

Falls Bridge Advisory Committee Meeting

Sept. 14, 2017

Meeting called to order 6:00 PM

Members Present: Deborah Brewster, John Chapman, Lynne Clark, Bill Cousins, Lori Sitzabee, Karen Wyatt, Facilitator Jim Schatz

MDOT Review of Public Comments presented by Andrew....

The Causeway Bridge question from the Public Meeting was answered.
Region 4 State of Maine DOT considers it a road, not a causeway, not a bridge.
Region 4 is responsible for inspecting it.

Several letters from the Public were read
MERI wanted to be kept informed of the process

Pictures and literature of the Hussey Bridge in Rhode Island and the Green Bridge in Brunswick/Topsham, Maine were distributed and discussed.

A neighboring town's Fire Department letter which was read had some incorrect information according to Assistant Fire Chief John Chapman of Blue Hill. The plan must take care of these inconsistencies. It was suggested that a meeting of the Blue Hill, Brooklin and Sedgwick Fire chiefs and the Falls Bridge Committee to discuss the issues could occur and resolve the problem. John Chapman was given the chore of arranging the meeting with Peninsula Ambulance Corp, Fire Depts., Selectmen & this Committee.

Facilitator Jim Schatz asked for committee comments on the benefits to them of the Public meeting or what it lacked. Keep in mind that there is no way to satisfy a broad audience and the committee needs to work towards the ultimate goal of making our recommendations with reasonable input.

DOT commented on issues the Public brought up at the Public Meeting which they felt were good to consider.

The financial impact of some of the options were discussed. Closing the bridge could impact the Fishing revenues of the area fishermen and dealers. Reaching out to those whose economics would be impacted was suggested.

The overall cost to the area economy both pro and con was important.

General access to the Salt Pond needs to be considered.

Facilitator Jim Schatz posed the question of how many more Public meetings should be held and their nature.

DOT handed out their Purpose and Need Statement defining the Departments goals for this project and went over that carefully.

DOT handed out and explained the three sets of Conceptual Sketches of Bridge Alternatives.

Alternative 1B is Bridge Rehabilitation with Sidewalk

Sidewalk would be 5 ft. wide, roadway would still be narrow, 20 ft. wide.

Committee and Public comment:

Kids jumping off bridge could crash into sidewalk.

Roadway staying narrow might keep vehicle speed down.

Sidewalks would still have bicycles and pedestrians in same areas.

Snowplowing would cause snow to be pushed into the sidewalk.

Alternatives 2A, 2B, 2C & 2D are a Girder Bridge with Aesthetic Treatment and Sidewalk

Sidewalk still constructed 5 feet wide, raised.

Roadway widened to 24 feet wide.

Differing types of Guardrails, open views, good visibility.

Parking area and path to Salt Pond maintained.

Alternatives 3A & 3B are Tied Arch with Sidewalk

Sidewalk still constructed 5 feet wide, raised.

Roadway widened to 24 feet wide.

Parking area and path to Salt Pond maintained.

3A is a Tied Arch, Cable

3B is a Network Tied Arch which is better at redistributing the load in case of accidental cable failure.

Facilitator Jim Schatz asked how much trouble it would cause work-wise if the committee chose one style over another.

DOT Goal at next meeting is to talk about the 1B concept of the rehab of the Falls Bridge and how to do it.

Re-routing the traffic was an issue of concern, handouts of the proposed alternate route and bridge were distributed. John Chapman held out for some discussion this time of the re-routing alternatives. Suggested by other committee member that it should be discussed next time the committee meets. Some discussion ensued.

Public comments followed.

Butler Smythe asked Dot if there were other materials they would consider using other than concrete. DOT replied that the Non-Structural Arch is a fairly high expense alternative.

Ruth Miller asked about having sidewalks on both sides of the new structure.

Tom Stein felt that a curb or raised sidewalk is a safety issue for vehicles and pedestrians.

Scott Miller gave his ideas on the alternative and rehab designs and costs and issues.

Next meeting will be in 3-4 weeks, was set for Monday, October 16 from 6 to 8 PM.

Motion to adjourn at 8:25 PM