Summary – Meeting #5

Community Advisory Group – I-5 Willamette River Bridge Project

May 8, 2007, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Tykeson Room, Eugene Public Library (100 West 10th Ave.)

ATTENDANCE

CAG Members

- Charlotte Behm – Representative, Springfield Neighborhood (and member, CPC for Whilamut Natural Area
- David Sonnichsen – Chair, CPC for Whilamut Natural Area
- Pat French – Planner and CPC Representative, Willamalane Park & Recreation District
- Trevor Taylor – Natural Resources Supervisor, Eugene Parks and Open Space Division
- Rich Hazel – Co-Chair, Laurel Hill Valley Citizens Association
- Dave Carvo – Vice Chair, Glenwood Neighborhood Group
- Bob Kline – Chair, Harlow Neighbors
- Renée Benoit – Membership Director, Springfield Chamber of Commerce
- John Barofsky – Co-Chair, Fairmount Neighbors
- Chris Ramey – Director and Architect, University Planning Office, University of Oregon

Resource Team

- Ann Sanders – ODOT Project Leader/Area Representative for Lane County, ODOT Region 2
- Tim Dodson – ODOT Project Liaison/CPM, ODOT Bridge Delivery Unit
- Lou Krug – Project Manager, Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners
- James Gregory – Environmental Task Leader, Oregon Bridge Delivery Partners
- Jamie Damon – Public Involvement Coordinator, Jeanne Lawson Associates
- Kalin Schmoldt – Public Involvement Assistant, Jeanne Lawson Associates

Other Attendees
Zach Vishanoff
Josh Proudfoot (Good Company)
Lwin Hwee (CH2M Hill)

Handouts

- Agenda
- Summary of CAG Meeting #4
- Revised Evaluation Criteria
- Summary of PDT Meeting #4

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

Jamie welcomed the group. She noted that the primary focus of the meeting would be to discuss, finalize, and apply the evaluation criteria to the potential bridge types. She noted that there would also be discussion of the open houses on May 3.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Zach Vishanoff had some observations about how projects tend to become connected together. He noted that for all of the expensive committees, studies and fancy reports, a bike lane could have been possible all the way to Glenwood, but he felt that bike rider rights weren't being respected. He noted the logging trucks on Franklin to Glenwood and noted that he felt having the cyclists take the bus was a flawed approach. He said that he felt the $10 million to be spent on bridge aesthetics will lead to local problems and he noted that the county needs the funding more. He said that the county is a responsive government that deserves the money. He felt that the bridge should be kept separate from other projects. He noted that the riverfront research park is a blighted mess and felt that it would be necessary to fix up the area and Williams Bakery before locating a fancy bridge there.

Jamie wrote:

- Concern about lack of bike lanes and money for improvements for bike traffic.
- Concern about $10 million allocated for design when other government agencies are facing cuts.
- Don't "package" the bridge project with other politically charged "signature" projects in the area.
- Consider how to improve area around the bridge (Williams Bakery, ie.) to address blight.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Summary of Meeting 4 – There were no changes to the Meeting #4 summary. Jamie noted that the final version of the last PDT meeting was included in the packet.

Update on community briefings – Lou noted that they had met with the Laurel Hill Valley Neighborhood on April 17th. Tim also noted that they met with members of the AIA. Bob Kline requested that a meeting be scheduled with the Harlow neighbors, probably in September.

PROJECT UPDATE

Communications Update – Lou noted that the Franklin Blvd workshop was held several weeks ago and that they had met with Art Paus. He noted that recommendations for the area around the bridge would be issued soon and he noted that one of the AIA 150 Franklin Corridor Study subcommittees has specific recommendations for the bridge. Lou recommended visiting the AIA website for the Franklin Blvd. project to obtain more information; website: www.franklincorridor.org.

Input received from the Open House – Lou noted that additional work on possible bridge types was completed prior to the Open House and more renderings of bridge options had been made available.

Jamie noted the comment synthesis and draft open house summary were included in the meeting packets. She noted that the first page contained a summary of the general trends and themes, while the actual comments were attached at the end. Just over 70 people had attended the meetings, not including the ODOT and OBDP staff, PDT members or several CAG members.

Jamie noted that there had been numerous comments on naming the bridge for or otherwise honoring the Kalapuya people. Comments were from emails and comments at the open houses. She noted that some representatives from the Grand Ronde tribe had expressed interest in being more involved in the process and there had been some conversations with some members of the Kalapuya about other potential ways to honor the tribe. Jamie emphasized that it was still early in the process to be thinking about naming. The process we are currently in is not addressing naming. Naming of the bridge may be included in a later phase of the project.

Kalin explained the process of synthesizing the comments. He noted that the comments collected on the flip-charts in the course of the open house had been denoted as separate from those received on the comment forms. He noted that the comment synthesis was intended as a general overview and referred committee members to the actual comments for specifics.

CAG members who attended the open houses were asked to provide their comments:

Rich Hazel said that he had been concerned about the materials available at the open houses in that they seemed to be oriented towards the engineering options. He noted that although the public didn't seem to be aware of the non-structural design options, they had nonetheless expressed consistent enthusiasm for curves and arches in the structure, including ornamental arches above the deck. Jamie agreed that there had been much interest in using natural lines, curves, and a streamlined open structure.

Ann Sanders noted that she too had heard comments regarding aesthetics, mosaic treatments, and decorative concrete, often in association with the Kalapuya.

David Sonnichsen confirmed that the 70 attendees had been members of the public. Jamie confirmed that the figure did not include the PDT, CAG members, or staff. He expressed surprise at the low Springfield attendance (20 people) and thanked the group for making itself available. He said that he expected interest in the project to grow over time.

John Barofsky noted that the CAG had discussed colored concrete as a possible aesthetic treatment, and he asked whether there had been any presentation made in that regard. Ann acknowledged that the focus had been on the engineering elements and that any exclusion wasn't intentional. She noted that there had been comments about aesthetic treatments. John asked when it would be appropriate to bring up the subject for a public conversation. Tim Dodson said that design will begin in earnest around June 2008 and design elements such as color could be discussed at that time. Tim confirmed that the CAG will continue to meet throughout the design process.

Chris Ramey confirmed that aesthetic considerations such as color have actually been budgeted for. Tim confirmed said that the cost/benefit ratio for color and form is very high and will definitely be a part of the process. Chris asked whether those considerations applied to above deck materials like guard rail. Tim noted the public desire for using a rail that affords views of the river and noted that nothing prohibits looking at such ideas, as such improvements could be made at a modest cost. He

noted The Dalles overpass bridge that features salmon and sturgeon as an example. Chris sought confirmation that the project wouldn't reach a point where there isn't the money for such improvements. Tim stated that there would be money available for these relatively inexpensive features. Jamie noted that she had discussed ways to record and incorporate ideas and core-values into the process so that they are a part of record from this point forward. Tim noted that the basic models will form the basis for the acceptable options so the design team can select from among the different types and incorporate additional aesthetic elements into a selected type. He explained that the basic models only include the raw form and all could include Kalapuya symbols, natural symbols, or other features. He said that while the design team doesn't yet exist, criteria can be put into Request for Proposals so that applicants incorporate the need for color and creativity as needed. Jamie noted that applicants may be scored according to their ability to meet design considerations.

Bob Kline suggested soliciting local options through a design competition. Jamie noted that there had been various suggestions to that effect from the public.

David Sonnichsen noted the contrast between the OBEC calendar circulating at the open house—with its inspirational bridges—and the relatively mundane concepts on the wall. Chris asked whether it would be possible to get copies of the calendar for the CAG. Jamie offered to look into it. Tim noted that the American Society of Civil Engineers produces the calendar. Dave Carvo asked whether it was prudent to provide such visions of expensive bridge types when the project is already at the heights of its budget. Jamie noted that there were various smaller details for the bridges that could be incorporated into the project.

Lou noted that the open house was also intended as an opportunity to gather input on the environmental factors for the EA. He noted the comments gathered to that end, and pointed out that most of the attention went to the discussion of the bridge type.

DISCUSS/FINALIZE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Jamie noted the addition of a preamble at the beginning of the Evaluation Criteria as suggested. She said that all of the bridge types presented in the renderings met the screening criteria. She noted that six bridge "packages" had been created to demonstrate the tradeoffs for the different designs. As an example, she noted that the use of a deck arch design could not continue over Franklin Blvd because of clearance issues.

Jamie noted that they had separated the "given" criteria (those criteria that must be satisfied by any selected option,) from those that help to differentiate the options. James noted that because the alignments and footprints were very similar, it was important to focus on the differentiators. Jamie noted the two matrices, one for bridge type evaluation and one for refinement design and construction. She noted that the team felt the criteria on the latter matrix were not differentiators—though they would eventually provide a basis for evaluating the different bridge options, as one design might meet a particular criterion better than other designs.

Rich Hazel requested copies of the issue summaries and the previous versions of the goals and objectives for comparison. He noted that the issue of safety for river users appears to have been dropped and noted that the current objective of protecting bicycle and pedestrian facilities was not the same as the original language of providing opportunities to *enhance* such facilities. He noted that the ability to pursue such objectives might be affected by the location of piers. Jamie noted that

Rich's concerns were reflected in the goals and objectives, but apparently not in the refinement matrix. Rich said that he wanted to make sure the concerns aren't lost.

Dave Carvo noted the conversation at the previous meeting regarding how the omitted considerations would be incorporated into subsequent stages of the process. He reiterated the importance of keeping the initial values present even if they don't affect every step. He noted the importance of making the design consultants aware of the initial values and criteria brought up at the beginning of the process.

Ann Sanders pointed out that some considerations, such as maintaining safety for river users, are required and wouldn't serve as effective differentiators. Jamie agreed, but also noted that the potential for improving the conditions might make a difference. She noted that it was important to gather those criteria so they can be reviewed in the context of the different bridge types.

Trevor Taylor requested confirmation that the other criteria not listed on the Evaluation Criteria would be brought up later during the refinement component. Jamie said it would, noting that some of the options required a more detailed analysis to determine their actual impacts. James noted that the goal was to get a recommendation from the CAG about which bridge types should be brought into the EA, each of which will have various options. He said that the process will let them know what opportunities there are for such issues as noise prevention and environmental enhancement. Tim explained that the bridge type matrix will be used now while the refinement matrix will be used by the design team and the general contractor later on. He noted that some of the criteria will serve as differentiators during the process of procuring the Engineering firm to design the bridge and the CM/GC firm (Construction Manager / General Contractor) to build the bridge, but because the refinement criteria can be applied to all of the bridge types, the refinement criteria won't differentiate among those types. He noted that any that *do* differentiate should be moved over to the bridge type matrix. He described that they were trying to "build a box" around the options so as to give James the information he needs to present to the regulatory agencies reviewing the EA. Trevor noted that he felt there were other criteria that should be in the listed in the Request for Proposals (RFP) to select the design consultant but which were not on the refinement matrix, such as sustainability and aesthetic issues. He said that while he felt comfortable discussing the bridge types now, he felt the refinement matrix was not complete. Jamie noted that the matrix represents their first cut and serves as a starting point.

Dave Carvo asked how much specific information is necessary for an EA. James said that the footprint is important to know and the specific bridge type is not important. He said that different design options can be folded into each alternative as defined by the number of piers in the water, the alignment, and the demolition of the existing bridge. He noted that they were not limited to only one girder type. Dave observed that pier placement seemed more relevant to the EA than the bridge types.

Jamie drew a simplified map showing the various steps in the evaluative process:

All bridge types → Screening Criteria → Focused range of bridge types (fatal flaw criteria) → Bridge type evaluation matrix **(we are here)** → Identify bridge "foot print" to analyze impacts for EA (can be multiple types with same footprint) → Bridge type refinement → Which bridge types to consider

Bob Kline asked whether the CAG would be able to review the RFP that would be used to select the design consultant. Tim said that would personally welcome any review by the group and that he would do what he could to make it happen.

Ann Sanders confirmed that if the group was to recommend a certain number of piers in the river, then the team would analyze the recommendation and identify potential impacts for discussion. Tim noted that the models in the pictures were representative models. He noted the locations where the piers would be located for each model type. He noted how some examples had only one set of piers in the water, but had two in the riparian areas, while other examples had two sets in the water but avoided the riparian zones completely. Jamie explained that the people doing the EA would look at the environmental and cultural impacts for the recommended number of piers and bring back a range of options and tradeoffs accordingly.

John Barofsky noted that the question of whether to use one or two bridges didn't seem to be under consideration. Tim confirmed that the issue had not been decided and would hopefully be decided today. Lou noted that the environmental implications for one bridge or two weren't as great as one might think. James noted that there had been a brief discussion about the issue at the PDT, and he reiterated the advantages of two bridges. He said that two bridges had been assumed for the models. Lou noted that using two smaller piers or one wider pier also wouldn't make much difference hydraulically or in terms of engineering. He noted that while there isn't much difference in cost between the two options, there are some advantages to using separate bridges. He noted the possibility of staggering piers to align with the direction of flow, but said it might be more aesthetically pleasing to line up the piers. Tim also noted that while potentially expensive, it is possible to use two separate bridges with only one pier. He said that while a single bridge would be about two feet narrower, they had found no other significant advantages, and it would be more difficult to engineer. There is also a significant staging advantage for two bridges compared to one. He noted the environmental benefits for two bridges in terms of increased light, and said that he would like the CAG to make a recommendation.

Bob Kline asked whether the piers could be shaped so as to minimize turbulence. Tim said that shape was an important design consideration, and would be significant for preventing debris hang-ups as well. Josh Proudfoot commented that in his experience in rowing, the turbulence from piers is less of a danger than collisions with collected debris. James said it was also important to ODOT maintenance.

Pat French asked whether picking a specific bridge type implies the selection of corresponding pier locations. Tim said that the pier locations would be located "within a box," and would be dictated by assumptions about the spans being equal lengths, the location of the main channel, the location of Franklin, and the shape of the haunches. He noted that there would be more flexibility if the span lengths varied. He also noted that the model combinations weren't exclusive (for example a deck arch could include *more* spans if necessary,) but he explained that they had assumed the minimal number of piers.

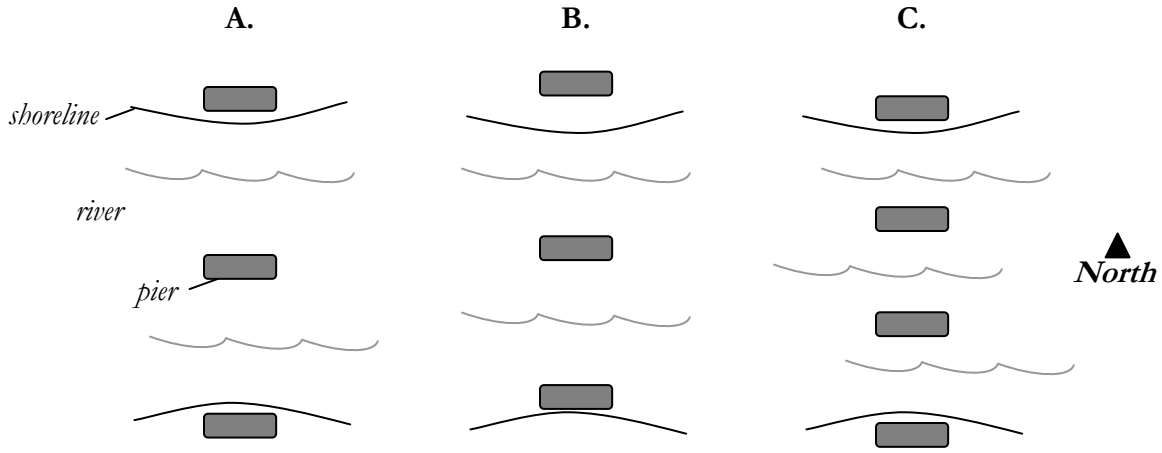
Bob Kline asked whether the goal was to narrow down the types of bridges. Jamie responded that it was more important to determine the allowable number of piers and whether one bridge should be used or two. Jamie reiterated that the decision about one or two bridges is slightly less critical because either option uses roughly the same footprint.

John Barofsky asked for confirmation that the tied arch feature was structural. Lou confirmed that it was. John asked whether it would be possible to combine the tied arch and deck arch designs. Tim noted that it wouldn't be feasible because of budget constraints.

Jamie suggested that the CAG members individually rank each bridge package according to the listed criteria in the matrix. Trevor Taylor pointed out that some members of the CAG weren't informed enough to know whether the packages meet some of the criteria.

John Barofsky noted that the deck arch structure appeared to be the only option that placed only one pier in the water, while the others had two in the middle or one close to shore. James said that was correct. Lou explained that they had wanted to keep the options simple, and noted that it was misleading to think that the options with two piers in the river were all the same. Tim noted that if the group decides on having only one pier in the water, then it would limit subsequent options for crossing Franklin, as it would preclude the possibility of using any form of haunch. He asked whether the group could accept the possibility of having two piers in the water (with one of them near the south shore and one near the center of the river) so as to give the design team more options. He pointed out that the regulatory agencies treated all piers below "ordinary high water" as essentially equal in environmental impact, whether the pier is in the water during low flows or in the near-shore location. He reiterated the need to define the footprint. He noted that the piers have been placed assuming equal spans, and while equal spans can be beneficial aesthetically and structurally, they aren't required.

Jamie drew three example diagrams of how piers could be placed in the river:



She noted that the CAG needed to determine which models provided generally acceptable locations for each set of piers.

Charlotte asked for confirmation that considerations are being made for the north-side bike path in each option. Lou said that all three possibilities have the potential to locate the bike path by the river. He noted that the deck arch might hinder clearance over the bike path. He noted that a haunched option could be high enough for bicycles.

Chris Ramey asked whether it would be possible to shift any of the pier options so as to avoid the riparian zones. Tim noted that example B seemed to offer the most versatility in avoiding the riparian zones.

Bob Kline asked whether dictating the pier locations precluded any specific designs. Lou said they did not, but noted that pier locations do dictate span lengths which will affect possible types.

John Barofsky noted that there appeared to be no way to completely avoid both the riparian zones and the river, and raised the question of how to yield the most minimal impact. He said that he felt that the CAG would prefer unequal spans if it meant reducing impacts to the riparian zones. Lou indicated that it could be possible to engineer around the riparian areas. There was some discussion of what "riparian" means. James noted that it's not clearly defined and could mean the bank itself or the whole flood plain. Chris suggested placing the piers as far from the water as possible. Pat French suggested defining the riparian zone as more than just the slope of the bank. She said that she preferred that the bike path should pass on the river-side of the piers instead of having a pier between the bike path and the river creating a tunnel effect. She suggested that option C could be eliminated while options A and B could go forward.

Trevor Taylor noted that while the location of piers is important, the type is also important. He noted how the delta-pier seems to provide more light, how a Y-pier would have a smaller footprint, and how a deck arch would be a solid form with a wider footprint. Jamie asked whether all of the piers would work with all of the bridge types except for the deck arch. Lou agreed that most of the piers would work with the different bridge types, but noted that there could be cases where specific bridge types would have specific pier design requirements.

Charlotte Behm asked whether fluid dynamics would be affected by the pier shape. Lou said that they would, as some pier options would require placement at 90° to the flow. Tim noted that there shouldn't be a noticeable effect on boaters. Tim also pointed out that the regulatory agencies are really only concerned about hydraulics as they impact fish passage. Also, because the river bottom is hard basalt all through the project area, scour (erosion) due to river hydraulics is not a concern. Charlotte expressed concern about fish and other animals. James said that they would be using conservative estimates for the pier impacts and considering alternatives and possible mitigation measures as a part of the EA.

Jamie noted the general interest in having longer spans with the piers moved away from riparian areas. She asked whether the group could consider eliminating option C (which would also remove concept #4, the least flexible option,) from consideration. There was consensus from the CAG to eliminate option C.

James asked for other considerations beyond the footprint, such as shapes or forms that the group considered unacceptable. Dave Carvo noted that while he liked the shape of the deck arch, he foresaw the potential for vandalism and abuse. He asked whether this was considered in the EA. James said that such considerations wouldn't be looked at from the natural resources perspective though they would be looking at whether the designs are likely to snag debris. He noted that the social/cultural objective could look at the potential for the structure to serve as a nuisance. Tim pointed out that if the deck arch is selected then the design would have to include provisions to make the arch structure inaccessible to people who would want to climb onto it.

Charlotte asked whether the group preferred one or two bridges. The agreed by consensus on the two bridge option.

Pat French noted that there were several important considerations in the matrices that the CAG wasn't qualified to offer input on, such as impacts to riparian areas and construction impacts. John Barofsky expressed concern that decisions were being reached without a complete discussion, and he cautioned against going to the PDT with an underdeveloped perception of what the CAG wants. He noted that the group had reached these agreements so that work can continue over the summer, but emphasized that it was by no means an exhaustive discussion. Ann Sanders asked whether there were specific decisions that John wanted to revisit. John said that he felt there were general issues that weren't being addressed. Jamie confirmed that the PDT members present would carry the message forward.

Chris Ramey noted that if the southern pier in Option B was moved closer to bank, it would eliminate the possibility of creating an arch because of vertical clearance issues. Tim agreed that they would have to evaluate how close they can get to the bank. Chris noted that the CAG needs to decide how it matters where piers will be allowed in the river. He noted that if the piers were to be moved north, onto the small island, then more curve could be possible. Ann requested a simulation to that effect. Charlotte asked about what was on the island. Some CAG members said they didn't know and that it was hard to reach.

NEXT STEPS

Tim noted that consideration of specific aesthetic design refinements and architectural elements added to the selected bridge will require work by the final design team, as the current level of design is very conceptual and focused on the type of bridge and overall form. He said more specifics, based upon the limitations established by the CAG, would be available in June. Jamie suggested meeting at some point in July to serve as a check-in where the CAG could review some of the more refined options. The CAG generally agreed. Jamie proposed meeting from 1pm-4pm on Wednesday, July 11.

James noted that they would have more information about impacts and how they will affect the various options. Lou noted that they had received good input that will help refine the options between now and July.

James asked how the recommendations of the CAG would be presented to the PDT. Charlotte noted that they would caveat the recommendations with a note that not all of the options were thoroughly discussed.

David Sonnichsen asked for elaboration on a comment about the piers being considered by the reviewing agencies as having the same impact regardless of their positions in the river. Tim said that his impression was that the review pertained to fish more than to people. James said that the fluvial standards are measured and considered equally important. Tim also noted that the regulators want to make sure that debris settles in natural areas.

Jamie summarized the group's concerns:

- Consider different span lengths. [i.e. not necessarily "equal spans"].
- Piers as far from water as possible.
- [North of the river, Bike] Path on the river side [of the pier], to north.
- Smallest pier footprint.
- Need to continue to consider all criteria.
- This is not a complete recommendation.
- Southern pier moved no further than the island.

CLOSE