



Local Concept Development Study for Hudson County Meadowlands Parkway Bridge Town of Secaucus, Hudson County



PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER No. 1 – SUMMARY REPORT

DATE : July 22, 2020
TIME: 5:00 p.m – 7:00 p.m (formal presentation at 5:10 p.m.)
LOCATION: Online GoToMeeting, open format
ATTENDEES: NJTPA, Hudson County, NJDOT, GPI, Stokes representatives and members of the public

Thomas Malavasi	Hudson County Engineer
Jose Sieira	Hudson County Engineering Department
Sean Keating	Hudson County Engineering Department
Sascha Frimpong	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)
Sarbjit Kahlon	NJTPA
Patricia Newton	NJTPA
Pamela Garrett	NJDOT– Bureau of Environmental Resource Programs
Bernie Boerchers	Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI)
Julia Steponanko	GPI
William Farrow	GPI
Nicole Pace-Addeo	Stokes Creative Group, Inc. (Stokes)

22 Public Attendees

PURPOSE: Solicit comments and/or concerns from the public on the existing conditions in support of the Purpose and Need.

MEETING SUMMARY: After a brief summary of the meeting format by Ms. Pace-Addeo, Mr. Boerchers then presented via PowerPoint the Project Team, project delivery process, existing conditions, crash and traffic data and analyses, stakeholder survey results, work completed to date and next steps. The following summarizes the key points of discussion (grouped by topic):

Bridge

1. It was inquired what would happen if the bridge experiences additional deterioration or a severe failure before construction. The Project Team stated that the structure is inspected every two (2) years, so any additional deterioration will be noted and corrected as needed until construction. The Project Team added that priority repairs, including column supports under numerous stringers and replacement of several end diaphragms, were completed in 2018.
2. It was inquired whether the off-road pedestrian walkway on the river side of the bridge, that originally provided access to the NJ Transit platform, could be reconstructed (it was removed after the station stop was eliminated). It was added that pedestrians using the off-road walkway could then cross Meadowlands Parkway at Seaview Drive. The Project Team noted that this option could be considered as part of the alternatives analysis.
3. It was noted that the NJ Sports and Exposition Authority (NJSEA, formerly the Meadowlands Commission) is generally involved with construction in municipalities in its jurisdiction. The Project Team noted that NJSEA will be a stakeholder, but it was not known whether they need to review contract documents for construction. *Subsequent to the meeting, a review of NJSEA*

courtesy copy of the Hackensack Meadowlands District Regulations, Section 19:4-3.2, Exemptions, item (a)1. indicates that "maintenance, repair or replacement work within municipal, county and State ROWs or on railroad tracks, signals, bridges, and similar facilities and equipment located in a railroad ROW" are exempt from these regulations.

4. It was inquired if there was any opposition to replacing the bridge. The Project Team stated that no opposition was received to date.

Roadway

5. It was inquired if any consideration will be given for making it possible to enter and exit Harmon Cove Towers (HCT) from both directions along Meadowlands Parkway, including entry and exit points directly onto the bridge from the HCT upper platform. Currently, traveling to and from HCT and Secaucus Junction is circuitous for residents. The Project Team replied that HCT access changes will be considered as part of the alternatives analysis.
6. It was stated that numerous motorists heading northbound on Meadowlands Parkway currently make an illegal left turn at American Way onto Meadowlands Parkway southbound to access HCT which is a safety concern.
7. It was inquired if this project addresses signage issues on the Meadowlands Parkway to Secaucus Road loop under the bridge. The Project Team stated that changes to traffic patterns, if any, will include modifications to signage on all approach roadways. However, it was noted that any existing signage concerns may best be addressed by the Town of Secaucus.
8. It was stated that there are "breaks in the drain line" in the project area which create ponding and icing over the winter. The latter results in difficulty traversing the bridge. It was noted that flooding occurs in the area. The constituent inquired if this issue will be addressed by this project. The Project Team indicated that while drainage may be upgraded in the proposed conditions that the existing concern seems to be a maintenance issue that is best addressed by the Town of Secaucus.

Pedestrian/Bicyclist

9. Mr. Boerchers asked the attendees if there was a side of the bridge that pedestrians and bicyclists use more often. One attendee stated the side closer to the river is used more, while another attendee stated whichever side faces traffic depending on which direction they are walking. The Project Team noted that all options for sidewalks and bike lanes, one or both sides of the bridge, would be considered as part of the alternatives analysis.
10. It was inquired if there will be significant noise from construction specifically in the early morning, late night, or weekends. The Project Team noted that noise minimization would be included in the contract documents with consideration given to local noise ordinances, and that there will be future outreach at which this issue could be further addressed.
11. It was stated that sidewalk is present along Meadowlands Parkway southbound, north of HCT and south of Seaview Drive. No sidewalk exists along Meadowlands Parkway northbound between Seaview Drive and American Way.
12. An attendee stated that it is dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists to use the bridge.

Public Transportation / NJ Transit

13. It was stated that HCT and the Townhomes previously had direct access to the trains via the removed pedestrian bridge and platform. However, now there is only a bus connection to Frank R. Lautenberg Secaucus Junction Station. Buses cannot get to HCT from Meadowlands Parkway northbound. The nearest bus stop along Meadowlands Parkway northbound is at American Way. *Note, there is no crosswalk across the northbound approach of Meadowlands*

Parkway at American Way to access the bus stop and the signal at Meadowlands Parkway and American Way does not have full pedestrian accommodations. There is also a signed bus stop southbound.

General/Other

14. It was inquired as to when construction is expected to commence, how long it will take, and the anticipated measures to ensure that traffic can continue during construction. The Project Team replied that construction would start in approximately five (5) years and would last about two (2) construction seasons. It was stated that the Local Capital Project Delivery Program Process, as outlined during this meeting, is in the first of four phases, hence the timeline. The Project Team also noted that a reduction in the number of lanes, one way and full closures with detours along with maintaining all lanes with lane width reductions will be considered as part of the alternatives analysis. It is anticipated that access to HCT will be maintained at all times during construction.
15. It was inquired as to where most of the submitted surveys came from. The Project Team noted that most of the 37 responses were submitted by HCT residents. An attendee noted that HCT and the Harmon Cove Townhouses have approximately 1,200 and 1,400 residents, respectively and recommended an interview to publish in the Secaucus Spectator, which reaches approximately 75% of the HCT and Townhome residents, to get additional comments.
16. It was recommended that the NJSEA and Hackensack Riverkeeper, Inc. be included as stakeholders.
17. It was inquired whether link files (documents/audio) of the meeting downloadable for sharing will be made available to the public. The Project Team noted that while this meeting is recorded and will be available via the website that only the presentation slides will be downloadable.

This memorandum of record is believed to be an accurate record of the discussions at this meeting.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER No. 1

Comments Received through September 8, 2020:

Received: 2020-08-04 15:22:31

Subject: Meadowlands Bridge

Message: A good idea to keep in mind is to give HCT residents a lane of their own to enter via Meadowlands Bridge and exit via Meadowlands Bridge. Also, an elevated structure from Meadowlands Parkway directly to F L Train Station.

A bike path/ walking path would also enhance living in Secaucus.

Response: We appreciate your input and will consider your suggestions in enhancing the accessibility to various modes of transportation to Harmon Cove Towers. Thank you.

Received: 2020-06-15 11:15:32

Subject: Harmon Cove Tower

Message: Thank you for addressing my questions live during last week's web cast. I commute to Harmon Cove Towers from NJ TPK exit 15X via Seaview Dr.

My question was will there be a restriction to entry into Harmon Cove Towers for northbound Meadowlands Pkwy drivers. Presently I turn left into the upper parking level off of Meadowlands Pkwy. There are no traffic controls when making this turn. Due to curve in the road and the blind spot from the location at the crest of the bridge, this is not an ideal setting. Many HCT residents enter in this manner. The safer option, arriving via southbound Meadowlands Pkwy via American Way, is quite inconvenient. I envision a barrier on Meadowlands Pkwy bridge to restrict left turns into HCT. I hope the project will create a left turn cut out for drivers to wait for an opening in southbound traffic.

Your traffic study did not reveal any vehicular crashes at this location.

I understand the project will reroute my trip to County Rd, Secaucus Rd, southbound Meadowlands Pkwy via American Way. I hope the present route into HCT from Seaview Dr is not permanent loss.

Thank You.

Response: Thank you for your participation in the study. We appreciate your feedback and comments regarding access and safety concerns for residents of Harmon Cove Towers. Thank you for your thorough feedback.