



**Pinellas County Public Works
Traffic & Roadway Division
Transportation Engineering Section**

Beckett Bridge Replacement - PID 001037A

Aesthetics Committee Meeting #1-Minutes

Type of Meeting: Aesthetics Committee Meeting #2
Meeting Date/Time: March 1, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm
Meeting Facilitator: Hardesty & Hanover Project Team
Location: Tarpon Springs Yacht Club, 350 N. Spring Blvd, Tarpon Springs, 34689
Prepared by: Ann Venables, Hardesty & Hanover
Project: PID 001037A – Beckett Bridge Replacement (Design)

Attendees: See Attached Attendee List

Summary of Discussion

- A. Bradley Touchstone provided an Introduction which included a brief review of the following:
- Project description and history
 - Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) requirements
 - Proposed design concept and bridge terminology
- B. Results of the 1st meeting were summarized and discussed.
- A summary of the meeting comments was reviewed.
 - Key words that the committee suggested for the theme of the bridge aesthetics were reviewed.
- C. Jim Phillips discussed maintenance considerations that should be considered.

Jim Phillips, Nancy McKibben and Erin Lawson met with the County maintenance staff and presented the concepts that were shared with the Aesthetics Committee members prior to this meeting. County maintenance staff expressed the following concerns.

- Concrete is preferred over coated steel for traffic barriers and vertical structures at overlooks.
- The preferred materials for the pedestrian/safety railings are aluminum or stainless steel.
- It is very important to secure the bridge control areas that house equipment from vandals or animals. The current design shows the bridge control areas more open than the staff prefers.
- County staff currently parks in the Yacht Club parking lot to open the bridge, or do maintenance. In addition, the standby generator for the electrical systems is located on Yacht Club property. Unless other areas can be provided on these two locations needs to be preserved.

Jim Phillips stated that the steel traffic barriers were not “off the table” at this time. Information from other municipalities that are maintaining this type of rail will be shared with Pinellas County Maintenance staff. The rails are made of galvanized steel, and maintenance is much less than with older steel railings.

- D. Bradley Touchstone presented the concepts developed since the last meeting.

Comments applicable to all of the design concepts include the following:

- The main focus which creates the “main user experience” for the public is treatment of the bascule pier.
- The overlook on the north side of the bridge which houses the bridge controls will be restricted to equipment and operators. There will be no pedestrian access.
- The curved outside of the bascule pier will lead to the stair.
- Smooth lines were emphasized to define the overall aesthetics.

- A texture can be added to the lower section of the pier that works well with the natural environment including weathering and growth of barnacles.
- Lighting (night) could be added to any of the concepts.
- a. Contemporary Design Concept
 - Timely, modern design with a quiet statement
 - The railing system provides a big impact visually.
 - Installation of a panel between the railings offers additional opportunities for aesthetic treatments.
 - As discussed previously, access to the south “overlook” would be restricted, possibly with a stainless steel mesh that still allows the area to appear open.
 - Colors are muted white.
 - The shade structure for the overlooks is translucent material, which is understated, quiet and represents a simple solution.
- b. Nautical Design Concept
 - Sail forms, more dynamic, visual movement, more vertical components
 - Color is “more” white than Contemporary design.
 - Sail Canopies are more dynamic, with staggered heights. They are tensile structures rated for wind, a tried and true system.
 - Color lighting could be added easily.
- c. Greek Modern Design Concept
 - Very strong horizontal planes
 - Bold geometry and visual mass.
 - Blue pane on overlook appears to “hover”.
 - One blue or a combination of blues could be applied.
- e. Motion Design Concept
 - Opportunity to control opacity and backlight at night.
 - Pillars of light.
 - Wind turbines will have ability to generate a small amount of electricity, but not enough to run the bridge.
 - Highlights the theme of sustainability
 - Canopy design accentuates the sense of motion.
 - Vertical elements create a relationship to the environment.

E. Discussion about Concept Designs

Comments on Greek Concept

- Concern that perhaps bright white is not representative of Greek design. There are places in Greece where the paint is more “white-yellow” to cut glare on the eyes.
- The area in the vicinity of the bridge was settled prior to the Greek settlement in Tarpon Springs. This design seems (historically) out of place in this location.
- Use of arches was suggested based on historic pictures of the area where arches were incorporated. The arch could reflect the arc of the bascule span.
- Guide wires could be added to reflect a more nautical theme.

Comments on Motion Design Concept

- Moving parts would discourage osprey nesting.
- Moving parts can be an additional maintenance problem.

- Concerns were raised that moving parts may not hold up well in an aggressive marine environment.
- The tower could be tapered to avoid the look of a smokestack.
- The tower could be designed to be more “nautical” like a sailboat mast.

General Comments

- If lit, lighting needs to be subtle, soft, glowing to prevent light pollution.
- Is it possible to allow the bottom level of north side be “open” so that you could see the machinery even though that area is closed to pedestrians?
- Care should be taken to preserve openness when designing a way for the control area to be secure.

F. Bradley Touchstone presented opportunities for “Interpretive Elements”

- The existing historic plaque is required by the MOA to be preserved and placed in an area that can be viewed by pedestrians.
- Opportunities to reuse salvaged parts were discussed.
 - Gears from the machinery could be incorporated into the railing.
 - The “track and tread” portion of the movable bridge could possibly be removed and installed on the bottom level of the overlook, or it could be placed on a cantilevered platform off of the outlook.
- Pinellas County has an historic marker program. This could be discussed with the Historic Preservation Board.

G. Miscellaneous Comments/Issues

Jim Phillips discussed the safety issue of clearing pedestrians from the overlook prior to opening the bridge.

County records show that the bridge opened 66 times in 2016. This was three times more than the number of openings/year between 2012-2014 when the PD&E study was conducted.

A “rub rail” will be installed on the bridge pier in lieu of a fender system to protect boats from bumping up against the concrete pier. (A fender system is self-supported. The rub-rail is not, but will be attached to the pier.)

H. Group Exercise

The concept drawings were displayed on large (7 ft x 3 foot) banners and placed outside on the Yacht Club’s patio. Aesthetic Committee members were each given five yellow “dot” stickers. Members were asked to place the dots on the elements that they liked best and would like see incorporated into the final aesthetic concept. The banners with the dots were photographed for the record.

There was a high level of excitement about the project and the opportunities that exist to create a meaningful project for this community. The following is a summary of the preferences expressed during the Group Exercise:

1. There is a strong desire to maintain the open railings system in lieu of concrete barriers.
2. There is a preference to maintain the vertical element on the Motion concept but marry it to the Nautical theme. Recommendations were given to convert the vertical element into a mast-like motif. That Nautical theme can influence the design of the canopy.
3. The members of the committee preferred to keep the interpretive element on the bridge if possible.
4. The main interpretive piece should be the track and tread assembly.
5. Secondary level interpretive elements can include the gears integrated into the railing or protective barrier at the overlook.
6. It was understood that the lower lever of the bascule pier will not be accessible to the general public (maintenance staff only.)

7. Arched forms will be explored for the pier caps.
8. A alternative color palette will be presented that incorporates softer yellow tones.
9. Soft lighting is appropriate in this environment.