

## **LAGOON POND DRAWBRIDGE COMMITTEE**

c/o Martha's Vineyard Commission  
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### **Minutes of the Public Information Meeting - August 30, 2006**

Location: Held at the offices of the Martha's Vineyard Commission

Members Present: Melinda Loberg (Chair), Steve Berlucchi, Derek Cimeno, Tristan Israel, Fred Lapiana, Mark London

Invited Guests: Steve McLaughlin (MassHighway), Peter Donahue (Parsons Engineering), Mark Carmichael (District 5)

Observers: John Bugbee (Tisbury Town Administrator), Harriet Barrow, Denys Wortman (Tisbury Selectman), Lois Craine (VTA), Peter Hefler, Janet Hefler, Barbara Kudrawitz, George Kudrawitz, Carol Slocum, Richard Hehre, Marjory Aronson, Rosalyn Toomey, Ralph Packer, Andrea Aughenbaugh, Richard Aughenbaugh, Betsey Goldberg, Bob Ford, Fred Lapiana,

Chair of the Bridge Committee, Melinda Loberg, opened the meeting introducing Mr. Steve McLaughlin, Mass Highway Department's project engineer.

#### **Temporary Bridge**

Mr. McLaughlin spoke about the anticipated schedule for the construction of the temporary bridge. His remarks included the following:

- The advertisement for the construction contract was posted on Saturday, August 26, 2006.
- The bids will be opened on the final Tuesday in November and the project will be awarded to the lowest competent bidder.
- The anticipated bid will be in the neighborhood of \$6.5 million.
- The TIP has been amended to \$7 million to cover anticipated increase in cost for the temporary bridge.
- Steve McLaughlin will send the Committee drawings (in pdf format) of the final bridge and approaches design.

#### **Permanent Bridge**

Mr. McLaughlin introduced Mr. Peter Donahue from Parsons Engineering, the firm that has been contracted by the State to design the permanent bridge. He stated that it would take approximately two years to complete the design process. The contract with Parsons is not yet finalized, but they are already doing preliminary planning.

Mr. Donohue will be in charge of the highway design. He commented that the process calls for considerable community involvement in the planning and design phase. His firm recently completed a similar process with the Woods Hole community in the design of the Eel Pond drawbridge. He highlighted the priorities of the permanent bridge design:

- Proceed as quickly as possible.
- To the extent possible, revise the alignment of the channel in order to straighten the dogleg in the channel that boats must traverse, improving sight lines and boating safety.
- Resolve the issue of the final height of the bridge, as soon as possible. An increase in height of 4' would appear to be ideal in that it would increase the number of boats able to travel under the bridge while having a minimal impact on the approaches, the required right-of-way, and retaining walls. The contract will include repairs to or re-building the seawall in areas affected by the bridge construction.
- The bridge will include two 12' travel lanes, two 4' shoulders, one 10' multi-user path on the Lagoon side of the bridge separated from the shoulder by the physical barrier, and a sidewalk on the Harbor side.
- The current span is 30' wide. The plan includes shifting the resting pier to the opposite side and making the drawspan probably wider (the exact span has not been determined).
- The goal in their design will be to minimize construction time. Innovative engineering design will be utilized as well as construction off-site of moveable pieces.
- The intention is to maintain traffic throughout construction. There will be brief periods when traffic is limited to a single lane and/or will travel on gravel.
- Effort will be made to identify all impacts to the ecosystem including eelgrass and shellfish beds, and plan permitting and mitigation early to avoid delays due to unanticipated permitting requirements.
- At present, the anticipated cost for construction is \$25 million, according to Mr. McLaughlin.

Melinda Loberg invited questions and comments from members of the committee and guests. Following are questions and responses given.

*Q: Would the use of a double bascule instead of the proposed single bascule allow for additional height in the center of the closed bridge without the associated impacts of longer approaches?*

A: Possibly. The option of a double bascule will be part of the bridge type study. Raising the bridge higher than 4' may have undesirable impacts further out, but they won't be known until the design process is further along. The goal of keeping the counter-weight out of the water will impact the decision on bridge height as well.

*Q: The overall bridge profile should be low and unobtrusive. What consideration is being given to aesthetics?*

A: The goal is to only raise the bridge a minimal amount to accommodate an additional class of sailboats without the need to raise the bridge. Other amenities could include a walkway underneath the bridge allowing pedestrians to go from the Lagoon side to the Harbor side without crossing the roadway. Further improvements to the seawall, bike route and access to Eastville Beach will all be considered in the design process.

*Q: Can the electric supply be moved to the Oak Bluffs side to enable the electric poles on the causeway on the Tisbury side to be removed? Can the motor be a single phase rather than a triple phase motor?*

A: We cannot tell at this time about the type of motor. In all likelihood, the power source can be shifted to the Oak Bluffs side. Parsons asks that the Committee put this request in writing.

Q: *Will the boating channel under the bridge become wider than 30' enabling larger vessels to access the Lagoon? This would put increased pressure on the Lagoon, having a negative influence on its environment.*

A: The Coast Guard requires that the channel be 30'. Although the piles will be further apart with the new bridge, the channel itself will remain the same width.

Q: *Who will remove the existing bridge and how will it be done?*

A: The firm that builds the temporary bridge will also be under contract to remove the existing bridge. The manner in which that is done is not specified in the contract, but logic dictates it would be done using a crane and barge.

Q: *What will the impact of construction be?*

A: Most work will be done off-site. The temporary bridge will be brought in on a barge.

Q: *Were double shifts for building the temporary bridge part of the contract recently put out to bid? Off-Island contractors often arrange for four days of 10-hour shifts, to minimize the cost of housing workers by avoiding weekends.*

A: No. A letter had been sent by both Boards of Selectmen, but Mr. McLaughlin did not recall receiving them. The RFP calls for 8-hour days. Due to the delay in finalizing a contract for construction of the temporary bridge, work will not begin until April 15th at the earliest. Because of the possibility of work continuing into the summer months the bridge committee decided to re-evaluate its request for double shifts. The Committee agreed that hammer-driven pile driving should not take place during the summer months in either single or double shifts. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the pile driving could probably be completed between April 15th and the end of June. He stated that a revision to the bid could be submitted.

Q: *What allowances have you made for the impacts to traffic during construction?*

A: There is \$100,000 in the budget for traffic details. These could be deployed anywhere on the island that is impacted due to bridge construction.

Q: *Where will equipment for construction be staged?*

A: Next to the bridge near the house. Barges will be used. Other places have yet to be determined and will be up to the contractor to work out.

Q: *Will the State have someone on-site to interface with the community during construction? Will notice be given in advance of changes to traffic patterns?*

A: District 5 of the MassHighway Department will take over responsibility for the project during the construction phase. A State Resident Engineer will be on-site, and will work closely with local authorities and the bridge committee. Mr. McLaughlin stated that there will be a pre-construction

meeting in Taunton to which a small group from the Vineyard will be invited in order to understand the scope of work, timetables and to provide answers to questions from the community.

*Q: Will the project include linking the bike path currently ending at the boat ramp to the multi-user path on the bridge?*

A: The scope of work for the state is to replace the bridge. However, the State will evaluate their ability to provide this link during the project's construction. The State would not have responsibility for maintaining such a pathway post-construction.

Mr. McLaughlin plans to meet quarterly with the Drawbridge Committee with the next scheduled meeting to take place in early December in Boston with the design team from Parsons who will have completed their marine design study and be prepared to finalize the decision on the bridge height.

Next Meeting of the Bridge Committee: September 20, 2006 at 9:00 am at the MVC.