



COUNTY OF MORRIS
Local Concept Development Study for
Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge over the Whippany River
Town of Morristown, New Jersey



COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER MEETING NO. 1
MEETING REPORT

DATE: Wednesday, January 23, 2019
 TIME: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
 LOCATION: Mahalia Jackson Fellowship Hall, Calvary Baptist Church
 10 Martin Luther King Avenue, Morristown, NJ

ATTENDEES:

First Name	Last Name	Representing
Attendees		
Phil	Abramson	Morristown Town Planner
Evelyn	Aiken	Resident
Carl	Badenhausen	Evergreen Cemetery
Jillian C.	Barrick	Morristown Town Administrator
Gordon	Dahl	Market Street Mission
John	Glass	Morristown Auto Body
Geraldine	Harris	Resident
Charlie	Hu	Blue Eagle Realty LLC
Candace	Kelley	Resident
George	Kelley	Resident
Margaret	Kelley	Resident
Palisa	Kelley	Resident
Project Team		
Val	Aylesworth	M.A. Culbertson, LLC
Martine	Culbertson	M.A. Culbertson, LLC
Danielle	Ferland	Morris County Project Manager
Sarbjit	Kahlon	NJTPA
Roslyn	Khurdan, P.E.	Asst. County Engineer
Joseph	Romano, P.E.	Michael Baker International
Marty	Wade, P.E.	Michael Baker International

PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the project team, present the project status and schedule, and to obtain input on the community interests associated with the Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge over the Whippany River (Agenda attached).

MEETING SUMMARY

1. Project Overview & Background

Martine Culbertson, Community Involvement Facilitator, welcomed everyone on behalf of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the County of Morris. After introductions from the Project Team and Attendees, Martine Culbertson reviewed the Agenda and Project Portfolio handouts.

- (a) Roslyn Khurdan, Morris County Assistant Engineer, thanked attendees for their participation and opportunity to share project information. Danielle explained that the County is looking to improve the Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge and received Federal funding through the NJTPA to study the bridge. The engineering firm awarded the Local Concept Development (LCD) Study is Michael Baker International.





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- (b) The bridge has reached its serviceable life and the County applied for Federal funding through the NJTPA. In order to continue to meet community needs, regular maintenance and repairs are costly. The purpose of this study is to identify how to rehabilitate or replace the existing bridge. The expensive is too great for Morris County, so the County applied for Federal funding. This Local Concept Development Study is the first step to bridge improvements.

2. Concept Development Process

Marty Wade, Baker Deputy Project Manager, provided information on the Local Project Delivery process using presentation slides with a table of the Local Capital Delivery Process, which is in each Project Portfolio distributed to attendees (*presentation to be posted to the project website after the public meeting*).

- (a) Currently, the project is in the Local Concept Development (LCD) phase, shown in blue on the Local Project Delivery Process handout. The table shows all the phases and list of the elements of each phase.
- (b) The Local Concept Development (LCD) phase has 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, Morris County, and the community of Morristown, the bridge improvement conceptual alternative option with the most benefit and which minimizes impacts will be recommended as the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA).
- (d) This LCD study will take an estimated 18 to 24 months to complete. The LCD schedule is listed on the back side of the Project Information handout in the Project Portfolio. With each phase of the process requiring a similar estimated timeframe of 18-24 months, the bridge improvements from conceptual development to the start of construction involves an estimated 6 to 8 years. However, it is the current Concept Development Phase that will determine what is needed for the improvements and then with future funding, the design and construction phases would follow. Resolutions of support for the PPA will be asked of the Town of Morristown and the Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

3. Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge – Data Collection, Bridge and Traffic Analysis

Marty Wade continued presenting information on the project information to be collected in referring to PowerPoint presentation slides.

- (a) The project work began by collecting engineering data. Field survey and environmental screenings work will be done and more data collection will occur over the next few months. Notification Access Letters to property owners within the 1000' set back will be distributed for the on-going data collection work. The project team also will request information on utility facilities in the project area. The bridge has an extensive amount of utilities as an important consideration in developing improvements to the bridge.
- (b) The team will review existing bridge inspection reports, and has begun identifying any existing substandard design elements within the project area and will gather crash data over the past three (3) years. Traffic counts will be conducted while schools are in session and on regular work days to reflect current traffic volumes. A proposed detour map was developed to identify where traffic counts should be taken and will be reviewed by local officials and then presented to the community at public meetings.





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- (c) The Concept Development Study Phase is estimated to be completed in 18 to 24 months and the project milestones and community outreach steps were noted in the power point presentation and on the Project Information handout.
- (d) Joe Romano, Baker Project Manager, provided an overview of the MLK Avenue Bridge project study area, the current bridge structure and existing information identifying the current structural deficiencies and reason to study the bridge to propose improvements via power point presentation slides.
 - The bridge dates to 1900 and was widened in 1928.
 - It's actually 2 bridges structurally with many utilities to consider aerial and under the bridge with high volume of traffic daily.
 - As part of the study, the type of construction staging will be examined to see what type of traffic flow may be possible if the bridge is to be rehabilitated or replaced.

4. Environmental Process

Marty Wade provided information on the environmental process, which must be followed for funding transportation improvements using Federal dollars.

- (a) 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 MLK Avenue Bridge LCD 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 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. A comprehensive Purpose & Need Statement and documentation is important to present the rationale for the project, and help guide the review agencies to work with the project team in moving the project forward from the LCD phase to the design and construction phases.
- (d) Community input is a part of the Environmental Process. As part of the LCD Study, input is needed from community stakeholders and the public in developing the Project Purpose and Need; which is the first major public outreach milestone. Martine Culbertson, as the Community Involvement Facilitator will assist the project team to enhance public participation and obtain community input via a community input survey and at upcoming meetings. A project web site will be developed to enhance communication and information sharing.

5. Community Involvement – Input and Discussion

Martine Culbertson, Community Involvement Facilitator, provided an overview of the information in the Project Portfolio, distributed to attendees. She reviewed the Draft potential List of Community and Agency Stakeholders as part of the community outreach process.

- (a) This is a draft list and the team is looking for input from the community to identify any entities and organizations or individuals interested in the project and willing to participate at a second community stakeholder meeting and two public meetings over the next 12 to 18 months.





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- (b) A Community Input Survey Summary Report was distributed to present the input received to date that is helpful to identify those interested in the Bridge Study. It is also helpful to provide input and insight on community interest for bridge improvements to assist the project team in developing the Project Purpose and Need Statement.
- (c) The project also will include the use of a website for sharing of information on the bridge study. The site will be maintained by the Project Team and at completion of the LCD phase, it will be turned over to Morris County to be maintained. 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. It will be available in multiple languages by use of a selection box on the home page.
- (d) The meeting was opened for questions and comments to identify the community issues and interests in the study area of the Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge. These comments will help the project team develop the project purpose and needs statement. The following items were noted:

Comments during Presentation

- Describe further impacts to community, residents, and businesses
- What development could result and concern for property impact, any assistance either financial compensation or other?
Response: If there is taking of property, there is compensation, however none are anticipated with this project
- When will we know?
Response: Information will be provided at community outreach meetings during each phase.
Additional Response Comments: If property were to be acquired it would be identified during this bridge study phase but any compensation is not discussed until the final design phase; no residential or business property is anticipated to be acquired for this bridge improvement project. The bridge is under Morris County jurisdiction.
- Traffic management is important for the local community
- Impact to economics - quality of life - investment of community matters greatly and would appreciate discussion at public meeting
- Funds to mitigate impacts
- Inform community impact
- Surrounding input of traffic and development
- Turning movement at Abbett is a concern
- Improvements to development in the area and impact on bridge traffic
- Overpass limitation restricts detour options
- Fiber optic – reach out to local officials to determine benefit for inclusion

Community Input

- Flooding and drainage
- Erosion – Whippany River
- Response: Hydrology will be studied and mitigation implemented if needed





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- Morristown and County parks – include representation
- Pedestrian use for access trailhead of Patriots Park
- Traffic planning study
- Some people are not aware of bridge and river
 - Communicate interest in public access and amenities
- High traffic volume coming with more development in area
- Fire safety rescue uses bridge
- Keep traffic moving
- Don't halt traffic that flows here – clogs area when bridge out
- Keep message of positive purpose to process
 - Not panic – positive investment in infrastructure to serve community
- Conversation with County on traffic in future from development
- MLK Avenue – volume serves today vs. volume serves tomorrow
- Walking/biking now vs. future
- Narrowing of intersection from streetscape – tricky
- Beautification – in between tricky
- Traffic calming hump intentional for pedestrian safety
 - Slow traffic, raised crosswalk and path trailhead
- Sundays and summer traffic volumes
- Examine Lincoln Street & George Street traffic impacts with detours
- Consider Spring in the Park and other local events
- Special improvement district – contact coordinator
- Neighborhood House already identified as stakeholder
- Add Rita Ruby Green Senior Center, Morristown
- Centro Biblico - reach out in Spanish, encourage participation

6. Closing Comments – Feedback

In summarizing the community input and meeting discussions, following items were noted:

Feedback

- Stakeholders meeting is educational
- Need microphone at PIC meeting
- Excellent meeting – communicate with churches in neighborhood for input
- Project Information Sheet – residents and commuters need more information of impact, positive or negative, to individual
- Good meeting - proactive vs. reactive, hearing about study at the beginning
- Keep build time minimal – great meeting, look forward to next
- Traffic flow critical





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- If bridge breaks, things worse
- What is timing for construction? A different project, bridge replaced in 24 hours
Response: Need justification for accelerated bridge construction, the bridge study will look at construction staging options to identify benefits and minimize impacts

7. Closing Comments – Next Steps

In summary, the Project Team will continue to gather additional traffic and engineering data, update mapping, review utilities, and hold the Public Information Center (PIC) meeting to obtain input from the general public as part of developing the draft Purpose and Need Statement.

Once a Purpose and Need Statement has been reviewed and approved by the agencies, the Project Team will then develop conceptual alternatives with community input received to date, and will present the alternatives at the next set of meetings as listed on Project Information Sheet handout and in the power point presentation.

Roslyn Khurdan, on behalf of the County and Project Team, thanked the Morristown Administrator, Jillian Barrick, and attendees for opportunity to meet and for their time and comments. For any questions, please contact Danielle Ferland, Morris County Project Manager, who is the key contact for the Bridge Study.

A meeting summary report will be provided, once reviewed and approved by Morris County and NJTPA. It will be posted to the project web site. Meeting adjourned by 4:00 p.m.

For additional information please visit the project website: www.mlkbridge.com

KEY ACTION ITEMS

1. The Baker team will continue bridge, roadway and traffic analysis in coordination with Morris County and Morristown.
2. The municipality and the County departments to share information on development plans, utility and drainage plans with the Project Team; also share traffic accident data or traffic count reports and any roadway work in the area of the bridge.
3. Local officials and community stakeholders to review Draft Community Stakeholders List, Community Input Survey Summary Report and Project Portfolio Handouts; please provide any comments and any contact information to update.
4. Martine Culbertson will provide meeting summary, update Stakeholders List and provide meeting notices for the Public Information Center (PIC) Meeting to be scheduled in February 2019.

NEXT MEETING

Public Information Center No. 1

Date: February 6, 2019 (snow date February 13, 2019)

Time: 4-7 p.m.

Location: Calvary Baptist Church, Mahalia Jackson Fellowship Hall, Morristown, NJ

We believe the foregoing to be an accurate summary of discussions and related decisions. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to the minutes within three (3) working days of receipt. Without notification, these minutes will be considered to be record of fact.

Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge Study Project Team





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Community Stakeholders Meeting No. 1

Wednesday, January 23, 2019

Mahalia Jackson Fellowship Hall, Calvary Baptist Church, 10 MLK Avenue, Morristown, NJ

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the project team, present the project status and schedule, and to obtain input on the community interests associated with the Martin Luther King Avenue Bridge over the Whippany River.

I. *WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION*

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

II. *MORRIS COUNTY MARTIN LUTHER KING AVENUE BRIDGE OVER WHIPPANY RIVER*

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

III. *DISCUSSION*

- Community Input - *Interests, Issues, Improvements*

IV. *NEXT STEPS*

- Public Information Center (PIC) Meeting - 2/6/19, 4-7 p.m., Calvary Baptist Church
- Project Website (www.mlkbridge.com)
- Feedback and Closing Comments

