

Willamette River Bridge Advisory Committee Meeting

July 15, 2008

Meeting Notes

WRBAC Members Present:

Mayor Vera Katz (Chair)

David Knowles (Facilitator)

Bob Durgan, Andersen Construction

Art Johnson, KPFF Consulting Engineers

Sue Keil, Portland Department of Transportation

Guenevere Millius, SRM Architecture and Marketing, Inc.

Karl Rohde, Bicycle Transportation Alliance

David Soderstrom, Portland Opera Board

Chuck Steinwandel, Ross Island Sand and Gravel

Mark Williams, Oregon Health & Science University

Rick Williams, BPM Development

Mike Zilis, Walker & Macy

Alternates present: Rod McDowell, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

WRBAC Members Absent:

Thomas Hacker, Thomas Hacker Architects Inc.

Pat LaCrosse, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

Christe White, Williams & Dame Development

TriMet: Rob Barnard, Sean Batty, Ann Becklund, Diane Goodwin, Neil McFarlane, Thomas Ngo, Stephanie Ratcliffe, DeeAnn Sandberg, Dave Unsworth

Mayor Vera Katz (Chair) and Fred Hansen (TriMet General Manager) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Fred spoke about the need to balance the various concerns and considerations related to the bridge selection process. He shared his excitement that, while this certainly will not be the first bridge constructed by TriMet, it will be the first one over the Willamette.

David Knowles (Facilitator) prepared everyone for the consultant's presentations by reminding them of the key considerations: aesthetic, environmental, functional and budgetary.

David spoke about the current status of the Portland-Milwaukie project: the SDEIS has been published, the Willamette River Crossing Partnership has submitted its recommendation, and LPA decisions are currently being made. Technical staff are

encouraged to review the SDEIS, as it is effectively a menu of all of the issues that must be considered during the Bridge Study. The outlined bridge study process will enable the Technical Advisory Committee, consultant team, and the WRBAC to work collaboratively to reach consensus. With the input of both technical-minded and broader policy-minded folks, decisions will likely come quickly.

Rob Barnard (Mall Project Construction Director) introduced the consultant team. The consultant selection committee desired to have an engineering firm and an architectural firm both serving as equals in the project. The thought was not to have one firm be the prime contractor and the other a subcontractor, but that both groups would be of equal importance so that the concept for the bridge would be “structure as art.”

Rob first introduced the engineering firm: HNTB. One of the aspects about HNTB that impressed the consultant selection committee was that architecture is part of its corporate culture.

Rob invited **Semyon Treyger (HNTB Project Manager and Structural Lead)** and **Greg DeMond (HNTB Architect Lead)** to present additional information about HNTB.

Semyon and Greg went over information on four large poster boards, which depicted examples of HNTB’s bridges in locations across the country, as well as drawings of a variety of bridge types.

Rob next introduced the architectural firm: Rosales + Partners. This firm always partners with an engineering team in order to allow the structure to be honest and true to itself. The consultant team is thus comprised of an engineering firm that brings experience working with architects, and an architectural firm that brings experience working with engineers.

Rob then invited **Miguel Rosales (Rosales + Partners Project Manager and Lead Designer)** to address the group.

Miguel utilized PowerPoint slides depicting examples of their bridges and how they were tailored to each specific location. The firm focuses only on bridges, and specifically on bridges for which there is a real public interest. The firm will be working with Jorg Schlaich (Schlaich Bergermann and Partners), an internationally recognized engineer. Two other important team members are Virginia Ferriday and Ety Padmodipoetro. They also felt it was important to include in their team a local firm familiar with the greenway and selected Mayer/Reed Landscape and Urban Design Firm.

Rob then introduced **Carol Mayer-Reed (Mayer/Reed Landscape)**, who presented slides of her firm’s work on the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade to explain the firm’s cognizance of issues related to the greenway on this project.

Rob asked Miguel to speak on the history of bridges in Portland. Miguel spoke about traveling over each of the bridges in the downtown area and how each had a distinctly different character. He then went bridge by bridge and provided his thoughts on what aspects of each bridge were effective and what were not. He also encouraged the WRBAC to pay special attention to the two bridges closest to our proposed location – Marquam Bridge and Ross Island Bridge.

Semyon and Miguel presented Bridge Basics.

Presentations are posted on trimet.org/wrbac for review.

Semyon's presentation included:

- Depiction that bridge types have not changed much over the centuries
- Diagram of the typical bridge design
- "Funnel" diagram of bridge selection process
- Graphs showing that elevation and length of span are key in screening for bridge types
- Photos and descriptions of the main bridge types (Girder, Segmental Concrete, Truss, Arch, Cable-stayed, Suspension, Moveable)

Miguel's presentation included:

- Bridge context: fit and beauty
 - Bridge context: aesthetic design hierarchy
 - Sustainable bridge design (greenway on both sides of river)
 - Bridge experiential scales (looking at, being on and near bridge)
 - Case studies – examples of the right bridge for a given location
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David Knowles asked for both the committee and the consultants to present their questions to one another and provide responses.

Questions from WRBAC to the consultants:

Question 1

Sue Keil: What are the environmental impacts of the towers in the river?

Semyon: There is a broad range of issues related to the towers. Everything that lives in the water can be affected. Fish can die from the sound generated by their installation, for example. Construction methods are thus very important. Material (contamination) from past river use will need to be removed during installation, which affects pricing. There has already been a discussion with the environmental consultant, Parametrix, about potential tower locations.

Question 2

David Soderstrom: Would the bridge structure be different for an automobile bridge versus a transit-only bridge?

Semyon: Yes. Car use creates a pretty static weight. With trains, the weight will push a wave in front of itself. This dynamic loading has to be carefully reviewed for cable-stay type structures.

David S.: Would that cause a limitation on bridge type?

Semyon: Any bridge type can be optimized to work for either use.

Question 3

Mike Zilis: Is it a given that this will be a fixed-span, not a moveable, bridge?

David Knowles: At this point the slate is blank - everything is still on the table.

Question from the consultants to WRBAC:

Miguel Rosales: What ambitions do you have for the bridge?

WRBAC members:

- It ought to be complementary to the new exciting environment on both sides.
- It should have sculptural qualities. It will be a key urban framework; it should really fit into both sides of river.
- It should not be difficult to get on or off the bridge. Access is important.
- It should be sustainable.
- It should be more than just something to get over. There should be gathering space, and space for people to be able to stop and enjoy the view without impeding other pedestrians or cyclists.
- It should have the maximum distance between piers for river users.
- It should curve over the river, away from the bank, not over the land.
- It should be designed at a pedestrians pace.

David stated that the next WRBAC meeting would take place Friday, August 8 from 3-5 p.m. and the next Working Meeting would be on Thursday, August 7.