STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP Meeting Summary

ATTENDEES: Chuck Eckart, Pt. Reyes Village Assoc.
Amanda Eichstaedt, Business Community
Dan Dawson, Marin County Department of Public Works
Bob Coralka, Marin County Department of Public Works
Curtis Havel, Senior Planner, Marin County Planning Department
Cathleen Dorinson, Main Street Moms
Randy Engler, Marin County, Pt. Reyes Fire Department
Lynn Stray, Farming Community
Melanie Gunn (on behalf of Brannon Ketcham), National Parks Service/ Pt. Reyes National Seashore
Joy Lee, Caltrans, Project Manager
Manny Caluya, Caltrans, Chief, Design North
Chris Pincetich, Caltrans Biologist
Tami Grove (on behalf of Shannon Fiala), California Coastal Commission
Jodi Ketelsen, CH2M, Environmental Generalist and Facilitator
Jasmin Mejia, CH2M, Environmental Planner
Yassi Sarvian, CH2M, Environmental Assistant

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Objectives

Caltrans formed a Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) to gather focused input from the Point Reyes community representatives in the development, refinement and screening of alternatives for the proposed Lagunitas Creek Bridge Project. The objectives for the **second** SWG meeting were as follow:

- To review the contents and action items from the January meeting;
- To review the scale and aesthetics of each build alternative and discuss the flexibility within these options, and to compare the full range of alternatives; and
- To understand environmental considerations, potential construction impacts on sensitive resources and surrounding land uses, and possible mitigation measures.

Action Items

Action items and suggestions are shown in bold italics within each discussion topic summarized below.

I. Recap January Meeting

The meeting started off by recapping highlights of the previous meeting and action items that were addressed and what items have been responded to by Caltrans, what will be further discussed, or what will be a part of ongoing environmental review analysis. The group also reviewed an updated list of

bridge-closure mitigation measures. The group was informed that the bridge closure mitigation document will continuously be refined as the alternatives are finalized and the project goes through environmental review. Emergency services reported that they will require that a full response staff be posted on either side of the bridge to meet current response standards during the full closure.

One of the action items that was discussed in detail was the format of communication with the broader community. Various topics were discussed such as communicating with media, privacy concerns, and the idea of creating periodic newsletters addressing various parts of the project for the community to read. The idea of publishing a periodic newsletter was well received among the group as an opportunity to help communicate the work and considerations under review within the SWG. It was also mentioned ***the newsletter should include the process by which the group was assembled and selected***. ***The SWG agreed that it would be appropriate to include SWG's names in the newsletters and meeting summaries to provide transparency and context about their individual roles on the committee.***

The group further discussed best distribution methods for the newsletter, and it was decided that ***mailing directly to P.O Boxes (via hand delivery to the Pt. Reyes post office), in combination with including the newsletter in the local newspapers and web distribution, would effectively reach the community***. The group also decided to ***send the newsletter to the newspaper first, with a disclaimer that the newsletter would also be delivered to P.O. boxes two days later.*** The team agreed that the ***first newsletter could be published as soon as possible.***

The SWG agreed that ***all questions about the details of the project would be deferred to Caltrans***, and ***questions regarding specific agency input should be directed to the appropriate member of the SWG*** (i.e. if there were questions regarding Marin County policies, they would approach Marin County Public Works).

II. Project Alternatives – Scale and Aesthetics

The group discussed various design standards for the four alternative bridge types outlined in the previous meeting: three span bridge, one span bridge, concrete bridge, and suspension-cable bridge. Design standards such as sidewalk width, trail width, barrier width, travel lanes, and shoulders were discussed. It was emphasized that these design standards are still in discussion and will not be finalized at this meeting. At the start of the meeting, the group participated in an exercise to determine what it would feel like to walk on a sidewalk that was 3, 4, 5, and 6 feet wide. The group noted that a 6 foot sidewalk was very generous. The team was informed that 6 feet wide sidewalks are required by the American Disabilities Act (ADA), and while no disabled residents have been observed using the bridge, the new bridge would be required to comply with ADA standards to meet federal requirements which is where a portion of the project funding originates. With this in mind, the group went through three alternatives and examined the scale and aesthetical values.

Steel Truss: Three-Span Bridge

Two design alternatives were reviewed for the three span truss bridge: with separated sidewalks or not separated sidewalks. Separated sidewalks could be cantilevered, with a protective barrier separating the sidewalk from the road. Sidewalks that are not separated would be 6 to 8 inches higher, but adjacent to the shoulder of the road shoulder. The SWG showed interest in the cantilevered sidewalk option, but were in ***favor of only one sidewalk***. The facilitator explained the locations of the piers under both separated and not separated sidewalks. Facilitator explained that for piers to be in the exact same location or under the current bridge, the ABC method would not be possible. Piers cannot be built under the current bridge while traffic is using the bridge. Therefore piers need to be located just east and west

of the current bridge. Where the bridge design is narrow or similar in width to the existing bridge, the piers and pier cap may be seen extending out beyond the bridge deck under the ABC approach.

Steel Truss: Single-Span Bridge

The Facilitator explained that under the single-span bridge alternative, there are no piers in the water. The SWG discussed the benefits of see-through railing versus solid barriers. Preferences generally aligned with see-through railing. The Facilitator also noted the height of the single span truss being 21 feet and that both the separated sidewalk and not separated sidewalk would be compatible with the ABC construction method. The SWG inquired if the piers could be installed in front of the abutment to shorten the span of the bridge from 150 feet to 125 feet. The Facilitator explained that placing the piers in front of the abutment would impact the integrity of the existing bridge and would require a conventional construction approach which may require up to a 3-year construction period and necessitate the construction of a detour bridge. ***SWG suggested using an arched truss that would extend out to the side down to the embankment as opposed to the single span on top; more information will be provided on this type of structure***. The SWG determined that a single span bridge would be environmentally preferable, if the structure were aesthetically pleasing to the community. Caltrans is investigating alternative shapes for the full-span steel truss.

Concrete Bridge

The Facilitator noted that the concrete bridge can be more narrow since the structure is underneath the bridge (as oppose to the truss that adds to the width of the bridge), and that the SWG might consider whether a mock truss could be added for decorative purposes. The Facilitator also explained that the concrete bridge is still a three-span bridge. To be a single span bridge, it would require raising the bridge 4-5 feet because a full-span concrete bridge would require a deep girder. To avoid reducing the waterway freeboard (clearance between water and bottom of bridge), the bridge would have to be raised. Raising the bridge would require raising the roadway, which would interfere with driveways and sightlines at the Sir Francis Drake intersection with SR1. SWG agreed not to pursue a higher bridge, but inquired about the constant impacts of salt water on concrete. The Caltrans Design Office Chief said that all materials have difficulty with salt water. SWG also brought up potential issues with localized pooling from the piers and inquired about environmental impact differences between a one span and three span bridge. Facilitator responded that a hydraulics analysis was under development to answer those questions.

Suspension Bridge

The Facilitator explained that, currently, the bridge engineers are not entertaining the suspension bridge under the ABC approach. This is being confirmed. The bridge alternative could be built under the conventional methods over the span of three years, however it would not have piers in the water. The towers would be approximately 20-23 feet high. ***More detail on the suspension-cable bridge will be available at the next meeting.***

III. Construction Effects and Mitigation

The Facilitator reviewed the construction timeline and details of the ABC method, including bridge closure times, phases of construction, property impacts, staging areas, noise, dust, traffic interruptions (evening lane closures), visual, detours, temporary and permanent impacts. To understand the construction process the Facilitator walked through the three different phases and explained the highest intensity of impact under each phase. The Facilitator explained that no permanent relocations are expected, but the process for acquiring a temporary construction easement includes negotiation and property owners are treated fairly and are compensated consistent with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970. The Facilitator explained how construction noise may impact adjacent users and what may be the potential mitigation measures to help attenuate noise.

The Facilitator also walked through the detour route difficult turning areas. The SWG notes two 'hairpin' points on the detour route that would add 14-16 minutes to emergency response times. Emergency services noted that the delay in response time would be unacceptable during the bridge closure and thus justifying the need to position of emergency response crew on either side of the bridge for the entire closure period.

IV. Environmental Considerations

Trail/Open Space Adjacent to Bridge

The Facilitator explained that State Lands Commission owns the riverbed up to the normal high water line. Above the river, the Department of Conservation owns the land and holds an agreement with Marin County to maintain the trail. Any impact to these lands would require correspondence with both agencies to come to an agreement to allow temporary access for staging during construction. SWG asked if land was designated as wetlands and the Caltrans biologist explained that existing habitat types are surveyed during the preparation of the EIR/EA.

SWG asked about timing of reconstructing a bridge on Sir Francis Drake west of this bridge; the County had provided the information that the other bridge would not be in construction for another 9 years.

Special Status Species Habitat

The Caltrans biologist described the various sensitive environmental areas surrounding the bridge and implications of impacting sensitive environmental areas habitat impacts (both during construction and permanent impacts); the Caltrans biologist explained the various permits that would need to be obtained due to impacts in riparian, in-stream, freshwater wetland, and coastal marsh habitats. The biologist explained that (per federal Endangered Species Act requirements) while there are no parts of the project footprint that are designated as coastal marsh habitats, there are coastal marsh habitat species that can migrate into the footprint. Caltrans is also working with Coastal Commission to identify wetland species and habitats, and emphasized that a majority of the work will be happening in the road. Biologist described various threatened and endangered species that are likely to be in or around the project footprint and potential mitigation measures to offset impacts. The biologist noted the noise mitigation measures proposed for humans could also work very well for offsetting impacts to northern spotted owl. The biologist also noted the potential need to obtain an endangered species permit if salmon species would need to be moved. Mitigation measures would need to be consulted upon with the federal and state agencies, including, but not limited to onsite biological monitoring, avoidance of instream work through building cofferdams and limiting construction noise. Biological studies for preparation of the environmental document would occur over the summer.

V. Comparing Alternatives

The Facilitator reviewed action items from last meeting and what have been resolved and what will continue to be resolved over time and during the environmental review process. SWG emphasized using noise mitigation measures discussed earlier in this meeting for mitigating noise impacts to the veterinary hospital. The Facilitator then compared the full range of alternatives, starting with the transverse slide-in and reporting that using the new bridge to cross the creek while the existing bridge is removed is possible. However, this approach would enlarge the construction and environmental impact area, but would reduce road closure.

The Facilitator communicated the need to include the conventional construction methods in the environmental document as a point of comparison and it would allow a version of the 3-span steel truss bridge piers to be placed under the bridge deck with a cantilevered sidewalk. Other aspects of the alternatives were discussed like lane width, shoulder width, and sidewalks. The ***Facilitator stated that that one sidewalk would be feasible. SWG supports one sidewalk that met ADA compliance of 6 feet would be the most preferable.*** Facilitator also mentioned that Caltrans can consider widening the

culvert going into Pt Reyes. ***SWG expressed interest in the Steel Truss, Single-Span bridge alternative as an arch, rather than a box structure.***

Additionally Coastal Commission inquired about the need for lighting on the bridge; ***Facilitator and Caltrans will look into who determines whether lighting is required and consider impacts to wildlife[1].***

The Facilitator agreed to distribute two newsletters about project development and stakeholder working group meetings, and an additional one before the environmental document is released in the fall. The SWG suggested having someone from Caltrans on the radio to discuss the project. SWG also suggested having a public meeting after a couple of newsletters to allow the public to digest the information and to ask questions.

Next meeting: April 26, 2016; 3 PM to 5 PM PST

[1] Project engineer says lighting is associated with safety. Currently, there is no justification for lighting on this bridge.