Design Advisory Group Meeting #25

Magnolia United Church of Christ
August 2, 2006, 4:00 – 5:30 PM

Summary Minutes

Agenda

I. Welcome
II. Project Updates
III. Final Design Concepts
IV. Public Comment
V. Adjourn

Attendees

Design Advisory Group

- Dan Bartlett
- ✓ Dan Burke
- Fran Calhoun
- ✓ John Coney
- Grant Griffin
- Lise Kenworthy
- ✓ Doug Lorentzen
- ✓ Jose Montaño
- Mike Smith
- David Spiker
- ✓ Janis Traven
- ✓ Dan Wakefield
- Robert Foxworthy (alternate)

Project Team

- Lesley Bain, Weinstein A|U
- Dirk Bakker, KPFF
- ✓ Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Gerald Dorn, HNTB
- Brian Elrod, HNTB
- Katharine Hough, HNTB
- Steve Johnson, Johnson Architects
- ✓ Kirk Jones, City of Seattle
- Don Samdahl, Mirai Associates
- Lamar Scott, KPFF
- ✓ Peter Smith, HNTB
- ✓ Lauren Stensland, EnviroIssues
- ✓ Marybeth Turner, City of Seattle
- K. Wendell Adams, KBA
- Terry Witherspoon, AMEC

Meeting Handouts

- ✓ *Agenda*
- ✓ *DAG #24 Summary Minutes*
- ✓ *Design Concepts Packet*
  - *Revised railroad crossing structure types matrix and plans*
  - *Draft three-dimensional renderings*
  - *Aesthetic treatment – Overlooks*
  - *Aesthetic treatment – Bike path*
- ✓ *Draft Frequently Asked Questions*

I. Welcome

Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues

Sarah welcomed the group and thanked everyone for coming. She outlined the agenda (and related supporting materials), which included the following:

- Project updates
- Final design concepts
- Next steps
- Public comment

Sarah asked if anyone would like to make edits to the meeting minutes from the previous Design Advisory Group (DAG) meeting. Hearing no response, she reminded the group that she would take edits via phone or email through the end of the week. She also asked if any DAG members would prefer to receive hard copies of the minutes. Jose Montaño and Doug Lorentzen asked that copies of the minutes be mailed to them and Sarah affirmed that she will mail copies of future meeting summaries.

II. Project Updates

Kirk Jones, SDOT

Environmental Review Process

Kirk informed the group that the team is still waiting for the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to approve the Cultural and Historic Resources Report. He explained that Peter Smith has been in communication with WSDOT and he expects an approved report soon. Until the report is approved, the team cannot submit the draft environmental assessment (EA).

Port of Seattle

Kirk explained that the project design team recently met with the Port of Seattle and shared information. He said the meeting was very helpful and they discussed how to maintain the seawall during bridge construction. Dan Burke informed the group that the Port team is still working to meet a Spring 2008 deadline for the cruise terminal and environmental work should be finished at the end of this year.

Seattle Parks Department

Kirk is trying to set up a meeting with his contact at the Seattle Parks Department to reach an agreement about how the park facilities and the bridge will interact. Kirk explained that one of the options for bridge design would span the whole lower park. He will report back at the end of the month with an update about parks.

Upcoming Public Meeting

Kirk informed the group that the public meeting for design concepts will be on September 13, 2006, at the Blaine School. The meeting will present the three design alternatives that the DAG will comment on during this meeting.

III. Final Design Concepts

Jerry Dorn, HNTB

Jerry updated the group about developments in the bridge design process. He explained that last month his team talked with the DAG about having five feet of depth for the bridge over the railroad crossing. They have now found that with a steeper grade there can be greater structure depth, allowing for more options. Jerry referred members to the handouts labeled *Attachment 7, Attachment 8, Attachment 19* and *Attachment 20*. *Attachment 7* and *Attachment 8* show the bridge designs discussed previously, including the two-span structure with a support in the middle of the railway and the design with a clear span over the railway. Alternately, *Attachment 19* and *Attachment 20* show structures with greater structure depth. By making the ramp coming up from 15th Avenue W. somewhat steeper, a complete span of the railroad is possible. *Attachment 19* shows this option with steel girders and *Attachment 20* with prestressed girders. Jerry explained that the key difference is that under the five-foot clearance design, the ramp and bridge came together to the east of the railway crossing and now they don't meet until they have crossed the railway area. In the new designs there are two separate structures crossing the railway.

Discussion

Coney: To what extent is the Port-side ramp earthquake damaged?

Jones: The earthquake in 2001 only damaged the existing bridge where it starts to go up. Only the high-rise part of the bridge was damaged.

Coney: Why are we considering replacing this part of the roadway – the Galer Street viaduct and the flyover part?

Jones: The westbound ramp doesn't meet current seismic codes – there's only one part of it that does. When we built the Galer Flyover we brought just that part over 15th Avenue W up to code, but the whole ramp doesn't meet seismic or geometric code. So part of this project is to get the whole bridge up to code.

Coney: Why not just bring it up to code instead of new construction?

Jones: That was our rehabilitation option.

Coney: Rehabilitation was for the whole bridge.

Dorn: I think the retrofit we did was just for the single span. It's retrofitted to a certain level but if there was a major seismic event, there would be problems along the entire bridge.

Jones: Right, but I think John Coney's question is whether we could build a new bridge and just retrofit that part.

Dorn: What we learned was that, by the time you did all the retrofits, you've almost bought a whole bridge.

Jones: We'll look at that and get the cost figures for that section, for both retrofit and a new build scenario.

Wakefield: Maybe it would allow us to do the high bridge sooner, due to lower costs.

Jones: The bridge operations staff had a major concern about bringing a ramp up from 15th Avenue W. and one over 15th Avenue W. and bringing them together. To go up and over 15th Avenue W. and then come down creates a bowl. We've had problems on the West Seattle Bridge and bridge operations asked that we not create any kind of sump on the structure. They've asked that we bring two separate ramps across the railroad tracks.

Dorn: The rolling profile Kirk was talking about is on the second sheet in your packet [*5' Structure Depth at 15th*]. You can see how it goes up and down and up again. That was to match the structures on the east side of the railroad.

Jones: So we're leaning toward the new design. It's much better from an operations standpoint.

Coney: What's the steepest grade that gives you?

Jones: It's a six-tenths of a percent increase.

Coney: I've been listening to a lot of complaints from trucking interests that a seven percent grade on the mini-viaduct going to the Battery Street tunnel is not viable for trucks.

Jones: Six or seven percent is a grind for them, if there's any distance, and getting up to the viaduct they have to merge with fast moving traffic. This is a short distance and they'll be coming from the north and making a right turn, not merging with any traffic.

Burke: And it's not a major truck route.

Jones: Six tenths is not a big change from an operational standpoint, and we'll build the bridge at less cost, so we've decided to make that change.

Dorn: So the options we are proposing to advance now are the arch option, up and over the railroad, which is a little more expensive but provides a nice feature at this location, or the two girder options: the steel girder and the prestressed girder. All of them would be at a seven-and-one-tenth-percent grade. Seven-and–one-tenth percent is not that steep.

Montaño: Handicap ramps can be eight percent.

Burke: And Metro buses can do nine percent.

Lorentzen: Are we talking about going ahead with the two options?

Jones: We're still putting that together. We'd like to show at least something different from the girder, something with a feature for the bridge. We'll show that in the options.

Burke: But that's not the one that will cost less.

Jones: Looking at the steel girder, both of the bottom two are less expensive than the two-span [See *Structure Types – August 2, 2006*].

Wakefield: On the bottom option, the prestressed girders, what is meant by 'skewed piers'?

Jones: That gets into some engineering. The difference between that option and the one before is the columns supporting it. The heavy dark lines [on *Attachment 19* and *Attachment 20*] show the columns. In order to use a prestressed girder we have the skewed ones because we have a shorter span. Squared columns are better in an earthquake.

Wakefield: If it were steel, would they be square?

Jones: Yes.

Lorentzen: With the aesthetics, I'd like to ask a question. Who can see it? This is virtually an invisible bridge.

Jones: You have a pedestrian pathway along the west end of the bridge.

Lorentzen: This might not be the place to spend millions on aesthetics.

Wakefield: Yes, lowest cost here is fine.

Dorn: So, do we have buy-in on these three?

Burke: What do you gain from those four million dollars [in additional cost for the Steel Tied Arch]?

Jones: Aesthetics is the advantage.

Montaño: No one will ever see it.

Burke: And maintenance will be less on the other bridge types.

Lorentzen: Looking at the advantages and disadvantages [shown on *Structure Types – August 2, 2006*] it doesn't make sense to do a structure that's twice as expensive and only has one advantage.

Dorn: Cost for aesthetics is the only advantage.

Jones: Then let's just show the two girder types?

Wakefield: Yes, that makes it less complicated for people.

Burke: And if people ask why you aren't designing something beautiful we can give good reasons.

Montaño: Then you have the same materials throughout, also. You don't introduce foreign materials.

Dorn: Good point, we'd have the same material all the way along here.

Jones: It's just that early on we talked about building an icon bridge.

Montaño: It's about going from point A to point B and doing it with the most elegant engineering.

Burke: I talked to the North Bay team and they really agreed that this bridge should just blend in. This really reinforces the North Bay team's preference.

Jones: Okay, we'll move ahead with those two girder options and not include the arch as an option at the public meeting.

Dorn: The next eight sheets just show that we are progressing on creating three-dimensional computer renderings of the prestressed girder and concrete box structures. It's a work in progress.

Wakefield: This actually looks nice.

Dorn: I think the spans will be long enough that it will look nice.

Jones: Personally, I'm leaning toward the haunched box.

Montaño: You'll see the girders from below, but not from above, right?

Dorn: Yes, you'll see the girders from below.

Jones: Next meeting we'll show you what we're bringing to the open house so you can comment beforehand.

Coney: This girder option has space between the girders, which could cause bird issues. That's one reason not to do it, with a park underneath.

Jones: Good point.

Jerry then introduced the bicycle and pedestrian handout and explained that the design team is considering creating pedestrian overlooks where people can pause and look at views of Seattle and Puget Sound. He informed the group that these are initial concepts of how overlooks might look. The idea of the overlooks is to create a sense of separation from the road and protection from traffic so pedestrians can enjoy the view.

Discussion

Lorentzen: I see you have three potential locations, two on straight roadway and one on a curve. The first thing that jumps out at me is that you have two designs that incorporate a curve and one that's more of a square box. If you wanted to have more than one and have them be different, put a curved one where the roadway is curved and a straight one where the roadway is straight.

Jones: That's good input. Today we just wanted to show you what we could do and where.

Burke: Is it clear yet whether we're going to try to move pedestrians coming from the park onto the bridge?

Jones: Yes, we are.

Lorentzen: We talked about lights previously. I noticed Magnolia has two different standard lights; which would be considered for the bridge?

Jones: There's the upside-down bucket, the promenade. It is directed lighting and the biggest problem is that it's only 100 watt light directed down. We're trying to light a roadway and would need stronger light, though we could put those in as supplements.

Lorentzen: What about the other type?

Jones: Seattle City Light has those also, but both are designed for residential, lower level lighting, where we're supposed to have higher level lighting. My first thought is to not use those, but we might be able to do supplemental lighting that might replicate the Magnolia lights.

Lorentzen: I was thinking that you have those square columns on the overlook and maybe should choose something that goes with that look.

Montaño: What about light shining up?

Jones: Right, we want to make sure it's all going down and not shining up and that's a design detail we'll continue to examine. For now let's jump to the bike path connection.

Jerry referred the group to the handout titled *Aesthetic Treatment – Bike Path.* Kirk explained that the dark swath across the top of the four diagrams is the new bridge, while the existing roadway is shown in white. Jerry explained that the diagrams show the bridge where it has just crossed over the railroad and is 35 feet from the ground. A 500-foot ramp is required from that height in order to meet American Disability Act standards. Jerry explained the options:

- Option 1 crosses over the Port access and uses switchbacks to reach the ground.
- Option 2 begins parallel to the bridge and then crosses the Port access. It still provides 20 feet of clearance and then only needs one switchback to get to the ground.
- Option 3 is the same as Option 2, except you lose some height and then use an island near and above the Port access to lose additional height.
- Option 4 runs parallel to the bridge and then drops low enough to get head clearance underneath the bridge and switchbacks down to the ground.

Discussion

Jones: In Option 1, there is a tower like there is next to the Galer Flyover now.

Wakefield: Like the Galer Flyover?

Jones: Yes, a switchback. This is again a work in progress and we'll get lots of comments about being close to the shoreline, but we need to go 500 feet.

Dorn: There's also the question of where you want to end up when you get to the ground. With Option 4 there are security issues.

Jones: Each of the other three options gets a person across the Port access so they don't have to worry about traffic. The existing trail does cross that traffic. Option 4 crosses it as the trail does today.

Wakefield: From the standpoint of riding a bike Option 4 is preferable, because there are fewer corners and in the rain part of it would be dry.

Jones: Right, we'd just have to work on the proper lighting. These are early ideas and you've made good comments. We'll keep those in mind as we move ahead and we'll get more information about the shoreline as it relates to this.

Any further questions or comments as far as the structural elements?

Lorentzen: I'm thinking this has been a pretty good process to this point.

Jones: For the open house we're giving you first cut at the *Frequently Asked Questions* handout. Let us know if something is unclear or if we missed a question from out there in the community and get back to Sarah [Brandt] by the end of the week.

Brandt: I probably already missed a question about bikes and pedestrians. If there are others from your stakeholder perspectives that I've missed please let me know; this can be a work in progress.

Jones: Any other questions or comments?

Traven: Either in "When will construction start?" or "How is it funded?" there should be question like "Is the project included in the current transportation funding packages?" And I would personally like to know the answers to those questions. How will the bridge be funded, and does the Mayor have a funding plan?

Jones: I'll get the answer that went to Representative Dickerson – she was asking the same question.

Traven: Yes, I asked her to ask.

Jones: They asked Grace Crunican and the Mayor and they gave the City's official response. It basically boils down to the fact that there are other major projects that already have obtained money and including the Magnolia Bridge would take money away from those. Again, we need to go after some grant monies and we've been talking with the Port and started discussions with the railroad. When we're done with the City Council on the transportation funding package and we've submitted our budget to the Mayor's office then our financial staff will have the time to seriously look at funding opportunities for the bridge. I know we have people in the neighborhood who want to know what they can do and we'll let people know.

IV. Public Comment

Kirk Jones, SDOT

There were no members of the public in attendance.

V. Next Steps

Kirk Jones, SDOT and Sarah Brandt, EnviroIssues

The next DAG meeting will be on September 6th from 4:00 to 5:30 pm at Magnolia Community Center. The team is also planning for a public open house on September 13th at Blaine School. In addition, project staff will be at the Magnolia Farmer's Market on September 16th.

Conclusion: With no further comment from the project team or DAG members, the meeting was adjourned.