

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Project: CDOT Region 3 – SH 82 Grand Avenue Bridge Environmental Assessment

Purpose: Combined Meeting PLT #9 and PWG #7

Date Held: April 5, 2012

Location: CDOT Glenwood Springs Maintenance Video Conference Room
CDOT Grand Junction Video Conference Room 308

Attendees:

CDOT:	Josh Cullen, Joe Elsen, Roland Wagner, Sean Yeates, Zane Znamenacek (by video conference), Tammie Smith, Nancy Shanks
City of Glenwood Springs:	Dave Betley
Colorado Bridge Enterprise:	Charlie Trujillo
FHWA:	Eva LaDow (via telephone)
Pitkin County:	Brian Pettet
Glenwood Springs Chamber Resort Assoc.	Suzanne Stewart
Downtown Development Authority:	Leslie Bethel
Historic Preservation Commission:	Gretchen Ricehill
Glenwood Springs Council Representative:	Bruce Christensen
Glenwood Hot Springs	Kjell Mitchell
Jacobs:	Craig Gaskill, Jim Clarke, Mary Speck, Nitin Deshpande
TSH:	George Tsiouvaras, Dave Woolfall, Ryan Abraham, Dan Logsdon
AMEC:	Don Connors
Newland Project Resources:	Tom Newland
Interested Citizen	Dave Sturges

Copies: PLT Members, PWG Members, Other Meeting Attendees, File

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

PURPOSE OF MEETING

1. To share what was heard at the meetings held on April 3 and 4 and discuss how to proceed with alternatives screening.

GLENWOOD SPRINGS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION MEETING, 4/3/12

1. The Transportation Commission is a Board in the City that makes recommendations to the Glenwood City Council. Project Team and PWG attendees were Craig Gaskill, David Woolfall, Dave Betley, and Joe Elsen for part of the meeting. Three Commission members attended, some other City personnel, and Mike Gamba, Council Liaison.
2. It was an open discussion that focused on the alternatives. Interest was shown in couplets, intersections, and video simulations.
3. Question about how this relates to a bypass. Why aren't "you" developing a bypass? The question was directed to government in general.
4. Concerns about noise under the bridge – if it could be reduced, it would improve pedestrian livability areas. Dan Burden, a pedestrian expert, had been at the City to talk about how to improve downtown livability and were to meet under the bridge, but noise so go great near the bridge, they couldn't meet there.
5. If you were to rebuild the bridge so it wouldn't be as noisy – expansion joints, etc., this would be good.
6. Pedestrian connections are important.
7. Can the state change the state route – i.e., if there is a couplet, then can SH 82 be changed to include the new route? (the answer was yes) How does right-of-way work for this situation? (this would have to be negotiated).

PWG/PLT Group Discussion

1. It would be desirable to get a summer traffic count. All counts in the past have been in the wintertime, so not done in peak summer season.
2. Change in parking could be an impact.
3. Couplets on Colorado could impact the Safe Routes to School. This would affect elementary school kids crossing at 9th to get to school. There could potentially be an increase in pollution being closer to school.
4. Downtown retail businesses depend on highway access – retail. Restaurants seem to be better suited to pedestrian connectivity.
5. Opinion that sidewalks are okay as they are – what's needed is more parking.
6. County is planning a parking garage at 7th & Colorado, they have purchased most of the land between 7th and 8th.
7. Question received at Open House – could there be an access from CDOT bridge to a parking structure. Topic for access control meetings. Wouldn't be cheap. It was noted that the alternative to access the proposed garage with the couplet option is 3 left turns.
8. No certainty about what County is planning for the parking garage. Should to talk to County about their plans regarding Colorado between 7th and 8th.
9. Concern with couplets and impact on circulation.

GLENWOOD SPRINGS RIVER COMMISSION MEETING (4/4/12)

1. Attendees: Craig Gaskill, David Woolfall, Bruce Christensen, and River Commission members.
2. More focus is desired on pedestrian connectivity. Access to trail system – Glenwood trail and the riverbanks is important, not along the frontage road – but along the river. This was also presented in the Agency Scoping meeting
3. Primary pedestrian movements w/in downtown area: 1) Hot Springs to downtown, 2) from Hot Springs area to hotel area (west on 6th), 3) from hotel area to downtown.
4. Group was supportive of the project and of the alternatives.
5. Train Depot - they also have an ADA access issue, maybe there is a way to combine elevator access between the train depot and the pedestrian bridge.
6. Is there a way to measure pedestrian LOS?. Pedestrian LOS is usually defined by density (i.e., Las Vegas, Manhattan) but maybe for Glenwood the better definition is available routes, number of crossings, crossing distances.
7. Significant amount of pedestrian traffic at Exit 116 to Two Rivers Park. Intersection design needs to take this into consideration.
8. Future traffic volumes – will it ever reach prior levels? We will be looking at future traffic forecasts. Purpose and need isn't about congestion, but we will be evaluating traffic forecasts for the alternatives.
9. If CDOT takes over what is now a City street, what happens? Answer was that ROW would need to be negotiated.
10. If CDOT takes right-of-way on Cooper, Colorado, or both – does CDOT give up right-of-way on Grand if they take Colorado? This would need to be negotiated.
11. Any knowledge of what existing pedestrian bridge current structural status is? Would that information change discussion about the Grand Ave bridge? The pedestrian bridge deck was replaced several years ago, it is likely the structure was evaluated at the same time. The bridge was plumbed for geothermal. TSH & AMEC will look into structural information for pedestrian bridge.
12. Does City do periodic inspections on the Grand Avenue pedestrian bridge? If so the project team should get a copy.
13. Is there some way to not use mag chloride on the road bridge?
14. Pier in the river – desirable to remove the pier.

PWG/PLT Group Discussion

1. Coordinate with City if they get GoCo funds – fish habitat, water recreation, aesthetics.
2. Input that everybody has a concern about the water quality of the river.
3. Has the Commission looked at access points along the river? There was a past proposal to GoCo by the City to continue trail at 116 Exit. There is already is an access point at the

Roaring Fork River. This is an existing railroad underpass that's still there. The door is locked.

4. There is an existing City Resolution – any structures on east side of Roaring Fork River (Confluence area) – accessibility is critical. Be aware of what the Council has done. Whatever is added/developed has to provide public access to the Roaring Fork River. Could have applicability to the Colorado River. Important consideration – access or where a future trail might go.

CDOT MAINTENANCE MEETING DEBRIEF (4/4/12)

1. Purpose was to find out CDOT Maintenance concerns and issues related to maintenance of the bridge.
2. Attendees: Craig Gaskill, David Woolfall, George Tsiouvaras, Joe Elsen, Roland Wagner, Josh Cullen, Tammie Smith, (several CDOT Maintenance staff) .
3. Desire to have a concrete deck – this is a lower maintenance solution. Is concrete louder? Not necessarily.
4. MS4 – do the best possible effort to provide permanent water quality.
5. Division of authority with the City for maintenance is defined. Anything behind the back of curb or anything under the road – drainage, etc. is maintained by the City.
6. How to deal with inclement weather and deicing. Don't like chemical deicing – anti-icing. Geothermal solution would be preferred.
7. Concrete falling in Hot Springs parking lot is a known concern.
8. Roundabout preferred pavement – concrete.
9. How would snow removal be dealt with? On bridge generally pushed off unless there are sidewalks, with sidewalks would need area for snow storage or City removes snow from sidewalks. downtown, pushed to inside and City clears. Area in the center would then be needed for snow storage.
10. CDOT is preparing an Access Control Plan – upcoming topic is coordination for maintenance on Grand Avenue between CDOT and the City.
11. Grades of structures – steeper grades create difficulty for cars, trucks. Example is trucks getting stuck on eastbound entrance to Hanging Lake Tunnel due to icy roads and steep grades.
12. Pedestrian facilities and snow removal. Affects cross sections, stored snow can end up blocking sidewalks.
13. Alternatives that fly over – could be additional considerations because of longer length and highway over parking lots, I-70.
14. Ice build up on bridge and comes down in chunks to Hot Springs parking lot. This is due to the original drainage design on the old bridge, which would not be replicated.

SWG WORKSHOP DEBRIEF (4/4/12)

1. There were approximately 36 stakeholders invited to the meeting, plus the study team, PWG, and PLT – 18 people, plus the study team, attended. Most of these viewed the public meeting exhibits beforehand. Four break-out groups were asked key value questions – what’s important about the alternatives and options presented in the exhibits?
2. Group 1
 - a. Focused on the north side landing.
 - b. Business owners from that area with views that were very specific. Intersections are important.
 - c. Under the bridge environment – with couplets, creating two spaces with problems.
 - d. Big roundabout – too big, fits in a big City. Group liked Option A.
 - e. 6th and Pine today – that underpass is inconvenient. With traffic moved, could make it a more traditional crossing.
 - f. View sheds – not much concern – if it’s attractive, will help it disappear.
 - g. Headlights – curved bridge – would spray across the hillside.
 - h. Couplets – not much support for them – spreading pain of traffic around.
 - i. Wing Street businesses – no permanent obstructions because of truck access.
 - j. Liked idea of pedestrian area under the bridge.
 - k. More worried about pedestrians than cars.
3. Group 2
 - a. Started with couplets discussion.
 - b. Cooper couplet – impacts on new parking garage; on Colorado – impacts to post office and elementary school.
 - c. Preference for Colorado over Cooper. View shed effects of Cooper where the bridge would take off.
 - d. Tradeoff between parking and sidewalks. Parking more needed than pedestrian areas.
 - e. Pedestrian access – hotels along 6th, west of Pine – it’s a long walk from there to downtown. Enhancing connection would be good.
 - f. SH 82 traffic off of 6th – driveby is a big plus.
 - g. County parking garage – access is from Colorado. County has bought the land for the garage, but there will be a lot of work between with city and county. That area is seen as their campus – not just the parking garage.
4. Group 3
 - a. Cooper/Grand Couplets
 - i. No support for Colorado/Cooper couplet – impacts on Cooper. Issues with Cooper – impacts to businesses, new library, new parking garages, etc.

- ii. Differences in philosophy regarding value of Colorado/Grand couplet: On one side, reducing traffic on Grand could provide opportunity to better develop Grand and help the entire downtown. This could also provide opportunities for businesses along Colorado. On the other side, land uses would be so affected along Colorado and circulation would change so much downtown that couplet would be too impactful. Plus, existing businesses didn't grow up with these type of traffic patterns.
 - b. Need to better understand circulation around southbound Colorado.
 - c. School and post office impacts would be concerns with the Colorado couplet.
 - d. Suggestions - revise the southbound alignment to avoid impacts to the Post Office perhaps by cutting through existing corners.
 - e. Support for keeping everything on Grand - visibility for stores.
5. Group 4
- a. Started with pedestrian/bike considerations.
 - b. Very strong preference to maintain a direct bike/ped connection between Hot Springs and downtown.
 - c. Tie bike/ped facility to Grand Avenue alignment - even if it meant losing Wing St.
 - d. Direct connection to the alleyway - between 7th and 8th Street is good for cross-connectivity
 - e. Landing to the north - good accommodation to east/west flow between Two Rivers and the Canyon.
 - f. Colorado/Grand couplet - supported with constructability and operational.
 - g. One person liked the couplets.

PWG/PLT Group Discussion

1. Bike lanes have been screened out between 7th and 8th but not to the north.
2. Need to find out more about bike plans. There are three existing studies that should be reviewed- City's Bike and Pedestrian Transit Access Study , Comprehensive Plan, and the Long Range Transportation Plan. Study team will pull these together and see what's been done
3. Past input indicated that people like a detached pedestrian facility
4. There are hidden impacts of couplets that we are learning from these discussions.
5. SWG input depends on who attends the meetings.
6. SWG preference is to have more meetings with more detail and more opportunities for meeting times.
7. Couplets - first time people had seen in much detail. Some of the intersections are very complicated - hard to get their head around it. Caution not to get any fixed ideas until these

are better understood. Decisions on couplets should be partly based on feedback from stakeholders.

8. Downtown businesses – need to seek out people and talk about how they feel specifically about couplet vs. four lanes on Grand. Joint partnership/DDA/Chamber meeting is an option to get feedback on options. Also consider meeting with the Planning Commission.
9. Concerns about how public is able to assimilate and understand information.
 - a. Get boards out to people – consider binding and publishing a document.
 - b. Criteria – public doesn't understand how those are being used.
 - c. A risk is that people will say, "I didn't know that is what you were talking about." People may think they are voting rather than there being a decision process.
 - d. Need to communicate language of criteria. Need to understand context of the process. How we are going to start eliminating alternatives.
 - e. Locals could facilitate the conversation.
 - f. The City could help with distributing the document/information.
 - g. Need to balance the individual self-interest with the process.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE DEBRIEF

1. Craig provided some statistics of the comment forms questions handed in at the meeting.
2. Other comment forms are anticipated to be returned either on-line or through the mail.
3. P&N : Supportive of both needs. 64 out of 100 rating on connectivity need. 74 out of 100 on bridge deficiencies need. Two people rated these 0 because they felt a bypass was the right answer.
4. General support for couplet : -31 on a scale from -100 to +100 with -100 being very unfavorable and +100 being very favorable.
5. Existing pedestrian bridge: +68 positive rating (scale from -100 to +100)
6. Changes in parking associated with couplet: -27 (scale from -100 to +100)
7. Ground level space more important than bridge sidewalk space: +70, (scale from -100 to +100)
8. General debrief notes collected from staff who attended the meeting:
 - a. Several folks think a bypass should be built instead.
 - b. Couplets in general were not too popular, for numerous reasons:
 - i. Couplets create event planning challenges.
 - ii. Couplets affect the new Library.
 - iii. Couplets affect the new parking garages.
 - iv. Couplets affect downtown businesses.
 - v. Couplets affect the County parking and campus.

- vi. Couplets affect the nearby elementary school.
 - vii. Couplets affect traffic flow.
 - viii. Couples affect circulation.
 - ix. CDOT has already spent money putting down concrete paving. Why consider couplets that might not use all of this?
- c. Cooper Street couplet was seen as the worst of the options.
 - d. There was some support for couplets, particularly using Colorado.
 - e. Without the proposed 8th Street bridge, couplets would be bad for downtown traffic.
 - f. Concern about traffic speeds on Grand Avenue.
 - g. Keep bike and ped movements separate.
 - h. Build an iconic structure.
 - i. Parking is not as important on Grand Avenue.
 - j. Parking downtown is very important.
 - k. 5th lane on bridge would be good for events.
 - l. Some folks had gripes about other transportation problems, such as Midland Avenue.
 - m. Three lane roundabout was generally less favorable.
 - n. Not much support for flyover alternative.
 - o. General opposition to change.
 - p. Not much interest in Maple.
 - q. Some City Council members expressed interest in more council presentations.

PWG/PLT Group Discussion

1. Don't make a big deal about constructability – we should consider longer term.
2. People will lose businesses with some of the alternatives.

HOW DO WE USE THIS INFORMATION TO MOVE FORWARD?

1. Process not clear to some people. Need to understand what people are hearing and able to absorb when considering the input we are receiving back.
2. Traffic/circulation:
 - a. Need to show pedestrian movements through roundabouts. (in the visualizations as well).
 - b. Can we put the traffic simulation on web page? (Nancy will look into this).
 - c. Flyover – folks didn't like big, long ramp.
 - d. Large roundabout – public concerns about use of a roundabout so large.

3. People need to see the screening criteria. While the information is available, the public needs to understand the process before we just eliminate something.
4. Our challenge is to get new information out in the media.
5. People need to understand how alternatives and options function in the long term.
6. Pedestrian safety, connectivity, enjoyment of the river, economics are all important.
7. Some people still see the process as a sham. We need to continue to emphasize the process and the PLT's role in making sure the process is followed.
8. Maybe next public meeting is a presentation with an opportunity to answer questions. There was some support for this but probably needs more discussion.
9. Schedule
 - a. What can we do for May?
 - i. Recommendations will be developed for that meeting – tied to criteria and the screening process. The project team will document the new input into the evaluation, supporting screening recommendations.
 - ii. Rehab alternative has been analyzed at a higher level of detail. Will need to consider how to best compare this alternative with the other 13 build alternatives.
 - iii. Several alternatives or alternatives elements had consistent input from PLT and PWG members to consider screening out based on relative disadvantages, recognizing that the full evaluation would be needed before any decisions/recommendations could be made:
 - Cooper, Colorado couplets.
 - Big roundabout option at 6th and Laurel.
 - Maple intersection.
 - Flyover option.
10. Decisions must be based on Purpose and Need and the Project Goals. The public involvement process is driving towards informed consent, not consensus.
11. A potential FAQ topic: Screening criteria – came from the public.

UPDATES

1. Public Involvement
 - a. Tom Newland has heard back from Lions Club. He will schedule a meeting.
 - b. Colorado Mountain College:
 - i. Just purchased bank building on 8th and Cooper – will be moving there. Very interested in being involved in the project. Partners in the parking garage (one of four). Planning new signage at bottom of bridge. Wanted to be more visible in downtown Glenwood.

- ii. Traffic study for parking garage assumed right in right out would be provided for access.
 - iii. Coordination is important – need to schedule a meeting. Possible contact: Jill Boyle at college.
2. Engineering
- a. Findings of rehabilitation evaluation.
 - i. Started with existing conditions – came up with a feasible alternative to fully evaluate it.
 - ii. Would require widened structure, raising vertical clearance, strengthening to current standards.
 - iii. Now, it's structurally okay. Widening the bridge puts it into a whole different code criteria. Fatigue life of girders is gone.
 - iv. Would have to add columns, add footings, lift bridge up.
 - v. Piers still too close to I-70. To do move, need to replace three spans.
 - vi. Result would be half bridge as new, half as old.
 - vii. Very impactful to general public. Work on bridge with traffic on it.
 - b. Sufficiency rating less than 50 is a trigger for FHWA – don't focus on the sufficiency rating, focus on the problems.
 - c. Solution – evaluate what you're up against, follow the process, come up with the alternative. Decisions must withstand scrutiny.
 - d. FHWA – if you're going to spend a certain amount to rehab, replace the bridge.
 - e. Even if you do everything on the rehab list, it's still functionally obsolete.
 - f. Developing costs for this alternative would be challenging as there are so many variables that could be considered. It would be a major undertaking but costs have not been developed. There appear to be many problems with the rehab alternative even without considering the cost.
 - g. People have a hard time understanding – how can you build two bridges and have it be the same cost of one bridge.
 - h. Constructability issues could triple cost of project.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Project team to schedule a meeting with the County to find out more about parking garage plans and other development plans in the area of Colorado Avenue.
2. David Woolfall to estimate summer traffic counts.
3. George Tsiouvaras to get a copy of last inspection conducted on the pedestrian bridge.
4. Roland to coordinate project with the Access Control Plan that is in progress.

5. Jim Clarke to get copies of bike/ped plans (3) and incorporate into alternatives development.
6. Jim Clarke and Craig Gaskill to schedule a joint meeting, as appropriate, with DDA, Planning Commission and Chamber.
7. Tom Newland to schedule presentation to Lions Club.
8. Tom Newland to schedule a meeting with the Colorado Mountain College.

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