

# LAGOON POND DRAWBRIDGE COMMITTEE

## c/o Martha's Vineyard Commission

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### Minutes of the Meeting held on January 21, 2010

Location: MVC Offices

Members Present: Melinda Loberg (Chairman), Mark London, David Grunden, Chris Fried, and Tristan Israel

MassDOT and Parsons Engineering: Steve McLaughlin (MassDOT-District Engineer), Andrew Schlenker (MassDOT-Landscape Architect), Jocelyn Dewire (MassDOT-Engineer), Leslie Haines (Parsons-Project Manager), William Lockwood (Parsons-Architect)

Observers: Robert Ford, Henry Stephenson, Bob Clermont, Janet Hefler, Bill Venno, Paul Foley, and Mike Mauro

The meeting was called to order at 10:45 a.m.

#### **1. Design Process for the Permanent Drawbridge**

Ms. Loberg opened the meeting by thanking everyone who was involved with the new, reliable, workable temporary bridge. She noted that this meeting was to review the proposed design for the permanent bridge before it reaches the 25% design stage, at which time a formal public hearing will be scheduled to address questions or concerns in regards to the design. Mr. McLaughlin added that although the temporary bridge is completed and working well, it is still temporary, and he looks forward to getting the permanent bridge up and running.

Leslie Haines reminded everyone that the purpose of the bridge project is to replace the old bridge that has reached the end of its structural life, and also to try to achieve other community goals such as improving boating sightlines by shifting the channel away from the growing land spit by Eastville Beach, reducing the need to operate the bridge by increasing the clearance under the bridge, and improving pedestrian and bicycle movement over and under the bridge.

Ms. Haines reported that the 25% design highway plans were submitted to MassDOT in December and currently being reviewed. The consultants have prepared sketch plans for the bridge itself, MassDOT is reviewing the bridge dimensions and concept. The sketches reflect an addition of 12' in length to the bridge, which is now 350' as opposed to the original 338', in order to accommodate the pedestrian paths under the bridge; this also resulted in raising the bridge profile 3 inches. After receiving comments from the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee, they will complete the 25% design for the bridge.

#### **2. Architectural Design**

Mr. Lockwood and Mr. Schlenker presented two photo representations of alternative architectural treatments of bridge railings, lighting, tender house and retaining walls.

- A traditional design would have a hip roof on the bridge tender's house, stone or stone-like treatment of retaining walls; metal pipe railings, traditional windows and lights.
- A modern design would have a shed roof (incorporating solar panels) on the bridge tender's house, concrete finish of retaining walls, cable railings, modern windows and lights.

**Abutments:** The abutments could be stone-faced (for the traditional design) or concrete (for the modern design). There are potential maintenance issues with natural stone facing; using patterned concrete forms provides many design options, is faster and less expensive. The two replacement bridges at the Sengekontacket inlets are using concrete forms with a small river stone pattern, similar to stone walls and buildings on the Vineyard. The project team will provide additional information about pattern options to the committee for consideration.

**Color:** While both options showed green beams for the bridge, the color can change.

**Tender House:** Based on initial community input on four preliminary design options for the bridge tender's house, the project team narrowed the choice to the hip (traditional) and shed (modern) designs. Visibility from the tender house is no longer of great concern, as there will be cameras monitoring watercraft approaching the bridge. The solar panels on the roof of the modern design would not provide enough power for the bridge itself, but could supply most of the electricity of the tender's house.

### **3. Landscape Design**

**Retaining Walls:** Since the permanent bridge is wider than the existing bridge, and its inland side is fixed by the location of the temporary bridge, the permanent bridge will extend much farther out on the harbor side (about 11' at the Oak Bluffs end and 5' at the Tisbury end). This will require larger retaining walls.

**Vegetative Screening:** The retaining wall along the Eastville Beach side reaches 8' in height and there is only a limited depth for grading, planting, or other means to soften the visual impact. They are proposing a low wall in front of the retaining wall in front of which there would be about 4' for planting. This design avoids infringing upon the Eastville Beach area, and thereby avoids the procedure for changing park lands (USDOT Section 4F). Several Islanders mentioned that the community was actively working to eradicate invasive vegetation along the bridge at Eastville Beach and was hoping the bridge project would aid such efforts. This would only touch a small area of invasive vegetation and would avoid any critical resources of the barrier beach. Mr. McLaughlin stated that with strong community support, going through Section 4F permitting to extend farther into the surrounding beach property would be easier and worth reconsidering. This would reduce the need for a retaining wall and would allow more natural berming and vegetative screening.

**Pedestrian and Bicyclist Accommodations:** There are both on and off bridge accommodations for non-motorized traffic.

**Bridge Cross-Section:** The bridge cross section will allow for pedestrians on both sides of the roadway and cyclists along the road edge as well as on a Shared Use Path:

- Two 11' travel lanes
- Two 4' shoulders
- A 6' sidewalk on the harbor side intended principally for the bridge tender.
- A 10' clear Shared Use Path on the pond side.

The plans do not include proposed crosswalks, which will be shown in future plans. The harbor side sidewalk terminates midway down the approach on the Vineyard Haven side, creating a crossing movement. This element needs attention for a better solution.

Shared Use Path: The project will extend the 10' wide SUP from the bridge to the existing SUP at the state boat landing in Vineyard Haven. This will be separated from the roadway by a 54" railing on the bridge, and either a 42" or 54" railing on the approaches. Railings may be on both sides of the SUP for some of this stretch due to the sharp drop off to Lagoon Pond along some portions. There is a projection opposite the Tender's House that accommodates an observation/fishing platform. The project terminates the SUP short of the entrance to Eastville Beach due to insufficient right-of-way along this boundary with Lagoon Pond. This sets up potential additional crossing movements of cyclists and pedestrians in close proximity to where some will already likely be crossing to Eastville Beach. The Vineyard may want to raise the priority of plans for constructing a SUP between the bridge and the hospital's SUP.

**Under-Bridge Paths:** At each end of the bridge, a 5' wide, ADA compliant pedestrian path wraps underneath the bridge. On the Oak Bluffs end, the path allows people on the pond side to go down to ground level and walk under the bridge to Eastville Beach. On the Vineyard Haven end, the path allows people on the SUP to go down to ground level next to the Tea House and pass under the bridge. However the current design dead-ends there since the narrow right-of-way along the seawall facing the sound on the Vineyard Haven end limits the ability to provide an ADA compliant path extending back up to the bridge. It was suggested that the rip-rap wall in this location be tiered rather than sloped to reduce its visual impact; it would also allow some informal access for fishermen, though it would appear to be impossible to include an ADA-compliant path.

## **1.4 Next Steps**

MassDOT is looking to hold a public hearing on Island in March in order to finalize the bridge design options. The design team will provide a 'fly by' computer simulation for the hearing, but only for one option. Therefore, they would like to get feedback from the Drawbridge Committee as to which of the two options is preferred.

MassDOT will provide the committee with concrete form patterns and color options. It will also reexamine the ability to extend the project area farther into the Eastville Beach area and treatments for the seawall riprap along the bridge retaining wall.

The committee will meet again shortly and invite the public to discuss the illustrations presented today and review any other issues in preparation for the hearing. The public should be invited to attend to give comments, or to send comments in care of Mark London (mlondon@mvcommission.org).

The committee will provide MassDOT with a list of native Island plants from which to select screening and stabilizing vegetation.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.





