

**Detroit River International Crossing Study**  
**Local Advisory Council/Local Agency Group Joint Meeting – 7:00 p.m.**  
**May 30, 2007 – Southwestern High School**

**Purpose:** To review the progress of the Detroit River International Crossing Study.

**Attendance:** See attachment.

**Discussion:**

**Introductions and Meeting Conduct**

Mohammed Alghurabi began the meeting with introductions by all. He then indicated that the meeting was to be conducted so that the observers could comment at the beginning and end of the meeting. The Local Advisory Council and Local Agency Group members would conduct their business uninterrupted in the core of the meeting.

**Agenda Review**

Mohammed Alghurabi reviewed the agenda and asked if there were any comments or revisions to the agenda. There were none.

**Public Comments**

Mohammed Alghurabi asked if any member of the general public wished to speak.

**C. Dr. Randall Brown:** “As resident of Southwest Detroit, and a Pastor in this community I question the justice of decisions leading the building of this bridge in southwest Detroit. You have quickly decided to move this project from the influential and affluent community of Grosse Isle to the much more impoverished and disenfranchised community of Southwest Detroit.

“These parties involved have presented “art work” rather than factual drawings to represent their intended decimation of our community. Thus they are selling us a product without accurate disclosure about their actual intentions. These parties have held meetings without the broader participation of Southwest Detroit, chiefly inviting community members who stand to gain monetarily and may move out of the community, while not seeking to inform those who will bear the long term brunt of this project – namely those who live across I 75 from the bridge. The residents of Southwest Detroit between the Clark St. Exit and Springwells Exit of I 75 will have to contend with;

- Less access to I 75 because the Livernois exit will be closed to community traffic.
- More truck traffic, creating more congestion near our exits because of trucks moving on and off the new proposed bridge onto I75.
- More congestion at Clark St. exit and the Springwells exit because these exits will have to service the entire community.
- More pollution with the increased truck traffic near our neighborhood.
- The inconvenience of years of construction noise and re-routing of traffic on I 75.
- The ultimate disruption caused by changes in our neighborhood.

To these issues the “bridge builders” have been silent, only holding out a fictitious presentation of how beautiful they will make our community by tearing out large sections of housing, closing exits, and removing long established community enters. I have other questions that I will save until later.”

**A.** We will address all these issues in the EIS.

**April 25, 2007, LAC/LAG Meeting Notes**

The April 25, 2007, meeting notes were part of the evening’s handout. Mohammed Alghurabi asked for comments on the notes.

**Q.** On page 5 it says the study will cost \$31 million. I believed it was \$26.4 million. Is there now a budget problem?

**R.** The budget before the geotech work was identified as a need was \$21 million. The addition for drilling was \$10 million, which took it to \$31. This work is fully funded.

**C.** Other questions we asked that did not get into the meeting notes. First, it was stated the Greenway Boulevard and other improvements depicted in the Delray Land Use Concept Plans could take 30 years. And, then I asked if budget were available to implement the plan. If there is no dedicated budget, that should be in the notes.

**R.** We will amend the April 25 LAC/LAD meeting notes.

**April 26, 2007, Public Meeting on CSS**

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated the April 26 CSS meeting notes were distributed with handout materials. He then introduced Bruce Campbell who presented information compiled from the April CSS meeting. He said that, so far, all information has been presented in pieces, so that community members could focus on individual project components, one at a time. Taken together, the CSS efforts related to bridges, plaza areas, ramps and local roads. The DRIC Study Team, working with the community, is getting closer to being able to put all the CSS pieces together. Photo-simulations, engineering drawings and scale drawings will be provided to help the public understand the look and feel of the proposed project.

The April workshop had visions from earlier workshops applied to more specific locations in the community and began the process of coordinating CSS and land use planning. The locations chosen are representative of those in the area that would experience direct DRIC project effects. On April 26, eight different areas were examined (he referred to a slide). He pointed out each area. Irrespective of location, the historical theme was favored over the cultural theme by scores of from 65 percent favored to 81 percent favored.

Later in the summer, the main bridge will be revisited in a CSS workshop, using information gained from the engineering studies. There will be scaled views for that workshop. And, there will be more CSS work on the bridge and the bridge approaches. The latter are the smaller spans that lead to the main span.

**Q.** At what point will a scale model be available or will there be one?

**A.** We are going to build a model in the computer of the Preferred Alternative to present the look and feel of the project.

**Q.** How different will that be than what we have seen already?

**A.** First it will show a Preferred Alternative. Next it will put the bridge in the context of the future land use. The team has been working with DEGC, The Detroit Planning Commission staff and local stakeholders to incorporate their review into the conceptual land use plans. The concepts being presented may become part of the City's Master Plan. Because land use planning is not the official purview of MDOT, there must be partnerships formed among federal and state agencies, the city of Detroit, and the private sector to implement the chosen land use plan.

**Q.** Why not have an actual physical model, not a computer model?

**A.** The study area covers 1,500 acres. A physical 3-D model to depict would be so big it would fill a room and still not be as good as a computer model.

### **Status of the Deep Drilling Program**

U.S. Program – Joe Corradino said that the last public meeting on drilling was in April because drilling is done. Six holes were drilled south of Ft. Wayne and seven north. The next steps are to complete the “MRI” of the rock between the holes. This work in the U.S. will be done by the end of June. The downhole gravity sensing will be done by the end of July. Then work will be coordinated with the Canadian team to see if results affect choosing one crossing over another based on the geotechnical analysis. The goal is to have results in August for review by the Geotechnical Advisory Group in September so that they can assist the DRIC Study Team in developing a recommendation.

Canadian Program – Len Kozachuk of URS Canada explained the Canadian program is similar to that in the U.S. with 12 holes total in corridors X-10 and X-11, and with the MRI program in Canada done after it is concluded in the U.S., by the same firm. Six of the 12 holes have been drilled to 500 meters. The drilling should be done by the end of June or early July with MRIs done by the end of July. A rubble zone has been encountered in an area where it was expected and predicted earlier by modeling. This relates to the sinkhole of the 1950s. Where drilling is underway is not where the bridge will go, but around the edges of it.

Joe Corradino added that on the U.S. side, the job was to determine whether there are any voids in the rock. In Canada they are trying to demonstrate something different. Len Kozachuk explained they know brine wells exist. These grew together and in the 1950s this resulted in a 300-foot sinkhole that dropped 30 feet into the ground. It is believed the edge of that brine well field has been confirmed. This work will help understand how close a bridge footing could be placed to the known brine wells.

Joe Corradino said the final results of the drilling program would be in the draft EIS.

### **June 20 Public Meeting**

Joe Corradino noted that in March and December 2006, there were public meetings on the impacts of the early Practical Alternatives. Then in January there was a session called Value Planning. In March some impacts of newer ideas coming out of Value Planning were reviewed with the public. Afterwards, the team reviewed more information on the proposed plaza from U.S. Customs. Taking all this information together, the DRIC Study Team believes several of the plazas and interchanges can be eliminated. The proposal to do so is being reviewed. June 20th will be the date that the information is presented to the public.

### **LAC/LAG Questions and Comments**

- Q.** Is the team still on target for a decision on a final location? When will there be a final decision on where the plaza and bridge will go?
- A.** The final federal decision will be at the end of 2008, but the Preferred Alternative will be set by the spring of 2008 (April). If a crossing cannot be built in one corridor for geotechnical reasons, there may be a clearer view earlier on the Preferred Alternative by the end of this year.

- Q.** Have all the residents been able to move back to their homes with the drilling done, and were there any problems?
- A.** They have all moved back and there were no problems. Some people did not relocate, but they were compensated anyway. There was paid independent security throughout the duration of the drilling near where the relocates lived to protect homes.

**Public Questions and Comments**

- Q.** I belong to a local church and am concerned with acquisitions. There are freeways and cemeteries and landmarks. Are you concerned with plowing through the community? If drilling finds problems, will you go other places?
- A.** We have been and will continue to address the impacts you note and are concerned about them. Based on what we already know, we don't believe drilling will take the project too a different location
- C.** I still rarely get notices at my house north of I-75. That calls into question decisions made already. I know you say you are mailing 10,000 notices, but there is a lack of contact.
- A.** MDOT has consistently reached out and that there are leaders within the community who can confirm that. We do go door-to-door and do mailings, emailings and have many meetings. How do you hear about the meeting?
- R.** I got a mailing at work. But none of my neighbors get notices. And, you cannot rely on email as many do not have access to it. I can give you lists of contacts, but that's not my responsibility. You have to go door-to-door to the whole neighborhood of 80,000 people.
- R.** Thank you.
- Q.** Please say again when a Preferred Alternative will be announced. Will it be April 2008, with the government taking formal action thereafter?
- A.** Correct, while noting that the geotechnical results could dictate one corridor is the Preferred Alternative as early as this year.
- Q.** Are the governments of the U.S. and Canada going to act together?
- A.** Yes.
- Q.** Will there be an LAC meeting at the end of June?
- A.** Yes, there will be a public meeting 5-8:30 PM on June 20 at Southwest High and later on June 27 an LAC meeting at 7 PM also at Southwestern High School.

- C.** I live a few blocks north of I-75. Neighborhood city hall says they haven't heard anything new on this project for years.
- R.** John Nagy said he started following the project when it was Downriver, not even in his neighborhood. Three years ago Bridge Watch was following it. Representative Tobocman's office was aware of it. Many from north of I-75 have been attending meetings. It's been in the news and on TV.  
If you have a congregation how can they not know?
- C.** My experience was I went to a Council meeting on the northwest side and I told people I want to find out. They connected me with City Planning Commission. That's what the neighborhood city hall should have told you.
- Q.** I am shocked how far the process has gone since the last meeting in Grosse Ile. Corradino said the community is being informed. How, with the artwork on wall? I take it you have architects. Much of material is not to scale. I want to see entrances and exits to scale.
- R.** These are conceptual drawings; we have said they are not to scale. The Grosse Ile meeting was in November 2005. That's almost two years ago. I don't know why you missed things since, but others have known.
- Q.** When will the conceptual drawings be done to scale?
- A.** We will take your comment under consideration.
- C.** Ms. Leonard noted that the Director of MDOT had come to Detroit to meet with a group of local people. She and others sent flyers throughout the community. About 70 residents came. I am sorry we could not reach you.
- C.** My house is on the map. My 102 year-old neighbor doesn't know. I am going to do my best to talk to the community
- C.** That happened to me six months ago. Maybe you could put announcements into local community newspapers. Go for a wider audience. Focus your efforts different ways.
- R.** Thank you.

**Other LAC/LAG Business**

There was none.

**Public Comments**

No more questions came up at this time.

**Next Steps**

The next LAC/LAG meeting will be June 27, 2007. There will be a June public meeting the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mohammed Alghurabi asked those present to help us find a place for July and August. The high school is not air-conditioned.

The meeting ended at 8:15 PM