

FINAL

Summary – Meeting #18

Project Development Team – I-5 Willamette River Bridge Project

*March 13, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
McLane Room (644 A Street, Springfield)*

ACTION ITEMS

PDT members will:

1. Provide feedback on ways to inform and prepare the public for upcoming construction work.

The project team will:

1. Provide notice of the next PDT meeting date (April 17 or April 24.)
2. Provide a preliminary schedule of construction and related events in advance of the April PDT meeting.

ATTENDANCE

Voting Members

- Molly Cary – Environmental Manager, ODOT Region 2
- Chris Henry – Transportation Planning Engineer, City of Eugene Public Works
- Al Heyn – Bridge Engineer, ODOT Region 2
- Kent Howe – Planning Director, Lane County
- Greg Mott – Community Planning Manager, City of Springfield
- Ann Sanders – ODOT Project Leader, Area Rep. for Lane County ODOT Region 2
- David Sonnichsen – Community Advisory Group (CAG) representative

Resource Members/Voting Member Alternates/Observers

- Brian Baker – OBDP
- Megan Banks – Public Involvement Manager, LCOG
- Douglas Beauchamp – Lane Arts Council
- Jamie Damon – Public Involvement Manager
- Carl Deaton – Designer, ODOT Region 2 Roadway
- John Ferguson – T.Y. Lin International
- Eric Gunderson – CAG Member, AIA
- Kevin Parrish – Hamilton
- Suzanne Roberts – OBDP
- Kalin Schmoltdt – Public Involvement Coordinator, JLA
- Jyll Smith – OBDP
- Richard Upton – Project Manager, ODOT
- Don Kahle – AIA
- Randy Nishimura - AIA

HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- PDT #17 meeting summary (*Draft*)
- PDT #16 meeting summary (*Final*)
- CAG #16/PDT #15 meeting summary (*Final*)

DESIGN WORKSHOP SHOWCASE

Committee members were invited to come early and view drawings and conceptual work from the February design workshops. The group began their normal meeting at 10:30am.

WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW

The meeting will focus primarily on the outcomes from the February charettes.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Summary of PDT #17 Meeting – The summary was approved with no changes.

Report from CAG Representative – David Sonnichsen noted that the CAG was generally enthusiastic about the workshop presentation, though the CAG is concerned how they will fit into the process of prioritizing and implementing the aesthetic features. The group hopes to remain involved. David will replace Charlotte Behm as the CAG liaison to the PDT. Charlotte will serve as the PDT alternate.

PROJECT UPDATE

Schedule & Budget – Dick Upton said that the project was still comfortably within budget. Construction will begin soon with work on the temporary bridges starting in July.

Community Presentations – Dick Upton noted a recent series of presentations to various organizations including neighborhoods and cycling groups. Dick noted that the team had prepared thorough responses to concerns and questions and that feedback has been generally positive.

Upcoming Work – John Ferguson noted how the design work had been subdivided to match the CMGC construction schedule. The early work package for this summer is nearly complete and involves finalizing design on the work bridges, bike detours, footing sizes, and the sign bridge. This work package will be submitted to ODOT Mar. 25. The following work package will be in August and will focus on the southbound portion of the project including retaining walls and approaches.

Chris Henry noted that there would be a hearing on the greenway permits with Eugene on Mar. 18. John said that minimal comments have been received on the greenway permits with no real opposition. Springfield permits will follow and hopefully be in hand by May 1. The Federal and State permit request were submitted on Mar. 6 and will hopefully be in hand by May.

Chris Henry noted the request for stimulus funds to be used for a camera and weather station early in the project. Dick said the camera could be covered by the project costs though the weather station could be paid for by stimulus funds. Those items will be inserted into appropriate work packages.

Dick Upon said that the team would be looking to the PDT for help in providing information and preparing the community for the coming work.

Public Involvement – Megan Banks said that there will be soundwall meetings with the Laurel Hill Valley Neighborhood Association and the West Centennial neighborhood. There will be additional presentations to service organizations, neighborhoods, elected officials, park users and anyone else who wants information about the project. There will be a presentation to the media based on the results of the design workshops.

Chris Henry said that the Eugene elected officials would be interested in hearing more about the arts component and that it could serve as a good opportunity to introduce Dick to the Council. Megan said she would look to Kent, Chris, and Greg to get on the city council agendas. Dick said that there may be a presentation prior to the groundbreaking followed by additional contacts after.

Jamie Damon explained that the team would be working with Larry, Kevin, John and Dick to synchronize design opportunities for the next work package. They will then identify how the CAG and PDT can help advance the design elements.

Douglas Beauchamp noted that the neighborhoods considering soundwalls may not know how to react to the options if they are not aware of the design possibilities at the time of the soundwall presentations.

Molly Cary asked whether there had been a survey of the people affected by potential sound walls. Megan said that the extent of the sound shadow was still being determined but that the question of whether or not to use a soundwall would go only to those affected.

Don Kahle said that the design team is trying to create an awareness of the project as a whole as opposed to the individual parts in order to tell a coherent story. The team wants to keep some particulars on the table for the time being. Randy Nishimura described the design process as more about planning a banquet than using an a la carte menu. Don quoted Eric Gunderson in calling for “not just a place for art, but an artful place.” Jamie noted that the PDT does not need to make a specific decision at this meeting, but should give a sense of whether they feel the outcome from the workshops is a step in the right direction.

DESIGN WORKSHOPS

Overview – Randy Nishimura explained that the charettes were organized around a hand-picked group of around 60 artists, architects, landscape architects, and technical staff. The meetings were held on Feb. 21 and 28. The setup allowed each group to observe each others work and committing the same people to both weekends helped ensure knowledge of the project and continuity of thought. The groups came up with helpful direction and the makings of what might be a thematic master plan and opportunities for art.

The groups benefited from presentations by CAG members as well as visiting cultural speakers. Facilitators at each table tried to make sure that all voices were heard and all ideas were explored. The work during the first Saturday was intended to not limit the creative process. At the end of the first day, the group reviewed the results and marked their favorite ideas to see whether there was

consensus about moving forward with certain concepts. The work was then summarized by table and theme in preparation for the second Saturday.

The second Saturday included presentations on design ideas and imagery as well as a presentation from the artists in the group. The small groups were re-mixed in order to evoke new creative energy. The second day was more focused and pragmatic than the first and included more design feedback from the technical team members.

The AIA has been interested in this charette model and is looking at how to apply it to other projects.

Presentation – Eric Gunderson explained that each table group included an artist, two architects, a landscape architect, design experts, and community members. While the first week focused on larger ideas and themes, the second week narrowed the ideas into several concepts that were developed by the groups:

- **The Whole Family** – This concept looks at the whole of the project and the experience of the entire area. Prominent ideas included: respect for the bridge as a beautiful structure by itself; the riparian edges along the river; the sound wall experience; the sign bridge; the railroad fence; the canoe canal; the possibility for an interpretive center; and the concept of creating a camas meadow to connect with the Kalapuya people.
- **One Minute Movie** – This concept considered the process of traveling from one end of the site to the other as experienced by cars on I-5. Several ideas focused on artistic treatments for the railings, fence, and guardrails. Part of the “movie” emphasized the passage from the valley to the foothills. This passage could be emphasized by making the soundwalls more geological and sculptural on the foothills side and more sinuous and organic on the valley side. Space in the median between the bridges could be used for sculpture. Landscaping was explored as a way to emphasize the transition: evergreens could be planted by the soundwalls or cottonwoods could create a gateway effect along the freeway. The group also suggested using part of the park as a camas meadow. CAG member Pat French suggested an additional meadow space north of the Eastgate Woodlands that could also be planted with camas.
- **Camassage (Camas Passage)** – A group explored the camas flower as an analogy for the place; the aerial of the site even looks roughly like a camas flower. The group explored the idea of using plant materials to screen the industrial area while reinforcing the riparian edges and the connection to the valley. There was an idea to combine an art-nouveau camas sculpture with the sign bridge or to place a similar structure in the space between the bridges. While schedule may be a constraint in the sign bridge design, it was suggested that a normal sign bridge could be built now and then reused elsewhere and replaced by a new artistic version at some point in the future. Ideas for a camas sculpture between the bridges was deemed infeasible because of maintenance needs.
- **The Nature of Walls** – The group envisioned the walls next to the LHV neighborhood as being stone-like and including plantings and planting niches. Organic imagery could also be included on the walls through the use of form-liners or other media. The walls could weave or overlap to appear more natural and allow for plantings between the walls if practical. The

group envisioned a “10-second movie” that could describe the step-by-step lifecycle of a camas bulb. Chris noted similar examples in the New York subway. The group also suggested ways to create the walls through pre-casting reversible panels to help alleviate visual repetition.

- **Mill Race Place** – Treatment of the mill race area was challenging because of the number of interacting elements and difficulty with visualizing the site. Eric suggested that a 3D model could help improve understanding of the area. The group noted that access and security were major issues. The limited access creates a scary under-bridge experience that could be alleviated through nearby parking or continuing the bike path along the river edge. The CAG also offered ideas about improving connections to the Laurel Hill Valley neighborhood.
- **Steps** – This concept looks at the theme of “footsteps” on a large scale and in the treatment of paths and hardscapes. The group considered incorporating patches of stone design elements or plant materials into the landscape. One artist came up with the idea of incorporating specific themes (such as water, wildlife and history,) directly into the paths and creating a connection to the Talking Stones.

Eric highlighted the many common interwoven themes that emerged during the workshops:

- **More with less** – Considers the bridge to be an elegant, crisp structure that should not be cluttered. It is a place for “opening” and appreciating the place. The surrounding elements should be part of the whole story as should the other structures required by the project.
- **Weaving Space** – Undulation was a common theme. Many of the concept drawings used a sinuous pattern in describing the ramps, soundwalls, fences, signs and gateway elements.
- **Weaving History** – Incorporation of elements at different scales that reveal layers of history, both human and natural.
- **Weaving Experience** – Creating sequences of events or carrying a theme (such as camas) throughout the project that unifies the place.
- **Organic & Inorganic** – Combining built elements with organic elements. Using abstractions of nature. Plants could be combined with hardscapes or organic images could be used on soundwalls.
- **Transitions** – *Spatial*: Using the landscape to create the gateway; shape the foothills and the valley meadow. *Temporal*: Changing images like a movie clip; build up the experience to the bridge like an exclamation point. *Vertical*: Consider the experiences at different levels (park, Franklin, I-5) as providing unique opportunities and richness.
- **A Light Touch** – The theme of footsteps at a large and small scale; also about sustainability. There were suggestions of using the fragments of the old bridges to tell the story of building the bridge. (The idea of using the old bridge piers in the park was nixed because of feasibility concerns.) Low level, low impact fiber optic light could be used to paint a faint line on the arches. Someone suggested changing the lighting on the bridge to match moon phases.

Eric explained that Jiri appeared to be generally receptive to the workshop ideas when he heard them the previous Friday. Jiri liked the idea of using nature to interplay with the bridge and he began to conceive of ways to add lighting to the structure. Don agreed that Jiri seemed pleased. Randy said

that although the deck arch may not seem as heroic an expression as the through arch, the deck arch does seem to be a more appropriate structure for telling the story that the group has arrived at.

Douglas Beauchamp said that it was enlightening to include the artists at the behest of ODOT. The artist group will be gathering one more time to provide afterthoughts on the process. At this point the artists could continue to be involved on an interdisciplinary design team, they could be commissioned to finish specific materials onsite, or the team could employ a more public RFP process.

Jamie Damon noted that Esther Stutzman had come to the Mar. 11 CAG meeting and had commented that some of the ideas being proposed had “fantastic elements that were both pleasing and respectful.” The CAG also liked the direction from the workshops. They praised the organic emphasis, simplicity, and the evolution of the creative process. Member Rich Hazel noted that he might have initially wanted a signature *bridge*, but is now more interested in a signature *crossing*. The CAG requested more details on bridge illumination before they make any recommendations. Several members wanted to see more emphasis on sustainability, particularly surrounding water and reuse.

Douglas Beauchamp noted that Trevor Taylor had suggested that the area under the bridge on the north bank was relatively neglected. Don said that the broader design themes could now be applied to those areas and others. Don noted that the theme of “interweaving” could also apply to interaction between agencies: while ODOT may not be able to plant the camas meadow, ODOT could buy the bulbs for another group to plant. David noted that the north bank area will become more dramatic with the addition of the bridge structure. The existing rubble slope gives a sense of unwelcoming impermanence and could be greatly enhanced. He noted possibilities for treatments of the arch footings and slopes. David noted that Chris Ramey had suggested some sort of onsite treatment for runoff that could be applied to the structure, perhaps at canoe canal. David noted that the group had also begun to address the idea that above-deck pylon-features were unnecessary.

Jamie Damon explained that the next step will potentially involve creating a master plan for the site and identifying which parts can be implemented by ODOT and by others.

David Sonnichsen noted that he was a proponent of illuminating the bridge and felt that lighting would improve the bridge experience. He clarified that the CAG had raised questions but is still interested in the idea. Don noted that the lighting on the Rogue River Bridge was deemed to not have an adverse effect on wildlife.

DESIGN DIRECTION FROM THE PDT

Kent Howe said that he has long favored above deck improvements as a benefit for people traveling over the bridge and those who see it from a distance. He noted early interest in conveying the transition from the valley to the foothills of Southern Oregon. While Kent was frustrated by the lack of above-deck elements, he felt that using the landscape, fence, and riparian areas could help to provide a sense of transition. Don suggested that the Laurel Hill Valley soundwall could be thought of as a 1/3 mile high basalt column tipped on its side.

Molly Cary expressed excitement about the ideas and the fact that they appeared practical. Molly liked the idea of subtle lighting on the arches and phasing the level of illumination. She liked the soundwall elements and noted use of the basalt style in Bend and plantings along walls in Salem. She

noted that 2,000 feet of concrete will be a large part of the landscape and has to look good. She suggested that an element over the railroad could facilitate the gateway feeling, as could the soundwalls and other landscaping. She described the idea of a camas meadow as striking.

Chris Henry agreed that the ideas felt practicable and he commended the designers. He expressed concern over how to implement each and every idea. He also questioned the costs and how they will fit into the budget. He noted the opportunities over the railroad and for design elements on soundwalls. He noted that the design elements will help the project succeed or fail in the eyes of the community.

Al Heyn echoed the thoughts of others. He complimented the ideas and said he was looking forward to seeing how they would be blended together to create a bridge-area experience.

Ann Sanders said the workshops were interesting and insightful and produced lots of doable and exciting ideas.

David Sonnichsen reiterated his previous comments. He expressed enthusiasm and encouraged continued involvement by the CAG.

Jamie Damon asked if the group knew of maintenance concerns that Don Angermayer might have noted. Dick noted that the meeting last Friday had looked for fatal flaws in the possible ideas and that Don appeared supportive as of last Friday's meeting. There is still need for further discussion of some issues. Megan offered to follow up with Greg Mott.

Carl Deaton said that he enjoyed the presentation and how it drew the elements together. He said that he liked the below deck elements visible from the paths better than the elements which would be seen while driving down the road. He noted that any moving roadway elements (such as kinetic art) would be dangerous for traffic.

Dick Upton said he was enthusiastic about the outcomes of the workshop and the idea of letting the beauty of the design come from within. He noted that the feasibility of the proposals relates to the idea of doing more with less and modifying elements that will need to be built anyway. While such modifications will lead to incremental cost increases, he suggested that the proposals appear to be doable and within budget.

Molly Cary complimented the idea of flipping two sided wall segments as a practical way to add variety and save cost. Chris noted that the wall design could be an interesting studio project and he suggested that a scale model could help visualize the whole area. Kevin agreed that size of the wall will be important to convey to the public. Jamie said that any need for models will be identified as the design needs are coupled with the work packages. Chris suggested that the turnaround would need to be quick if help is sought from the U of O. Don suggested that the timeframe for producing a model is probably not realistic. Randy suggested that a computer model could be used to produce visuals of fly-throughs and drive-throughs relatively quickly. Chris asked whether Hamilton would need a model. Kevin explained that the bridge itself is fairly simple and doesn't require a model beyond the information with the plans and contract documents. He noted that the artistic elements could present some challenges, and noted an example in Redmond where the spatial needs of pathways, waterways, and art had to be accounted. Kevin suggested that the use of screens over the

railroad would need to withstand ice-loads and wind, but otherwise there were no other obvious problems. Kevin added that he was excited about the process. John said he was also excited.

Ann Sanders asked whether direction would be provided on the construction of specific elements or whether the ideas would be left to the interpretation of individual artists. Jamie said that the next steps were not laid out yet. The team will begin by matching the design elements with the work packages and bring the schedule back to the group to determine whether an RFP or other means of outreach is needed. John noted that the next steps will involve increasing the level of detail in the design matrix. He noted that decisions to shift the focus to those elements not directly on the bridge will add flexibility to the schedule.

Chris Henry encouraged that the CAG and PDT should be kept in the loop with regard to upcoming decisions. He advised against coming back to the groups with surprise decisions. Dick noted that the team would come to the April meetings with a sense of how to match up the ideas and decide what fits where.

Don Kahle noted that the AIA steering group is trying to be intentional with regard to how the workshop findings are rolled out in the news. A media event will likely happen before the next meeting of the PDT and efforts will be made to keep the group informed.

NEXT STEPS

Jamie Damon noted that the next meetings would take place in mid-April and mid-May with additional meetings likely on a monthly basis. The team will be soliciting advice from the PDT during this high activity time and will advise on the specific meeting dates as soon as possible. The team is planning to provide a preliminary schedule to the groups in advance of the April meetings. Megan noted that the April meeting will include information about groundbreaking related events. Jamie noted that the upcoming meetings will give Kevin Parrish time to discuss construction activities and needs in more detail so the PDT and CAG can act as conduits to the community.

Kevin Parrish said that he may need to consult with the parks representatives regarding the placement of informational kiosks and relocating some of the Talking Stones. David clarified that Kevin was referring to moving un-engraved stones to a site where they can be engraved. The already engraved stones do not need to be moved.

CLOSE