

Minutes of Meeting

Date of Meeting	October 3, 2013	7:00 pm	60119543
Project Name	North Maple Community Bridge Environmental Assessment		
Location	Vaughan City Hall, Room 244		
Regarding	Citizen's Liaison Committee Meeting # 3		
Attendees	Michael Frieri, Tony Artuso, Selma Hubjer- City of Vaughan José Vernaza, Renée Pettigrew, Sheri Harmsworth, David Brutto – AECOM Glen Pothier, - GPlI Members of CLC		
Distribution	CLC#3		
Minutes Prepared By	David Brutto, Renée Pettigrew		

PLEASE NOTE: If this report does not agree with your records of the meeting, or if there are any omissions, please advise, otherwise we will assume the contents to be correct.

	Action
<p>1. Welcome & Overview - Glenn Pothier, Independent Public Facilitator</p> <p>A brief introduction on the project history was provided, followed by introducing the project team. and give any additional info, if they chose</p>	
<p>Those in attendance included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Margaret Primier – Became first involved in the project through ratepayers association. Lives very close to the proposed bridge location. Daughter would cross the bridge. • Karim Tahir – Represents the Ahmaddiyya Muslim community in the study area. • David Schleihauf – York Region Transit • Jackson Marin - York Region Transportation Planning • Gary Verdin – Platoon Chief, Vaughan Fire and Rescue Service • Paul Lasalle – Detective, York Regional Police • Sue Schuhmacher – Lives in the study area, very close to the proposed bridge location. • Teresa Santos Gomes – Lives in the study area, very close to the proposed bridge location. • Sonia Sanita – York Region Catholic District School Board (YCDSB). 	

<p>Representing both the YCDSB and York Region District School Board (YRDSB).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Van Kessel – Lives in the study area, very close to the proposed bridge location. • Ann Jakopin-Vlahovic - Lives in the study area, very close to the proposed bridge location. • Matthew Volpintesta – Lives in the study area, very close to the proposed bridge location. (Boom Road) • Monica Volpintesta – Lives in the study area, very close to the proposed bridge location. (Boom Road) <p>Other observers (non-CLC members) were present although they were not asked to give formal introductions. Being said, other observers were welcome to comment or ask questions during the meeting.</p> <p>Glenn reiterated that time will be provided following the presentation to questions of fact or clarification, following by comments and observations.</p>	
<p>The members of the CLC in attendance were then asked to formally re-introduce/introduce themselves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Monica Volpintesta - It was not communicated that the meeting was open to any member of the public. <p>Response Provided by Project Team: The intention of the CLC was to have a focus group, comprised of residents and authorities, that would meet to discuss the project. Although the CLC meetings were meant to be by invite only we would not turn anyone away that came that was not a dedicated CLC member. We had non-CLC members attend all three CLC meeting as observers. We can provide a list of attendees (CLC meetings 1 to 3) to all CLC members, if necessary.</p>	
<p>2. Growth Forecasts - Michael Frieri, City of Vaughan (Slides 5 to 7)</p> <p>Michael explained the City of Vaughan Official Plan review process and spoke to the future growth planned in the City.</p> <p>Intensification areas and urban expansion areas were shown on mapping. An explanation was also provided that the white belt areas are areas that are potentially subject to intensification.</p> <p>In the three and a half years since the CLC #2 (March 2, 2010) meeting, the city has been developing the city wide Transportation Master Plan (<i>A New Path</i>) to accommodate the growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Karim Tahir – What is the name of the road at the bottom of Block 27? • Response Provided by Project Team: Teston Road. 	

<p>3. Project Recap and Update – Renée Pettigrew, AECOM (Slides 8 to 19)</p> <p>Renée Pettigrew presented an overview of the study area, study background and a description of the phases of the project as part of the Class EA process. The process of confirming the preferred alternative solution (Phase 2) was reiterated. Some of the concerns detailed and given response during all prior phases of the study were presented; however it was explained that the concerns were by no means an exhaustive list. A few of the concerns were named.</p> <p>The alternative design concepts (Phase 3) were also reiterated, culminating with a presentation of the preferred design alternative(s).</p> <p>José Vernaza further clarified that the 6% grade approach slopes (Alternative Design Concept Option 1) would raise the John Deisman Blvd. and Cityview Blvd. intersections. As a consequence the properties abutting the intersections would be impacted requiring retaining walls and re-grading of the driveways. Alternative Design Concept Option 2B, with a 7.5% approach slope minimizes the impact to the intersections and properties. Therefore the study choose this alternative as the preferred design.</p> <p>The concept drawings presented in Phase 3 of the project were shown, including the landscaping plan, concluding this segment of the presentation.</p>	
<p>4. Traffic Report Update – Sheri Harmsworth, AECOM (Slides 20 to 22)</p> <p>An overview of the 2013 updated Traffic Assessment Study Area was provided. The most important finding was that the actual traffic counts at the Teston road ramps do not show significant difference from the estimates in the 2010 study. The planned traffic network in the vicinity of Mackenzie Vaughan Hospital was also shown (Slide #21).</p> <p>It was clarified that the only planned access points to the hospital are at Jane St and Major Mackenzie Drive. Traffic analysis concludes that there would be no need for motorists to drive into the residential area to get into the hospital via the bridge. However, emergency services normally utilizing Major Mackenzie Drive would benefit from the proposed bridge should Major Mackenzie Drive be impassable.</p> <p><i>See Slide 22 for the conclusions of the Traffic Study.</i></p> <p>Glenn Pothier turned the presentation back to Renee Pettigrew for an explanation of the next steps in the study.</p>	
<p>5. Next Steps (Slide 24)</p>	

<p>Following Renée, Michael Frieri clarified that the next steps involve a report to the Vaughan Committee of the Whole identifying the conclusions of the Environmental Assessment Study and a request for the Committee to approve the study in principle.</p> <p>A November timeframe was identified as for the report to the Committee of the Whole. Michael explained that it would be possible for the interested public to make deputations at that time.</p>	
<p>6. Q&A and Discussion</p> <p>The CLC members were provided with the opportunity to provide further comments and ask additional questions of clarification. These comments and questions are summarized below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment/Question: Ann Jakopin-Vlahovic– The slope (7.5% slope, Slide #14) looks steeper than anything she sees in Maple right now. Is it safe and reasonable in winter? ○ Response Provided by Project Team: (JV) – The drawings provided on Slide #14 show a significant exaggeration of the slope. These drawings are exaggerated for engineering purposes. In engineering nomenclature, 7.5% is an acceptable slope for a bridge of this nature. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Nancy Van Kessel– Asked for clarification on the traffic counts (Slide #22), she didn’t notice a significant difference in numbers. • Response Provided by Project Team: The traffic counts were estimated in 2010. The estimated volumes were equivalent to actual counts conducted post-2010. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Nancy Van Kessel – Very concerned that the bridge would become a shortcut for motorists outside of the study area; to the hospital and elsewhere. Concerned that future traffic on arterial roads would filter through the neighbourhood across the bridge. Also, it is very hard to believe that local traffic would also only use the bridge to get to the other side, and not get to the highway or elsewhere. • Response Provided by Project Team: It was reiterated that there is no direct planned connection between the hospital and Block 33. Traffic studies confirm that motorists from outside the study area would not use the proposed bridge as a ‘shortcut’. It would primarily serve local traffic as a means to cross Highway 400. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question/Comment: Teresa Santos-Gomes – How will the concerns of the people be addressed at council? The bubbles expressing the concerns are not very professional. This presentation has only presented evidence speaking to the reasons to justify the need of the bridge. • Response Provided by Project Team: (GP) - The project team certainly has not intended to belittle the concerns of the community. The ‘bubbles’ were only presented as a refresher to the prior concerns raised and responded to by the project team. (MF) - The concerns of the community will be summarized as part of the report presented to the Committee of the Whole (Council). (JV) – All of the community’s detailed concerns will be included in the Environmental Study Report that will require approval by the Minister of the Environment. JV further noted that a 15 page document, responding to concerns, was prepared and distributed to members of the CLC in June of 2010. It was reiterated that council will be provided a summary of community concerns. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Monica Volpintesta – Claims the minutes from a City Council meeting, dated January 29th, 2013 were biased, giving direction that the bridge environmental assessment study should be completed. Referenced that the Vellore Woods proposed bridge was cancelled, as well as another (unnamed) bridge in the community. Just because the need for the bridge is identified in the City of Vaughan Master Plan should not mean that it is a “done deal”. There will be issues with cars stopping in winter because of the 7.5% grade. Does not want to wait until deputations come in. The community is already not people friendly due to lack of sidewalks. Make sure community concerns are adequately conveyed to council, (i.e. to an appropriate degree, more than just a simple summary). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment/Question: Ann Jakopin Vlahovic – Will there be any design (i.e. traffic calming) measures to ensure that others outside of the local community don’t use the bridge? There are already no sidewalks in the area. The increase in traffic is bad for neighbourhood safety. • Response Provided by Project Team: (SH - AECOM) - It is the Region’s responsibility to ensure traffic flows adequately through the blocks. (SH - Vaughan) - America Avenue is currently wider than some of the streets in the study area. Volumes at America Avenue/ John Deisman Boulevard do not approach the need for a traffic light. The addition of a bike lane will visually narrow the street, providing a type of traffic calming element. If the Environmental Assessment is approved, additional traffic calming measures will be considered. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment (adding to the project teams’ response): David Schleihauf (York Region Transit) - From a transit perspective it is preferable not to have vertical speed attenuation. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Karim Tahir – What is the yellow coloured area shown on Slide #6? What are the pink areas on Slide #7? Please clarify wording for Slide #10 - <i>Alternative Solution #4 – Build 400 Overpass.</i> • Response Provided by Project Team: (MF) – The yellow area on the map shown on Slide #6 is the City of Vaughan’s existing urbanized area, including both employment and residential lands. The Pink areas shown on the map on Slide #7 are areas approved for development and under construction. Alternative Solution #4 was one element of the Preferred Solution in Phase 2 of the project, currently constituting the bridge identified with the red dashed line on Slide #20 (the proposed North Maple Community Bridge). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Karim Tahir – I am speaking on behalf of more than 1000 families in Block 33 and 34 part of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The community’s official stance continues to support the bridge. However, the other CLC members concerns should be addressed. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Paul Lasalle (York Regional Police) – (Personal opinion as a police officer) The concept of the bridge sounds like a good idea, however, resident concerns (i.e. traffic calming issues) are important. People from north of the city try to use every road and shortcut to get everywhere. <i>Paul reiterated this comment was not on behalf of the York Regional Police, rather a personal observation as a newcomer to the CLC and observer of the meeting.</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question/Comment: Sue Schuhmacher – What is the grade of the existing hill west of the America Avenue / John Deisman Boulevard intersection? Reiterated the concern about the grade of the bridge. Are there any other precedents in Vaughan with a similar grade? • Response Provided by Project Team: (JV) – The existing hill at the end of America Av. It is estimated in more than 4%, (opinion based on photo on Slide #12). After the meeting it was confirmed that the slope is approximately 4%. (MF – SH-Vaughan) Speaking to precedent of bridges with similar grades the team mentioned the Portage Parkway over Highway 400. This bridge <u>may</u> have a comparable grade (higher than 6%). As another comparison, the shoulder of a highway is typically 6% grade. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Sue Schuhmacher – When were the traffic counts on America Avenue conducted? Will there be traffic counts after the bridge is built? What types of existing roads in the area would counts for the bridge be similar to? • Response Provided by Project Team: (SH - Vaughan) – Counts on America Avenue were conducted as recently as mid-September 2013 (after school started). Follow-up traffic counts would be completed after the bridge is built. In the absence of readily available traffic data for other roads outside of the study area, it was suggested that counts would be ‘similar to’ existing counts on Drummond Avenue. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment/Question: Nancy Van Kessel – Reiterated the concerns that people will use the bridge to get to the highway. Do any threshold numbers exist that would trigger a bridge being required? How can we ensure the traffic will go where intended as opposed to becoming just another route to get to the highway? • Response Provided by Project Team: (SH – Vaughan) - Regional road improvements elsewhere ensure that traffic will continue to utilize arterial roads as the best method of regional transportation. The traffic on arterial roads will not diminish; it will only increase in future. The proposed bridge is not meant to displace traffic on arterial roads. (MF) - The proposed bridge will ensure that local traffic will have an alternate to get to the arterial roads. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Matthew Volpintesta – Is there any transit route planned over the highway that would use this bridge? • Response Provided: (project team deferred to David Schleihauf, York Region Transit) - No transit routes are immediately planned, although YRT is investigating the possibility. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment/Question: Monica Volpintesta – Expressed concern that the study did not take into account speed (traffic) capacity at Jane Street and America Avenue. Concerned that the safety of children, conserving the number of schools in the area, were not taken into account. • Response Provided by Project Team: (SH – AECOM) – The traffic study focused on the Teston ramps as the area of greatest concern. Traffic counts were obtained at all intersections shown on Slide #20 mapping, despite the numbers not being shown on the presentation. There were no significant observed differences in traffic counts at any of the intersections in the study area from the numbers presented in the 2010 traffic study. Based on the updated traffic study, the Jane Street and America Avenue intersection will be able to handle the additional traffic volume. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment/Question: Monica Volpintesta – What are the traffic counts on Teston Road? Also expressed concern with the trucks associated with the prestige industrial area on the west side of Highway 400 using the bridge. • Response Provided by Project Team: These concerns have been noted by the project team and will be addressed in the Environmental Study Report (ESR). Traffic counts will be documented in the Environmental Study Report. 	<p>Provide Teston Road traffic counts</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Sonia Sanita - Is the approach grade of 7.5% appropriate for youth to traverse? Moving forward in the study, it is very important to consider traffic calming measures. • Response Provided by Project Team: These concerns have been noted by the project team. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Karim Tahir – Reiterated concern about the commercial traffic (e.g. commercial trucks) using the proposed bridge. There should be speed limit enforcement (stated an example of Shoreham Drive in Toronto at York University, where speed enforcement is very prevalent) and no commercial trucks allowed. • Response Provided by Project Team: (SH - Vaughan) - Any traffic calming measures regarding commercial traffic (e.g. commercial trucks) will be addressed at the implementation stage. (MF) - The City would consider putting a traffic monitoring program in place following implementation of the Bridge. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Karim Tahir – In 1998, during initial planning for the residential block, why wasn't enough room for bridge made without having to involve property impact? Recalled a 14 day OMB hearing on the matter. • Response Provided by Project Team: (MF) - The planning at the time did not take into account the widening of Highway 400. The MTO developed plans to widen Highway 400 to 10 lanes. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question: Sue Schuhmacher – Can you please estimate when construction would begin, and how long would it take? • Response Provided by Project Team: (MF) - The Minister of Environment-granted time period for implementation of an approved Environmental Assessment is 10 years. The Transportation Master Plan (TMP) estimates that the need for the bridge will become evident by 2021. Before implementation, the City will conduct a TMP update and Official Plan review, which would include a reassessment of the City's transportation network and growth plans. Based on these updates, the timing may move forward or behind. (JV) - For this project, construction would be about one year. (MF) - Detail Design would also take about one year. This is a development charge funded project which would require approval through the budget process. (SH - Vaughan) - The earliest bridge completion date would be closer to 2021 (estimate). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment: Ann Jakopin-Vlahovic – Coming into the meeting, I was concerned that this study was the end of the planning for the project. This meeting has given me further clarity on the process and I now understand that more detailed study (i.e. detail design) will take place, including looking further into traffic calming options to mitigate concerns. 	
<p>Glenn Pothier thanked everyone in attendance and concluded the meeting.</p>	