

Citizens' Advisory Panel

Date: Wednesday, May 26, 2010
Time: 7:30 am to 8:30 am
Place: Victoria City Hall – Committee Room 1

MEETING NOTES

Attendance

Members: Andrew Turner, Jim Kerr, Margaret Lucas, Richard Linzey, Sid Chow

Staff: Gail Stephens [Chair], Allison Ashcroft, Peter Sparanese, Katie Josephson, Mike Lai, Kristin Quayle, Howard Markson, Dwayne Kalynchuk and Chaz Whipp

Guests: Joost Meyboom and Jim Fowler, MMM Consulting Group
Tim Stevens, IEC

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:30 am.

Dwayne Kalynchuk, the new Director of Engineering, introduced Tim Stevens of Infrastructure Engineering as the new project manager for the Johnson Street Bridge project.

Joost Meyboom and Jim Fowler of MMM Consulting Group attended to run through the powerpoint which focuses on the rehabilitation alternative. He noted that the project requirements consider the desire to have a 100 year lifespan as well as providing for improved accessibility for all forms of traffic and, improved safer traffic flow at both bridge heads. He noted that the costs to upgrade or rebuild will be provided at a later date. This presentation provides a brief overview without the technical details which are still being worked on.

The rehabilitation alternative includes:

- Replacing the 85 year old electrical/mechanical system;
- Seismic upgrading (not visual as they impact the foundation mostly);
- Repainting and removal of corroded steel;
- Installing a new 5 metre wide pedestrian/bicycle walkway on a separate bascule bridge;
- Ensuring marine traffic is accommodated in accordance with NWPA, and
- Honoring the heritage/conservation guidelines (both Federal and Olde Towne).

He noted that with the rehabilitative option it is not recommended that a dedicated bicycle lane be included on the westbound side of the bridge because of a safety issue associated with bus and truck off-tracking on the 'S' curve at the railway overpass.

He added that BC Transit has advised that the bridge crossing is its third highest route.

The initial timelines estimated that the project could be completed in two years of construction. However, it is now felt that 3 to 5 years will be required. In addition it will take one year to complete design and tendering. He noted that the estimated timelines for the schedule are driven by the various stages and some stages will require full closure and/or periods of time when only one or two lanes of traffic are available resulting in considerable congestion. Construction will also have to come to a stop to allow for the "fish windows" (February through July). Examples for closure provided include but aren't limited to: replacing the electrical/mechanical system, painting and steel repairs. Full possession (no other use) for each of the roadway and railway bridges will be required for rehabilitation.

Business Survey Results

Katie Josephson presented the results of the Ipsos Reid survey of the downtown business community, noting that 250 businesses were included and there was a 45% response rate. At the top of their concerns, similar to the residential survey, were social issues with the bridge showing quite low on their list; however, 62% did agree that the bridge is an important issue. In summary:

- Most felt that to replace or build new would have little to no impact on their business;
- Impact of bridge closures would have the greatest impact on restaurants;
- Noise and lights from construction done during the night would have little impact on downtown businesses;
- 2/3 felt that other levels of government should help with the funding;
- They are interested in receiving more information, mostly about the costs and about the construction schedule (i.e. closures);
- They are interested in having input, through an interactive website and prefer receiving information via email; and
- One of their greatest concerns would be an increase to taxes.

It was agreed that most people are not aware that the bridge would have to close completely if it is not replaced or rehabilitated as it would likely be deemed unsafe.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 a.m.