



CYCLING PEDESTRIAN CROSSING
Minutes – Collaborative Planning Working Group (CPWG)
Norquay Community Centre, 65 Granville
12 noon – 4:00 p.m. Monday February 2, 2009

Meeting No. 1

Present:

Stakeholder Groups

Jim Chapryk – North Point Douglas Residents' Assoc.
Anders Swanson – One Green City/Mayor's Environmental Advisory Cmte. (1 pm)
Janice Lukes – Winnipeg Trails Association (12:45 pm) (represented earlier in the meeting by Louise Ballaban of the NE Pioneers Greenway)
Brion Dolenko – Bike to the Future
Kathleen Leathers – Prairie Pathfinders
Jordan Van Sewell – South Point Douglas Residents' Assoc.
John Klassen – Good Neighbours Senior Centre/Elmwood/East Kildonan resident (2 pm)
Brian Timmerman – Exchange District BIZ

City of Winnipeg:

Bill Ebenspanger – Public Works (Project Manager)
Stephen Chapman – Public Works (Traffic)
Lee Caldwell – Planning, Property and Development (Urban Designer)
Kevin Nixon – Planning, Property & Development (Active Transportation) (1:15 pm)
Judy Redmond – Planning, Property and Development (Accessibility Coordinator)

Consultants:

Susan Freig – Susan Freig & Associates (public consultation)
Gail Watson - Susan Freig & Associates
Anne-Marie Thibert – Susan Freig & Associates
Justin Lee – for Susan Freig & Associates
James Betke – Dillon Consulting
James McCutcheon - AECOM
Glen Manning – Hilderman Thomas Frank & Cram

1. Welcome

Gail and Susan welcomed everyone to the meeting. Susan explained that this would be an important and exciting project and that everyone's participation was well appreciated. The collaborative process for this Working Group will be quite unique. Background information, facts and a common knowledge base will be provided in order for the group to collectively make recommendations.

2. Introductions

Participants introduced themselves and briefly indicated what sector or organization they were representing.

3. Disraeli Bridges Project – Planning Process and Status Update

James Betke provided an overview of the Conceptual Design Report that was prepared for City Council for the group to learn about the overall Disraeli Bridges Project and how current discussions about the Cycling Pedestrian Crossing fit into the overall planning process.

The original project team for the Preliminary Engineering phase of the project consisted of Dillon Consulting Limited, AECOM (formerly Earth Tech) and Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram Architects along with several other sub-consultants. The project limits for the preliminary engineering study extended along the existing Disraeli Freeway from Main St. to Hespeler Avenue and include the bridge and overpass. The Preliminary Design of the Disraeli Bridges rehabilitation was recently completed and the City is now in the process of procuring a consortium to design, build, finance and maintain the project.

Project Objective

The rehabilitation included all roadway and bridge components within the study limits. As identified in the original proposal, the goal of the assignment was to rehabilitate the Disraeli Freeway in a manner that is technically sound, reflects the needs of the community and City in general, is cost effective, environmentally responsible and is generally understood and accepted by the general public.

Preliminary Engineering

The preliminary engineering assignment consisted of four main components: a condition assessment of the existing facility; conceptual design of potential rehabilitation alternatives; public consultation to solicit input from the informed and general public; and preliminary design of the preferred concept.

Condition Assessment

The condition assessment identified a number of deficiencies associated with the Disraeli Freeway that require rehabilitation or upgrading to achieve the 75-year service life set by the City and in accordance with current design standards and City of Winnipeg practice. Based on the condition assessment, as a minimum, these rehabilitation requirements include:

1. Major rehabilitation of the concrete piers and abutments, particularly at locations subject to severe exposure to de-icing salts from the roadway.
2. Replacement of the bearings for improved performance.
3. Blasting and painting of the girders for added protection against future corrosion and strengthening to meet current bridge design codes.
4. Replacement of the bridge deck and all appurtenances such as the sidewalk, expansion joints and barriers.

The decision to replace the deck is primarily based on its existing condition. The deck replacement also allows us to redesign other components to meet current City practice. These include:

- Improvements to the vertical and horizontal geometry of the bridge and roadway.
- Improvements to roadside safety measures associated with both the bridge and roadway.

- Improvements along the facility to meet Universal Design requirements and to improve pedestrian and cyclist accessibility.

Traffic Study

The condition assessment also included a traffic study to determine traffic capacity requirements for the rehabilitated facility and for traffic management during construction. Sophisticated traffic modelling was done in order to analyze present and future demand. Best estimates on population growth (a realistic 1% growth rate over the next 20 years was used) and potential land development in Winnipeg's northeast quadrant was also considered. Based on this information and the limited traffic capacity of the intersections at either end of the bridges it was concluded that the structure does not need to be expanded from 4 lanes to 6.

Conceptual Design

The majority of the cost of the project involves rehabilitating the bridge and overpass. For this reason, the conceptual design primarily focused on developing and evaluating various rehabilitation concepts for the structures. The rehabilitation concepts included both 4-lane and 6-lane options and the concepts were evaluated on pre-established evaluation criteria. The main criteria groups included engineering, socio-economic, safety, risk, environmental and cost. Our conceptual design recommended the highest rated concept, which was a 4-lane bridge with a single sidewalk on the east side.

Public Consultation

The next step in the process was public consultation, which was planned and coordinated by Susan Freig & Associates for the City. Public consultation was a critical component of the phase in deciding which concept would be taken to Preliminary Design. This was important to ensure that the communities' needs were heard and their input could be considered.

There were two main components; the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings, with representatives from various organizations and community groups representing the interests of the different sectors and constituencies most affected by the project, and broad public input achieved through disseminating informative publications (newsletters and display ads), surveying residents and businesses and public open houses. The consultant team acted as advisors during public consultation and presented the results of the condition assessment and conceptual design for their consideration.

Working through the evaluative criteria and in consultation with their constituency groups three concepts were selected by the SAC and then advanced to the broad public for input. Through the entire public consultation it was identified that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists were paramount with the main difference being varying levels of accommodation.

Preferred Bridge Concept

Following this, the SAC went back to the table to consider the ideas and issues raised by the public including a report to the City prepared by the Bike to the Future group that involved the addition of a separate pedestrian/cyclist bridge, and to evaluate how well the concepts met the project goals and community's needs. From this, the City Public Service ultimately made their final recommendation for a preferred bridge concept: a 4 lane bridge with one sidewalk on the east side, with a separate pedestrian and cyclist crossing to enhance safety and better integrate the transportation infrastructure with the surrounding community and connect with

Active Transportation routes. A formal report was then submitted for Council approval at their meeting on September 24, 2008. The preferred concept was also deemed most cost effective because no substructure widening is required to accommodate the proposed width. The separate corridor/bridge over the Red River was proposed to further enhance pedestrian and cyclist accommodation.

Preferred Bridge Concept

The preferred concept as approved by Council is a 4-lane divided roadway option in accordance with current City practice for rehabilitated structures and includes one sidewalk on the east side of each structure. This option was essentially chosen to provide a basic rehabilitation alternative for the structures and the proposed deck width is 20 metres including accommodation for commuter cyclists with sharrows painted adjacent to the curb barrier designating the lane to be shared by vehicles and cyclists. The location and type of crossing for the new cyclist/pedestrian corridor will be planned and evaluated through this current collaborative planning process.

Preliminary Design

The rehabilitation requirements for the roadway and structures were then further refined to fit with the preferred concept. These requirements were then identified as minimum design requirements for the DBFM proponents to design and construct as part of the Disraeli Freeway rehabilitation. The preliminary design report and corresponding technical requirements were prepared and provided to the DBFM proponents at the end of 2008 as part of the Request for Proposals documents.

4. Cycling / Pedestrian Bridge Background Information and Planning Implications

Justin Lee presented the highlights of the background report that was prepared for the project. He explained that a bridge is not just about moving people as efficiently as possible from Point A to Point B. The committee is here to make recommendations about a bridge that connects communities together. The background document focuses on the community.

He cited the documents that served as sources of information, including a number of important studies, the South Point Douglas City Guidelines and Action Plans and the South Point Douglas Secondary Plan. (The complete list is available in the report.)

Report highlights:

Land Use

What governs land use in the area?

- Plan Winnipeg (Being Renewed)
- Secondary Plan for South Point Douglas (Underway)
- City of Winnipeg Zoning By-law (effective 2008)
- Downtown Zoning By-law (2004)

Most of these policies are being developed or have recently been renewed. This leads to opportunities to affect them.

Justin broadly pointed out on an aerial map the various industrial, commercial, and residential zones within the project area. The building inventory is also available in the South Point Douglas inventory list.

The cycling pedestrian crossing should integrate with surrounding land uses. Although the Secondary Plan for South Point Douglas is currently underway, it is important that plans for the crossing are compatible.

Transportation

Key considerations are:

- Heavy industrial and through traffic in South Point Douglas
- Division of Point Douglas by the Rail Line
- Existing Active Transportation Corridors

Traffic counts

Over a 24 hour period on any given weekday:

Disraeli Bridge: 36,000-49,000

Louse Bridge: 24,000

Higgins Ave: 18,000-21,000 (poor condition of road and streetscape noted in community pre-consultation process; designated truck route)

Sutherland Ave: 7,900

The preliminary traffic management plan during construction was briefly referenced.

A map was shown indicating the location of the Trans Canada Trail and Northeast Pioneers Greenway. Active Transportation was defined as active living, consistent use and being part of the community.

The goal would be to create a strong and safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles and to strengthen the connections among the communities:

- North and South Point Douglas
- Between Elmwood-East Kildonan, and Point Douglas
- Between community nodes such as the schools and community centres.

Environmental Issues

Contaminated Sites identified from the SPD inventory. Hydro at 35 Sutherland is considered contaminated and would affect alignment of the bridge on the South Bank. Anywhere on the North bank is suitable. There are also some other minor sites and areas of concern including on the riverbank.

Riverbank Access & Stability - steep, narrow, private ownership, contaminated from industries

The committee will have to consider the condition of the riverbank along the site, accessibility to the river, and fostering healthy and sustainable communities.

Urban Design in the Public Realm

- Design Excellence

- A couple of examples of beautiful bridges were shown as a starting point for discussion about creativity and innovation
- Creativity
- Linkages
- Identity
- Universal Design – building it right the first time
 - Inclusive
 - Easy and Clear
 - Safe
 - Comfortable

Consideration will have to be given to safe and accessible design and creating a source of community pride and accomplishment.

Historical Interpretation

- Multiple histories
 - What are OUR stories? There is no single history of a place, and the neighbourhood is rich in histories
- Contribution to Design Excellence

In concluding, Justin stated that overall the background document information is intended to provide a comprehensive knowledge base and a starting point for the Working Group's discussion and planning.

In response to a question it was explained that in general the City wants to promote bus use. There are existing Park & Rides that will be upgraded with express buses added.

It was pointed out that on page 8 of the report, the date reflects the start of the study for the Louise Bridge and not actual construction.

Bill also clarified that at this time, due to the condition of the bridges that the Disraeli does need to be done first. Working first on the Louise Bridge is not an option.

5. Collaborative Planning Process and Roles

Susan Freig explained that today's meeting was to lay the foundation for the February 18th planning. The committee will require background information, facts and a comprehensive and common working knowledge base.

The scope of the Collaborative Planning Working Group's work on the project is:

- Determine the location of the cycling pedestrian crossing
- Determine the connections leading to and from the crossing
- Develop design criteria

The overall project goal is

- technically sound
- reflects the needs of the community, and city in general
- cost-effective

- environmentally responsible and safe
- generally understood and accepted by most of those affected

This broadly stated goal will be more fully defined and fleshed out at the next meeting

Susan explained that the Collaborative Planning Process was the method chosen for the Working Group on this project.

- An effective planning and decision making process where members of a group work together to develop a plan by exploring options, evaluating those options and reaching consensus on a preferred option.
- Timeframe will be quite compressed with 3 meetings planned.
- Working group members' attendance needed consistently to contribute, influence and support the process outcome.
- Decision by consensus: not necessarily unanimous but a decision of the majority that everyone can live with.

The process for the project includes stakeholder and community involvement in reaching recommendations on a plan for the crossing

- The Collaborative Planning Working Group includes representatives of a balance of different sectors and communities who have an interest in or are affected by the project.
- Work jointly together with municipal representatives.
- For credibility and integrity, participate as representatives of broad constituency rather than as an individual. Ensure that your voice is not your own personal opinion, but rather, the view of the community or organization that you are at the table to represent.

Multi-Disciplinary Working Group

- Pooling together the wisdom of each specialty (all are equally important):
 - Interest/advocacy group specialization
 - Local community knowledge
 - Professional municipal expertise

This meeting is intended to develop the comprehensive knowledge base for all

- Cycling/Pedestrian Bridge Background Information and Planning Implications Report
- References – available for further reading
- Project consultants – information resources to support the work of the committee
- Working members sharing information
- Site tour
- Identify what further information is required so it can be gathered and sent to Working Group members before the next meeting

Planning Process (planning charette)

- Identifying and prioritizing project goals
 - Common and divergent interests
- Brainstorming potential alternatives
 - Creativity; think outside the box
- Objective evaluative process
 - Pros and cons

- Win/win scenarios

Planning/Design Charette

- Feb. 18 – full day (with breaks!)
- Dynamic, intense, collaborative planning process
- Led by Glen Manning – Hilderman Thomas Frank Cram with support from SFA
- By end of day: Options – locating crossing, connections and design criteria

Consultation with constituencies

- Get input on options from constituencies you represent in committee (the timeframe is being built around this so input can be brought back to the final meeting)

Broad Public Input

- has not been quite firmed up yet; will depend on this planning process and how things develop as it all has to fit

6. Disraeli Bridge Design, Build, Finance, Maintain (DBFM) Contract

Bill Ebenspanger explained that a DBFM (also known as a P3) procurement format has been chosen by the City for this project. Requests for Qualifications went out last year and three proponents were pre-qualified. Request for Proposals have gone out to these three and the final submissions are expected close to summer 2009. The DBFM contract is expected to be awarded in the fall of 2009 with construction to begin in 2010.

The plan is to include this pedestrian/cycling crossing in the DBFM contract which will extend over 25 – 35 years. The proponents are international consortiums. Proponents will be provided with the results of this process, including minutes of meetings, as soon as possible so they know how to structure their proposals. Minimum design criteria should be included. Aesthetics is a criterion.

There was discussion that South Point Douglas residents have expressed interest in limiting the Louise Bridge to pedestrians, cyclists and transit only. Transportation corridors are bisecting the community. Some feel also that pedestrian needs should be considered apart from cyclists and the Active Transportation system. A transportation study for this bridge/area is planned for 2013/2014. A comment was made about a study helping to ensure actions taken now don't prevent opportunities in the future. The scope of a study looking at all separately and in relation to the entire city would be enormous. Delaying the Disraeli Bridges or cycling pedestrian crossing for a large study would not be feasible due to the timing of the DBFM proposals being submitted for consideration and award of contract.

The current estimate for the cycling/pedestrian crossing is \$15M and although it is not necessarily planned to be a "signature" bridge, the design/concept that is developed could become a solution for other city river crossings.

It was noted that if the Louise Bridge was to be closed to regular vehicular traffic it would still require some rehabilitation (e.g. deck, coating, etc.)

7. Indication of Interests and Priorities of CPWG Members

It is imperative that group input gets brought to the table.

Jordan – representing the emerging South Point Douglas Residents’ Association (also a local resident and artist)

- Louise Bridge is an excellent resource
- Need answers on future traffic patterns and counts
- Concerned that this process essentially ensures the replacement of the Louise Bridge and its continued use for vehicular traffic
- Cartage and truck firms on Higgins – can they be relocated? This could have a huge benefit in reducing traffic.
- Invest more in the Higgins/Louise Bridge area as part of the overall project
- Historic value in area
- Need to revisit traffic flows and real needs

Kathleen – Prairie Pathfinders

- Jordan’s comments bring new light to the situation
- Removing traffic on Higgins and Sutherland could be a bonus to pedestrians

Jim - Point Douglas Residents’ Association

- Supports Jordan’s ideas
- Likes idea of “re-using”, e.g. the Louise Bridge
- Plan Winnipeg: time for Winnipeg to grow up, not out
- Higgins could be more amenable to residential development if traffic is decreased (Sutherland and Euclid also)
- Behooves us to look at transportation planning in advance
- Whatever roadways lead up to the bridge should be designated “bike boulevards”: can be used by cars but primarily identified for cyclist use.

Janice – Winnipeg Trails Association

- Focus on connectivity
- Challenge with land use and planning and transportation (Louise Bridge included)
- Need larger look at overall plan, including land use

Stephen – City Traffic Dept.

- Will provide input at planning charette

Brion – Bike to the Future

- Not sure about organization being credited with this idea
- Wants to see people getting out of their cars – riding their bikes
- Build it and they will come
- Organization has volunteered to do traffic and cyclists counts. Noted a large increase from the spring of 2007 to 2008, partly due to North East Pioneers Greenway
- Hesitant to tear down the Louise Bridge
- Connectivity important (Brazier and Annabella)

Lee – City Planning Dept.

- Is the Louise Bridge important to a “sense of place”? It is an iconic structure that could be important to the community (such as the Elm Park Bridge which has become a destination)

Kevin – City Active Transportation Coordinator

- Will serve as a resource

Anders - One Green City/Mayor’s Environmental Advisory Committee (also involved with North Winnipeg Commuter Cyclists and was active with the development of the Marconi)

- Considers it somewhat “insulting” as a pedestrian to only have one sidewalk on the bridge
- Does “this plan” not have to serve those not being served?
- Is this just the cheaper solution (as opposed to two sidewalks on the bridge)?

Bill responded that this is an Active Transportation project. The Disraeli Bridge is not ideal for pedestrians and it was felt to be a better solution overall to separate pedestrians and cyclists from cars, not just because of the cost.

- Competition for dollars on big projects – shouldn’t discount moving ahead with this bridge and moving forward with other creative options; these can be studied later; does not have to be “one or the other”
- Cost of pedestrian and cycling bridges much lower than for vehicular bridges
- 500m from Henderson Hwy to the Louise Bridge is quite far for pedestrians and cyclists (when talking about connections)
- The bridge itself can be a destination

It was confirmed that creative design professionals would be involved in the DBFM process.

James M. – AECOM

- Can look at de-linking traffic as part of the process; it can be checked if the city has any past studies on the Louise Bridge that might show what would happen to traffic if the bridge was closed down to vehicles.

Brian – Exchange District BIZ

- Concern regarding the Annabella connection at Higgins
- What dollars will be going in to make connections pedestrian and cyclist friendly?
- Change uses of land in area; need to put money into the area
- Wayfinding will be extremely important: signage, lighting, etc.
 - Don’t want a bridge to “nowhere”

Judy – City Accessibility Coordinator

- Biggest concern around pedestrians – important to have a physical separation from cyclists
- Connectivity from community to community – focus should not just be on pedestrians generally but also the specific needs of seniors, children, students, and those with mobility issues and sensory disabilities
- By accommodating these users you can also add to the aesthetics
- Crime Prevention through Environmental Designs (CPTED) – safety, lighting, landscaping

Bill – City Project Manager

- Has to follow Council's instructions and that includes having this cyclist/pedestrian crossing included in the DBFM
- Quite surprised by interest expressed about the Louise Bridge; unfortunately the Disraeli process cannot wait for this
- Great information and ideas already provided; has to digest this and give some thought to how both ideas and plans could possibly move forward

Justin – author of background report

- This would be an excellent opportunity to “inform” the secondary plan, as opposed to simply using current information from the secondary plan as background information
- Goal may not have to be preservation but adapting and re-use of Louise Bridge
- Consider the future value of what today would be considered a utilitarian look: this could be appreciated in the future
- The bridge can be a gathering place as well as a transportation node
- Do not have to limit what can be done with the Louise Bridge by what is done here
- Some riverbank and private property limitations to consider

John – E.K. Seniors

- Will wait to digest information as just recently arrived

James B. – Dillon Consulting, bridge engineer

- Also quite surprised by all the interest and suggestions surrounding the Louise Bridge as it is not part of the parameters of the Disraeli Bridges project
- Can consider future options: possibility of twinning the Disraeli if necessary in future
 - it is hoped that what is done now would not limit future development/additions
- Can only use history and reasonable estimates to determine possible traffic levels in the future: Has this already peaked? And there is not a lot of development opportunity in the N.E. quadrant of the city. This was one of the reasons not to go with a six lane option, as well as the intersections at either end having limited traffic capacity.

Susan noted that there would be a lot to discuss on the bus tour. She asked if there were specific questions that would require follow-up by the resource team for the next meeting.

Items requiring follow-up:

- Point Douglas Yacht Club at base of the Louise Bridge, City owns this but it is not used. Direct transport was offered years ago but the City refused hence a lost opportunity. Detrimental to go ahead without a full and comprehensive study encompassing this area and all the options available.
- Parameters of the bridge - It was explained that it would be 3.5 m wide, 250 m long, straight and as low as possible – but no lower than the Louise and Redwood bridges
- Traffic counts on use of Disraeli and Louise Bridges
- Would be interesting to see what the affect on future traffic volumes would be if rapid transit and bike routes increased - need scenario or prediction information. The City does modeling in macro form – load transfers need to be taken into account so not sure if this would be possible.

8. Site Tour (2:30 – 3:45 PM)

The site tour began on Rover where possible south bank connections were looked at. The contaminated Hydro site was pointed out. This area should not be disturbed in the construction. The location of the gas pipeline was also noted and construction would have to stay to the east side of this. It was agreed that the Hydro towers/lines would be plotted on the map for the charette. Any possible health and safety concerns would have to be looked into.

Condition of the existing structure was noted. The goal is a 75 year service life. The tour continued to the end of Syndicate and also went up Annabella.

Connectivity to Waterfront Dr. was discussed and the group walked down the river path. It was explained that there is a City report that recommends not lighting the path as restricted sightlines and a steep grade make it less safe and not the best connection to Waterfront.

Clearance height under the Disraeli Bridge at Higgins was noted. Pedestrians and cyclists will be fully accommodated on the existing bridge and underbridge walkways will be included. Design enhancements can be suggested / recommended.

The tour continued with a short drive on the north side to look at the riverbank. There would be some grading issues to connect at Brazier but overall there are some good opportunities. The tour concluded crossing the Louise Bridge. The distance from the Disraeli was noted.

Upon return from the tour there were a few comments shared.

- Need to investigate proximity of the Hydro corridor.
- Beauty of the Louise Bridge (considered utilitarian in its time)
- What is the “catchment” area of the project/geographic parameters? The limits need to be identified in terms of riverbank, connections, routes, City traffic planning and land use, etc. How much needs to be factored in?
- Would be good to have a map of some of the planned routes, e.g. proposed Active Transportation Network

9. Wrap-up

Glen Manning briefed the committee on what to expect at the Planning/Design Charette on February 18th. Large maps will be used and destinations, routes, safety considerations, etc. will all be factored in. The group will review conventional options and look at the pros and cons but then proceed to “thinking outside the box”. The resource team will be on hand to advise what is impossible or impractical. It will be primarily a drawing exercise. No artistic skills required though!

It was suggested that landmarks and buildings of significance should also be identified. This information is available in the South Point Douglas inventory.

It was clarified that key features would be indicated on the map, including lights, stop signs, etc. It was requested to include the catchment areas of schools and a distance “chart” to show pedestrian and cyclist times out from the area, e.g. how far for 5, 10 or 15 minutes is from the bridge.

Plans for Ernie O'Dowd Park were raised so Kevin indicated he would communicate with the Parks department.

The Neeginan Housing Development was mentioned and it was asked if there would be any chance that the Maple St. underpass next to the CPR station could be re-opened. All these possibilities, plans and ideas that are the domain of other City projects or departments would be important and critical to know.

Susan reminded members to be sure they are clear on the priorities of their respective groups as they are as representatives of their groups, not just representing their own individual view. The work on the 18th will be a collaboration. Not all issues that are beyond the scope of the cycling pedestrian crossing can be fully addressed at the Charette. However, they can be identified for follow-up.

Everyone was again thanked for their participation.

The meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Notes prepared by: Anne-Marie Thibert

Distribution:

All present

Ingrid Zacharias – Elmwood Community Resource Centre

Todd Smith – AECOM

Kurtis Kowalke - Planning, Property and Development

John Wintrup - Planning, Property and Development

Ken Allen - Public Works (Communications)