

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Project: CDOT Region 3 – SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge

Purpose: PLT #16/PWG #16 Combined Meeting

Date Held: January 10, 2013

Location: Glenwood Springs Community Center

Attendees:

CDOT:	Joe Elsen, Josh Cullen, Roland Wagner, Zane Znamenacek, Behrooz Far (on phone), Mike Vanderhoof, Vanessa Henderson
Colorado Bridge Enterprise:	Ken Szeliga
Jacobs:	Jim Clarke, Mary Speck
TSH:	Craig Gaskill, George Tsiouvaras, Jeff Simmons, David Woolfall
Glenwood Springs City Council:	Bruce Christensen, Shelley Kaup
City of Glenwood Springs:	Dave Betley, Terri Partch
Garfield County:	Tamra Allen
Glenwood Springs Chamber:	Suzanne Stewart
Glenwood Hot Springs:	Kjell Mitchell
Historic Preservation Commission:	Gretchen Ricehill
Eagle County:	Eva Wilson (on phone)
Downtown Development Authority:	Leslie Bethel
Newland Project Resources:	Tom Newland
Pat Noyes and Assoc.:	Pat Noyes
Interested Citizen:	Dave Sturges

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

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTIONS

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

1. 162 people signed in at the Public Open House. This was the highest turnout to date. Some of the additional attendance may be attributed to contractors interested in the CM/GC RFP that's on the street and some may be attributed to e-mails advertising the meeting from the Save Grand Avenue group.

Comment Sheets.

1. David Woolfall summarized responses submitted on the 17 Comment Sheets submitted. Not all Comment Sheets had answers to all questions.
 - a. Preference on pedestrian bridge types: Of those who answered, Option 1 was favored (Sydney Harbor bridge type). Options 1 through 6 were mentioned most frequently.
 - b. Should the pedestrian bridge include stronger aesthetic elements or fewer than the Grand Avenue Bridge? Of those who answered, most were supportive of the pedestrian bridge having stronger aesthetic treatments. It was mentioned the highway bridge should be functional and both bridges need to reflect historic elements.
 - c. South Side pedestrian connection: Of those who answered, most favored Option 2 (new sidewalk along Grand Ave. between railroad and 8th).
 - d. North Side pedestrian connection: Of those who answered, Option 3 (more direct connection to Two Rivers Park) was favored.
 - e. Suggestions to mitigate traffic during construction.
 - i. Free or discounted buses, incentives to use buses.
 - ii. Complete bicycle amenities first.
 - iii. Maintain east-west access across Grand Avenue.
 - iv. Corps of Engineers temporary bridges in various locations.
 - v. Remove traffic circle at Exit 114 for entire construction time.
 - vi. Minimize construction time, use shoulder season.
 - vii. Encourage locals to bike, carpool or walk.
 - viii. Use Midland to divert traffic.

Discussion on Comments Heard at Public Open House

1. Closure of Wing Street and Alley
 - a. Group of business owners is concerned about the closure of Wing Street and the alley being used for delivery trucks, emergency services, trash removal.
 - b. Vagrancy - if you beautify alleys, vagrants will find those areas - worried about dark areas. Maybe consider cameras on the bridge.

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- c. In DDA 2013 scope of work, studying alleyways and consolidating how access would work.
2. Access Control Plan (ACP)
 - a. The ACP and our project are perceived as being one. Possible distrust about what we're doing on where bridge is going to land. Perception we are working "in cahoots" with the ACP. We need to communicate that the ACP and Grand Avenue Bridge projects are separate, but recognize that they are intertwined.
 - b. ACP has scheduled an Open House for February 12. Maybe have breakout groups there - would Grand Avenue Bridge project team want to have a table; ACP going to Council March 21.
 3. Concern about trucks at bridge touchdown near 8th Street, starting/stopping - noise, air impacts.
 4. Snow removal is an issue - CDOT currently plows snow into medians and city forces remove snow - an agreement between CDOT and City is needed to address snow removal as part of any planned project improvements.
 5. ¾-turn, porkchop - is there something we could show people? Best example - 6 and 50 in Grand Junction has several of them.
 6. People are concerned about the loss of an historic pedestrian way. Fear of losing downtown vitality and pedestrian environment. Landowners on Grand, 8th, and 7th, are looking beyond the bridge closure and wondering what everything will look like after bridge is open.
 - a. Possible options to explore.
 - i. One option is to build the bridge to accommodate either a sidewalk or left turn lane. Later, this could be converted to left turn lane or sidewalk. If later a sidewalk here were converted to a turn lane, the pedestrian ADA access would need to be addressed, likely with a new ramp.
 - ii. Communication with public.
 - Challenge is to emphasize there will be mid-block crossing and that it is the safest way is to remove traffic. Underpass mid block (safer, quieter).
 - Create visualizations from the pedestrian/human perspective showing where the bridge is touching down and how high and how wide the bridge will be.
 - Need to identify similar situations in existing places around Colorado/country - that have been successful.
 7. Visuals are important.
 - a. DDA is working on this to show benefits of what would come of both projects.
 - b. DDA plans on issuing an RFP is on January 11 for a consultant to look at areas that will be built in conjunction with the bridge (between 7th and 8th on Grand), redevelopment of

6th St., redevelopment of 7th (under bridge), 8th and 9th on Grand (medians, parallel parking), off-site improvements (30% CDs); \$250k. Will look at choices so the public can see there will be trade-offs. Hope to have a consultant on board by mid-February.

- i. Project team will provide this consultant the latest model.
8. East-west traffic movements.
 - a. Through movements numbers are low. Creating intersection for these isn't practical.
 - b. Confluence development would create more traffic. Could have higher density. DDA consultants concerned about the lack of vehicular connection.
 - c. Timing of the lights? If we reduce cross traffic, light timing needs to address how traffic moves east and west.
 9. Need physical reminders about how high the bridge is going to be. Mount something at the location – show type of barrier.
 10. Shelley Kaup – PLT's role is to make sure we're listening to the public. Visualizations are important. Change is happening sooner than people thought. They are seeing the area downtown will be more of a highway. We need to listen to this. We need to acknowledge that this project will change the downtown community. How can we try to consider these concerns and listen better, not just educate about the options we have developed?
 11. Consider pedestrian crossing under the railroad on the south side.

Summary of Conversation Circles

1. Pedestrian Bridge Type Options.
 - a. In general, there was no overwhelming consensus on the preferred bridge type.
 - b. Most agreed the pedestrian bridge could be the more aesthetic bridge – highway bridge in the background. Design a sleek, new vehicular bridge – make sure it has elements that blend into the surroundings.
 - c. Some liked pedestrian bridge superstructures that projected above the deck, but didn't want to affect views of mountains. No consensus on what would solve that. Others, would rather have flat.
 - d. Cable stays look like mountains. Others like arches. One preferred utilitarian, functional support.
 - e. The term "postcard bridge" came up.
 - f. Visually, the bridge should be equal from east and west. Commuters headed east didn't think that viewpoint was the most important.
 - g. 70 percent – more modern structure with historic elements; 30 percent – a more historic structure.
 - h. People supported the multimodal improvements we are showing.

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- i. People generally accepted the 20-foot width. Continued desire to separate bikes/peds.
 - j. Do we want to consider incorporating elements of the bridges that were built before? For example, Sydney Harbor has a truss. After discussion, decided these elements would better be incorporated into the design details – not the structure type.
 - k. Have we looked at how we can maximize bridge's utilization in the winter? Snowmelt. Considering covering the bridge. Covered bridges have not been successful in keeping snow from bridges.
 - l. Look at asymmetrical cable stay on north side of bridge.
2. Construction Detour/ Traffic Impacts
- a. About 75 people participated in the four sessions. The overview presentation of what was on boards was effective. Heard different things from different groups.
 - b. General concerns/comments.
 - i. Concern about tourists, trucks, adjacent businesses downtown (can we provide mitigation, direct or indirect impacts).
 - ii. What happens at 6th and Laurel? Need to minimize closures there; show construction schedule for that area.
 - iii. 7th Street Bridge over Roading Fork River connecting Midland Bridge and downtown – kept open; Midland Ave. residents recognized it was necessary to have traffic on it – access a concern, how to get around. Impacts both during closure and total construction time.
 - iv. Maintain 25 mph speed limit on Midland.
 - v. Concerned about traffic impacts during entire construction, not just during closure.
 - vi. Is detour the same whether we have a longer or shorter closure?
 - vii. Is detour the same for all bridge types?
 - viii. How to access to the pool from the south side if bridge is closed.
 - c. Suggestions on how to mitigate traffic.
 - i. Widen Midland – concerns about impacts. Maybe it's widened northwest of 8th Street only. Maybe the widening is for transit use.
 - ii. Consider other bridge crossings? Colorado River at Devereaux Road.
 - iii. Build a new bridge at 8th St (under railroad)? 8th St. connection.
 - iv. Transit only lane on Midland; transit connection at Confluence Area also.
 - v. Stripe narrower lanes on Midland bridge (Exit 114) to create additional lanes on Midland during detour.
 - vi. Improvements along Grand Avenue between 7th and 8th (planters/sidewalks) to mitigate business impacts.

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- vii. Minimize time bridge is closed.
 - viii. Provide free buses during construction.
 - ix. Provide free parking downtown.
 - x. Vouchers for people at hotels.
 - xi. Put traffic on ped bridge.
 - xii. Mitigation improvements during construction that could stay long term (Grand Ave.)
 - xiii. Conduct significant media campaign. Visitors also must understand what is happening.
 - xiv. Hunting season in fall - consider closure in spring.
 - xv. Give contractors a bonus to finish early.
 - xvi. Retime signals at 8th and Grand during closure.
 - xvii. Enforce local routes during construction.
3. Discussion.
- a. Bruce Christensen mentioned that the developer of Meadows has an agreement with City that if traffic volumes reach a certain level, City must widen Midland to four lanes (Midland past shopping center). Need to make this situation an exception.
 - b. Project team will evaluate the suggestions from the public about how to mitigation traffic and determine if they actually can help the project.
 - i. Some may be good for the project in the short term; City should be looking at these in terms of longer term improvements.
 - ii. Summarize findings. Include factors considered - could they be implemented? Yes, no. And, why.
4. Will 7th Street stay open? It's important to connectivity through the City.
- a. The ACP should consider visuals of 7th being kept open.
5. Midland Avenue.
- a. Would speed limit be increased on Midland over 25 mph?
 - i. It is a school bus route. Traffic backs up traffic along that route. Talk to bus people at school.
 - b. 13th St. on Midland is a very long delay. Add pullout?
 - c. Roundabout is also jammed up with single-occupancy traffic (two days a week). Maybe adjust school start time.
 - d. Speed limit - use a speed sensor for signal that turns red if people are driving too fast.

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- e. Are we reconstructing and realigning Midland as the map might indicate? Revise detour graphic if we use it again so there is no confusion.
 - f. Consider removing roundabout at 27th Street during construction and signalize.
6. Additional action items.
- a. Outreach to people along Midland corridor.
 - b. Coordinate with RFTA – BRT will be starting up about the same time.
 - c. Clearance under bridge is a challenge now for RFTA’s coach-type buses.
 - d. North side connection – what is north of graphics shown? Show 6th Street. Graphics confusing.

Bypass Discussion

1. Decided to talk about how the Grand Avenue Bridge project and a bypass project could both be done. The City’s Comprehensive Plan says to pursue both. Parallel track could occur. Also emphasized that the public needs to understand the problem so a solution can be developed (starting with project goals for a bypass study). The study area for a bypass would be a lot larger than the bridge project’s – and will require a long process.
2. There was a belief that promoting bypass could in some way stop the bridge project.
3. Also, “we don’t want change; we want to keep our bridge” and is a bypass the way to keep the bridge.
4. Alignment 3 works better with the Centennial study bypass alignment. It has a better grade.
5. Strong sentiment about the ACP and discussion.
6. People need to hear what actions the City is taking; perception that CDOT is taking action.
 - a. Dave Betley offered that the City put something together about how planning docs are being used to move forward? Need a series of stepping stones – show them the work that’s actually occurring.
 - b. There is a belief that the money spent now will preclude money being spent on a bypass. Need to show how City is taking steps to move that discussion forward. It will help show that these are separate projects.
7. There were 18 questions that we would answer on website.
 - a. How does the current bridge project account for or accommodate a bypass?
 - b. What is the motivation for CDOT to study a bypass if they put \$60 million into a new bridge?
 - c. Why can’t you just rehabilitate the existing bridge?
 - d. When could a bypass study start?

- e. What will trigger the access plan?
- f. Has CDOT considered the “Centennial Study” to build a 2-lane limited access road parallel the railroad?
- g. Why can’t we just keep the existing bridge as a 2-lane bridge and build a bypass?
- h. Can we show bypass options and how they work on the model?
- i. If there is a bypass does the Grand Avenue Bridge still need 4 lanes?
- j. Should a bypass even be considered?
- k. Can demand management reduce or remove the need for a bypass?
- l. At what point in the future will more capacity be needed?
- m. What is the timeframe for the steps on the roadmap?
- n. How do you keep from presupposing a bypass in pursuit of establishing funding for the study?
- o. If only local traffic used the existing bridge, would it still need to be rebuilt?
- p. How can we make the bypass study move quicker?
- q. Would the Grand Avenue Bridge be designed differently if a bypass is built?
- r. What funding sources are available to study the bypass?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Format of Meeting

1. Noise level was high. Needed more space for the number of people who attended (we had expected half that number).
2. Include DDA at next public meeting, if one is held this spring.

Additional

1. Bridge could be designed to be flexible – 7th/8th St section. If ACP has $\frac{3}{4}$ or RIRO, different cross sections; regardless of that answer, could accommodate both or change in the future. Could that be at the ACP in February? Yes.
2. New library parking will open between Grand and Cooper on 8th.
3. CM/GC proposals due Jan 24. Shortlist/interview - February. End April on board. Already looking for sites for construction staging. Confluence area.
4. Next PLT meeting would be early March. We would have more information on alternatives.

Ongoing Outreach

1. Continued outreach needs to emphasize that this is an ongoing process.

2. May want to consider public open house in the spring.
3. Use City hall for exhibits and have comment sheets available.
4. If we ask Council to vote on recommendations, give them enough time to consider the evaluation. This comment was specific to the ACP but should consider future Grand Avenue Bridge recommendations.
 - a. Keep refuting that this is all CDOT driven.
5. Talk to people on Red Mountain, government area, etc.
6. Field trip to show height and width of bridge.
 - a. Pole with styrofoam.
 - b. Ped ramp - Option 1.
 - c. Roland, Joe, and Tom will work out the best time and how to do this.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Coordinate with ACP project on attendance at February 12 Open House.
2. Develop pedestrian bridge option with an asymmetrical cable stay on north side of bridge.
3. Conduct evaluation of traffic mitigation suggestions from Conversation Circle and document results.
4. Develop an FAQ on bypass that answers the questions from the Conversation Circle.
5. Create visualizations from the "human perspective" to illustrate where the bridge is touching down and how high and how wide the bridge will be.
6. Schedule a field trip for the general public to demonstrate height and width of bridge on south side.
7. Schedule meetings with:
 - a. Red Mountain residents/businesses.
 - b. Government complex.
 - c. RFTA.
 - d. Schools.
8. Determine exhibits for City Hall.
9. Design options and considerations.
 - a. One option is to build the bridge to accommodate sidewalk or left turn lane. Later could relane or restripe, and have to address pedestrian connection.
 - b. Pedestrian bridge utilization in winter.
10. Graphics revisions.

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- a. North side pedestrian connection – show more of 6th Street and what happens north of there.
 - b. Detour route – place improvement along existing corridor so it doesn't look like we are reconstructing Midland.\
11. Find out about agreement between Meadows developer and City regarding increased traffic counts.

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