

HEALDSBURG AVENUE BRIDGE OVER THE RUSSIAN RIVER

PUBLIC MEETING #2

**July 29, 2010 – 6:00 P.M.
Healdsburg City Hall Council Chambers**

START OF MEETING 6:01:30 PM

PROJECT SUMMARY

Public Works Director Kirn summarized the project noting that today's meeting was the second public meeting in a series of public meetings. Previously, there have been two open houses and one public meeting where 15 different concepts were presented. Another public meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2010 at 6:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

Mr. Kirn recalled at the last public meeting, 15 concepts were presented, 12 of which retained the existing bridge in some fashion. Mr. Kirn noted that although the refined concepts would be discussed at tonight's meeting, the City is still in the planning stages and all the information that would be shared was at the planning level and no designs have been completed and no final decision had been made on what alternative will ultimately be selected. Mr. Kirn indicated that the presentation shown tonight would be available on the Project website by close of business, Tuesday, August 3, 2010.

106 COMPLIANCE WITH HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT 6:04:20 PM

Mr. Steve Mikesell, ICF International, gave an overview of his experience as Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer and Section 106 compliance. Mr. Mikesell summarized Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, noting that it requires identification of historic resources within the project area, and that if historic resources are found, assess and mitigate and/or avoid the negative impacts. Mr. Mikesell opined the City has gone through an extensive process to analyze 15 alternatives before selecting the preferred alternative, which is broader than any bridge replacement project. He added the City is doing a credible job and will have an orderly 106 process once an alternative is selected.

Mr. Mikesell noted that the planning process that the City has undertaken provides the same degree of consideration for the Bridge as called for in Section 106 for historic structures. In essence the City is treating the Bridge as it were in the National Registry of Historic Structures.

OVERVIEW AND PRESENTATION OF REFINED CONCEPTS 6:11:58 PM

Mr. Ross Ainsworth, Omni-Means, stated the 15 project concepts are undergoing preliminary engineering, environmental, right-of-way, traffic operations and safety, and cost and financing review. Mr. Ainsworth added the analysis is not complete and the finalized project concepts would be presented at the August 26, 2010 community meeting. Mr. Ainsworth reviewed the following refined concepts:

- Concept 1A No build – Leave existing bridge as is
- Concept 1B No build – Close bridge to all but pedestrian and bicycle traffic
- Concept 2A Rehabilitate existing bridge in place
- Concept 2B Rehabilitate existing bridge and convert to one-way westbound
- Concept 2C Rehabilitate existing bridge and convert to one-way eastbound
- Concept 2D Rehabilitate existing bridge and convert to one-way alternating direction – traffic signal controlled
- Concept 2E Rehabilitate and widen existing bridge in place
- Concept 3A Replace existing bridge with a similar steel truss bridge
- Concept 3B Replace existing bridge with a new precast concrete structure
- Concept 4A Rehabilitate existing structure for bicycle and pedestrian use only; and construct a new vehicle bridge to the North
- Concept 4B Rehabilitate existing structure for bicycle and pedestrian use only; and construct a new vehicle bridge to the South
- Concept 4B Rehabilitate existing structure for bicycle and pedestrian use only; and construct a new vehicle bridge on new alignment that would go though Syar's property, cross the river and connect to Mason Street
- Concept 4D Rehabilitate existing structure for bicycle and pedestrian use only; and construct a new vehicle bridge on new alignment to the South of the existing bridge through the residential area and connecting to Healdsburg Avenue
- Concept 5A Rehabilitate existing structure for bicycle and pedestrian use only and relocate to the north; construct new vehicle bridge on existing alignment
- Concept 5B Rehabilitate existing structure for bicycle and pedestrian use only and relocate to the south; construct new vehicle bridge on existing alignment

NEXT STEPS 6:20:50 PM

Mr. Ainsworth recalled that the evaluation criteria used to evaluate the project concepts included: historic preservation, public safety, environmental sensitivity, right of way impacts, constructability, design standard conformance, costs, transportation operations, and funding capability (City's ability to fund the project).

Mr. Ainsworth stated the next step in the process is to evaluate each of the project concepts against a project purpose checklist and criteria including: addressing public safety, General Plan consistency, facilitating movement of goods, improving public transportation opportunities, minimizing negative impacts to the Veterans Memorial Park, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access and facilities.

At the end of the evaluation process the relative weighing for each of the criteria will be applied as a multiplier.

PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES FOR EACH CONCEPT AND POTENTIAL FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Mr. Ainsworth presented preliminary conceptual costs for each of the 15 project concepts. He also discussed potential state and federal funding availability and eligibility criteria that must be met for each of the funding sources, i.e. Chapter 6, Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program.

Mr. Neil Blais, Blais and Associates, discussed their efforts to locate potential grants and noted that once Council selects the preferred alternative, his firm would begin to prepare and submit grant applications. Mr. Blais indicated that public participation in the process was an important factor in grant preparation and participation in meetings such as this would be an important part in securing grant funds. Mr. Blais cautioned that all grant applications are competitive and that there is no guarantee that an application will be awarded funds.

PUBLIC COMMENTS 6:41:00

Mr. Lewis Bangham, Mason Street, stated he did not support the alternative that would tie into Mason Street and asked that future presentations be less technical. He asked that illustrations be prepared at the road level perspective and from various vantage points (i.e. Memorial Beach, west and east of the river, etc.) for all concepts if possible, if not possible at least for the Mason tie in concept. He spoke in support of the concepts that have the least impacts.

Ms. Christine Culver, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition, spoke in support of bike and pedestrian only bridge and encouraged the City to work with SMART in the alignment of the path. Ms. Culver opined right now is the time to change the alignment to behind Bert's Canoes instead of going out to Healdsburg Avenue.

Mr. Phil Trowbridge asked if the engineers had an opportunity to look at a single lane bridge and bicycle pedestrian on the south side of the bridge coming into Front Street.

In other words a one way bridge on the existing bridge and a one way bridge next to the railroad bridge which could be concrete and would not downgrade the look of the railroad bridge and could tie with into the SMART pedestrian path.

Mr. Mel Amato, Revel Road, stated that under the “constructability criteria” there was no mention of construction time which he believed was very important factor in selecting the preferred alternative because a new bridge would require a two year closure compared to less than 6 months for rehabilitation. He opined that the aerial views were very deceptive and added the bridge would have to align at both ends of the highway leaving only two options, a straight bridge that cuts off 30% of the park or a curved “s” bridge. Mr. Amato questioned the reduction in the estimated cost of a new concrete box to \$17M noting that HDR’s study in 2007 estimated the cost at \$23M. Mr. Amato further stated that since 2000 funding has been earmarked by the state to seismically retrofit the bridge but the City has not applied for those funds.

Mr. Phil Luks commented on the safety criteria and opined that making the bridge additionally safe beyond safety standards should not have a high rating. He added that when taking into consideration the safety needs of the community, it would not be fair to analyze competitive alternatives without taking real account of the history of traffic and speed on the bridge.

Ms. Laura Tietz opined that it was not realistic or financially viable to consider the expensive options.

Ms. Melisa Munson stated the illustrations do not show how wide the road would be at each end of the bridge or the impact it would have on the adjacent areas. She opined this should be considered when making a selection.

Mr. Ross Ainsworth, in response to the public comments, stated it was not the consultant’s role to determine which alternatives would not be financially feasible. Their task was to present Council with all the alternatives. Regarding the traffic rating, Ms. Ainsworth stated the 1.47 rating for public safety came from the community and is being applied across the board to all the options.

Mr. Doug Ries, Omni-Means, assured everyone that the designs would comply fully with all the City, State, Cal Trans and ASHTO standards.

Ms. Holly Hoods stated it would be helpful to see drawings at the street level rather than aerial illustrations and added rehabilitation in place was the better option.

Mr. Lewis Bangham, Mason Street, opined that the issue of traffic and planning for the 20 year growth should be addressed and the acceptable level of traffic for Healdsburg Avenue should be reflected in the option selected.

Mr. Ainsworth noted that the traffic forecasts to support the 2030 General Plan shows that a two lane bridge with a roundabout at Fronts Street would be sufficient.

ADJOURNMENT

Public Works Director Kirn reiterated that the materials that would be posted on the website were only planning documents and that no final decision had been made. Director Kirn reminded everyone the next community meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2010 at 6:00 P.M.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00:50 PM