



**COUNTY OF ESSEX / COUNTY OF HUDSON**  
**Local Concept Development Study for Bridge Street Bridge**  
**over the Passaic River**  
**City of Newark and Town of Harrison, NJ**



**COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS MEETING NO. 1**  
**MEETING REPORT**

DATE: Monday, September 19, 2016  
 TIME: 3:15 – 5:15 p.m.  
 LOCATION: Harrison High School Cafeteria,  
 401 Kingsland Avenue, Harrison NJ

**ATTENDEES:**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Thomas J.	Alrutz	Newark Public Library, Newark Preservation & Landmarks Committee
Mark G.	Barksdale, PP, AIA, JD	City of Newark Office of Planning
Michael	Betesh	The Betesh Group
James	Doran, PhD.	Harrison Public Schools
Nadege	Duvernay	Apostle's House
Juan	Feijoo	City of Newark
Ellie	Ferrer	EZ Ride
James A.	Fife	Town of Harrison
Jane	Hall	Apostles' House
Matthew	Hersh	Resident
Leigh Ann	Kimber	Rutgers University Newark
Ramez	Maxemous	Trimax Pharmacy
Joseph	McQueen	PSE&G
Jeffrey	Peck	MONOC Ambulance
Rocco	Russomanno	Town of Harrison, Engineering
Phillip	Scott, P.E.	City of Newark, Engineering
John	Sheridan	Resident
Chad	Spies	NJ Performing Arts Center
Jeff	Strauss	
Joan	Wynn	The Betesh Group
Luke	Young	Speedway LLC Gas Station



## ATTENDEES (continued):

First Name	Last Name	Representing
		<b>Project Team</b>
Lauren	Adams	Stokes Creative Group, Inc.
Martine	Culbertson	M. A. Culbertson, LLC
Joseph	Glembocki	County of Hudson Engineering
Sarbjit	Kahlon	NJTPA
Paul	McEachen	Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc. / RGA, Inc.
Rob	Piel	Amy S. Greene Environmental
Bruce	Riegel	Hardesty & Hanover, LLC
Luis E.	Rodriguez	County of Essex, Engineering
Glen	Schetelich, P.E.	Hardesty & Hanover, LLC
Khalid	Shaikh	NJDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian
Amy	Sokalski, P.E.	McCormick Taylor, Inc.
Kelly	Stokes	Stokes Creative Group, Inc.

## PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the project team, present the project status and schedule, provide information on existing conditions and environmental screening, share the Community Input Survey Summary, and to obtain input on the community interests associated with the Bridge Street Bridge over the Passaic River.

## MEETING SUMMARY

### 1. Project Overview & Background

- (a) After introductions from the Project Team and Attendees, Martine Culbertson, Community Involvement Facilitator, reviewed the Agenda and Project Portfolio handouts.
- (b) Luis E. Rodriguez, Essex County Project Manager, noted the need to study the Bridge Street Bridge is because of the age of the bridge and the Counties cannot afford the continuing repair costs for keeping the bridge in service. Essex County and Hudson County have responsibility for the bridge and share the expenses alternating every two years.
- (c) Joseph Glembocki, Hudson County Project Manager, explained that Hudson County also supports the need to study the bridge due to structural deficiencies that indicate either a major rehabilitation or replacement may be needed. The bridge is over 100 years old and many of the mechanical parts are no longer manufactured, making it even more expensive to continue to repair. The purpose of this bridge study is to identify how to rehabilitate or replace the existing bridge. The costs are too great for either Essex County or Hudson County so it requires Federal funding. This Local Concept Development Study is the first step to the bridge improvements.
- (d) Essex County filed the application with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) who is overseeing this phase of the project. The bridge is under both Hudson County and Essex County jurisdiction. It's important getting input from the stakeholders to decide what



improvements are needed for the Bridge Street Bridge. Once an alternative is decided, then NJDOT Local Aid will administer the project for the design and construction phases with the Counties utilizing Federal funding.

## 2. Concept Development Process

Bruce Riegel, Hardesty& Hanover Project Manager, provided information on the LCD process using a power point presentation with the following information noted:

- (a) Currently, the project is in the Local Concept Development (LCD) phase, shown in blue on the Local Project Delivery Process table, which is in the Project Portfolio given to each attendee.
- (b) The LCD Flow Chart shows the steps to be completed including data collection, establishing a Purpose and Need Statement, developing conceptual alternatives and through a matrix analysis recommend a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) to move forward to the design phase.
- (c) Working as a team in collaboration with the Agencies, Essex County, Hudson County, the Town of Harrison and the City of Newark, the bridge improvement option with the most benefits and least impacts w be deemed as the preliminary preferred alternative (PPA).
- (d) The LCD study will take an estimated 18 to 24 months to complete. The schedule is listed on the backside of the Project Information handout in the Project Portfolio. With each phase requiring a similar estimated timeframe, the bridge improvements from concept development to the start of construction involves an estimated 6 to 8 years or at best 5-7 years. The Concept Development Phase will determine what is needed for the improvements and then with future funding the design and construction would follow. Resolutions of support for the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) will be asked of both municipalities and the Counties.

## 3. Bridge Street Bridge – Data Collection, Bridge and Traffic Analysis

Bruce Riegel presented information on the project status, preliminary bridge condition and information to be collected using the power point presentation (a copy of the presentation will be posted to the project web site).

- (a) The project work began in June of 2016 to collect engineering data. Field survey and environmental screening work has been completed.
- (b) The team has reviewed existing bridge inspection reports and conducted a cursory visual inspection, and has begun identifying any existing substandard design elements within the project area and gathering crash data over the past three (3) months. New traffic counts will be collected in September while schools are in session and on regular workdays to reflect current traffic volumes.
- (c) This Bridge Street Bridge Study includes a Navigational Study of the Passaic River, which was initiated by the Clay Street Bridge LCD Study. The results of the Navigational Study will be presented to the Federal Highway Administration and the U.S. Coast Guard and will identify commercial and/or recreational users of the river to determine current and future navigation activity of the Passaic River. The EPA's Lower Passaic River Restoration Project is included as part of the navigation study to determine what vessels are needed for the cleanup work. The Navigation Study has revealed that City of Newark fireboats require 18' vertical clearance at mean High Water (MHW) to access under the bridge. If the bridge were to be replaced, the



height over the river could impact the connection to the approach roadway intersections on each side of the bridge. The U.S. Coast Guard has jurisdiction over the navigable waters of the Passaic River, so the project team is awaiting the USCG's response to the Navigation Impact Report to see what navigational clearances are required for any bridge replacement alternative (fixed span or movable bridges).

- (d) Input is needed from community stakeholders and the public in developing the Project Purpose and Need; which is the first major milestone. Martine Culbertson, as the Community Involvement Facilitator will provide more information on a community input survey, upcoming public meetings and the project website effort. Community input is a part of the Environmental Process. Pamela Garrett from NJDOT Bureau of Environmental Program Resources (BEPR) is the Project Manager for this effort providing oversight of the environmental documentation and approvals needed for the LCD Study.

#### 4. Environmental Process

Bruce Riegel explained the environmental process, which must be followed for funding transportation improvements using Federal dollars.

- (a) The NJTPA is administering the project, however FHWA provides the funding. Any transportation project receiving Federal funding must follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.
- (b) The Bridge Street Bridge Local Concept Development Study must identify any environmental concerns and conduct environmental screening. When analyzing alternatives, one looks to avoid or minimize environmental impacts and if that's not possible then to provide mitigation. The environmental resources include air, noise, hazardous or contaminated sites, parks, wetlands, water resources, social and economic impacts, and cultural resources such as historic structures and facilities.
- (c) The NJDOT BEPR representatives for this project, as on the Project Team List in the Project Portfolio, are Pamela Garrett and Marie Limage. They will be working with H&H, Amy Greene Environmental Consultants, and Richard Grubb & Associates in providing environmental support staff to the NJTPA and the Counties for the environmental screening and cultural resources screening.
- (d) The agencies look carefully at comments from the public and as such, community involvement is an important part of environmental process and for the project to move forward with consensus and environmental compliance. The results of the environmental screening, which is in the project schedule, will be presented at the public meetings.

#### 5. Environmental Screening

Robert Piel, of Amy Greene Environmental Consultants, conducted the environmental screening and presented the findings to date:

- Rob noted that there are no wetlands, however the entire area is within a 100-year floodplain.
- There is also a regulated riparian zone adjacent to the Passaic River.
- In addition, the project area is mapped as a possible urban nesting habitat for the state endangered species, Peregrine Falcon. Further investigation will be needed prior to construction



to determine if the species is nesting in the area. The project area is also foraging habitat for the Peregrine Falcon. Unless the Peregrine Falcon is nesting on the bridge (which is not likely) the only constraints anticipated are timing restrictions during construction.

- There are some contaminated sites (hazardous waste sites) within the project area originating from the long-term use of the area for industrial manufacturing. There are also records of spills in the project area and of existing and abandoned underground storage tanks. Based on the Environmental Data Resources report the contaminated areas have been cleaned up, removed or capped.
- The Passaic River itself is mapped as a contaminant site, possibly with dioxin, and if disturbance of the bottom sediments is proposed, further testing and evaluation of the sediments will be necessary.
- Under the Green Acres Program, there is a small parcel that appears to be part of a parking lot on the City of Newark side within the project study area.
- As a bridge project, there will be permits required by the Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Coast Guard and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for any improvements to the Bridge Street Bridge. Rob Piel will assist the project team with environmental permits related to each alternative developed.

## 6. Cultural Resources

Paul McEachen, of RBA, Inc. (formerly Richard Grubb Associates), provided information on the cultural resources screening and presented the findings to date. There are some historic sites within the project study area, which the team is investigating. The bridge itself is historic so there will be on-going coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). For each cultural resource, they will identify, research, do tests and archeology to assess any impacts. A draft cultural report indicating the findings will be created.

## 7. Project Schedule

Bruce provided the project schedule as listed in the power point presentation and as referred to on the Project Information Handout on the backside is the project schedule with milestones and the community involvement steps to be met.

- (a) The Concept Development Study Phase is estimated to be completed in 18 to 24 months (Winter 2018).
- (b) The project study does have a project website for sharing of information on the bridge study, which will become active after this stakeholders meeting and before the public meetings in October. The web site will include information similar to the project information sheet, meeting announcements and reports, photos, contact information, and opportunity to submit comments and questions. The site can be viewed in Spanish as well as other languages by clicking on the select language box on the home page upper right.

## 8. Community Involvement – Input and Discussion



Martine Culbertson, Community Involvement Facilitator, reviewed the information in the Project Portfolio, distributed to attendees. She explained the Draft List of Stakeholders as part of the community outreach process.

- (a) This Community Stakeholders List is a draft because the team is looking for input from the communities to identify any entities and organizations or individuals interested in the project and willing to participate at two community stakeholders meetings and two public meetings over the next 12 to 18 months.
- (b) The results of the Community Input Survey were distributed in a Survey Summary Report in the Project Portfolios. The purpose of the survey is to help identify those interested in the Bridge Street Bridge Study and becoming a member of the Stakeholders Group. The input received will assist the project team in developing the Project Purpose and Need Statement.
- (c) The meeting was opened for questions and comments to identify the issues and interests in the study area of the Bridge Street Bridge. These comments will also contribute to developing the project purpose and needs statement. The following items were noted:

- *Question #1:* Is there public land for the riverfront walkway area?

*Response:* The project team will coordinate with the City of Newark's riverfront development plan, which is a separate project. The Bridge Street Bridge Study will look to maintain safe access and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists with the project study area. This is a bridge improvement study funded with Federal dollars, which will look to make improvements to the approach roadways for safety and access to and from the bridge. It is not possible to extend the project study limits beyond what is acceptable under the Federal requirements.

*Additional Comment:* The project team has not seen specific riverfront plans to identify what may be private or public land between the Bridge Street Bridge and the Clay Street Bridge since some of the area lies beyond the 250' setback of either bridge regarding either side of the river.

- *Question #2:* What if some of the land is NJDOT right-of-way?

*Response:* The Bridge Street Bridge is under County jurisdiction and as a local project; the Project Team has an NJDOT Local Aid Project Manager who would coordinate with NJDOT to communicate the status of other projects or right-of-way with State jurisdiction.

*Additional Comment:* The project team looks forward to seeing the City's riverfront plans to understand what goals and objectives the Bridge Street Bridge Study needs to include concerning the future plans. Because this LCDS Study involves multiple government jurisdictions, it may be able to assist in the coordination and communication with both efforts to ensure this Study includes improvements that will allow for connectivity.

- *Question #3:* What about the Jackson Street Bridge?

*Response:* The Jackson Street Bridge is not currently under study since it's in fair condition as compared to Clay Street Bridge and Bridge Street Bridge. The Counties have submitted applications to move forward with bridge studies based upon the condition of the existing bridge structure. All bridges are inspected every two years by the NJDOT and a rating is assessed. These bridges are all safe to use. Repairs and maintenance are on going and will continue to be.

- *Question #4:* Is there any maintenance going on now?



*Response:* Essex County just completed a repairs and maintenance contract for the Bridge Street Bridge.

### **Community Input / Comments**

- Walkway on Harrison side also
- Riverfront development – need plans and coordination
- Walkways & connectivity future planning
- Striping / lane markers
- Consideration for barriers on the bridge
- Jackson Street Bridge status and traffic flow impact if Bridge Street is closed
- PSEG
  - increased station activity Clay Street Bridge 2 years
  - deliveries to coordinate: 2 years / 5 years estimation
- Traffic detour route needs to be examined
- Prudential Center and Red Bull Arena events – impact to traffic flow
- Methods of snow removal
- Safety for pedestrians and bicyclist
- Lighting and cameras

### **9. Closing Comments – Feedback**

In summarizing the community input and meeting discussions, following items were noted in closing comments – feedback.

### **Next steps for Community Outreach**

- PIC meeting Tuesday, October 18th
- PIC meeting with two sessions - afternoon in Harrison, evening in Newark
- PIC meeting notice via email blast and postal mailing
- Web site: [www.bridgestreetbridge.com](http://www.bridgestreetbridge.com) (listed on Project Information Handout)
- Flyers for announcing the web site
- Twitter also active
- Next Community Stakeholders Meeting – to be held late afternoon, High School Library



## **Feedback / Action Items**

- Informative + + +
- Information similar to Clay Street Bridge
- Thank you – look forward to next meeting
- Glad to see coordination - riverfront big impact
- 2 gas stations - fuel trucks access challenging now
- Future development of riverfront
- Glad I came + + + +
- Traffic's impact on:
  - local streets
  - how bridge improvements may increase traffic
- Future recreational and development on the river
  - build right here consideration for what is upstream
- Students, Rutgers, NJIT - reach out to get involved in the Study
- Licence plate reading camera's
  - web cam
  - lighting
- Safety, emergency access very important
- Questions and answers – post to web site under FAQ
- Great, communication and Project Team
- Other possible stakeholders:
  - Newark Downtown District Quarterly
  - other communities
  - Rutgers University police -> web blast & flyer to students & faculty
- Public Land Trust - FBI building limited walkway – looking to Clay Street Bridge
- ID-cars for police and traffic
- Identify staging sites to be used during construction – very limited space

## 10. Closing Comments – Next Steps





In summary, Bruce Riegel reviewed the next steps, which is for the project team to gather additional traffic and engineering data, update mapping, review utilities, and hold the Public Information Center (PIC) meetings to obtain input from the general public that will help to develop the draft purpose and need statement; after which the team will then develop conceptual alternatives with the input to present at the next set of meetings as listed on Project Information Handout.

In closing, Joe Glembocki, Hudson County Project Manager, thanked the Town of Harrison for hosting the community stakeholders meeting and the attendees for their comments. He noted the importance of community input as valuable in helping to find the right solution for the Bridge Street Bridge.

Sarbjit Kahlon, NJTPA Project Manager, thanked the school for use of their facility and all attendees for their time and input. Any questions, please contact Luis Rodriguez, Essex County Project Manager, or Joe Glembocki, Hudson County Project Manager, or Bruce Riegel, the H&H Project Manager. A meeting summary report will be provided and distributed by the Project Team.

Martine Culbertson will inform attendees and community stakeholders when the web site is available online and the presentation is posted to the website. Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

## **KEY ACTION ITEMS**

1. H&H will continue bridge, roadway and traffic analysis in coordination with Town of Harrison, Hudson County and with City of Newark, Essex County.
2. Attendees and Community Stakeholders to review Draft Community Stakeholders List and Project Portfolio Handouts; complete the Community Input Survey if they wish to provide any comments and updated contact information.
3. Martine Culbertson will provide meeting summary, update Stakeholders List, distribute Survey Summary Update, provide email notice when web site is active, and provide notice via email and mailing for the Public Information Center (PIC) Meeting sessions to be scheduled in October.

## **NEXT MEETING**

### Public Information Center (PIC) Meetings

Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2016  
Time: 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. (brief presentation at 4:00 p.m.)  
Place: Harrison Public High School, Library  
401 Kingsland Avenue, Harrison, NJ

Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2016  
Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. (brief presentation at 7:30 p.m.)  
Place: City of Newark, Leroy Smith Public Safety Building, 14th Floor Conference Room  
Essex County Government Complex, 60 Nelson Place, Newark, NJ  
*(Corner of Howard St. & 13th Avenue) Free parking lot after 5pm: enter on West Market St.*



**COUNTY OF ESSEX / COUNTY OF HUDSON**  
**Local Concept Development Study for Bridge Street Bridge**  
**over the Passaic River**  
**City of Newark and Town of Harrison, NJ**



**Community Stakeholders Meeting No. 1**

**Monday, September 19, 2016**

***Harrison High School, Cafeteria***  
***401 Kingsland Avenue, Harrison, NJ, 3:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.***

**AGENDA**

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the project team, present the project status and schedule, provide information on existing conditions and environmental screening, share the Community Input Survey Summary, and to obtain input on the community interests associated with the Bridge Street Bridge over the Passaic River.

**I. *WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION***

- Project Overview & Background
- Local Concept Development (LCD) Process

**II. *ESSEX COUNTY / HUDSON COUNTY BRIDGE STREET BRIDGE OVER THE PASSAIC RIVER***

- Project Status and Schedule
- Data Collection, Bridge and Traffic Analysis
- Environmental Process - Screening
- Community Involvement - Survey Summary

**III. *DISCUSSION AND NEXT STEPS***

- Community Input - Purpose and Need
- Action Items – Public Information Center Meetings
- Closing Comments

