Meeting: Steering and Stakeholder Committee Meetiing

Meeting Date: 04/27/10 - 1-4 pm

Location: Kittery Trading Post, Rte. 1 Kittery, Katahdin Room

Progress of Evaluating Alternatives

Maine-New Hampshire Connections Study
Steering/Stakeholder Committee Meeting
April 27, 2010, 1 am – 4 pm
Kittery Trading Post: Kittery, Maine

Attendees: Josh Pierce, Seacoast Area Bicycle Routes; Cathy Goodwin, Greater York Regional Chamber; Cliff Sinnot, Rockingham Planning Commission; Leigh Levine, FHWA – NH; Gerry Audibert, MaineDOT; Bob Landry, NH DOT; Russ Charette, Maine DOT; Nancy Carmer, Portsmouth Economic Development; Doug Bates, Greater Portsmouth Chamber; Steve Parkinson, Portsmouth DPW; John Carson, Kittery KPA Chair; Ken Herrick, Albacore Park; Rose Eppard, Portsmouth; Gail Drobnyk, Kittery; Mike McDonough, Pan Am Railways; Roger Maloof, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard; Kirk Mahoney, ME Historic Preservation Commission; Dan Blanchette, Town of Elliot; Steve Workman, NH Seacoast Greenway; Myranda McGowan, SMRPC; Deborah McDermott, Portsmouth Herald; John Butler, NH DOT; Stephen Kosacz, Autoworks, Inc., Paul Godfrey, HNTB; Carol Morris, Morris Communications.

Meeting begins at 1:05 PM

Jim Murphy and Loretta Doughty of HDR presented a slide show detailing the inspection report for Sarah Long and Memorial Bridge.

Carol Morris: Thank you for coming to this steering and stakeholder meeting this afternoon. The purpose of the meeting today is to review the draft the study team has composed of the matrix that we all put together last fall; you helped design what is in the matrix. I want to clarify that this is a draft only and is being used today as a teaching tool so we can show you folks the progress that has been made, but I want to emphasize that this matrix will change by the end of the study; again, this is only a draft. You'll see that the matrix has colors and numbers attached to it based on the rating system we used.

Question: Is there a reason why we are not using an external rating system?

Carol Morris: That's a fair question. Many of the criteria do not have externally set goals, so we have simply rated each alternative in relation to one another, with the highest and the lowest rating acting as bookends. Let's go through the evaluation one by one, because my goal at the end of the meeting is to have you folks understand how the criteria was derived and make sure that you think it's fair, and makes sense. And so once we have that, than we will move ahead and recast the matrix in a way that reflects your concerns today and any concerns that come out of the public meeting.

Paul Godfrey: In fairness to how we look at this, many of the items on the matrix are the same ones we use when we do other transportation feasibility studies. So many of these are not new and how we apply them is very consistent, but importantly, every one is unique, so we look at it from a unique perspective to make sure we are applying it appropriately for this feasibility study.

Carol Morris: I'm going to hand the draft of the matrix out but please make sure this is not perceived as final. Once we get to the next step we are probably going to be seeing one or two alternatives rise to the top, and at that point we are going to want to take a step back and look at strategies for constructability in terms of cost and timing as well as look at traffic issues as they come into focus. This is going to be the hardest piece of the puzzle and will affect the final result.

Paul Godfrey: To give you a sense of what we've been doing to date, the study team has been busy: we have completed the resource impact analysis and quantification, convened a Section 106 meeting and discussion. We've completed the life cycle cost analysis, completed the business impact assessment and completed this draft of the evaluation matrix.

As you receive the draft of the matrix, you're going to want to look at the colors, but please don't for the moment. This is what we refer to as a messy meeting, this is your opportunity to help us fine tune and finalize the criteria against which these alternatives will be ranked, so your input, your guidance and your suggestions are important. And you can't do that if you're just focusing on the colors in the matrix. Please listen to what we're going to talk about, because it is hugely important. We have 45 criteria in nine different categories. We need to look at all of these specifically. Any questions before we jump in?

Structural Improvement

The first category is structural improvement. The first criterion is whether the alternatives provide improved structural and functional life to bridges over a hundred-year life. Does the

alternative give no or modest improvement to both bridges, that could likely be how we'll evaluate a rehabilitation. Is there only sizable improvement to one bridge? That is how we could evaluate a rehab versus replacement. And then, is there considerable improvement to both bridges, that might be the rating where replacing both bridges is considered. So that is how we're going to look at how the alternatives rank in terms of satisfying structural needs.

Lift Span Reliability

We have the same thing with lift span reliability, do alternatives improve lift span reliability to bridges over this hundred-year period. Again, if there were modest to no improvement it will be labeled red, if there is tremendous improvement to one bridge but not the other, it would be a yellow classification, if there's sizable improvements to both, it would be coded as green.

Mobility

Mobility is the next category; this looks at how people or vehicles get around within the study region. We have several criteria. The first is *vehicle miles traveled, (VMT).* Our travel demand model calculates the VMT during our summer weekday peak hour for each alternative. Our first measure is the number of VMT for each alternative. We have a range for each and we will determine green, yellow or red based on that range. We look at the range and divide that into three equal parts and whichever third that particular alternative fell in terms of VMT, that is how it is color coded as either green,

yellow or red. Generally speaking, when we have an alternative where there is going to be congestion, that will be ranked red because we hypothetically will have people trying to drive around congestion, which adds to the VMT.

We have the same thing with *vehicle hours traveled (VHT*), we are going to look at the range of the number of hours that people are sitting in their car in our summer weekday peak hour and we will look at the ranges by alternative, and we will rate them green, yellow or red accordingly.

Roadway level of service is our next category. What we look at is the level of service at intersections and compared the alternatives with a no-build scenario and determine whether it got better and if so, by how much, and we rank those red, yellow or green.

Gerry Audibert: Just as an example of some of the things that we're still talking about in terms of changing the matrix, there was roughly a two percent variation on VHT and VMT, so that may not be enough to go red, yellow or green because the two percent difference is essentially the same. So those are some of those discussions we still have to go through.

Paul Godfrey: Yes, and we have plans to speak with the DOTs and our charge will be, if any of the criteria changes we will come back and tell you why.

Carol Morris: And that is what we have been trying to get across, that some of the criteria are rated across a really narrow spectrum. But, red tends to scream really bad and green tends to scream really good and in some cases that kind of extreme rating may not be warranted.

Paul Godfrey: Continuing on with mobility, the next category is *available bridge capacity.* We're looking at the Sarah Long and the Memorial separately. Each bridge has a capacity - how many cars can pass over it during peak hour - and what we look at with each alternative is how much of that capacity is

used up. Where we identify the bridge as being near capacity, it's around 0.85, that means 85% of the bridges capacity is used up. At capacity we're getting .85 to 1.0, that's where we start to get delays. Then we have over 1.0, this is when the demand to cross the bridge is greater than the capacity. We use these as a way of rating the criteria; if we have under .85 its likely green, if its .85 to 1.0 its viewed as yellow, and if its over 1.0 it is coded as a red.

Q: Are we going to weight some of these categories? Because from a public standpoint this would be weighted highly.

Paul Godfrey: Right now we aren't weighting any of the criteria, right now our charge is to establish the criteria accurately, and then we'll look at the eight alternatives collectively. Are there two or three that rise to the top, and a couple that are sliding to the bottom? Once we establish this we'll likely have more detailed discussions about if we should weight, because I'm sure right now in this room everyone has a different opinion about what should be weighted more heavily.

The next category is *local road impacts.* This is a new criterion that came out of the public meeting; we're looking at local road impacts from a traffic perspective. We look at non-state route roads within the study area, and we establish whether the alternatives increase traffic volumes along those local roads. If they do, we code them red, if there is largely no change they are coded yellow, and if there is an alternative that lessens local traffic it gets ranked as a green.

The next category is *mobility during construction*. The way we've identified it is by asking, is the Sarah Long Bridge is open during construction? We have alternatives that look at improving the Sarah Long on alignment or upstream. One of the advantages if you build it upstream is that you can keep the bridge open during construction, and that is considered a benefit.

Question: Are there any alternatives where we would have a temporary closure to rail service?

Paul Godfrey: If there's going to be impact to rail, we look at what's the ultimate timeframe, and can we work that timeframe in with the current rail schedule. Obviously if we keep the Sarah Long open through construction, the rail service would be maintained, if not than we would need to see how rail would be impacted during that time period.

The next category is looking at *emergency and evacuation access.* Does the alternative impede emergency access; make it worse or maintain, or does the alternative make it better? One of the things we are looking into is widened shoulders and from my perspective, knowing folks in the emergency services field, a wide shoulder that increases vehicles' ability to pull over and allow access for emergency vehicles is a positive change.

Question: You use the term maintains existing emergency accessibility and coding that yellow suggests that emergency mobility now is inadequate.

Paul Godfrey: From my perspective it's not inadequate, but its not as good as it could be under some alternatives. Do you think that's a fair way to evaluate that?

Question: Looking into other parts of the matrix I see that maintaining service at current levels is coded as green, so if that's the case this should be green rather than yellow.

Paul Godfrey: Your point is right, if we're going to establish criteria, we need to be consistent. If there are places where maintaining certain levels of service are coded green, we need to make sure that is kept consistent. Thank you for that. (INTERNAL NOTE: If in those other cases maintaining services was at one end of the alternatives "bookend", then it was consistent with our initial methodology. Not to say we cannot consider change…)

Gerry Audibert: Another point is that the matrix tries to put everything in a package on one page, but really there are nuances and differences with each alternative under every criterion. The report will get into more detail. So red, green and yellow will change to different shades of red, green and yellow and we will look at the specific details of all of the different scenarios closely.

Paul Godfrey: The last category in mobility is *evacuation access*, we evaluate the impacts to evacuation plans based on each alternative and whether they impede, maintain or improve.

Question: I'm confused by the maintain thing. Maintain compared to what? Right now or if the bridges were at proper levels of load bearing, what does maintain refer to?

Paul Godfrey: All the alternatives assume that the bridge loads are going to be improved, either by rehab or replacement, and they will back to where they were before, not what they are today.

Question: So the baseline is now, and if it's improved it will be better than now?

Paul Godfrey: All the alternatives are looking at the year 2025, and again we assume that the bridges have been improved.

Gerry Audibert: The one exception is the No Build, which is based on today's condition, which leads to the Memorial being closed, and the Sarah continuing with a ten-ton capacity.

Paul Godfrey: Correct, we do have a No Build alternative which assumes there's no Memorial in place and the Sarah's capacity is increased to ten tons.

It goes without saying that this is a lot to absorb sitting here, and follow up comments via email to Carol or to the website are always appreciated.

Accessibility

Paul Godfrey: The next category is accessibility. We look at *accessibility to downtown and* evaluate the accessibility by alternative. Does the alternative reduce all modes' access to downtown, does it reduce only some modes, like for the alternative of having a bike–pedestrian only Memorial Bridge, or does it maintain. Again this is how we look at grading the different alternatives.

Question: What happened to the improved category? We had reduced, improved or maintained, now it's classified as reduce some, reduce all or maintain. What happened to the option for improved?

Paul Godfrey: In this category, you either have access, or you don't. You are either going to reduce, and by reduce I mean eliminate all of the modes of crossing, meaning one of the bridges is gone; reduce some, like if you're not allowing vehicles to access downtown in the bike-pedestrian alternative for Memorial, or you're maintaining what we have today. I don't see an improved category here.

Carol Morris: How about if we add bike–pedestrian access to Sarah Long?

Paul Godfrey: What would impede that now?

Comment: The law, it's illegal to cross the bridge walking or on a bike.

Paul Godfrey: Ok, point taken.

Question: An improvement would be if the Memorial Bridge had that pedestrian structure added on the side.

Paul Godfrey: And we're getting to that. We have a criteria coming up where we cover design features, and that's where we covered that aspect. For maintain and improve, the criteria covers whether the bridge remains open to all modes, or just some modes.

Question: The Albacore connection gives you another path to the downtown.

Paul Godfrey: And that's assumed under all alternatives, but do you think this needs to be critiqued differently?

Comment: It's fine as is.

Paul Godfrey: We have the same approach for *access to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard*: does the alternative impact how people access the shipyard by mode and does it reduce all modes, some modes or maintain.

Now we're going to get into bridge design features. There are design criteria if you are going to build a new bridge, there are guidelines like lane width, shoulder width, etc. These next series of criteria speak directly to that.

The first one is *a bridge design feature, looking at the bridge alternatives relative to vehicles*. Does the alternative improve design features, meaning do we get wider lanes? Some alternatives keep the same lane width meaning it does not meet current state and federal design standards. Does it provide partial, meaning one bridge it doesn't, one it does, or are both bridges improved in terms of these guidelines. So

generally looking from a vehicle perspective, the question is, are we able to get wider lanes.

The next category is *marine accessibility,* and this is relative to navigational horizontal and vertical plans. Does it reduce, improve or maintain. This is how we rank whether there are improvements for marine vessels going up and down the river.

The next category is *bicycle access*, looking at the alternatives, are shoulders wide enough for bike lanes, do they meet the standards, if they don't it will be red, if only for one bridge it would be yellow and if shoulder lanes are added on both bridges it would be rated as green.

The next category is *pedestrian access.* If we are able to provide adequate width for sidewalks it's green, if for one bridge but not the other it would be yellow, and if no improvement for pedestrian access were made it would be rated red.

The last category is bridge design features for rail. This is pretty simple, asking if the alternative maintains access for rail. In all cases we do, so all would be rated green.

Question: Why did we not rate these bridges separately, and then combine the two with an overlay. You have to do this by process of elimination to see that it's the rehab of the Memorial that's making this all red. I think it would be clearer if we could see them independently.

Paul Godfrey: From the DOT's perspective, the study had to look at both bridges together from a mobility and a funding standpoint. Most times the ranking does take into consideration whether we're doing something better or worse for each bridge.

Comment: You're averaging them in a way that doesn't make a lot of sense. If we could see them separately and you could see the effects on each other you would see this differently. If

one is red all the way across and it's bringing them all down to yellow, I don't think that answers the question. From what I heard from Bob Landry, rehab of the Memorial Bridge is hanging by a very thin thread.

Comment: At a minimum you need to say which bridge improves, because it's not at all clear that all the improvement comes from the Sarah Long Bridge but that's what's happening.

Paul Godfrey: I don't disagree for some criteria that you can look at them independently. There are some criteria, however, where we have to look at the bridges together, for example when we evaluate traffic, we don't just take one out because they both work together to provide sufficient access between the communities. I do hear your point though and we will discuss this.

Gerry Audibert: We have eight or nine alternatives left here and there are various combinations of alternatives. What this does is help us identify what points drag us down without going in and predetermining based on one individual structure.

Paul Godfrey: a very potential scenario is you could look at the Memorial and say that one particular alternative is the right option, but that could predetermine what the Sarah Long has to be. I see your point but there does have to be some continued connection with the bridges.

Comment: This is a request; it would be helpful for me to see the eight or nine alternatives that are left.

Paul Godfrey: We do have those and we will look at those.

Comment: I'm with Rose, for each alternative, instead of having a single yellow or red, you could split them and code them separately with its own color. Then you could combine them this would allow you to see what makes an alternative red or yellow.

Paul Godfrey: Ok, we will take a look at it and see if we could do that.

Paul Godfrey: We have a lot of information; let's find the best way to present it. Yes, we can look at the bridges independently so you can see what the differences are, but combining them is our charge for this study and that's how we're going to have to evaluate them in the final analysis.

Cost

Paul Godfrey: The next section is on costs. With the help of Maine and NH DOT, we have *capital construction costs* by alternative; these numbers represent millions of dollars. We have divided the range into three sections, highest third would be red, the middle third would be yellow and the lowest third is marked green. And again this is combined cost of both Memorial and Sarah Long.

The next section is *operation maintenance* for the bridges over the next 100 years. You'll see the operation and maintenance costs divided by thirds, the highest third is red, the middle third is yellow, and the bottom third is green.

We then add the total together as *life cycle costs,* because we need to look at the two together and we have the same grading technique as in capital and operating and maintenance costs.

Gerry Audibert: It's not simple addition in case you're wondering; we take the cost over a hundred years and bring it back to the value of today's dollar. Major investments have to be made in year 20 and year 50 and those are added in.

Carol Morris: And the cost of taking down a bridge is included in the capital cost?

Gerry Audibert: Yes.

Bob Landry: How does this relate to what in reality the two states are willing to spend?

Comment: If you're going to build a bike-ped bridge, how are you going to compare that in a color, to a bridge that's going to carry cars? I think the numbers should stand on their own, I don't believe the costs should have colors, or ranks added to them.

Gerry Audibert: Two things address that, we do a benefit to cost analysis, in other words, for that extra cost we spend, what is the perceived increased benefit.

Question: Benefit to whom?

Gerry Audibert: We've tried to include value, whether it's qualitative or quantitative, for all of the interests we've heard so far during the study. The other thing is Bob's point, the piece that Paul Godfrey will get into a little later, is that as these last couple of alternatives start rising to the top, the harsh realities of what can we afford to do today will come to light.

Paul Godfrey: Good point. We talked about whether funding feasibility should be a criterion, because there is a funding practicality to all of this. We recognize we have a lot of criteria; we are not going to base a decision on single criteria, but again we need to factor in practical reality. We will look at the question of how do we sort through which alternatives remain and which ones are going to be recommended.

Question: Would it be fair to say that cost is a controlling criteria?

Paul Godfrey: I don't think I would say that.

Gerry Audibert: No, but it's a reality factor that we need to face.

Carol Morris: The implementation aspect is going to be important, we are going to have to look at not just cost but the timing of funding availability for each alternative. It's not just a numbers game because some alternatives might end up with one of the bridges closed for a really long period of time until the DOT has money, potentially. Maybe that's worth it, but that's something we will talk about as we work through the process.

Question: Where are mitigation costs factored in?

Bob Landry: They are not as of yet.

Paul Godfrey: So there will be some additional costs due to mitigation, which have not yet been defined. There are many other criteria in addition to cost that we take into consideration; we are not going to simply do a bike-ped bridge because it's less expensive.

Comment: People who tend to be cost driven are going to look at that number and see that it's yellow and not consider these points you've just made.

Carol Morris: But people who think the historic aspect is the most important will only look at that criteria, and people who think bike and pedestrian access are most important will only look at that. That's why we have a range of criteria.

Comment: Those people are not in Augusta. I just don't think we should be weighting dollars.

Gerry Audibert: Well, at this point there is no weight applied to anything, so right now they're all considered equal.

Paul Godfrey: The next category is *travel time costs*. We looked at the overall delay, how many hours were people

waiting at traffic signals, and congestion, and we look at that by multiplying the weighted average value of time ranked by range.

Question: It occurs to me that there would be a travel delay for the bike-ped option.

Paul Godfrey: There absolutely is.

Comment: But it's showing green. I think for some people that is a very unacceptable travel delay.

Paul Godfrey: Yes, and we've looked at that, and we're happy to provide the detailed data with you, and show why we believe there are benefits to the bike-ped option with a four-lane Sarah Long. And that those benefits to some degree offset the delay. For the traffic crossing the Memorial there is additional delay, but for traffic crossing the Sarah Long there is improved travel time. This provides a balance and it ultimately ended up being green.

Russ Charette: And there was also improvement in traffic in downtown Portsmouth with that option.

Question: You have a four lane Sarah Long, but you have traffic light at controlled intersections that you don't have now.

Paul Godfrey: Yes. We absolutely took that into consideration.

Question: What does that mean?

Paul Godfrey: The amount of delay is less with the four-lane bridge, because we have two through-lanes.

Question: But you can't coordinate the lights because of river traffic.

Paul Godfrey: Yes, but when you don't have river traffic you have increased service and can coordinate the lights. So it is a net gain.

Comment: I think the issue about traffic delay reinforces the need to separate the bridges within the study. Having traveled from a to b, where a and b are a straight line across the Memorial Bridge, I don't see how going through the back streets of Kittery and Portsmouth to go over a six-lane on Sarah Long would not have a travel cost. I feel that that lends more argument that all criteria should be separated for each alternative.

Paul Godfrey: Okay. So suppose we separate the bridges, if I want to understand the traffic patterns for the bike-ped Memorial option, what are you going to assume on the Sarah Long? Whether it's a two lane, or a four lane, these all have an effect on the capacity of the bridge. I don't disagree that there are some criteria that could be separated, but for some criteria, and traffic is one, where you have to look at the two bridges together.

Bob Landry: Why don't we pull out criteria that can be separate, and then list what needs to be combined?

Paul Godfrey: Yes that's a good idea, but I'm telling you that some criteria simply cannot be separated because we won't get the proper perspective.

Comment: I would have to see the numbers that would argue that the bike-ped option would be green when combined with a four-lane bridge on Sarah Long. People aren't going to believe it.

Comment: Especially when it's only a 50-million dollar difference to have an actual bridge that carries all vehicles.

Paul Godfrey: Absolutely, and again I'm happy to share the data that makes us understand.

Comment: I want to emphasize that; it's how each individual bridge weighs in on that option. Even if an option is combined, each bridge will experience its own specific negative or positive effects.

Paul Godfrey: And again, for certain criteria you can split the bridges, but for traffic we absolutely have to look at the two bridges together.

Carol Morris: When we look at mobility, we look at the traffic system in the area as a whole. In some areas traffic is better and in some areas its worse, but as a whole, over the system, do the traffic conditions improve? You're focusing here on the one area where traffic will be worse without taking into consideration all of the other areas that improve.

Paul Godfrey: Let's look at that, and we'll show you our research and than you can see what we see.

Comment: I think when you answer a question you talk about bridge capacity. We're asking about how we as individuals get to use that bridge capacity. And you have impacts on city roads and city streets but you say nothing about the state roads.

Paul Godfrey: And generally how I would say that we look at that in terms of intersection level of service. We ask do we have long waits at intersections depending on the alternatives, yes or no.

Question: What about traffic levels on streets themselves?

Paul Godfrey: We can compare volumes.

Gerry Audibert: I think graphically we can show the mobility issues, just color-coded.

Question: For the sake of the study, did we decide what rehab actually means, how it is defined?

Paul Godfrey: Simply put, it's likely a combination of replacement and rehabilitation for either of the two bridges.

Bob Landry: On the Memorial, current plans show replacement of the lift structure. Rehab plans are mostly replacement. On the Sarah, we'd be replacing existing spans

Question: Are you talking to the Portsmouth Planning Office and asking them if you close a bridge, what's their opinion of how they want traffic to change, because this will impact them.

Paul Godfrey: And that's part of the detail that you don't see, if we see that there's an intersection in downtown Portsmouth where this creates problems, we take that into account as part of the alternative and devise an intersection improvement.

Question: I suggest talking to Portsmouth Planning Board and see what they think about all of this. *(Note: Steve Parkinson, Portsmouth Public Works, is on the Steering Committee.)*

Paul Godfrey: Moving along, we also worked on a local economic impact survey for the local business impact assessment, assessing whether the alternatives affect those businesses negatively, positively, or had no change.

Russ: You've got a yellow for 1.0. My suggestion would be red or green, no yellow.

Paul Godfrey: I agree with that.

Carol Morris: We do have the report on the local economic impact surveys and we are waiting for final DOT comments. It will be on the website within the week.

Paul Godfrey: We also looked at regional economic impacts; Charlie Colgan is giving us an assessment of regional impacts.

Question: None of the alternatives would have any measurable effects so why are we doing it?

Paul Godfrey: It's all going to be yellow because Charlie has determined that there's going to be no net change regionally.

Question: If the no build alternative is red, does that mean that that neither bridge has been repaired?

Paul Godfrey: The no build option assumes that there is no Memorial Bridge and the Sarah Long has been reduced from a 20 ton to a 10 ton loading.

Question: I would like to submit that without the Memorial Bridge, meaning the bike-ped option, there is no way these are yellow, it would be red.

Carol Morris: Yes, there would be a negative impact in downtown Kittery.

Comment: And Portsmouth.

Carol Morris: Less so, but we are considering that to be a local issue rather than a regional issue. Regionally – the big picture - there is no impact because someone who decides not to go to a specific business because it's less convenient will likely go to another similar business within the same region.

Question: So how is that not a red impact on the business there now?

Paul Godfrey: Under the No Build alternative, the Memorial Bridge is not there at all, so from a business perspective that is worse than the bike-ped option because you are still able to accommodate those who use the bridge in a bike-ped capacity.

Question: We're getting confused between local economic impacts and regional economic impacts, so what is the geography of the "region".

Paul Godfrey: The region is the area that this study encompasses.

Question: Is this concentric with local or does it mean Dover and Newington?

Carol Morris: Let's define that specifically and get back to you.

Paul Godfrey: Yes, let us define what those are so folks can better understand what we mean when we say local and when we say regional.

Carol Morris: We will make sure we have that for next week's meeting.

Question: The matrix says regional / local, so local is not supposed to be in the matrix?

Carol Morris: That is a mistake, one should say local, and one should say regional.

Question: The map of the study area was Kittery and Portsmouth, not Rockingham or York County.

Question: So regional doesn't include Dover or Ogunquit?

Paul Godfrey: I am going to confirm that with Charlie Colgan.

Comment: If any of the alternatives reduce the overall capacity, than there will be an economic impact as evidenced

in Cape Cod. We lost a lot of business when people waited three hours to get over the bridge. Are we going to see Charlie's study?

Carol Morris: Yes.

Bob Landry: But none of the alternatives reduce capacity.

Comment: But you're eliminating one bridge entirely; you're going to have to prove it to me.

Question: Are these costs based on replacing the current structures and designs as they exist today, or are we still talking about using maintenance free designs and materials?

Bob Landry: That's the replacement option.

Gerry Audibert: If the rehab alternative is chosen, it's based on replacement to the best extent we can. Under the replacement option we would be building a more modern bridge, both options take into account maintenance costs, so yes it's based on real costs.

Historic

Paul Godfrey: The next section is on historic criteria. Here we evaluate *impacts to National Register bridges* based on alternative, whether it remove/replace both, remove /replace one or rehab both.

We also have other *Historic/Historic Eligible Resource Impacts*, we will evaluate these based on impacts: does the alternative have an adverse effect, no adverse effect or no effect.

Question: Based on this narrative we have an inconsistency, you describe other historic resources as yellow, and some as red.

Paul Godfrey: Okay, thank you. We do want to be consistent.

This next section is on *archeological impacts*; we will evaluate impacts to archeological resources based on alternative and whether they're high value/location, high value/artifact, or no impact.

Question: Our archeologists looked at this and did not understand how you came up with this. It sounds like impacts are being judged on the basis of a predicted model rather than faze one, phase two fieldworks. And archeological resources do not have a high value because of location, I think you are looking at maps and making predictions.

Paul Godfrey: This is out of my league for explanation, we need to put Ellen in touch with the state archeological folks to make sure we're rating this consistently. We will do that.

Gerry Audibert: We recognized there are shortcomings in this section, we need to get everyone together to talk about how to be consistent.

Natural Environment

Paul Godfrey: The next section is natural environment. Looking at *short-term river quality impacts,* we look at it based on the alternative depending on the number of piers. We look at the range of piers constructed and rate it from lowest to highest amount of impact.

The next criteria in this section is *air quality assessment*. We evaluate this by looking comparing each alternative against

National Ambient Air Quality Standards. If it increases it would be red, and if it's below that it would be considered green.

The next section is *aquatic habitat*; we will evaluate short-term river quality impacts based on alternative depending on number of piers.

The next criteria is *access to river*, I do not believe there is any impacts to access to rivers so it's all ranked the same.

The next criteria are *threatened and endangered species*. I'll come back and clarify this section at the public meeting as I am not sure why this is ranked the way it is.

The next criterion is *floodplains and floodways.* We based this on the amount of square foot impact. We evaluate the impacts to floodplain/floodway by alternative (range based on square foot impact).

Question: I want to go back to air quality for a second, which standard are you talking about, PM10 or is it a regional standard?

Paul Godfrey: It was a hot spot analysis.

Physical Environment

Paul Godfrey: The next section is on physical environment impacts. The first criterion is *neighborhood impacts.* We identified five neighborhoods within the study area, and determined whether each alternative increased roadway traffic through none, one to two or three to five neighborhoods.

Comment: I live on Badgers Island and I'm not the least bit concerned about increased traffic on Route 1, but I am worried about the impact on my neighborhood with the bike-ped

option. I would consider that to be red, not green. I think that traffic volume is the wrong measure for neighborhood impact.

Paul Godfrey: So in your opinion, maintaining traffic volume trumps decreased traffic volume in your neighborhood?

Comment: Yes, a trip to downtown Portsmouth will now take me ten minutes when it used to take me two.

Paul Godfrey: And that issue is covered by the negative rating of the bike-ped bridge in the *access to downtown Portsmouth* criterion. This criterion is addressing the desire to limit increased traffic volume within neighborhoods.

Carol Morris: Perhaps we should call it neighborhood *traffic* impacts because what you are concerned about – your lack of access to Portsmouth - with is measured in other areas.

Comment: I don't think it what I'm concerned about has been adequately addressed.

Paul Godfrey: We have a downtown accessibility criteria. And your concern is addressed there.

Gerry Audibert: So we may have a couple of subsets in these criteria.

Paul Godfrey: The next criteria is *publicly owned property impact*: how much of that property is impacted. We are simply looking at the physical amount of property that is impacted and we rank this from lowest impact to highest impact. This is the same with the next criteria: *commercial property impacts.* There is a range of square footage identified as impacted under each alternative and we rank from lowest to highest. The next criterion is *residential property impacts*, and we rank this the same way.

We also look at *business or residential displacement* as the next category. We rank that by the number of properties that are displaced by each alternative.

Question: So these are based on what would actually happen with the eight alternatives? What properties would be taken or how much?

Paul Godfrey: We have conceptual design plans that show the design and the resulting slope limits (which effects the amount of property that needs to be taken) and we look at that in relation to the properties.

Question: Why wouldn't you put commercial and residential property under their highest, why put a ceiling? Why not just put greater than 3400?

Paul Godfrey: We could do that. The upper range of 5100 is the maximum amount that we've determined.

Carol Morris: Most of the impacts result in taking a small slice of these properties.

Paul Godfrey: The next section we looked at *noise*. We've identified any alternative that would increase noise levels. We measure this and ranked them accordingly.

Regulatory

The next section is on regulatory impacts. We looked at *US Coast Guard permitability*, and whether each alternative is permitable. We also looked at other *state and federal regulatory permitability*, and assessed if other state and federal permits can be obtained based on each alternative. We also made an assessment of *required NEPA documentation*. This is similar for all the alternatives.

Resources

The last section is resources. These are all to be determined; we are going to be looking at historic and other 4(f) resources.

Carol Morris: 4(f) is a separate state and federal regarding historic resources.

Question: How are we predicting what future marine loads will be?

Paul Godfrey: We did not look at what the potential increase in volume would be, but we sat down with the Coast Guard and discussed what types of ships we want to accommodate and this has been factored into the design of the alternatives

Please remember that this matrix in front of you will change; we've received good feedback today.

Comment: Putting the colors in each box is going to be a lighting rod at the public meeting. I don't think people will be able to look at this as a draft; people are going to see things as red (bad) that they didn't expect to see as red. People have certain expectations of where we are and expect to see certain alternatives eliminated and they are not.

Paul Godfrey: Ok, so you're arguing to present this later

Comment: I would say that up until this meeting the credibility of the study has been very high, and now we need to know how you got to this conclusion in terms of impacts. I think you need to hold back on distributing this because we have concerns in certain areas that have not been addressed.

Carol Morris: We know the local and regional economic impact is an area of concern, what else?

Comment: The loss of the existing Memorial Bridge with vehicle traffic.

Comment: it would be better if this group saw the breakout with just numbers before you present it to the public.

Comment: People will see this and think there is no way to change it and that will cause the study to lose credibility.

Gerry Audibert: I feel a need to show progress in the study - how can we fill the need to show progress?

Comment: Don't have any colors, show the numeric criteria for the matrix and take out the colors.

Gerry Audibert: That's a point well taken.

Comment: You want people to see what you're doing without thinking you've made your conclusions and the colors feel like you've made conclusions.

Comment: It will be good for people to see the physical condition of the bridge, and the pack rust. This will increase the credibility, and than show the alternatives.

Comment: If you flag the criteria that this group had concerns with, people with see that as progress and people will see that you've received input.

Bob Landry: How about if when we go through the evaluation items, we can give examples of the obvious situations and apply colors, but not put any colors on the actual matrix.

Comment: There were a couple of categories where there was not enough information provided as to how you came to some of these conclusions. We should have that information at the public meeting.

Gerry Audibert: Would it be better to show each alternative separately and show impacts to Memorial and impacts to Sarah and compare them?

Comment: Yes.

Comment: I think you need to keep in mind that we had the opportunity to experience a bike-ped option for the Memorial in November when the bridge was being repaired and it was not a good thing. This will be red flag to a lot of people.

Paul Godfrey: I understand that and the criteria are going to address those concerns.

Meeting ended at 3:30 PM