

MassDOT Cape Cod Canal Transportation Study

Cape Cod Canal Transportation Study

RE: First Working Group Meeting

Date and Start Time: October 29, 2014, 4pm-5:30pm

Location: Upper Cape Cod Technical School, Bourne

Attendees: [Sign-in names attached]

Meeting Notes:

An introduction of the study team, including Ed Hollingshead and Bill Reed of FST and Ken Buckland of The Cecil Group, was made by the MassDOT Project Manager, Ethan Britland.

The attendees then introduced themselves.

Mr. Britland provided an overview of the study with a slide show (attached) noting the age of the canal bridges, and probable decades of future delays from increasing maintenance requirements as the impetus for the study. The study is in its earliest stages and will lead to an environmental impact analysis.

A parallel effort is the public-private-partnership option; also known as P3. The concepts shown in the P3 materials published in area newspapers were not definitive, only illustrative for that process.

He noted that the bridges and much of the canalside property are under federal ownership and managed by the Army Corps of Engineers. The study area boundaries are approximately 1 mile on either side of the canal.

The study involves five steps during which the purpose of the Working Group will be to provide input at intervals. The Working Group was told they are a key component of the study process both for the members providing information to MassDOT and for the members to disseminate accurate information to their constituents. Ideas for additions to the list of Working Group members will be accepted.

The next step in the public outreach process is a public meeting. The next Working Group meeting is scheduled for early 2015.

Communications will come in multiple forms with meetings, website and emails. The website is to be set up. Govdelivery.com will be used as the email sender.

Mr. Britland then opened the floor to questions from the attendees:

Rep. Randy Hunt noted that if the state owned the bridges, it should be studying the bridges. But asked if the state does nothing, is it the federal government's responsibility for maintaining the crossings?

Michael Walsh of the Army Corps of Engineers replied that they are studying the record to determine what are the responsibilities of the Army Corps of Engineers towards the bridges, and will be looking at federal funding for action on the bridges.

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Rep. Randy Hunt noted that the Army Corps of Engineers currently owns and maintains the bridges, and asked how they evaluate the cost benefit of maintenance versus replacement. He then asked how long the bridges will last.

Mr. Walsh replied that they do not know and a determination requires a detailed analysis.

Rep. Hunt stated that one alternative is that the state does nothing about the bridges and acts instead on other and smaller projects.

Mr. Britland replied that the “No Build” analysis would cover that alternative.

Rep. Tim Madden asked what the state’s responsibility is for replacement versus an additional crossing, adding that the state should not take on the responsibility of the Army Corps of Engineers. He asked for an alternative to consider twinning the Bourne Bridge. He noted that state policy is needed on the bridges management.

Mr. Britland replied that was a good suggestion.

Linda Zuerno of Bourne asked why look at a new crossing location, and that the study should focus on replacing the existing bridges in the same general locations.

Ed DeWitt of the Association for the Preservation of Cape Cod provided his initial findings that the historic documentation noted that all highway crossings of the canal must be toll free, with revenues coming from the canal and rail transit, and that the original 1899 canal project was a public-private-partnership. He stated that the state should be researching the documentation.

Tom Guerino of Bourne said that assuming there is a 3rd bridge, then the impact area should expand and at least extend up to Glen Charlie Road. Also that the capacity of the 2-lanes on Route 6 must be considered. He said the study needs to recognize the impact on the Belmont Circle project and the economic vitality the project will provide, which could be negatively impacted with a third bridge. He also stated that the closure of Exit 1 is unacceptable.

Ethan Britland noted that short and long term impacts and economic development impacts will be part of the analyses.

A public attendee thought that the EIS for the Route 25 extension resulted in clarification of the relationship between the State and Army Corps, and thought the southside connector would be beneficial.

Glenn Cannon of the Cape Cod Commission said the Working Group could look at all options and not just what was included in the P3 document. He added that the Cape Cod Commission’s travel demand model will go beyond the study area boundaries shown.

Mr. Britland agreed that the options are open and the traffic impact model is a larger area than the study boundaries.

Ryan Collins representing My Fishing Cape Cod said that the news media has presented a plan that means increased capacity, which in turn means urbanization. He then presented a petition against a third canal bridge.

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Michael Sharff of Peter Pan Bus stated that he would like to increase capacity for transit, including buses and trains. The company has 32 to 40 bus crossings a day and 50-60 during the summer season and thinks the state should consider an HOV lane.

Marie Oliva of the Canal Chamber noted that it can take 45 minutes to cross the bridges which causes air pollution and that the purpose of the project is not for more people to come to the Cape but for greater public safety.

An attendee noted that the study is planned with an aggressive schedule and past projects suggest taking more time provides a better outcome.

Mr. Britland praised the attendees for the level of interest and participation, and the range of comments and that this was the reason for bringing this group together. He then closed the meeting.

Notes compiled by K. Buckland, 11/5/14

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*** The following include individuals affiliated with a Working Group member**

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Project Team present	Affiliation
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Ken Buckland	The Cecil Group, Inc.
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