

DRAFT
MEETING SUMMARY
New Paltz Community Advisory Committee (CAC) – Carmine Liberta Bridge
March 11, 2015

In Attendance:

Gail Gallerie, Jeff Logan, Richard Gottlieb, Allan Stout, Peter Ferrante, Sande Ferrante, County Executive Michael P. Hein, Ed Pine, Sue Plonski, Brian Cunningham, Robert Sudlow, Dennis Doyle, Hector Rodriguez, Kenneth Wishnick, Mayor Jason West.

Also:

James Nani – TH Record, Michael Calimano, Andrew Emrich, Chris White, Paul Brown – NP Times, Jeff Plonski, Johnathan Cohen, Kevin Barry, Marianne Ananew.

Dennis Doyle called the meeting to order at 3:08pm and asked those in attendance to introduce themselves.

County Executive Michael P. Hein

The County Executive joined the meeting after the introductions to address the Committee

The County Executive thanked the CAC for helping to ensure that the replacement of the Carmine Liberta Memorial Bridge becomes a successful new model for community input into key infrastructure projects and benefits all our residents and businesses. The Executive noted the importance of the bridge for the economy and daily lives of New Paltz residents and the length of detours available (Gardiner & Rosendale). He spoke of his commitment to construct a temporary bridge to be in place before work on the existing bridge begins. The Executive outlined his historic commitment to preserving the County's transportation system in a manner that meets the needs of our County for generations to come and highlighted that the ability to invest in infrastructure today is a direct dividend to our citizens from his administration's fiscal responsibility since taking office. The Executive also noted the following:

- The bridge is safe today, but at the end of its useful life
- Flexible on design but cognizant of the budget
- The bridge replacement cannot solve all of the transportation issues in New Paltz
- The need to address bicycle pedestrian issues as part of bridge design and possibility of a second bridge to serve cyclists and pedestrians only

The Executive laid out the following measures of success

- Improved visual impact
- Safer for cyclists and pedestrians
- Will serve future needs
- On time and on budget

Project Timetable

The project timetable was discussed. Mr. Doyle noted that the CAC should finish major decisions on bridge elements by the no later than mid-July to allow the County to complete its design and funding approvals, with construction to start in the Spring of 2016 and finish in late fall of the same year.

Handouts

Handouts were provided of the history of county actions on the bridge and a handout of considerations for the CAC as it worked toward recommendations, including: feasible alternatives, reasonable costs, and what objectives the new bridge should accomplish.

Temporary Bridge

Preliminary layout of the proposed temporary bridge was made available to the committee. The proposed bridge would be located to the north of the existing structure. On the east approach it would be aligned so as not to disturb the sidewalk near the Gilded Otter. The bridge would be able to serve two-way traffic. It was noted that on the west side, the bridge would require a temporary roadway to gradually rise to meet Rt. 299 and this would encroach on Mr. Ferrante's field. Potential exists to reuse the abutments of the temporary bridge to locate a bridge dedicated to serve the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Technical Considerations

Ed Pine from the County's Public Works Department discussed the potential bridge replacement type options describing the large expanse that must be crossed (approx 180 ft). Feasible alternatives are Truss, Arch or Beam. Additional considerations ensuring that the bridge is out of the floodplain and reuse of the existing abutments.

Bridge Vehicle Capacity

Questions were raised concerning the need for additional travel lanes to accommodate future traffic growth. The response was that the bridge is not causing congestion in the Village. The congestion is related to the capacity of the intersections with NYS Rt 299 at Rt. 208/32 and at Manheim. It was also noted that adding lanes to the bridge would not improve the 2 lane configuration of Rt. 299 just west of the bridge. Finally, it was noted that the community plan was to focus growth east of the Wallkill River and preserve open space to the west.

SEQRA & Permits

Questions were also raised concerning SEQRA and permits. The County will need to complete SEQRA for the project and may seek lead agency status if it is determined that the project is not a Type II action. Permits will likely be required from DEC for work in the Wallkill. Temporary bridge structure may be considered as Type II. NEPA will not be needed unless a federal fund source is used (Not anticipated at this time).

A separate bicycle pedestrian bridge on the temporary bridge alignment will not be a Type II action and would require a SEQRA determination and finding.

Bridge Construction

Season - Spring to mid-Fall (April – November)

Time – 6:00/6:30AM – 5:00/6:00PM

Weekends not anticipated unless schedule requires

Intersection will shift to the north for the temporary bridge alignment.

Cost \$1.7 – 2.5 million – No Fed or State money

Depending on bids - Work may be partnership -done part County/part Contractor

Program & Budget in place to begin 2016 – Deliver bridge by end of 2016

Staging Area for equipment – should be primarily on west side

Mr. Ferrante commented that May is busiest month for business at the farm stand. During the Regatta, when a lane is closed on the bridge, he estimated approximately 50% loss of income

Other comments included possibility of community help with traffic enforcement? Consideration of the use of Variable Message Signs (VMS) noting the bridge being under construction with a temporary bridge that provides access to businesses open on the west side.

Bridge Design Comments

Make bridge a destination – lighting – parking - signage – benches

Design bridge to encourage use and allow free flow for cyclists and pedestrians – tie into proposed path along 299 (north side) to Libertyville Rd

Utilities

Utilities - Bury Central Hudson transmission lines was suggested. Concern was expressed regarding a move of utilities to the south side of bridge. New poles were just put in was noted. Noted that UC has contacted CH to move poles so that the temporary bridge could be installed. Water line on the existing bridge will have to be relocated – cost borne by Village Water Dist – anticipate Village will want water line back on new bridge upon completion. Can relocate to temp bridge – completion time essential due to no insulation on the relocated line. A question was asked if it was easier to hang on certain types of bridges. County confirmed it could be hung on any type but will look at cost considerations.

Aesthetic Considerations –

Overhead truss blocks some of the views and generally has more maintenance issues

Other design options that work include and could enhance the view would be non-overhead truss bridges, beam Bridge - Suggested that the US Bridge website for visuals of truss bridges and Google for beam bridges.

Other considerations include:

- Height of railings
- Pedestrian access outside truss
- Lights could be built into railings – attractive - solar lighting was suggested
- No overhead truss eliminates mistakes regarding height restrictions for loads that can damage the bridge
- Beam bridge used Albany/Troy (Green Island Bridge) also done in Hudson(?)
- Concrete vs. Asphalt – concrete for strength with asphalt overlay or could just be concrete can be done either way

Other Discussion:

Impacts of temporary bridge on traffic on Huguenot and Water Street

Cancelling the May 2016 Regatta - does not seem necessary – likely that the construction of the new bridge would not interfere with the Regatta - need to coordinate

Continued discussion of separate Bike/Ped Bridge vs. Main Bridge. Overall width of the main bridge was discussed.

Widen shoulders on Rt. 299 west of bridge and how to link with proposed trail to Gatehouse Rd.

Next Steps

Make meeting time earlier for Bike/Ped people – 1:00–3:00pm

All were okay communicating via e-mail with attachments

Poster/drawing will be shared – it is a draft

Website Links to options

Committee members were asked to be responsible & respectful if commenting to the media – voice opinions during committee to each other. Decisions - would be best to arrive at consensus for general design parameters and hopefully through the details. Committee work on this should be done by late June or July. Committee could continue to meet to discuss additional developments during construction including bridge opening dates and to act as liaison to community.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 8th at 1:00pm at the New Paltz Community Center

The meeting ended at 4:43pm.