



## MEETING NOTES

**To:** Jeanette Janiczek  
City of Charlottesville

**From:** Sal Musarra  
Kimley-Horn

**Date/Time:** February 21, 2017/5:30-7:30

**Subject:** Belmont Bridge Replacement Project (VDOT Project #0020-104-101 / UPC #75878)  
Steering Committee Meeting #1

**Attendees**

Amy Gardner	Belmont Neighborhood
John Harrison	Business Community
Patrick Healy	Ridge Street Neighborhood
Heather Danforth Hill	North Downtown Neighborhood
Tim Mohr	PLACE
Scott Paisley	PLACE
John Santoski	Planning Commission
Lena Seville	CAT Advisory Board
Fred Wolf	PLACE
Tony Edwards	NDS - Development Services Manager
Alexander Ikefuna	NDS - Director of NDS
Jeanette Janiczek	NDS - UCI Program Manager
Carrie Rainey	NDS - Urban Designer
Martin Silman	NDS - City Engineer
Keith Aimone	Kimley-Horn
Allison Linney	Allison Partners
Brian McPeters	Kimley-Horn
Sal Musarra	Kimley-Horn
Don Paine	KGP
Stephen Stansbery	Kimley-Horn
Jonathan Whitehurst	Kimley-Horn

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## PURPOSE

At the first meeting of the Steering Committee participants discussed previous design efforts and learned more about their role in the current effort. The committee also learned about project constraints and discussed the importance of various design considerations.

A similar meeting process will occur with each of the five stakeholder groups.

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## AGENDA

5:30 to 6:00	<i>Presentation</i>	<b>Introduction and Overview</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our team/our approach</li><li>• Project process and schedule</li><li>• Role of the Steering Committee (and how others will be involved)</li><li>• Understanding project constraints</li></ul>
6:00 to 7:00	<i>Facilitated Activities</i>	<b>Previous Design Processes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What went well?</li><li>• What did not go well?</li><li>• What can we learn?</li></ul> <b>Design Considerations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Performance of the proposed bridge program endorsed by City Council</li><li>• Design</li><li>• Relative importance of the various considerations</li></ul>
7:00 to 7:10	<i>Presentation</i>	<b>Next Steps</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MetroQuest Survey</li><li>• March 11<sup>th</sup> Mobility Fair</li></ul>
7:10 to 7:30	<i>Public Comment</i>	

## SUMMARY

This was the first in the series of meetings between the Steering Committee and the project team for the Belmont Bridge replacement project. Members of the Steering Committee, City staff, consultant team, and public were present for the discussion. Below is a brief description of the items discussed.

### Summary of Discussion

#### Introduction and Overview

Jeanette Janiczek, project manager for the City, read elements from the RFP to the group, which laid out the general expectations for the project. The RFP included details of the enhanced bridge concept as approved by City Council which is the starting point for the design effort. Following brief introductions, Sal Musarra (Kimley-Horn) gave a background presentation, which included the following:

- Target design timeline of 15 months
- Multiple public engagement meetings and stakeholder interaction for the first 6 months of the timeline includes
- A list of stakeholders including the Downtown Business Association, PLACE Design Task Force, Board of Architectural Review, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and the Tree Commission. Members of the Planning Commission and the ADA Advisory Committee also were invited to attend one of the five small stakeholder groups
- In addition to the stakeholders, the City has formed a Steering Committee to guide the overall process and a Technical Committee which is comprised of City staff from across many departments
- Meetings and discussions with the stakeholders as well as the public and Steering Committee will serve as a guide for the design process where the goal of the project team is to obtain informed decisions, rather than consensus. Every step will build upon the previous step of the process through the selection of the preferred concept
- Initial project constraints include vertical clearance over the railroad, clearance over Avon and Water Street, project budget, bridge piers and supports, and intersection touch points
- A project website will be established and will be located at [www.BelmontBridge.org](http://www.BelmontBridge.org). Meeting materials, notes, and notices will be posted to the website
- Members of the Committee introduced themselves and noted the specific groups they represent

#### Facilitated Activities

##### *Previous Design Processes*

Three questions were asked to encourage discussion and inform the consultant team about the previous design process. Below are the three questions and typical responses to each.

- *What went well?*
  - We ended up here
  - The public was engaged
  - The public discourse raised awareness that this is a significant opportunity
  - The project came to be viewed as a catalyst
- *What did not go well?*
  - How decisions were made—there was little transparency
  - The bridge become very meaningful requiring too much to resolve the larger planning issues

- Expectations and a framework for design were not clearly defined. Concepts such as “gateway” were not clearly defined throughout the process
- The project website had some glitches
- *What can we learn?*
  - Understand the cultural significance of Belmont Bridge and its impact on design
  - Understand constraints and limitations to better frame the design process and get to an implementable solution
  - Focus on the goal and urgency to develop a solution and advance the project toward construction

### *Design Considerations*

With the understanding that project constraints (e.g., space, money, time, etc.) will require tradeoffs to occur, the committee was asked to weigh in on design priorities. Committee members were given a worksheet that organized the design considerations endorsed by City Council into 10 categories:

- |                       |                     |                               |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| ● Community Gateway   | ● Lighting          | ● Spans, Piers, and Abutments |
| ● Improved Approaches | ● Multimodal Design | ● Travel Speeds               |
| ● Innovative Design   | ● Scenic Viewsheds  | ● Other                       |
| ● Landscaping         |                     |                               |

Committee members were asked to rate the importance of each category on a scale of 1 to 5 (low to high). Then, they were asked to rank the considerations 1 to 9 (or 10 if they added an additional category). Each committee member was asked to discuss their top three selections. The most important categories identified by the committee were Multimodal Design, Other (e.g., coordination with other plans, priority impacts, connectivity), and Improved Approaches. This activity was repeated with the Stakeholder Groups.

### Next Steps

The community engagement process will include 12 total committee meetings (six steering/six technical), 15 stakeholder meetings (three meetings with five different stakeholder groups), and three community events. Additionally, an on-line survey will be available. The committee was encouraged to bring up any pertinent information they may not already know. This includes other potential projects, existing studies, or anything that could potentially affect decisions regarding the bridge.

Several upcoming events were featured:

- Mobility Summit: Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- Online Survey: March 11<sup>th</sup> – April 16<sup>th</sup>
- Design Charrette: April 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup>
- Website Launch: [www.BelmontBridge.org](http://www.BelmontBridge.org) (includes digital comment form)

### Questions/Comments (from Committee and Public)

- How will the Steering Committee members see public comments?
- How will communication from the public to the Steering Committee be handled? The Committee’s *email addresses will be posted on the project website so that every member can see communications. If a comment is received by mail, the City project manager will scan and email to the Committee.*
- How were the stakeholders notified of meetings? *Individual meeting notices were sent via e-mail to committee members and public notices were emailed to the Neighborhood Development Services’ (NDS) mailing list and posted in NDS’ lobby.*

- During construction, how will people be able to use the bridge? *Construction phasing will be an important part of completing the project.*
- A citizen expressed concern over the functionality of the bridge 50-60 years ahead.