision and the why – be very clear.
 - h. Financial questions.
 - i. Is Colorado Bridge Enterprise (CBE) going to make the decision? – No, CBE is part of the team, and the decision is part of NEPA process. At appropriate time, coordinate with FHWA, CBE, and CDOT – on who pays for what.
 - ii. Will the money go away? Don't have an answer for now.
 - i. Where are the sidewalks? Need to show on the plans
 - j. Concerns about bridge widths, bridge heights, sidewalk locations, and speed of traffic into town.
 - k. North-south pedestrian access – several comments saying absolutely not an elevator.

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- l. There was more of a concerted effort by people interested in bypass, particularly the Centennial plan (beginning at Exit 116); more aggressive than previously.
 - m. High interest in traffic simulations. People want them on a website. Also need to show pedestrian and bike connectivity – how does it work with the various options?
 - n. Most people were interested in business impacts – direct, as a result of improvements and indirect – making sure we preserve/cultivate tourism – important driver in the town.
 - o. Heard preference for Alternative 3 because of business opportunities and traffic advantages from the roundabout at Laurel.
 - p. Couplets have circulation problems.
 - q. Important to provide a “marquis” structure.
 - r. Questions about what happens at the north end of Alternative 1? Alternative 3 shows intersection improvements at Laurel. What about Alternative 1? This looked incomplete to people.
4. PLT member input
- a. Feeling that Alternative 4 needs to be eliminated as it doesn’t provide benefits over other alternatives.
 - b. Still heard concerns about how decisions are being made – are they being arbitrarily made?
 - c. What was the general sense about public meeting comments regarding the S. Curves and couplets? Comments could be rooted in a desire to take trucks, hazmat vehicles off of Grand. They appeared to be supporting a bypass.
 - d. Repetition in message and process and facts – good thing.
 - e. May 31 article was good information
 - f. Encouraged coordination with Access Control Plan. Touchdown points are really important pieces of information on the solutions.
 - g. Alternative 1 – has the possibility to be the most historic solution because it’s straight. Curious if Alternative 3 has to be a curved, modern solution? Look at Utah – these bridges are more modern. Can it take on a historic quality? General response from project team is that Alternative 1 has more potential for taking on a historic solution.
 - h. Alternative 4 – There may be value in an alternative that has smaller impacts for many people verses other alternatives that may have more severe impacts to fewer people.
 - i. Highly engaged group of residents – As the screening funnel gets tighter, people will work outside of the process. In the SWG groups with special interest people, conversations were focused on their agendas; other groups were more open with newer ideas.
 - j. Need a strategy to address special interests. Their rhetoric is taking away from the process moving forward.
 - k. Suggested letter from PLT – referring to credibility to process, need to replace bridge.

1. Public must understand the problem for the process to be successful.

HOW DO WE USE THIS INFORMATION TO MOVE FORWARD?

1. PLT to send out a statement or letter about credibility to process and need to replace bridge. Tom to draft this up.
2. Describe VE (independent peer review) to general public. Important part of the process. VE has good message as an independent assessment of the process and alternatives.
3. Downtown Development Authority to consider contributing to development of sketches for 6th Street area. This would be done for all alternatives if it can be accomplished. The person who did the graphics for Comprehensive Plan a possibility for this. What could you do from a streetscape perspective that would change the character of the 6th St area? Rather than talking about land use.
4. Alternative 3 and roundabout – consider how to make it more understandable
5. 6% grade issues on Alternative 9– develop message about what it looks like. For example, eastbound I-70 into Hanging Lake tunnel is only a 4.5% grade, and it has issues.
6. Dave showed visuals from La Jolla Blvd. – good example of roundabouts.
7. Economic study – is it a differentiator? If yes, could do one. Concern about the accuracy of economic study results. They have been shown to be limited in value due to the large number of assumptions and variable conditions.
8. Develop a message about how decisions are being made; consider a graphic illustration.
9. Alternative 3 originated from the process – let public know.
10. How to continue to get word out between now and August Public Meeting?
11. Local radio attended Open House; there was a story in Aspen Daily News on Sunday; Channel 4 interview with Joe.
12. Types of aesthetic treatments for different bridge structure types would be good to provide.
13. Develop strategy to address special interest groups.
14. Continue to coordinate with Access Control Plan.
15. Continue to communicate community feedback on 6th Street, 8th Street, etc., to City Council.
16. Develop additional information on ABC techniques and publish them.
17. Include what happens between 6th and Pine and 6th and Laurel in visualizations.
18. Develop more detail around the intersections in Alternatives 1, 4, and 6.
19. Two Rivers Park and Glenwood Canyon trail – wayfinding for trail connections important.
20. Get information about City's Comprehensive Plan and other plans on bypass related directives.

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SCHEDULE

1. Decided to not hold an Open House in July due to short time frame, limited new work will be done, and recognition of other, appropriate ways to get information out to the public.
2. August meetings are scheduled: PWG on August 9, PLT on August 10.

UPDATES

1. Public Involvement
 - a. Tom Newland will be at Strawberry Days and the summer Tuesday market.
 - b. Tom to schedule meetings with organizations he met with earlier in the process.
2. Engineering
 - a. Preparation for Value Engineering (VE) at next PWG meeting on June 14.

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