

Bay Bridge Monitoring Committee
August 22, 2018
Meeting Summary

The Kent County Bay Bridge Monitoring Committee (BBMC) met on Wednesday, 22 August 2018 at 10:00 a.m. in the County Commissioners' Hearing Room in the R. Clayton Mitchell, Jr. Government Center in Chestertown, Maryland. The following committee members attended the meeting: Gary DiVito, Ralph Dolinger, Torr Howell, and Thomas Tontarski. BBMC Kent County staff included Amy Moredock, Person of Contact/Planning Director; Mike Moulds, Public Works Director; Jim Wright, County Engineer; and Sandy Adams who clerked the meeting.

The meeting summary for June 27, 2018 was accepted by the Committee as presented.

Steve Cohoon – Facilities Planner, Queen Anne's County Department of Public Works:

Mr. Cohoon talked about the following concerns for Queen Anne's County as the State maneuvers through the lengthy NEPA process:

- The concerns are with traffic volumes and what is going to happen within the next 20 years (i.e.: current conditions and/or future conditions pending the results of the study);
- A major concern is the ability to provide a stable and reliable method for transporting people to medical facilities, and our emergency responders' ability to navigate;
- Our main message to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is to keep the NEPA process moving and to help Queen Anne's and Anne Arundel Counties in the meantime;
- Queen Anne's County has installed 9 traffic counters in major thoroughfare areas for monitoring traffic volumes during varied times and days of the week, along with monitoring the changes over time;
- Public Works Director Todd Mohn is the participating agent for Queen Anne's County;
- Ms. Moredock wanted to know how Queen Anne's residents perceived the State's recent public hearing. Mr. Cohoon said approximately 50-60 people attended. He said it happened to be scheduled on the same date as their County Commissioners' meeting; therefore, he does not believe it was as well-attended as Kent County's hearing. He also commented that there was not a lot of information to respond to, and he said that everything being displayed at the public hearing was also listed on the State's website;
- Mr. Tontarski wanted to know how Queen Anne's residents feel about potential locations of a future span. Mr. Cohoon said that he is currently not aware of any citizen-based movements going on within Queen Anne's County (favorable or otherwise). He reiterated that, unlike Kent County, their County's concern is more of a traffic problem, but he said the last thing Queen Anne's County wants or needs is for MDOT to select a location that will put them into litigation for another 10+ years; and
- Mr. Cohoon said their Commissioners are very interested in continuing open dialogue with the surrounding counties to discuss traffic issues, and he said there is also talk about forming an Eastern Shore Coalition for collaborating and coordinating responses. Ms. Moredock suggested that all Eastern Shore participating agents spearhead that coordination.

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Committee Business:

- Ms. Moredock informed the committee that the Commissioners did not support sending the draft letter to MDOT. Ms. Moredock said that, while the Commissioners appreciated and read the memorandum and the letter the Committee drafted, they felt the tone of the letter is not the type of tone they wish to convey, nor is criticism warranted at this time. Ms. Moredock said the Commissioners are looking for the Committee to continue monitoring and reporting, but with a more collaborative type of communication with state agencies. Ms. Moredock assured the Committee that the Commissioners also continue to collaborate with their colleagues, legislators, and MACO representatives to maintain a proactive role in the Study.
- Ms. Moredock informed the committee of the delay of the purpose and need study; it has been postponed until the fall/winter timeframe.
- All Committee members present at the meeting verified that they have received the (one page) copy of the Transportation Article 4-407 from Ms. Moredock.
- The Committee discussed imposing a time limit for future meetings. Most of the Committee members present at the meeting requested future meetings be limited to 1.5 hours, unless being notified in advance of the need for the meeting to run longer; the Committee also agreed that future agenda items should contain a time limit.

Next Step(s):

Ms. Moredock informed the Committee that the following guest speakers are forthcoming: a staff representative from the Department of Agriculture; and a local citizen who is an advocate for a span in Kent County.

The Committee heard public comments and received correspondence addressed to the Maryland Transportation Authority.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 26, 2018 from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

The meeting concluded at 11:45 a.m.