

**New International Trade Crossing
Local Advisory Council/Local Agency Group Meeting
Notes
May 25, 2011, 7:00 p.m.
Southwestern High School**

Purpose: To review the progress of the New International Trade Crossing Project.

Attendance: See attached.

Discussion:

Introduction/Agenda

Mohammed Alghurabi asked those in attendance to introduce themselves. He reviewed the meeting conduct procedures and agenda. There were no additions to the agenda.

Mohammed discussed language in the budget bill detailing MDOT tasks for NITC, suspending activities until authorizing legislation passed.

Public Comments

Tom Cervenak from CBC thanked MDOT for the communication and praised the overall process.

Elizabeth Johnson thanked Mohammed and MDOT on behalf of Detroit City Councilwoman JoAnn Watson for exemplary leadership.

John Bendzick thanked Mohammed for the productive meetings and professionalism. He believes there will be a bridge built, but it will be more of a Canadian driven effort than US driven, and he continues to believe it is a worthwhile effort.

Mohammed said that Mrs. Leonard was unable to attend the meeting and sent her regrets.

John Nagy spoke about his involvement, the previous opposition, and took credit for stirring up the community at the start of the environmental process (i.e., three residents at the first meeting, 180 at second meeting after his outreach). He feels very strongly that any new bridge must have public oversight.

Notes of LAC/LAG Meeting of April 27, 2011

Mohammed asked for comments on previous meeting notes – there were no comments or revisions.

Detroit Works Update

There was no update.

SWCBC Update

Mr. Cervenak gave the CBC update: There was a general membership meeting last week which included 80 attendees. U of M urban planning students spent some time in Delray and are helping to work on a neighborhood plan. CBC has been working with MDOT to draft an RFP for an economic development study in SW Detroit in connection with both the NITC and DIFT. Since NITC activities are being suspended, possible for MDOT to only move forward with the DIFT.

Mr. Cervenak then discussed accessibility to the water front and Fort Wayne enhancements being family friendly and providing this access. CBC has received a grant for the boat launch facility on DTE's property next to Fort Wayne. They need to raise some matching funds and will need about 150 volunteers to assemble some new playground equipment in the park-like area surrounding the boat launch

Professor Larissa Larsen spoke about U of M's review of community vision and subsequent update of housing inventory. She made a formal presentation of student generated proposals at the May 12, 2011 CBC meeting.

NITC Status

Mohammed noted that MDOT is still waiting for introduction of authorizing legislation.

Mohammed also noted that in order to fulfill the spirit of boilerplate language contained within Section 384 of Public Act 192 of 2010, MDOT has chosen to suspend activities for the NITC Project as of May 31, 2011, until such time as legislation allowing the project to move forward is signed into law. This suspension will include MDOT participation at future LAC meetings until further notice.

Other LAC/LAG Business

Frank Rodriguez asked about status of the Gateway Project. Mark Sweeney stated that MDOT started bi-weekly meetings with DIBC (Detroit International Bridge Company) in January and said other than the continuing discussions, he had no additional update.

Hugh Graham asked if the damaged signs at West Grand Boulevard and I-75 could be addressed. Mr. Sweeney said he will look into the issue and see if those are signs over which MDOT has control.

Additional Public Comment

Tom Cervenak stated there people trying to buy property under false pretense prior to the government acquisition. He warned residents to ask for proof of representation before signing or negotiating anything. If they cannot produce an ID, send them packing.

John Nagy spoke about the DIBC commercial running on Fox 2. He urged people to call the number and say they DO support a publicly owned bridge, contrary to the commercial's message. The number is 1-866-823-4787.

John Bendzick recounted his history with the project and expressed his frustration with being constantly bombarded by the public vs. private discussion as well as his personal frustration with DIBC. He stated he wished people would just concentrate on the new bridge.

Mr. Cervenak discussed the history of a 1999 bridge proposal in Bishop Park, Wyandotte.

Richard Rosen expressed his regrets over the suspension of the project and hopes it will re-start as soon as possible. He is very supportive of NITC.

Future LAC/LAG Meetings

Mohammed stated there would be no meeting in June, and said that he would email contact information to attendees. Please see the attached letter that was sent on May 25, 2011 for this information. The meeting was then adjourned with no additional discussion.

“MDOT will be suspending activities related to the NITC project as of May 31, 2011, including participation at future LAC/LAG meetings held after May 31, 2011, until further notice. This action is being taken in order to fulfill the spirit of the boilerplate language contained within Section 384 of Public Act 192 of 2010. Lieutenant Governor Calley's office is taking the lead should there be any questions regarding legislation allowing the NITC project to proceed.”

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

KIRK T. STEUDLE
DIRECTOR

May 27, 2011

(Name)
(Address)
(City, State, Zip)

Dear (Name):

In order to fulfill the spirit of boilerplate language contained within Section 384 of Public Act 192 of 2010, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has chosen to suspend all activities for the New International Trade Crossing (NITC) Project as of May 31, 2011, until such time as legislation allowing the project to move forward is signed into law. This suspension will include MDOT participation at future Local Advisory Council/Local Agency Group (LAC/LAG) meetings until further notice. Lieutenant Governor Calley's office is taking the lead should there be any questions regarding legislation allowing the NITC Project to proceed.

Based on the commitment I made to you at the May 25, 2011, joint LAC/LAG meeting, I am pleased to provide you with the following contacts with the Southwest Detroit Community Benefits Coalition during this period of suspension:

Scott Brines:	scott_swdev@flash.net	(313) 842-1961
Simone Sagovac:	simone_swdev@flash.net	(313) 842-1961
Tom Cervenak:	TCervenak@aol.com	(313) 554-3111
Michael Christopher:	MichaelChristopher35@yahoo.com	(313) 207-1575
Ryan Michaels:	ryanm@southwestdetroit.com	(313) 842-0986 ext. 7

Thank you for your continued support of the NITC project over the years; it has been my privilege to interact with each of you. As always, additional information about this important effort can be found at www.partnershipborderstudy.com.

Sincerely,

Mohammed S. Alghurabi, P.E.
Senior Project Manager