

**Detroit River International Crossing Study
Local Advisory Council/Local Agency Group Meeting
Meeting Notes
November 28, 2007
Southwestern High School**

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

Attendance: See attached.

Discussion:

Introductions

Mohammed Alghurabi opened the meeting with introductions.

Meeting Conduct Procedures

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that the meeting will be conducted so that the observers could comment both at the beginning and at the end of the meeting. The Local Advisory Council and Local Agency Group will conduct their business uninterrupted in the core of the meeting.

Agenda Review

Mohammed Alghurabi asked if there were any changes to the meeting agenda. None were suggested.

Public Comments

There were none at this time.

LAC/LAG Meeting Notes

No changes were requested.

Status of Legislation/Completion of the DRIC Study

A brief overview was provided by Mohammed Alghurabi about the status of the DRIC Study as a result of action by the Michigan Legislature. He indicated that the study would continue. Design was not permitted. Nor was property acquisition except in hardship cases and then only when justified and approved.

Bridge Conceptual Engineering Study

Bruce Campbell summarized the results of the bridge study. Following that overview, the following questions and comments were addressed.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked about the cost differences between the various bridge types.

R: Bruce Campbell responded that the bridge costs are very comparable between the cable stay concept and the suspension bridge concept.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked the longevity between concrete versus steel structures. He asked if the service life was the same.

R: Bruce Campbell indicated that every big bridge is made up of both concrete and steel. The service life is over 100 years.

Q: John Bendzick indicated that he had seen construction on the U.S. side of the border near the Ambassador Bridge and knows of construction on the Canadian side as well. He asked if construction of the second span of the Ambassador Bridge had begun.

R: Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that the construction on the U.S. side was associated with what is known as the Gateway Project to directly connect the existing Ambassador Bridge to I-75. He asked Joe Polak to respond as it relates to the second span. Joe Polak indicated that the Ambassador Bridge construction work is for Customs booths and that authorization of the second span has not yet been provided.

Q: John Bendzick asked if a joint venture between Canada and the U.S. will be considered for the bridge project purchases and if Canadian materials are considered "foreign."

R: Bruce Campbell said, "yes," that they would be considered foreign under the "Buy America" provision of U.S. law.

December 12th CSS Meeting

Joe Corradino indicated that an open-house type meeting would be held at Southwestern High School between 5:30 and 8:00 p.m. on December 12th. Public notices had been sent and door-to-door distribution was occurring in Delray and along the north side of I-75. The purpose of the meeting was to wrap up the last two years' worth of Context Sensitive Solution and Land Use work. It's an opportunity for the community to see the results of their engagement. Joe Corradino asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Possible Street Closures and Additions

Joe Corradino made a presentation indicating the number of streets that could be closed depending upon each of the six interchanges being studied for the DRIC project. He stressed that this presentation was a more detailed than what had been discussed at various public meetings of December 2006, and March and June of 2007. He noted a number of the seven streets crossing I-75 could be closed to make way for the new interchange connecting the DRIC plaza to the freeway. Of the five pedestrian/bicycle-only crossings, a number of those could be closed depending on the interchange being studied. He then asked for comments and questions.

Q: Tom Cervenak indicated that consideration should be given to making the partial interchange to a full interchange at Dearborn Street.

R: Comment acknowledged.

Q: Richard Rosen asked why streets and pedestrian crossings would have to be closed.

R: Joe Corradino noted that modern design standards would not allow a new interchange to connect the proposed DRIC plaza to I-75 to be added to all the other interchanges between Dearborn Avenue and the Ambassador Bridge. As a result, the interchange at Livernois Avenue and Dragoon Street will be have to be eliminated and others, like at Clark and Springwells, would be modified depending on the DRIC alternative being studied.

Q: Delores Leonard stated that if Waterman Street is closed as a crossing of I-75, it would impact Southwestern High School. Further, she indicated that major congestion along I-75 would cause traffic to be on the service drives which would affect pedestrian crossings.

R: Joe Corradino indicated that the way pedestrian crossings work today, they land before the service drive and a pedestrian still has to cross the service drives.

Q: John Nagy asked if the Springwells interchange were closed, at least partially, how would traffic come into and go out of Delray?

R: Joe Corradino noted that the service drives would still be available for use of cars and trucks. The routing, though would be more difficult than today. That will be recognized in the DEIS.

Q: Tom Cervenak asked if direct access to Fort Wayne would be provided?

R: Joe Corradino indicated that access would be provided from the plaza to local streets.

C. Tom Cervenak offered to provide a sketch of his idea for local access.

C: Mrs. Leonard indicated with fewer ramps providing direct access to I-75, freeway traffic would move along the service drives for longer distances creating additional pollution and noise pollution..

R: Joe Corradino indicated that an analyses of the noise and air pollution issues are part of the DEIS. He indicated that noise walls may be possible along the north side of I-75 where houses abut the road. But walls on the south side were not likely because of the lack of sensitive uses there.

Joe Corradino then indicated that a Welcome Center had been discussed for Fort Wayne. However, a Welcome Center at Fort Wayne is considered a "use" of an historic facility. Federal law prohibits such use unless there is no other reasonable and prudent alternative. Joe Corradino indicated that there are many places to locate a Welcome Center outside the Fort. Therefore, a DRIC Welcome Center will not be located at the Fort. Nonetheless, it is still possible that some investment could be made at the Fort through the DRIC project.

Other LAC/LAG Business

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that a tentative meeting has been set for January 9th to discuss the DEIS before the public hearing which is scheduled for later in January.

Public Comments

Q: Maria Finn expressed some concerns about Dragoon and Livernois Avenues.

R: Joe Corradino indicated that the Dragoon/Livernois Avenue interchange would be eliminated with the DRIC. This would lessen truck traffic on those streets which should be a positive change from the current condition.

Q: *Of all the alternatives, which one would be the best for the community?*

R: Joe Corradino indicated that no selection of a Preferred Alternative has been made at this time.

C: Ernest Fair indicated that building barriers to control noise seems to break apart the community.

R: Joe Corradino indicated that the point is well taken. Noise barriers will have to be selectively located to mitigate noise while not blocking the community's access.

Q: Steve Walker asked if as the service drives absorb increased traffic, would they be rebuilt?

R: Joe Corradino responded it is likely they will.

Q: Richard Rosen commented that he believes steel is more durable than concrete for the bridge.

R: Bruce Campbell indicated that any new bridge would include both concrete and steel and that durability and maintenance were the key considerations in the design concept.

Q: Mary Ann Cuderman asked whether steel or concrete were noisier.

R: Bruce Campbell indicated both structures would be designed to control noise. He noted that noise from older bridges is largely due to joints in the roadway surface which cause noise when cars and trucks pass over them.

C: Terry Kennedy noted that the August LAC notes indicated that he said "dynamite" was being carried across the Ambassador Bridge. He noted that that was not what he said. He said "cyanide" was being carried across the bridge.

Next LAC/LAG Meeting

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that no formal LAC meeting will be held in December because of the holidays. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for January 9th to discuss the DEIS. The next formal meeting of the LAC is scheduled for January 30th at Southwestern High School. With that, the meeting came to an end at 9:00 p.m.