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## The Public Information Meeting Meeting Summary

Public Information Meetings for the Rockland Road Bridge over the Des Plaines River Phase I Study were held on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 and Wednesday, October 21, 2020 from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M. at the Libertyville Civic Center in Libertyville, Illinois. The purpose of the identical meetings was to present the study process and existing conditions, present potential bridge improvement concepts and aesthetics, and gather input. The meeting was conducted in an open house format with exhibits on display for review. Attendees had the opportunity to speak with study team representatives and provide written comments on the preferred alternative. A total of 33 people recorded their names on the attendance register, not including the public agency representatives listed below. Twenty-three written comment forms were completed and submitted at the meetings. The original comment period ended on November 4, 2020, however this was extended an additional week to November 11, 2020. Two sets of comments from two families were received subsequent to the public meetings.

The following public agency representatives attended:

- Village of Libertyville
  - Jay Justice, Trustee
  - Kelly Amidei, Village Administrator
  - Paul Kendzior, Public Works Director
  - Jeff Cooper, Village Engineer
  - John Robbins, Appearance Review Commission Chair
- Libertyville Township Highway Department
  - Marty Neal, Highway Commissioner
  - Mike Zorn, Operations Manager
- Congressman Schneider's Office
  - Sarah DUBY, Representative
- Lake County Board
  - Jennifer Clark, Board Member
- Libertyville Township Board
  - Kathleen O'Connor, Supervisor
  - Carol August, Trustee
  - David Nield, Trustee
  - Matt Kovatch, Trustee
- Lake County Forest Preserves
  - Jeff Sloom, Planning Manager

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Following is an overview of comments received.

## Bridge Aesthetic Design

- Nineteen comments favored Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative, and nine favored Alternative 4. Some comments listed both as preferable.
- Only one comment mentioned Alternative 2 as the preferred and none mentioned Alternative 1.
- Ten comments asked that lighting fixtures be painted green, while three mentioned they would prefer black.
- Seven comments mentioned that they would prefer the light poles to be shorter than what is shown in the current renderings, and four commenters asked that lighting be either indirect and under the railings, slatted wall lighting, or wall sconces.
- Two commenters mentioned that they liked the concrete form liner on the bridge.
- Two commenters asked that the same number of light poles included in Alternative 4 (12 poles), be included in Alternative 3.
- Three nearby residents asked for lights to be removed from consideration from all alternatives.
- Other suggestions for aesthetic features included: flower pots, a forest preserve theme, bollards, concrete spheres, finials, emblems or impressions in concrete to reflect the area, the construction of a new decorative truss structure, powder-coated light pole finishes, wooden guard rail, adding the street name to the side of the bridge so it can be seen from the river, and “dark sky” compliant lighting.

## Pedestrian Walkway

- Three commenters mentioned that a safety railing on the north side of the pedestrian walkway should be added.
- Two commenters mentioned that they appreciated the addition of a safe area for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## Other

- Comments regarding the reconstruction of the bridge were generally positive with support for the project.
- Several commenters were excited for the opportunity to provide input on the bridge aesthetics.
- One commenter was in support of lowering the speed limit on the Township side to match the Village speed limit going over the bridge.

Listed below is a list of common questions received during or after the meeting, followed by responses from the project team.

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- 1. What is the justification for widening the bridge by two full additional lanes from an existing 30 feet wide to approximately 40 feet wide roadway. Traffic is too extreme on this residential roadway as it is. Extending from a two lane roadway to what is approximately a four lane roadway is not desired by residents.**

The bridge will be not be widened to provide four lanes. One through travel lane will be provided in each direction as exists today. Painted shoulders will be used to separate vehicles from the parapet walls of the bridge as well as from pedestrians using the pedestrian walkway. These shoulders will also be used for snow storage so that plowed snow does not narrow the travel lanes. The pedestrian walkway will be elevated above the bridge deck surface by approximately six inches.

In response to some comments received at this Public Involvement Meeting, a crash-rated barrier between pedestrians and vehicles will now be included in the design. The width from face of wall on the north side, to the face of the pedestrian barrier will be 30 feet, the minimum face-to-face width for a bridge allowed by Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) standards. Details of the final design are subject to IDOT review and approval.

- 2. What are the existing pedestrian counts over the bridge?**

Current pedestrian counts are not available. Due to abnormalities associated with the COVID pandemic, accurate/typical pedestrian counts cannot be gathered at this time. The proposed sidewalk width across the bridge meets IDOT width criteria.

- 3. Can the length of the walls be shortened on the west side so that they do not extend past the abutments?**

The lengths of the parapet and pedestrian walls have been shortened so that they do not extend past the bridge abutments on the west side of the structure. Details of the final design are subject to IDOT review and approval.

- 4. What is the cost difference between different alternatives?**

At this early stage of design, below is a summary of the rough cost differences for the structural items (bridge and retaining walls) between the alternatives presented at the Public Information Meeting (PIM):

- Alternative 1 – Standard IDOT Concrete Bridge Railing with Aluminum Railing, Type L: *Baseline Cost*
- Alternative 2 – IDOT Enhanced Concrete Bridge Railing: *2% Cost Increase over Alternative 1 (approximately \$40k)*
- Alternative 3 – IDOT Enhanced Concrete bridge Railing with Decorative Lighting: *6% Cost Increase over Alternative 1 (approximately \$120k)*

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- Alternative 4 – Aesthetically Enhanced Concrete Parapet with Form Line Texture Surface, Decorative Railings and Lighting: *8% Cost Increase over Alternative 1 (approximately \$170k)*

## 5. What will be done about noise abatement?

Highway traffic noise must be considered on Federal-aid projects where there is a substantial vertical or horizontal alteration. There is no horizontal alteration. The definition of a substantial vertical alteration is one that removes shielding, therefore, exposing the line-of-sight between the receptor and the traffic noise source. This is done by either altering the vertical alignment of the highway or by altering the topography between the highway traffic noise source and the receptor. The receptors on the residential properties would be their back patios or front stoops. There is a line of sight to vehicles today that will not be removed as part of the project, therefore there is no substantial vertical alteration, and a noise analysis is not warranted. Even if a noise analysis was completed, the low speed of traffic and low traffic volumes would likely not warrant noise abatement walls, and would not pass cost effectiveness analysis as there are only two receptors on each side of the roadway. Additionally, noise abatement walls would likely block residents' views of the bridge and the forest preserve.

In order to match the speed over the bridge going east, Libertyville Township will be lowering the existing 30 mph speed limit to the east of the bridge to 25 mph, which matches the posted speed limit on the Village side to the west of the bridge. A small reduction in traffic noise may be realized from this reduction in speed.

## 6. What happens to the entrance to the shared driveway at 903-911 Rockland Road with the elevation change of Rockland Road to the bridge?

The portions of the driveways at both 903-911 E. Rockland Road and 902-910 E. Rockland Road closest to the roadway will need to be reconstructed in order to match into the roadway. The proposed grades of the driveways are being evaluated to ensure that they will not direct water towards the homes. The detailed design of the driveway aprons will be completed in Phase II of the federal-aid process.

## 7. Where will signage of the closure to both vehicular and foot traffic be placed in order to avoid the congestion of cars turning around on both Riverside Drive and Rockland Road? The staging area brings trucks and workers' vehicles in the area and the access streets become congested. Can the signage be placed west of Riverside Drive so that Riverside is only used by local traffic and not as a 'turn-around'?

Construction staging details will be developed as part of the subsequent Phase II design process. The comments received at this PIM as well as lessons learned

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from the roadway construction project will help inform construction staging decisions.

- 8. How do homeowners access their own driveways and enter/leave between the bridge and Riverside Drive? During the previous construction the Village Police were fining anyone going west on Rockland Road \$250, thus residents next to the bridge had to go east and drive around to come back to the Village. Will homeowners have daily access throughout the project? What about the Aldridge entrance drive which has two additional driveways?**

Construction staging details will be prepared during Phase II design. The comments received at this PIM as well as lessons learned from the roadway construction project will help inform construction staging decisions.

- 9. To what extent can the storage of materials be staged to the east of the bridge?**

Libertyville Township has agreed to store as much of the construction materials as possible while attempting to keep the impacts to the Forest Preserve to a minimum. This may mean some materials or equipment will need to be stored west of the bridge. Construction staging details will be prepared during Phase II design.

- 10. During the roadway construction project, there were construction related materials, litter and trash piles, and construction debris remaining for extended periods of time. There was airborne transfer of construction dust towards residential homes and the river. Is there a plan in place to keep this from happening again? Can there be an installation of construction fencing to delineate private property vs. construction zone to maintain both safety and privacy?**

Construction staging details will be prepared during Phase II design. The comments received at this PIM as well as lessons learned from the roadway construction project will help inform construction staging decisions.

- 11. Street parking is not acceptable for long periods of time when homeowners have garages on the property. How will we get access to our garages?**

While the bridge is anticipated to be completely closed for approximately six months, access to the three driveways on the west approach to the bridge, between Riverside Drive and the Des Plaines River, will not be restricted for significantly long periods of time. There will be short-term periods during which driveways will not be accessible, for example when the concrete curb and gutter or (on the south side) sidewalk is curing. These periods should range from a day to less than a week, similar to the conditions that were experienced during the recent roadway project. Advance notice will be provided by the contractor in advance of anticipated closures.



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**12. None of the alternatives offer enhanced pedestrian safety. Why not provide new options for pedestrian safety when reconstructing? There are similar bridges nearby with lower speed limits that include a buffer between the roadway and pedestrian walkway.**

The comments received at this PIM showed notable resident concern over this issue. As a result, the design team has revised the proposed bridge cross section to include a crash-rated barrier between vehicles and pedestrians along the north side of the sidewalk on the bridge.

**13. Is the Lake County Forest Preserve District part of the discussion?**

Preliminary analyses of impacts to the Old School Forest Preserve and the Des Plaines River Trail are being completed and a coordination meeting is being planned with the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD). LCFPD representatives were invited to and attended this PIM.

**14. What will be the transition from the existing bridge supports to the new bridge surface? We were informed that the existing bridge supports and concrete would remain in place. We are concerned about how this transition will be handled from a visual and safety standpoint.**

The bridge supports (two piers within the river, and also the abutments on either end) will be completely reconstructed. Portions of the steel sheet pile walls and former stone abutment (under the bridge on the west side of the river) will remain to ensure that the waterway opening beneath the bridge is not narrowed or expanded to the point where it would significantly affect water levels upstream or downstream.

**15. Can the expansion joint be placed to the West of the bridge to reduce potential noise from the joint?**

The proposed bridge will be joint-less with integral abutments versus using conventional expansion joints. Traffic noise will be considerably less than if conventional expansion joints were used.

**16. How will the new roadway grade down from the new bridge elevation into the front yards of nearby residences? How will this affect the drainage of the two nearby residential driveways?**

The new roadway will grade down as quickly as possible to the existing roadway profile while meeting several requirements:

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1. The bottom of the proposed bridge must be at an elevation that meets river waterway opening requirements. This is to prevent upstream and downstream flooding.
2. The proposed bridge structure depth must meet all required structure design criteria and be a cost-effective design.
3. The roadway profile must meet all applicable IDOT standards for vertical geometry including but not limited to vertical curve lengths, stopping sight distance, and vertical curvature rate.
4. The proposed roadway profile on the bridge approaches may not, at any point, be lowered below the existing profile. This avoids the creation of low points within the floodplain that could result in roadway overtopping in areas where it does not occur today.

The proposed grades of the driveways are being evaluated to ensure that they will not direct water towards the homes.

## **17. How long is the anticipated bridge closure? How does this estimate differ for vehicles and pedestrians?**

Preliminary analyses anticipate a bridge closure of six months. This will apply to both pedestrians and vehicles since the bridge will need to be fully reconstructed. For the safety of all users, the bridge will not be open to any traffic until the construction is complete.

## **18. Will temporary sheet piling be installed again? If so, where?**

Temporary sheeting may be installed to construct cofferdams required to construct the new piers. The contractor will be responsible for the design of the cofferdams, which are temporary construction structures.

## **19. Will trees damaged or eliminated in the parkway be replaced?**

Any trees that will be removed will be replaced in accordance with IDOT standards. It is unknown at this time how many/which trees will be removed for construction access and subsequent grading.