OLD COAST HIGHWAY AND JONATA PARK ROAD BRIDGES

Dept. of Public Works/HLAC Subcommittee Workshop

~~Draft~~ Final Meeting Minutes

TO: Sue Adams, Chair, County of Santa Barbara, Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

Meeting Attendees:

Sue Adams – Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission
Barbara Lowenthal - Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission
Jim Lowsley - Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission
Jarrell Jackman - Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission
Scott McGolpin – Department of Public Works
Dace Morgan – Department of Public Works
Water Rubalcava – Department of Public Works
Charlie Ebeling – Department of Public Works
Joy Hufschmid – Department of Public Works

FROM: Charlie Ebeling – Department of Public Works

DATE: August 4, 2004

NEXT MEETING: To be determined

Scott McGolpin — Introductions and review of Meeting Agenda (see attached)

Sue Adams — Suggested that Public Works should go through the agenda so the members of the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) could react.

Scott McGolpin — The goal of today's meeting is to make sure everyone is comfortable with proceeding with replacing Bridge 225 (the southern bridge on Jonata Park Road) and moving along with the final design so the project can begin construction in May of 2005. The Department of Public Works (Department) may be able to add funding for "Context Sensitive Solutions"/betterments for Bridge 225 based on recent discussions with Caltrans and FHWA. The Department will have to apply for and seek approval from Caltrans and FHWA for the additional funding. The Department also discussed doing a Feasibility Study for Bridge 226 (the northern bridge on Jonata Park Road) with Caltrans and FHWA. The Department will also have to apply for the additional funding for this. Caltrans and FHWA have indicated an interest in performing the feasibility study for Bridge 226 therefore they will likely fund the study. The Department will hire a civil engineering consultant from the

pre-screened Master Service Agreement (MSA) list of consultants to perform the Feasibility Study.

Sue Adams — Asked if the firms on the MSA list have any knowledge of historic structures.

Dace Morgan — Indicated that she was aware that several of the firms had worked with historic structures in the past including rehabilitating historic structures. Dace also indicated that the Department will also use a slightly abbreviated Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select a consultant from the MSA list. The RFP will ask the proposing consultants to provide information on their past experiences with historic structures.

Scott McGolpin — Part of the Department's consultant's responsibilities will be to allow time for peer review by a consultant hired by the HLAC.

Jim Lowsley — What is the selection process used by the Department for the MSA list and what will be the selection process for hiring a consultant from the MSA list for a specific project?

Dace Morgan — The MSA list was a formal screening of qualified consultants that responded to an RFP. The selection process for hiring a consultant that is on the MSA list can vary depending upon the size of the project. For the Feasibility Study for Bridge 226, the Department will use a panel of Department engineers to review the proposal to a specific RFP for this project. The Department engineers will follow guidelines typically used by local jurisdictions and incorporate some standards used by Caltrans. A formal interview would likely not be a part of this particular selection process because of the size of the project and because of the pre-screening the consultants went through to get on the MSA list.

Sue Adams — Reminded the Commissioners that they have a proposal to landmark Bridge 226 by resolution.

Scott McGolpin — The Department would like to suggest that the HLAC wait until the results of the Feasibility Report for Bridge 226 has been completed so any conditions the HLAC would like place on any proposed project for the structure can be based on the recommended alternative. That way the HLAC only has to act once and there would be a stronger likelihood that the Department and the HLAC would have a mutual understanding of the nature of the project that will take place. With this mutual understanding of the ultimate project, the Department and the HLAC could avoid the type of conflicts that arose around the Old Coast Highway Bridge project.

Dace Morgan — Pointed out that if the Department's consultant and the HLAC and/or the HLAC's consultant disagree on the selected alternative for Bridge 226 or the ultimate nature of the project, the Department is bound by its primary directive keep public safety paramount.

The members of the HLAC began a discussion regarding the process, timing and creation of a resolution for landmarking Bridge 226 and conditioning any proposed project. The discussion centered around landmarking now with conditions that allow for the Department to propose any of the alternative studied in the Feasibility Report and then creating another resolution that specifically address a specific project when one is presented to the commission. Or, waiting for the feasibility report to be completed and a specific project presented so that all of the appropriate conditions can be set at one time.

The members of the HLAC then briefly discussed the issue of maintenance for the portion of the Old Coast Highway that has been proposed to also be designated an historical route by the commission. The HLAC members then decided to return to the meeting agenda.

Sue Adams — Asked that the scope of the Feasibility Study for Bridge 226 include a rehabilitation alternative.

Dace Morgan — The scope of work will definitely include a rehabilitation alternative. The study will also look at an alternative alignment (building a new bridge next to the old one) and a replacement alternative. Dace also pointed out that in her recent discussion with Caltrans and FHWA, she confirmed her understanding that FHWA will expect that a bridge that is rehabilitated meet minimum standards. A rehabilitated bridge must meet an overall sufficiency rating of 80 and that the bridge can not remain "functionally obsolete." Dace wanted to prepare the HLAC that if the outcome of the feasibility study shows that rehabilitation is feasible, that may mean many portions of the existing bridge might have to be changed to meet the minimum sufficiency rating standard of 80 and so that it will not be functionally obsolete. This could include, but is not limited to, widening the exiting bridge, replacing the bridge railing, and/or major improvements to the approach roadways.

Jarrell Jackman — Regarding Bridge 225 (the southern bridge on Jonata Park Road), the two approach roadways look very different. The original surface of the Old Coast Highway may not be there anymore. Dr. Jackman also stated that he has, "lost interest in making anything historic around Bridge 225 including the roadway, but would like to see the [bridge] be narrower and some aesthetic treatments." He also asked if FHWA has a minimum traffic volume that a roadway needs to have for funding a bridge project?

Walter Rubalcava — FHWA does not have a minimum standard at this time.

Dace Morgan — FHWA used to have a minimum standard Average Daily Traffic (ADT) but in recent revisions of the Highway Bridge Rehabilitation and Replacement Program (HBRRP) rules dropped the minimum standard. Dace also discussed her recent discussion with FHWA and Caltrans regarding possible betterments in the form of Context Sensitive Solutions for these projects for historic preservation/aesthetics reasons. FHWA is willing to receive applications for all three bridges (Old Coast Highway Bridge 346, Bridge 225, and Bridge 226) for funding for betterments under their Context Sensitive Design Solutions program. The funding would be up to 5% of the construction costs of the projects. Dace reminded everyone that ALL funding is based on an 80%/20% split so when FHWA says they will provide an additional 5% of construction costs, they really mean that of the 5% they will pay 80% and the local agency, Santa Barbara County, will have to pay 20%. The Department will likely have to ask the Board of Supervisors for the additional funding (to contribute the 20% match).

At this point a discussion began regarding how other agencies and states construct bridges with aesthetic treatments and have funding for preserving historic transportation structures. Dace Morgan pointed out that the HBRR Program is a national program that has the same rule for every state so they likely are not using HBRR Program money. Dr. Jackman expressed that states such as Oregon seem to be much farther along in their understanding of the historic value of some of their bridges. Charlie Ebeling pointed out that the City of Santa Barbara likely has had the local funding available to pay for betterments and that other states are likely contributing state money for preservation efforts because the Federal programs are the same for all states.

Jim Lowsley — Asked would backing by the HLAC help with approval of the applications for the 5% for Context Sensitive Design Solution betterments.

Dace Morgan — Yes, the HLAC could write a letter that could be included in the application package. The package for Old Coast Highway Bridge and Bridge 225 need to be finished and sent to Caltrans by August 13, 2004. Dace reminded the group that to get the additional funds for betterments, the Department has to apply. The additional amount is 5% of the construction costs of the project and that the County actually has to contribute local matching funds so FHWA is really only paying 80% of the 5% and the County has to pay 20% of the 5%. Dace also reminded the group that all betterments have to keep public safety in mind.

The members of the HLAC and the Department's staff then began discussing the width of the proposed new bridge for Bridge 225. Walter Rubalcava said that he is doing some research into standards and what may be acceptable to Caltrans and FHWA.

Barbara Lowenthal — Why is [wider] width important? Don't narrower roads slow traffic? Shouldn't the roadway's width be based on the land use in the area?

Walter Rubalcava — Lane widths and shoulder widths for this project [Bridge 225] are based on standards set by Caltrans, FHWA, and the formal standards that have been adopted by the County of Santa Barbara. Caltrans and FHWA minimum standards must be followed for this project because they are providing the funding for the project. The HBRR Program rules do allow for the use of the local standards if they have been formally adopted by the Board of Supervisors. In this case, Santa Barbara County's roadway design standards are based on the same national standards that Caltrans and FHWA base their standards on. The standards for roadway geometric design (including bridges) are based on published standards by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The design of the bridges and approach roadways on Jonata Park Road are based on the type of roadway and the forecasted future traffic volumes in the year 2020 of about 1,400 vehicles per day.

Dace Morgan — Pointed out that Charlie Ebeling is a registered traffic engineer in the State of California and asked him to speak about narrowing roads.

Charlie Ebeling — A massive amount of recent scientific literature has been devoted to "Traffic Calming" and many agencies have tried some Traffic Calming techniques such as narrow roadways. In new developments roadways are sized based on projected traffic volumes that are developed from proposed land uses. The actual design and layout of a roadway is mostly based on the setting (terrain) the roadway is in and the predicted speed of the traffic. Land use for the actual design and layout of a roadway is rarely considered. An existing roadway's capacity (number of lanes, etc.) may be upgraded based on a change in land use but, once again, the actual design will be based on the setting of the roadway and the predicted speed of vehicles. Traffic Calming measures work best in urban residential areas because drivers are already expecting the unexpected in that setting. A narrower roadway or a traffic circle can effectively slow a vehicle without introducing a hazardous situation because drivers are aware of the overall setting they are in. Traffic Calming measures in rural settings are much less effective because, as many studies have shown, drivers tend to drive at a speed that is comfortable. In a rural setting with lower vehicle traffic and less potential obstructions, drivers tend to travel at relatively high rates of speed. Even between speed control devices such as stop signs, a driver will accelerate back to their comfort speed in very short distances. Unexpected Traffic Calming devices or speed control devices in rural areas tend to not be effective and create a potential hazard. There are many examples of rural roads in rolling terrain that suddenly have a stop sign for a cross road in the middle of nowhere. Many skid marks can usually be seen at the approaches to the stop sign and the accident rate for these intersections is usually very high.

Sue Adams — What about accidents? No accidents have occurred on [Jonata Park Road] in the recent past.

Charlie Ebeling — Accident rates are just one part of the information used to design a road and even for particular segment of roadway that has not had any accidents. The roadway is compared to roadways of a similar nature statewide to determine design parameters and liability risk. Public agencies that maintain transportation systems, in this case roads and bridges, are, in general, expected to upgrade roads to current standards as they are maintained. In fact, many agencies have lost major lawsuits because they didn't upgrade their facilities as they were doing maintenance projects or as land use and the roadway's setting changed over the years. In other words, the courts expect that the agency not wait for accidents to occur. They want the agency to be proactive and when they aren't and an accident does occur the agency usually loses. Not meeting current standards takes serious consideration with regard to liability risk and most Federal and State funds come with requirements that transportation facilities meet the current standards to receive the money.

Jarrell Jackman — Asked for a better description of what can be included in the design for the additional 5% for Context Sensitive Design.

The group discussed potential uses of the 5% that the Department will apply for next week. The bridge rail was discussed. Dace Morgan pointed out that reveals on the roadway side of the bridge rails are not considered acceptable for a bridge of this nature [Bridge 225] because reveals tend to be dangerous when a vehicle hits them. They tend to catch the vehicle instead of returning the vehicle to the roadway. Barbara Lowenthal asked why she sees so many bridges with decorative reveal designs in the Santa Barbara area. Dace Morgan pointed out that bridges in an urban setting have sidewalks and that with sidewalks the standards are different. Also, the City of Santa Barbara likely used local funds to do many of the decorative treatments. Barbara Lowenthal asked why can't the bridge [Bridge 225] have sidewalks. Both Walter Rubalcava and Scott McGolpin responded that FHWA was unlikely to pay for sidewalks because the existing roadway and bridge do not have sidewalks. FHWA only pays for sidewalks when there is connectivity.

Sue Adams — Can the 5% for Context Sensitive Design be spent on PCC approaches to the bridges? What exactly does PCC stand for?

Dace Morgan — Yes the 5% can be spent on using PCC for the approach roadways. PCC stands for Portland Cement Concrete. Portland Cement is the "glue" and Concrete is a mixture of cement, sand, gravel, and water. Modern roadways are usually constructed with PCC curbs and sidewalks and asphalt concrete (AC) roadways. Old Coast Highway was originally constructed using PCC.

Jarrell Jackman	How much more expensive is PCC than AC in the construction of roadways?
Walter Rubalcava	In general PCC is more expensive than AC. The construction of PCC concrete roadways is more labor intensive because wooden forms have to be constructed and steel reinforcement bars ("rebar") must be used. The difference in price for construction materials is highly dependant on the quantity that is purchased and the price of PCC for this particular project has not yet been determined.
Walter Rubalcava	Walter passed out an Advanced Planning Study APS drawing of the currently proposed replacement bridge for Bridge 225. The APS was created prior to all of the recent input from the HLAC.
Sue Adams	Asked if the drawings showed the bridge rail and is "K-rail" style bridge railing shown.
Dace Morgan	Responded that the design shown in the APS is a Type 732 Concrete Barrier that has a different look than the common "k-rail." A Caltrans version of "K-rail" is commonly used for freeway medians.
Walter Rubalcava	Reminded the HLAC members that a letter supporting the application to get the extra 5% (of construction costs) for Context Sensitive Designs that FHWA and Caltrans have said is available for the Old Coast Highway Bridge and Bridge 225 must be provided to him early next week so he can submit it with his application package by Friday, August 13, 2004.
Dace Morgan	Pointed out that the letter that the HLAC provides and, for that matter, the application should be generic enough in nature to allow the Department, with input from the HLAC, to add desired aesthetic features to the projects.
Walter Rubalcava	The schedule for the replacement project for Bridge 225 is that detailed design will begin immediately and construction will start in May of 2005.
Jim Lowsley	Asked what will be the construction costs?
Walter Rubalcava	Responded that the costs will be in the $1.3 to $1.4 million range but that the final costs estimates are developed as part of final design.
Sue Adams	Asked if any savings on the Bridge 225 project can be transferred to the Bridge 226 project.
Dace Morgan	Responded that FHWA does not allow transfers of funds between separate projects.

Walter Rubalcava	Asked, given several comments from the HLAC, for clarification on how to proceed with Bridge 225. Both Jarrell Jackman and Jim Lowsley said, "press on" [with the replacement project]. The HLAC subcommittee and the Department will work on the detail design of any betterments that are funded by the Context Sensitive Design Solutions FHWA program will be worked out at future meetings.
Sue Adams	What are we doing with the plaques? There are two plaques on Bridge 225 and two plaques on Bridge 226.
Joy Hufschmid	The current plan is to give the plaques to the Buellton Historical Society.
Sue Adams	We would like to see them o the new bridge [Bridge 225] or see them on site.

At this point the HLAC members discussed various options for the plaques and then decided that they needed to have an "HLAC plaque talk" at a future meeting.

Walter Rubalcava	The Department will look at ideas HLAC may have for the plaques but we would like to receive specific ideas in writing so we can then research their feasibility and cost.
Charlie Ebeling	Reviewed the status of the project, the feasibility report, and the project schedule for Bridge 226. The status of the project was based on where the project was prior to the recent input from the HLAC. The NEPA (federal) and CEQA (state) environmental documents have been completed. The Department was ready to start detailed design. Given the input from the HLAC, the Department has decided to do a comprehensive feasibility study to determine if Bridge 226 could be rehabilitated instead of replaced. The analyses will include replacement and change of alignment scenarios for comparison purposes. The Department has not committed to a design solution and will use the feasibility report to help us determine our recommendation for the ultimate project. A consultant will be hired from the Department's list of pre-screened consultants. The Department hopes to have the consultant hired by the middle of October of this year. The scope of the consultant will include time for coordinating with a consultant hired by the HLAC to perform a peer review of the draft feasibility report. The Department plans to have the feasibility report finished in the Spring of 2005 and start final design of the selected alternative in June of 2005. The Department plans to construct the selected alternative in the Summer of 2006.
Sue Adams	What will the rehabilitated bridge look like?

Dace Morgan — Potentially the rehabilitation work could involve many visible changes. Spalled concrete would have to be fixed and the abutments may have to be strengthened. The bridge railing may have to be replaced and the bridge itself may have to widened. The approach roadways may also have to modified. We just don't know to what extent the bridge will need to be rehabilitated prior to the outcome of the feasibility report. Caltrans and FHWA will require (to get the funding) that the rehabilitated bridge achieve a sufficiency rating of greater than 80 and that the bridge no longer be functionally obsolete. The bridge will also have to be able to carry a legal load. A combination of any or all of the potential rehabilitation measures just discussed may or may not meet Caltrans and FHWA standards. The sufficiency rating is based on many factors but being able to carry a legal load seems to be one of the bigger factors. The bridge will also have to meet current seismic requirements and part of the rehabilitation will be that the bridge will have to be seismically retrofitted.

Jim Lowsley — Are historic resources factored into the [sufficiency] rating? In other types of projects, such as building projects, some things are exempted. In other types of projects such exemptions are in the Historic Uniform Building Code (UBC). So is there any flexibility in the standards for Bridge 226?

Walter Rubalcava — No flexibility or exemptions are specifically mentioned in the bridge standards but since new bridges are required to achieve a 100 sufficiency rating the requirement of a rehabilitated structure meeting at least 80 may be the flexibility your are thinking of.

Jarrell Jackman — Why is California behind the curve in recognizing and preserving historic bridges? Other states including Oregon seem to be much further along in there understanding of the value and their preservation efforts.

Dace Morgan — The federal programs are the same for all states so Oregon may be using state funds for many of their preservation efforts.

Sue Adams — Describe what the railings on Bridge 226 will look like.

Dace Morgan — We really don't know what they will look like because we are going to wait for the results of the feasibility study to determine if rehabilitation is feasible.

Jim Lowsley — Will the consultant look at tweaks to get to the 80 threshold?

Dace Morgan — Yes. Also, Caltrans and FHWA are willing to fund the feasibility report because the HLAC was heard and because the bridge already has state and federal historic landmark status.

A lengthy discussion of the timing and conditions of an HLAC resolution for landmarking Bridge 226 began at this point. Scott McGolpin offered that the HLAC might wait until the results of the feasibility study. The resolution could be written only once with conditions based on rehabilitating or replacing Bridge 226. HLAC members debated the importance of doing something now and the ease of introducing another resolution after the feasibility report.

Sue Adams	Stated that she wants to show that [the HLAC] is actively doing something to save one of the three bridges.

At this point the meeting moved on to discussing the Old Coast Highway Bridge Project. Dace Morgan discussed the Department's recent conversations with Caltrans and FHWA. FHWA is willing to fund an extra 5% of construction costs of the project for "Context Sensitive Design Solutions." Dace said that everyone should remember that when Caltrans and FHWA fund projects that the County actually has to pay 20%. Therefore the County has to pay 20% of the 5% for Context Sensitive Design Solutions. An application and approval will be need to get the additional funding. For the Old Coast Highway Bridge project, the Department is looking at changing the material for the approach roadways from Asphalt Concrete to Portland Cement Concrete to match the material used for the original roadway.

The last item the group discussed was landmarking the Old Coast Highway route. Scott McGolpin provided a list of special maintenance conditions that the Department would like to have added to the resolution to landmark the Old Coast Highway route. The Department needs to know how the HLAC wants the roadway maintained. The Department needs to be able to address safety issues such as shoulder backing or downed traffic control signs, for example, without having to go to the HLAC for approval every time. Some safety issues require an immediate response by the Department. Members of the HLAC and the Department agreed to discuss this issue further.

ACTION ITEMS

Task	Responsible Party
1. Press on with Detailed Design of Bridge 225	Walter Rubalcava
2. Relocation of Existing Bridge Plaques	HLAC to provide a written request that the Department look at relocating the plaques on the new bridge.
3. Letter of support for Context Sensitive Design Solutions	HLAC to provide letter of support by August 11, 2004
4. Bring special roadway conditions to August 9, 2004 HLAC meeting.	HLAC and the Department
5. Bring list of County owned and maintained bridges that were constructed prior to 1954 to August 9, 2004 HLAC meeting.	Dace Morgan (Letter and list sent to Sue Adams on July 24, 2004)
6. Approach Roadway Cores for Bridges 225 and 226.	Dept. Public Works (Scheduled for August 25, 2004)

AGREEMENTS

1. As a result of this meeting between the Department of Public Works and the Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission, both parties agreed that the Feasibility Report for Bridge 226 can be peer reviewed by a professional structural engineer hired and paid for by the HLAC.

2. The Department agreed to provide the HLAC copies of the proposals the Department will solicit from consultants listed on the Department's Master Service Agreement list. Selection, management and funding of the Department's consultant that will provide the Feasibility Report for Bridge 226 is the sole responsibility of the Department.

3. The Department agreed to provide a copy of the Request for Proposals for the feasibility report for Bridge 226 to Jim Lowsley for informational purposes only.

CONCURRENCE

The meeting minutes presented here have been reviewed by the following meeting attendees and have been found to be a substantial accounting of the meeting held on August 4, 2004:

Dace Morgan, P.E.
Department of Public Works

Sue Adams - Chair
Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

Aug 11 Draft of Aug 4 Mtng minutes approved 9/13/04 by SLO.