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MEETING MINUTES

MEMORIAL BRIDGE PROJECT PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Date: April 10, 2012
Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Project: Memorial Bridge Replacement Project – 13678F
Portsmouth, NH to Kittery, ME

In Attendance:

NHDOT:	Bill Cass Keith Cota Robert Landry Mark Sanborn Nickie Hunter
MaineDOT:	Joyce Taylor David Sherlock
Bike/Ped Representatives:	Doug Bates Stephen Koucas Steve Workman Dave Topham Charley LaFlamme Chief Paul Callaghan Gerry Mylroie Josh Pierce
McFarland Johnson:	Jennifer Zorn

The meeting started at 2:00 PM at the Katahdin East Meeting Room, Kittery Trading Post, Kittery, ME.

Keith Cota began the meeting with introductions by the group and thanked everyone for attending this second outreach meeting.

Joyce Taylor, David Sherlock, and Bill Cass passed around photos of the Sarah Mildred Long/Route 1 Bypass (SML) Bridge showing the deterioration of the railings/posts. They explained that 60-70% of the

posts are in poor condition. Joyce explained that the barriers need to be in the shoulder of the roadway and not on the sidewalk area. David Sherlock detailed that the sidewalk is thin concrete and is also deteriorated. The roadway in the shoulder area is approximately 8 inches thick and would be the appropriate location for the barrier system.

Charlie LaFlamme stated this would make a less safe situation for the bicyclists by forcing them into the roadway. The DOTs responded by stating that bicyclists are prohibited on the SML Bridge.

Stephen Koucas stated that his research revealed only one accident on the SML Bridge which was caused by an impaired driver.

Steve Workman requested that the group move away from discussion the railing issues and begin to discuss alternatives for the bike/ped traffic.

The issue of the ability to use the sidewalk was questioned. Doug Bates stated that safety was the most important issue and no one can be allowed to be injured or put at risk. Joyce Taylor stated the sidewalk may or may not be used, depending upon the barrier system that will be installed.

Chief Callaghan thought the barriers would be a natural traffic calming effort and the speed limit of the cars would decrease.

Charlie LaFlamme asked the Chief to provide input on enforcement. The Chief stated that bikes should be prohibited from the SML Bridge due to safety reasons.

Steve Workman requested that enforcement be consistent on both sides of the river. Steve also stated that bike/ped usage must be a component of the new SML Bridge, regardless of rehab or replacement. He recommended a 12 foot cantilever on the upstream side of bridge.

Joyce Taylor stated that bike/ped usage will be looked at for the SML Bridge.

Gerry Mylroie asked if speed versus impact safety was reviewed and what was the level risk. Joyce Taylor stated no, this was not specifically reviewed. Bill Cass also added that approximately 10,000 cars travel over the SML Bridge per day and this in itself creates a high risk. Bill also added work on the SML Bridge would likely begin in January 2014.

Keith Cota then proceeded to review the shuttle data from the start of operation in January through March. He passed out written analysis including graphics. It was determined that less than 1% of the operation time, the shuttle capacity had been exceeded. These times were also at an unusual event/day, and included the night of the removal of the center lift span of the Memorial Bridge and the night of St. Patrick's Day. In addition, there was only one occurrence when the bicycle capacity was exceeded.

Keith explained that the department was monitoring the shuttle on a daily basis including each trip over the 20 hours per day of operation for passengers, bicycles, and wheelchairs. He further detailed supportive data would be needed for any increase shuttle operation to occur.

Stephen Koucas asked what Archer Western Contractors responsibility was in this matter. Keith explained their role was very prescriptive and they met the requirements of a shuttle operating 20 hours per day, 1 hour trips on each side of the river, shuttle capacity of 12 passengers, 6 bicycles and 2 wheelchairs (i.e., ADA compliant). Any changes to this would require a contract modification with AWC.

Josh Pierce stated he did not like the times of shuttle operation and found it inconvenient for his preferences and that other times should be considered. Furthermore, he stated that bicyclists are branded as the “bad guys” in the media.

Mark Sanborn replied that was incorrect, no one is the bad guy. Joyce stated that there are trade-offs for everyone involved. Keith added that the shuttle forces a decision by the users to engage other forms of transportation and he reminded the group that the shuttle is for those who have a hardship with no other form of transportation.

Doug Bates stated he is concerned about the summer time employment and transport back and forth for summer workers. He stated there will be a hardship for some.

Steve Workman stated there is a disproportionate hardship on bicyclists and pedestrians.

Nickie Hunter stated that the 30 minute shuttle route has been reviewed and it was determined that it would not be sufficient. A 40 minutes route cycle worked in January, but it was not reviewed for the summer time traffic.

Josh Pierce inquired if a 45 minute cycle was reviewed. Nickie stated that this time cycle had not been reviewed to date.

Dave Topham complimented the DOTs for their detailed information. However, he stated it was very important to reach the touring bicyclists and certain list serve accounts can reach 1,000 or more bicyclists. Dave also recommended a shuttle stop at to be provided at each end of the SML Bridge for the touring cyclists that head to the SML under the impression they can ride their bicycles over this bridge. He also recommended signs be placed leading up to the Memorial Bridge.

Joyce responded that adding a shuttle stop defeats the purpose of an increased shuttle cycle.

Josh Pierce stated that there is a problem from Marcy Street, adjacent to Prescott Park (East Coast Greenway route) with understanding which way to go due to the construction activities.

Charlie Laflamme requested that a priority be given to workers who need and use the shuttle. Mark Sanborn replied that any kind of a priority system would need to be discussed with the Attorney General’s office.

Dave Topham inquired whether the lane width of the new Memorial Bridge could be reduced, therefore, reducing the speed of the vehicles. Bill Cass stated that a 12 ft lane is normal for a country road setting, 11 ft lane is being used on the Memorial Bridge, and 10 ft lane is narrow and cars/trucks would be expected to travel into a bike lane at that narrow width and possibly wear away the painted line denoting the shoulder is used as a bike lane.

Jennifer Zorn stated that additional signs for bicyclist had been deemed necessary by the project team and requested the input of the attendees.

Mark Sanborn stated bicycle and pedestrian access will be part of the discussion for the SML Bridge.

The meeting ended at 4:00 pm. At this time, Jennifer Zorn gathered a few members of the group and requested input on the location of bicycle detour signs. The primary input was to add a sign on the main

tourist routes in both Portsmouth and Kittery, approaching the Memorial Bridge, and then a sign at the Memorial Bridge construction fencing directing bicyclists to the shuttle.

All revisions suggested by the subcommittee members and attendees on the draft version of these meeting minutes have been incorporated. These meeting minutes are considered correct and final. Any further comments should be submitted to Jennifer Zorn at jzorn@mjinc.com.

Submitted By:
Jennifer Zorn

