

Maryland Transportation Authority Bay Bridge Reconstruction Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

Wednesday, October 5, 2016

Members Present

Jack Broderick, Chairman
Barbara Hitchings
Nick Deoudes
Nancy Wright
Tracy Schultz
Pat Lynch
Barbara Span-Obert
Bill Nevel
Delores Green
Dick Ladd

MDTA Staff

Tim Cooke
Ricky DeGraffenreid
Melissa Williams
Michele Gross

Other Attendees

John Narer (SHA)
Bob Rager (SHA)
Lt. Cross (AA County Police)
Senator Steve Hershey

Opening Remarks

Mr. Broderick offered best wishes to Dennis Simpson on his retirement from state government.

Senator Hershey was introduced to the group at the start of the meeting.

MDTA Construction

Mr. DeGraffenreid provided updates on Bay Bridge system preservation efforts.

- Cleaning and painting is underway on the east portion of the westbound span
- Cable and dehumidification was completed in the summer and was noted that the Bay Bridge is the first bridge in the country to have it

- The contract for emergency evacuation that will allow for lane use signal modification is underway.
- Mr. Broderick asked for a review of the Bay Bridge wind limits and restrictions. Mr. DeGraffenreid said that 35 mph is the minimum sustained wind for an advisory and is frequently monitored. Mr. Deoudes asked what the vehicle restrictions are. Mr. DeGraffenreid said that 35 mph winds restrict certain types of vehicles and 50 mph winds sustained equals a closure. Senator Hershey asked what the protocol is for a hurricane coming up the coast in terms of emergency evacuation. Mr. Schultz talked about lane modifications not being in place. Mr. DeGraffenreid said this is being addressed and corrected.

Mr. DeGraffenreid talked about the November 6 Bay Bridge 10K. There were currently 20,000 registrations with an expected final of 23,240 by race day.

Mr. DeGraffenreid announced that October 12 was his last day at the Bay Bridge. Richard Jaramillo will be taking over. The group thanked Ricky for his great work in transitioning from Gordy over the past six months.

Update on Sandy Point State Park Ad Hoc Group

Ms. Hitchings spoke about the various agencies involved in and around Sandy Point State Park making a concentrated effort to help come up with a solution for the summer of 2017. Overhead messaging along with no parking on access road signs were suggested. Ms. Lynch spoke about the August 2016 Broadneck Council meeting and thanked all the different stakeholders for their help in trying to mitigate this situation.

Ms. Lynch said she will be speaking on November 3 at the Anne Arundal County delegation. Officer Greene (MDTA) spoke about having a written plan by the summer season 2017 between the different police agencies. Ms. Lynch said that she was requesting funding from Anne Arundal County for additional county police to help with this situation. The MDTA was asked where their jurisdiction ends and Mr. DeGraffenreid said that Oceanic Drive is the cut off line. Officer Greene passed out copies of the wind restrictions to those in the group who were interested.

SHA Projects Update

- Dover bridge in Easton will have deck pours done before the winter season
 - 95% of the bridge work will be done by Christmas 2017 and fully opened to traffic
 - Senator Hershey asked how long the last 5% will take?
 - Final build out will occur in the summer and will open to traffic completely by Christmas 2017
- Centreville 304/301 interchange
 - Project is moving along and should open by this time next year as the contractor is running ahead of schedule
- MD 404
 - 309 is almost complete
 - 9.5 miles from US 50 to Denton need to be completed

- West side of 309 will have work stopping in March 2017 because of stream restrictions but will begin again after the restriction period is over
 - The contract is for a November 2017 completion but that is a very ambitious schedule
- US 301 northbound has two deck jobs and will be down to one lane. Barrier was set on October 4
- US 50 and the Severn River Bridge will have a public meeting in November. The project is funded but will not be constructed until after the 2017 beach season
- Chestertown Bridge 213
 - Bridge painting started in September
 - Concerted effort to not have day time lane closures
 - There will be a five night full detour which will be announced with plenty of notification to the surrounding communities and impacted travelers
- System Preservation
 - Lots of work in Caroline county but nothing for US 301/US 50 at the moment
- The MD 404 project will be a big test for SHA as this starts in the spring. This project, along with the Salisbury bypass work deck overlay will require a significant outreach effort.
 - 11 bridges will be rehabilitated over two year period

Bay Bridge Tier 1 NEPA Study*

Mr. Broderick on behalf of BBRAG thanked Executive Director Chafee, Secretary Rahn, and Governor Hogan for funding this study. Mr. Broderick reiterated that the BBRAG group wants to be involved in this process. Ms. Williams spoke about the two goals of the study being how to reach an agreement from the eastern shore counties and identifying funding option(s). Ms. Lynch asked if this is a preamble to NEPA? Ms. Williams responded that it is and that EPA check points will be followed throughout this study.

Senator Hershey asked how long the design phase would take. Ms. Williams said that it will be 2-3 years and that a public/private partnership may be looked at. Senator Hershey asked how long the full blown NEPA process will take. Ms. Williams said she expects the full process to take 7-10 years.

Mr. Gladd expressed concern about the Tier 1 study taking too long to complete. Ms. Williams talked about the differences between Tier 1, Master Plan, and NEPA. The goal of this study isn't the environmental assessment. It is truly about answering the question about eastern shore counties agreement and funding option(s).

Senator Hershey spoke about the 2013 bill language and reaffirmed that the goal is a consensus agreement from the eastern shore counties.

*As of December 1, the official name of the study is the Bay Bridge Master Plan Study. Ms. Span-Obert asked if it is just the counties concurrence or do the smaller municipalities count as well since Queen Anne's county has 8 municipalities. Ms.

Williams spoke about the study getting the definition of concurrence, which will also be a part of the legislative session.

There was some conversation regarding the location of the new bridge and whether it should be in the same corridor that the current bridge is located. Senator Hershey asked if it was fair to say that after the study is complete, location, infrastructure, and financing will dictate what occurs in conjunction with the current two spans. Ms. Williams concurred.

Mr. Ladd spoke about the need for a huge public outreach campaign for the project and the need for a reliable, verifiable decision. Mr. Broderick asked if traffic estimates will need to be updated. Ms. Williams said yes. Ms. Lynch spoke about her questions and concerns about the traffic numbers. Mr. Deoudes said a new bridge at the same location would be problematic in his view, especially the federal process that it would have to go through. Mr. Ladd talked about the funding from a budget perspective. Mr. Ladd said if Governor Hogan is re-elected, that would be a win for the Bay Bridge but if he loses, as long as the money is in the CTP, elected officials can still push forward while saving face.

Mr. Narer explained that this is a process and patience is needed because there will be a lawsuit and the state needs to make sure they have every check box marked from start to finish. The only way to win a lawsuit like this is to have all the small details done correctly from the start.

Ms. Williams said that she will have an update at the January meeting for the group.

Other Business

Ms. Lynch asked about paving on St. Margaret's Road and US 50 by SHA and the MDTA. Mr. Broderick asked Ms. Williams if she will be at the CTP tour meetings for Anne Arundal and Queen Anne's County. Ms. Williams said she would and Senator Hershey expressed that Ms. Williams participation at the two CTP meetings is vital.

Mr. Broderick closed the meeting with a final thank you to Mr. DeGraffenreid.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm

Next meeting Wednesday, January 4, 2017