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Meeting notes from:

**The Inaugural Meeting of the
Detroit River International Crossing
*Community Consultation Group***

Meeting Date/Location:

May 11, 2005/Holiday Inn Select Windsor, Ontario

Facilitator: Glenn Pothier, President, GLPi

Meeting Purpose

As the first meeting of the Community Consultation Group (CCG), this session was introductory in nature and was designed to:

- Initiate the activities of the CCG
- Establish ground rules and key principles to guide the work of the CCG
- Provide an overview of the Environmental Assessment (EA) process and the CCG's relationship to it
- Explore and confirm the purpose/role of the CCG
- Confirm meeting logistics, approaches and operating procedures
- Explore issues concerning CCG membership and group composition
- Provide feedback on key themes from the Initial Public Outreach meetings
- Provide an overview of the Illustrative Alternatives Evaluation process
- Surface and discuss agenda items for the next and future CCG meetings

Summary of Meeting Highlights

Opening Remarks

- Glenn Pothier, the independent meeting facilitator, called the group to order.
- Roger Ward (Senior Project Manager, Ontario Ministry of Transportation) provided a brief welcome and message of thanks to all participants.
- Glenn Pothier welcomed all participants and observers, and introduced project team members.
- CCG participants introduced themselves.
- Glenn Pothier provided an overview of the session agenda — followed by an invitation for comments and questions, prior to confirming the agenda items.
- Glenn Pothier described a number of ground rules and key principles to guide the work of the CCG (please see slides 4 & 5 of the attached slide presentation), which were confirmed and accepted by the group. These will serve as the foundation for subsequent meetings.

Overview of the Environmental Assessment (EA) Process

- Len Kozachuk (Deputy Project Manager, URS Canada) provided an overview presentation of the EA process (slides 7-10 of the attached presentation) — covering the project goal, the nature of this Bi-National study, the structure of the project team, key milestones, project components, and timelines.

- The presentation was followed by a series of questions and comments on a range of topics including such things as:
 - The linkage between the Canadian and American study processes, and the need for a common set of crossing alternatives to be presented in both Canada and the U.S.
 - The number and range of crossing alternatives to be considered
 - The impact of changes in the political climate
 - The importance of air quality — and various methods of measurement — and its impact on human health
 - The timelines and why certain activities take as long as they do
 - The amount of fieldwork undertaken to date and proposed timelines for future fieldwork — and the nature/comprehensiveness of secondary data
 - Access to background reports/documents
 - Access to materials/reports generated throughout the life of the EA process
 - The relationship between the EA Terms of Reference and the project work to be undertaken
 - The need for transparency throughout the process, including being kept informed of the deliberations of working groups/committees outside of the CCG
 - Who will make the final decision re: the selected crossing alternative

Purpose/Role of the CCG

- Glenn Pothier provided an overview of the suggested role and purpose of the CCG (see slide 5 of the attached presentation) and invited comment/feedback and ideas for additional roles.
- There was a question about what other committees/working groups are being consulted with throughout the EA process. Len Kozachuk and other project team members provided an overview of the different committees/groups and their composition.
- There was a suggestion that the process might be better served by having project team members meet directly with individual community/stakeholder groups. Len Kozachuk confirmed that such meetings would be undertaken *in addition* to the work of the CCG.
- There was a participant suggestion that the CCG be used to review — when feasible and where it makes sense to do so — various communication materials intended for the public with a view to maximizing the clarity and comprehensiveness of the information being conveyed. This was accepted as a potential CCG role.

- Through the discussion, the following points were clarified:
 - The CCG does not have decision-making authority — its focus is dialogue and information/perspective sharing
 - The CCG is not construed to be nor is it considered representative of the broader populations of the Canadian border communities
 - The CCG will not be ‘voting’ on preferred crossing alternatives/solutions
 - The CCG will not be issuing statements as a collective to the broader public
 - The CCG will serve as more than a focus group
 - The work of the CCG would be transparent (meeting summaries will be available to the public; public may attend meetings as observers)

- Notwithstanding concerns expressed by a few participants about the potential efficacy and value of the CCG, the proposed role and purpose of the Group was confirmed by an overwhelming majority of those in attendance. The goodwill of the group and the willingness to be forward-looking/constructive was evident and much appreciated.

- Glenn Pothier provided a general overview of the proposed CCG meeting frequency, timing, formats and operating procedures (see slide 13 of the attached presentation). The group accepted these.

- Glenn Pothier also raised various considerations and issues relating to CCG membership and composition. In particular, the group explored two issues in some detail: a proposed limit to the total number of CCG members and whether limits should be placed on the number of members from a single community/stakeholder group. Regarding these, the following was agreed to:
 - The CCG should be kept to a manageable size (this was generally agreed to be in the 35-50 participant range). There was strong support for this.
 - The issue of whether the CCG will accept new members beyond those who applied during the formal applications process was deferred — it will be re-visited in a subsequent meeting possibly following the June Public Information Open Houses (given the likelihood that they will generate additional interest in the CCG). There are different perspectives on the issue. Some participants would like to ‘hold the line’ and limit CCG membership to those who have already applied and become members. Others are open to adding a *limited number* of new members — 5-10 was a suggested range — based on future interest and potential attrition. The difficulty of selecting a limited number of new members from a larger pool (should such interest materialize) was noted.
 - There was agreement that all who applied for CCG membership within the defined applications period should remain eligible to participate. Furthermore, no specific community or interest group will be asked to

limit itself to a set number of members (beyond those who are already members). However, in the interests of fairness and meeting efficiency, a single spokesperson will be asked to speak on behalf of a particular group. This does not preclude members of that same group from offering additional or differing perspectives.

Overview of Public Meetings and Illustrative Alternatives Evaluation

- Len Kozachuk presented key themes and input from the Initial Public Outreach Meetings held in April in both Windsor and LaSalle (see slides 15 and 16). He also provided an overview of the illustrative alternatives evaluation process, including proposed evaluation methods (reasoned argument and arithmetic) and key factors to be considered (slides 17, 18 and 19).
- There was no detailed exploration of the evaluation process given that the proposed evaluation factor-rating tool will be the topic of discussion at the next CCG meeting. Still, participants did offer some comments and raised questions concerning such things as:
 - Whether there are ‘over-riding’ factors or criteria (for example, “ultimate danger” to human health posed by air pollution, traffic flow, etc.)
 - Whether the natural environment will be given primacy in the decision-making process
 - The degree to which Planning, Need and Feasibility Study results will influence decision-making in the EA project phase
 - The importance of political factors
 - Property rights and the need for easements
 - How new or developing technology (for example, more environment-friendly fuels or combustion engines) might be factored into decision-making and the likely impact on air quality
 - The actions of parties with an interest in the crossing issue (for example, the City of Windsor, the owners of the Ambassador Bridge)

Looking Ahead

- The next CCG meeting date is tentatively scheduled for June 9/05. The meeting will focus on the proposed evaluation factor-rating tool.
- A subsequent CCG meeting has been tentatively set for July 13/05. The agenda is yet to be determined, but will likely include exploration of issues flowing from the June Windsor-area Public Information Open Houses (tentatively scheduled for June 21, 22, 23).

- The group agreed that CCG meetings should be held in the same location (Windsor) and venue (Holiday Inn Express) whenever feasible. There were requests for a larger meeting room and different seating arrangements (i.e. round tables).
- Most participants indicated that they would like to receive project information and meeting agendas/summaries by e-mail. Others indicated a preference for receiving information by either fax or surface mail. Len Kozachuk indicated that information would be sent in the manner of a participant's choosing.
- Beyond discussing the evaluation factor-rating tool at the next CCG meeting, the group identified the following potential agenda items for future meetings — to be addressed at the time when it makes most sense to do so (listed in no particular order):
 - Air quality (how, when it will be measured)
 - Regular updates on the U.S. component of the study
 - Governance issues (including the implications for accountability, transparency and so forth of a public or privately owned/managed crossing) — there was reference to a 'border' or 'port' authority
 - Lessons learned and best practices from river/border crossing jurisdictions both domestic and international
 - The possibility of combined CCG/LAC meetings

Open Forum and Closing Remarks

- Participants and observers were invited to share any additional thoughts about the project and/or the CCG. A number did so both as part of the formal meeting and in one-on-one conversations following the meeting adjournment. Comments made during the formal meeting concerned such issues as:
 - The actions of the Canadian Transit Company to secure lands and approvals to twin the Ambassador Bridge, and the influence this might have on the DRIC EA process
 - Reduced queuing on Huron Church Road
 - The need to present environmental and technical constraints/opportunities in combination with the initial set of route alternatives
 - The relationship between the Talbot Road improvements and the DRIC study
 - The need for and implications of construction staging for the chosen crossing alternative
 - The issue of governance and its implication for the crossing and surrounding communities
 - The potential cost of a new crossing
 - The need to better monitor air quality in and around the Talbot Road area

- Glenn Pothier and Roger Ward thanked the group for their attendance and participation.
- The meeting was formally adjourned (having run from approximately 6:35 to 9:30).

Attendance (names listed in no particular order)

CCG:

Robert Benson
 Dominic Troiani
 Jeff O'Brien
 Mary Ann Cuderman – WWCTWC
 Tedd Szalay
 Clara Deck
 Kevin O'Neil
 Alan McKinnon – Citizens Protecting Ojibway Wilderness
 Mike Duchene – Citizens in Support of DRTP
 Moe Haas – Citizens in Support of DRTP
 Liz Morneau
 Paul Morneau
 Carmella Micallef
 Pat Morneau
 Earle Dunham
 David Baker – Save Ojibway Group
 Charles Bake – CAW Local 200; Little River Enhancement Group
 Ian Naisbitt – Little River Enhancement Group
 Anna Lynn Meloche – WWCTWC; CPOW; Concerned Citizen of LaSalle

Ed Oleksiuk – Ojibway Now!
 Alice DiCaro – Ojibway Now!
 Ed Arditti – Ojibway Now!
 Josie Iannetta
 David Munro – Little River Enhancement Group
 Kevin O'Brien –SLOOF
 Terrence Kennedy – WWCTWC
 Frank Mallat
 Dan Karon
 Derek Coronado – Citizens Environment Alliance
 Rob Spring – CEA & Green Party of Canada
 Elizabeth Havelock – CPOW
 John Barton
 Cliff Cartier
 Dennis Boismier
 Tom Henderson – DRCC Outreach Committee
 Maria Ala – Talbot Road Residents; DRTP
 Bill Marshall – Talbot Road Residents
 Joanne Marshall – Talbot Road Residents

Partnership:

Roger Ward, MTO
 Joel Foster, MTO
 Kaarina Stiff, TC

Consultant Team:

Len Kozachuk, URS
 Colin Wong, URS
 Audrey Steele, LGL

Facilitator:

Glenn Pothier, GLPi