

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
JUNE 21, 2007**

This Meeting was held at the Henry Hudson Regional High School located at 1 Grand Tour, Highlands.

Mayor O'Neil called the meeting to order at 7:49 P.M.

Mrs. Flannery read the following statement: As per requirement of P.L. 1975, Chapter 231, notice is hereby given that this is a Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highlands and all requirements have been met. Notice has been transmitted to the Asbury Park Press, the Courier and the Two River Times. Notice has been posted on the public bulletin board.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mr. Nolan, Miss Thomas, Mr. Caizza, Mr. Urbanski, Mayor O'Neil

Absent: None

Late Arrival: None

**Also Present: Nina Light Flannery, Borough Clerk
Bruce Hilling, Borough Administrator
Dominick Manco, Esq., Borough Attorney**

Mayor O'Neil asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor O'Neil started by thanking all who came out to the special bridge meeting and also the representatives from the DOT who came out tonight. He stated that he would like to keep this meeting in an orderly/timely fashion. There will be a timer for questions, that's how it has to be due to the great number of people who signed up to ask questions.

Mayor O'Neil introduced Commissioner Kris Kolluri.

Mr. Kolluri addressed the meeting:

First, he thanked the Mayor and Council for allowing this meeting and thanked the audience for coming. He said that in a democracy, one of the greatest value one has is protection of free speech and the ability to say what he or she feels. He knows that a lot of people feel that they did not have much community participation. He stated that he has the fundamental obligation to make sure that the bridges in New Jersey are safe and secure. He also has a fundamental obligation to make sure that we are fiscally responsible and balance the needs of the community when they are putting a project together.

This project is not a new project; it has been around since 1980. He then gave some history regarding the bridge. He stated that the bridge was built in 1932. That it is a 35-foot movable bridge. He said that the overall height, at the top of the towers, is 68.5 feet and the height of the movable span, when opened, is 110 feet. In the State of New Jersey, there are currently 23 movable bridges, however, five years ago there were 28. Mr. Kolluri stated that in the Capital Plan, the State is planning to replace six more movable bridges within the next several years.

He said that the current bridge does not have any shoulders. So if someone were to breakdown, they would be stopped in a live lane of traffic. There are sidewalks, but for anyone on a bicycle, or even for pedestrians, he feels that they are not adequate.

He then went on to say that for Monmouth County, this is a coastal evacuation route. So for the 1800 to 2000 families that have full-time residence in Sea Bright and several thousand in Highlands, and for the thousands of people who visit this area, this is the evacuation route for the county. He stated that this bridge is also used by first responders.

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He asked the audience to just imagine what would happen if the bridge was not in existence. For instance, the recent large fire in Sea Bright required deployment of responders from many towns which needed this bridge to help fight the fire.

There are two questions he touched on, why do we have to replace the bridge? It's safe, and a resolution from Highland said so. He then touched on this first question. He stated that this bridge has rapidly deteriorating conditions. Typically, a bridge is inspected once every two years. This particular bridge now requires inspections four times per year. With a radiant of 0 to 100 with 100 being the best and 0 being the worst, this bridge is rated at 2. The bridge has exceeded its life expectancy by 25 years. He also stated that the public can have full access to the inspection reports for review.

Mr. Kolluri asked Rich Handley to give a presentation. Mr. Handley spoke with regard to the deterioration of the bridge. He presented some pictures of the bridge and a description of each. There are pictures on the underside of where the concrete has worn away and the steel reinforcements are losing their integrity. He showed a picture of a steel beam where he circled a hole through the beam. These pictures are typical of the conditions throughout the bridge.

Mr. Handley then showed a picture of a main beam where the size of the beam has deteriorated and is now mostly razor thin. This too is typical throughout the bridge. The final picture showed a bearing support area where again, the concrete is wearing away. He said that these conditions are the reasons that this bridge needs to be looked at quarterly.

Mr. Kolluri spoke regarding reliability. For the peak summer season, the bridge needs to open every half hour. This means that the bridge will open approximately 700 times each summer season. During 2006, there were 14 times that the bridge was stuck for various reasons, delaying either boat traffic or vehicle traffic. He stated that should there be an emergency, no one can get across this bridge. At times, the delay could be up to four hours. Mr. Kolluri said that this is just not safe.

Mr. Kolluri then spoke with regard to cost, to maintain the bridge and also to repair or replace the bridge. He said that since 1991, costs have reached \$10 million dollars for reconstruction. For emergency maintenance, the cost is \$1 million annually, which is expected to grow for every year the bridge remains in this condition. Mr. Kolluri stated that the operating budget is \$400,000 each year.

With regard to repair of the bridge, Mr. Kolluri stated that it would be a 16 month minimum closure for the bridge. Mr. Kolluri stated that a 2007 estimate to repair the bridge came in between \$86 million and \$96 million. That does not include the \$14 million the department has already spent in designing and engineering of the fixed span bridge.

Mr. Kolluri said that to build another movable bridge would cost approximately \$150 million, construction costs.

Mr. Handley showed slides and spoke with regard to height of the proposed bridge which would be 65 and that the height of the towers on the existing bridge is 68 feet. He said that on the proposed bridge there will be multi-use, bicycle, pedestrian walkways, also a safe harbor for cars to pull off the road.

Mr. Handley stated that the theme throughout this project for the 65 foot bridge has been minimization, such as minimize environmental impact, minimize the necessary property needed, minimize view-shed impact, etc. He stated that there will only be seven piers in the water which will maximize the view underneath.

The next item was bridge material and lighting. He stated that they are working with the State Historical Council regarding bridge color and the like. There are pylons on the

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existing bridge, which he stated the DOT would be mimicking on the proposed bridge. The tile work on the existing bridge will be replicated or replaced on the proposed bridge.

Mr. Handley stated that there will be a pedestrian bridge on the Sea Bright side to allow safe passage for pedestrians across Route 36.

He estimates the construction of the bride to be approximately \$100 million.

Mr. Handley showed the audience some slides regarding the existing bridge versus the proposed structure from different viewpoints. He estimated that for the first 18 months they will be building half of the new bridge and that they would have to maintain the current bridge during that time. Route 36 traffic will be maintained throughout the bridge construction. At no time would Route 36 be closed or a detour required.

Mr. Handley spoke of the milestones so far with regard to the project:

1. MOA with State Historic Preservation Office, concurring with the 65 foot high bridge.
2. Received DEP permits.
3. Completed the final design.
4. Recently received a Coast Guard permit.
5. Authorization from the DEP.

Mr. Handley stated that the Coast Guard has jurisdiction over the waterway. The Coast Guard dictates how high a fixed bridge would have to be to allow proper navigation of the channel.

Mr. Kolluri asked the Mayor to allow for questioning at this time.

Allison _____ read a statement from Congressman Paloma's:

As the State Department of Transportation moves forward with its plan for the Route 36 Highlands to Sea Bright Bridge, I feel that it is important for the DOT to pay significant attention to the views of the surrounding communities. Yesterday I sent a letter to the transportation commissioner, Chris Kolluri, asking him to clarify the costs and benefits of renovating the existing structure or replace the current bridge with a similar drawbridge.

Following is the text of the letter:

Dear Commissioner Kolluri;

It is my understanding that you will be sponsoring public meetings in the Boroughs of Sea Bright and Highlands on Thursday, June 21st, regarding the condition and replacement of the Route 36 Highlands' bridge. I appreciate your willingness to come and address the concerns that are being raised by the community about this project.

Numerous constituents have contacted my office worried of replacing the current structure for a fixed span bridge of much higher elevation.

In addition, the governing bodies of both Sea Bright and Highlands have expressed to me their opposition to the current

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proposal. There are concerns about the increased traffic resulting from a larger fixed span bridge, safety concerns about its steepness, and the affect that the new height will have of the view of the Twin Lights, a site of the State and National register of historic places.

Given these concerns, I would like the Department of Transportation to consider again the options for the repair of the current bridge and the possible construction of a similar drawbridge to replace the current structure.

I know that you have considered these options in the past, but I believe they need to be raised again because a lot of questions remain. Particularly relative to the costs and benefits of these alternatives.

Again, thanks you for taking the time to hear the concerns of the residents in the communities that surround this bridge. It is my hope that working with the local communities, concerned residents and State officials that we can come up with a mutually agreeable proposal that is safe, reliable and cost effective.

I think that this is a positive step for Commissioner Kolluri to hold these public forums so that the public can play a role in the process. It is important for the outcome of this project to be fiscally responsible, reliable, safe and responsive to the opinions of the surrounding communities.

Kate _____ read a statement from Assemblyman Sean Kean:

I'd like to thank Commissioner Kolluri for holding a public meeting to discuss the Sea Bright/Highlands bridge project. As many of you are aware, I wrote to Commissioner Kolluri on December 19th, 2006 and asked that he hold a public meeting in Sea Bright or Highlands, so the local residents could voice their opinions about this project.

While I am pleased that this public meeting is being held, I am disappointed that I am unable to attend because I am required to be in Trenton for a general assembly voting session. The deeds of the general assembly and senate voting sessions are public knowledge, so it is unfortunate that this meeting is being held on the same evening that both houses will be voting on the State budget and will most likely be stuck in Trenton until later in the evening. I'm sure that other legislatures would have liked to attend this meeting as well.

The safety of the motorists and the pedestrians, who utilize this bridge, should be the most important concern when creating a design plan. I believe the new design to be secure, will not grossly interfere with the coastal landscape and significant historical sites.

Any plan for the bridge must take into account a variety of factors, including _____ and traffic patterns, but it also must consider the safety, cost, quality of life concern and a potential ruin of a historical treasure.

This structure will impact on the quality of life of area residents and greatly affect the landscape. Thus, it is critical that the Department of Transportation does not insist upon a design proposal that will negatively impact residents of Highlands and Sea

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Bright for generations to come.

In conclusion, I am hopeful that the Department of Transportation will take into consideration the views of residents and then with the local governments, create a design proposal that's more agreeable to both sides.

Congressman Joseph Azzolino gave a brief history of his background. He has worked on several projects including Metro Park and the Middletown Train Station, among others. Sometimes we have to do what is good for everyone and not what is good for a few. And that is how he feels about the bridge, some may not like it, but he thinks it is the best thing to do.

T.R. Dempsey - he gave reasons why he would like to see a bridge like the one that is there now - it is unimpeded access to the beach, that is what he is looking for. He acknowledges that the bridge is in total disrepair.

Maureen Kramer of 200 Portland Road- She feels that Mr. Kolluri has short-changed the people here tonight, because they should see the same thing that was shown in the Borough of Sea Bright. She realizes that he is planning to leave at 9:00 but she feels that he needs to stay and show the people of Highlands the same presentation that he gave to the people on the other side of the bridge.

She stated that she has e-mailed Mr. Kolluri's department everyday since April and that it wasn't until she threatened to go to the press and expose a lot of the things that people don't even know about with regard to everyone being ignored, that someone in his department e-mailed her back.

Mr. Kolluri stated that he went through every slide in Highlands that he went through in Sea Bright. He then proceeded to show the slides from 25 down to 1.

Mayor O'Neil asked everyone if we could please address the questions that we have.

Unidentified person - what studies have been done to prove to residents that the bridge will stand up to perhaps a nor'easter. She is concerned about water and ice on the steep inclines.

Mr. Kolluri stated that he will provide to the Mayor and Council tomorrow morning the standards that they used to design this bridge. He stated that although the grade of the bridge will be higher than the current bridge, it is the same as other coastal bridges that have been built. He added that the grade on the new bridge is actually lower than on some of the local streets in Highlands.

Unidentified person - asked who rated this bridge the worst moveable bridge in New Jersey and when? She also asked if the rating was done after minimal repairs were done on the bridge so that the bridge would have to be replaced.

Mr. Kolluri stated that he understands that some people feel that they did not have a meaningful participation. From 2002 to 2006 we have received five resolutions in support from the governing body of Highlands. He is providing the study to the Mayor and Council and implored everyone to study it and let him know what they think.

Unidentified person - she stated that approximately 10 years ago, the DOT decided that they were going to replace the bridge and not repair it, and as a result of that, there was very minimal maintenance and repairs done to this bridge. So it has now deteriorated enough to the point where it can not be fixed and that we need a new bridge.

Mr. Kolluri stated that he has been at this job for 18 months and that he is now faced with a decision as to what to do with the bridge, right now, as it stands. He stated that it is his responsibility to make a decision, there are only three options, repair the existing bridge,

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replace it or close it down.

Mr. Kolluri said that what she is suggesting is that perhaps at a cost of 80 to 96 million dollars for repairs, and in 20 years we are right back where we are today. He stated that there are numerous bridges in the State of New Jersey in bad condition and he has the obligation to repair each one if he gets the opportunity. To spend that much money to get 20 years out of the bridge is not an option.

Mayor O'Neil asked the audience to refrain from all speaking out due to the recording of this meeting. He then asked Mr. Kolluri if there will be any taking of property.

Mr. _____ stated that with the design we will require to have two small parcels from the Borough.

Mr. Kolluri asked if the meeting could return the question and answer according to the list of people that signed up.

Mayor O'Neil stated that he wants this to be questions asked and answers given, not statements.

Unidentified person asked about the elevation of the bridge and how far back will the incline have to start.

Mr. Handley stated that he can get the exact numbers to the town tomorrow. He stated that the bridge will be 1247 feet long. He stated that it will start the same place as the bridge that is there today.

Unidentified person with the steep incline he feels that all the businesses on the south end of Bay Avenue will suffer because you just won't be able to make it up the steep bridge should there be a little snow or ice.

Mr. Handley stated that the ramps are not going to change. He stated that every aspect of the design is currently with the Borough and that everyone is welcome to look at it.

Unidentified person stated that she believes that the bridge should be protected and that the new bridge would hurt the Borough of Highlands and only aid Sandy Hook. She stated that eventually there will have to be a widening of Ocean Avenue all the way to Long Branch with this bigger and faster bridge.

Mr. Kolluri presented a letter that states in no uncertain terms the Department of Transportation nor Sea Bright will or have any plans to widen Ocean Avenue.

Eric Reinhardt - expressed a concern regarding using Highland Avenue as a detour during the bridge construction.

Mr. Kolluri stated that there will be no detours.

Patty Moran - has a developer been named for the bridge?

Mr. Kolluri asked if she was referring to the contractor for the bridge.

Ms. Moran stated yes.

Mr. Kolluri said no, that they have not issued bids.

Unidentified man asked about the Jamison Company.

Mr. Kolluri stated that they are not a developer nor are they a contractor, they are engineers.

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Fran Denison - she stated that one of the problems that we are seeing here tonight is that there is a great deal of distrust. She said that the pictures shown tonight do not actually show how wide the bridge should be - that it should be wider and steeper. She stated that she read on the DOT website that there are many solutions to every traffic problems, she is hearing only one. Ms. Denison stated that at most of the Council meetings, it has been stated that this project has been forced upon the Borough of Highlands.

Mr. Kolluri spoke with regard to the width and depth of the bridge. The width of the existing bridge is 61.6 feet. The proposed bridge is 92.3. The bridge will have two shoulders, 12 foot wide lanes versus the 11 foot wide lanes on the existing bridge. With regard to the depth of the structure, the new structure will be only 8 feet compared what is there now, which is 12 feet. The height, 65 feet versus 35 feet measured from the mean high water level to the underside of the super structure.

Unidentified person - what is the total height of the bridge.

Mr. Kolluri stated that the total height of the bridge will be 8 plus 65 feet - 8 foot depth, 65 foot to get to the underside which will be approximately 73 feet.

Ms. Denison asked if Mr. Kolluri could give an example of another bridge to compare to.

Mr. Kolluri stated that the two most recent examples where we built a 6 percent grade, is the Route 35 Shark River Bridge and the Route 35 Victory Bridge.

Unidentified person objects to the fact that everyone can only ask questions and not make statements.

Unidentified person - with regard to the waterway at the Brielle Bridge, why was that replaced with a drawbridge and not a fixed span bridge? With regard to the impact economically and on the town itself, he feels that a 65 foot bridge will discourage people from going down into the town of Highlands, where they can now see from this present bridge, what is down there. Has the DOT done an economic assessment that evaluates and analyzes the impact on the Borough of Highlands?

Mr. Kolluri stated that there is an impact statement that the Mayor and Council have that anyone can have access to. He also stated that the very same economic concerns the speaker addresses are the very same concerns that are present because of the condition of the current bridge.

Mr. Handley stated with regard to the Manasquan Bridge, that bridge is being rehabilitated, it is not being replaced. The bridge was built in 1950 and it is in much better condition than the Highlands Bridge.

Stewart Lieberman - representative for the Citizens for Rational Development - the people in this room do not want what you are selling.

Ally Cassidy read a statement into the record.

Spencer Adler - he gave a statement into the record.

While in Trenton last August, a representative from the DOT stated that repair of this bridge could cost approximately \$45 million and last for 50 years. He gave reference to the DOT's 2003 feasibility study.

Mr. Adler referred to a statement by the Mayor of Sea Bright that they have no plans to widen Ocean Avenue. Also, the Dot has stated the same. Although in February plans were presented to Sea Bright to widen Ocean Avenue. He asked if the DOT will enter into a deed restriction along Ocean Avenue so that it will never be turned into a four lane highway.

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Mr. Adler stated that everything should be done to assure that no State or Federal money be used to demolish this bridge.

Mike Roomer - Edison - past president of the Central Jersey Bicycle Club - he stated that in 2001 his club was asked to define the bicycle and pedestrian needs for the Route 36 Highlands Bridge. He stated that his club was helping with the Sandy Hook bike path and the Henry Hudson Trail. Their goal was to make the bridge accessible to everyone, bicycles, pedestrians, wheelchairs, etc. He said that the access through this area will be greatly enhanced with the new bridge.

Mr. Parla - at a meeting in August of the Historical Sites Council in Trenton, a DOT representative stated that what we have here is an unusual project, we are about to demolish a bridge that is structurally sound. Later he added, and certainly not unsafe. On that day, Mr. Parla stated that the DOT withdrew its bid to demolish the drawbridge. He then went to say that two months later, he attended another meeting at the same DOT office, however, another DOT representative said that the drawbridge was fractured critically. He painted a mental picture for the audience of motorists plunging to a certain death in the river.

On further questioning by the Historical Council, fracture critical meant that someday in the future it might become necessary to load post.

On that day, the Council voted down the demolition. Unfortunately, the Council had no authority.

Mr. Parla asked if it is true that this bridge is beyond repair or rehabilitation, please demolish it. But we request that they build a new Twin Lights drawbridge.

Frank Callis - made a statement as to the beauty of the bridge.

Nancy Thomas - asked the DOT to please reconsider the design of the bridge. Miss Thomas asked how the new design is being fiscally responsible.

Mr. Kolluri stated that the cost of the bridge is \$124 million, and repairs are \$80 to \$90 million.

Miss Thomas - she mentioned the fact that repair of the bridge could close it for approximately 18 months, and as you can see by the people in this room, they would be completely in favor of that alternative. It was also mentioned that rehab of the bridge would give an approximate life span of 20 years, and she asked what the life span of the current bridge, built in 1932, was.

Mr. Kolluri stated that it is 50 years.

Miss Thomas believes that the life expectancy of a rebuilt bridge of 20 years is a very, very low number. She stated that the pedestrian walkways that were submitted for the new bridge are an eyesore.

Also, it was mentioned that in January of 2007, the designs were completed and in November the designs were submitted to the Council, she asked what the changes were.

Mr. Kolluri stated that there were no changes to the 800 sheets that were given to the Council.

Miss Thomas asked that the DOT please go back to the drawing table and take into consideration the Borough of Highlands and the people who live there.

Mr. Nolan - he thanked everyone for coming out. Mr. Nolan stated that he understands that the bridge needs to be replaced, however, he would like to know what the cost would be to replace the current bridge with a similar bridge.

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Mr. Urbanski - he thanked the DOT for coming out this evening. He recognizes that the current bridge is deteriorating, but requested that if there is a way to get something in place that is similar, he would welcome that.

Unidentified Woman spoke about the Borough of Highlands and what she likes about it. She asked what the proposed fixed span bridge can contribute to the integrity of the Borough of Highlands.

Carla Braswell - Highlands Business Partners - how would the new bridge be constructed or the old bridge repaired or replaced without interruption to the business of Highlands? And also, can some kind of signage be incorporated during the construction phase and after?

Mr. Handley stated that during the building of this bridge, there will be a limit to the disruption. Half of the new bridge will be built first, and use of the old bridge will continue. The highway will then be tied into the new bridge, the old bridge will be shut down and demolished, and the new bridge will be fully functional while the other half of the new bridge undergoes construction.

With regard to the landscaping, the World War I monument will be moved and the entire area will be cleaned and there will be benches, walkways, etc.

Mary Keily – Comments are Inaudible

She spoke about the view that she now has and the ability to walk to Sandy Hook, etc. She feels that the new bridge will devalue her house and force her to put a for sale a house that she has fought hard to keep.

Ms. Grace - gave her opinion as to the proposed bridge and that she is against the new bridge.

John - he questioned the new bridge pedestrian walkway and how someone who is elderly or handicapped could possibly cross the bridge. Also, directed to the DOT representatives, if they were in possession of their grandfather's old watch, and it didn't work, would they throw it away?

Mr. Kolluri - Many speaking at the same time, its inaudible.

Unidentified woman asked if the photos were to scale.

Mr. Kolluri stated that the photos will be on the website for download. He stated that these photos are to scale.

Unidentified woman asked if this meeting was part of the public process.

Mr. Kolluri stated that this meeting was for him to come and answer two questions, come and repair the bridge, and he feels that he has a fundamental obligation to come and explain what that means in terms of cost, etc. Mr. Kolluri stated that with the consent of this council, we are going to propose to build a fixed span bridge. He added that since November of last year, the Council has had access to the plans, however, the questions that were raised is, come back and tell us why you can't repair the bridge.

Unidentified woman asked, is the public commentary on this proposal closed?

Mr. Kolluri stated that he told the Mayor and Council that he would come and answer questions.

Unidentified Woman asked if the public commentary on this proposal still opened?

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Mr. Kolluri stated no.

She stated that it doesn't matter what the public says here tonight, that our comments are not going to be considered by any jurisdictional authority. She also asked if there will be taking of any property.

Mr. Kolluri stated that there is a \$200,000 @9:55

Unidentified man stated that it is underneath the existing bridge, right next to Bay Avenue - two small streets -

The woman then asked if there was a map to show the area of disturbance.

Unidentified man stated that they did not have it with them tonight but that there is something depicting the area of disturbance.

The woman asked if the map shows the endangered species (plover).

Unidentified man stated that we will not proceed with this if they are disturbed.

Unidentified Woman asked if he could show her on the map.

He stated that it is not shown on the map. It covers the Sandy Hook area.

Mr. Kolluri stated that we have it, and he would be happy to submit everything to the Mayor for public view.

Unidentified Woman asked if they were getting any funding for the projects at Ft. Hancock.

Mr. Kolluri stated no.

The woman asked if the columns of the bridge are going to be solid or hollow.

Mr. Kolluri stated they would be hollow.

Mr. Handley stated that it facilitates the rapid construction of the bridge, similar to what was constructed on the Victory Bridge.

Unidentified Woman asked what they were called.

Mr. Handley stated that they are pier columns. Precast - prestressed concrete.

Unidentified Woman asked if that would facilitate utilities going across the bridge as well.

Mr. Handley stated that aside from the lighting for the bridge itself, there will be utilities hanging from this bridge. He stated that he believes that there are utilities that will under the river bed.

Unidentified Woman then asked if the area of disturbance has been approved by the DEP.

Mr. Handley said yes.

The unidentified woman stated in closing, that due to new information, she suggests that they reopen the public commentary.

Mr. Parker - Portland Road - Asked the audience for contributions to the Citizens for Rational Coastal Development.

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Michelle _____ - no where in the presentation did Mr. Kolluri state what the maintenance cost of the new bridge might be, what is the life span of the proposed bridge, what materials are being used.

Mr. Kolluri stated that it isn't just about money, his primary concern is the safety. With regard to cost and repair, the DOT has given the Mayor and Council a copy of a report (that the public has access to) regarding the life span of the new bridge, which is approximately 75 years.

Mr. Handley stated that the maintenance would become part of a routine of the area. Presently, the existing bridge requires its' own account to make sure we can handle over \$1 million worth of work per year.

Miss Thomas asked where the service records are of this bridge for the last ten or so years.

Mr. Kolluri stated that necessary maintenance of the bridge was maintained knowing that the bridge was going to be replaced.

Miss Thomas asked what materials will be used to allow this bridge to last upwards of 75 years.

Mr. Kolluri stated concrete and steel.

Mr. Handley described that a repair would require replacement of the entire superstructure, which results in the big number. He said that the reason the life span is estimated at only 20 years is due to the original footings of the bridge, which would remain.

Miss Thomas stated to then replace the bridge with one that is more aesthetically pleasing to the Borough of Highlands.

Ms. Bauer suggested that the reason there was no public meetings before tonight to discuss alternatives is due to the fact that the Department did not study alternatives.

Ms. Bauer asked what the cost of the demolition of the old bridge would be and if that is included in the \$120 proposed construction costs?

Mr. Kolluri stated that it is included in the cost.

Ms. Bauer then asked if there are elevations for a movable bridge option?

Emily Olman - Portland Road - she asked after the 75 year proposed life span of the new bridge will there then be a taller bridge put in its place.

Mr. Kolluri cannot say what the future holds but that the bridge will be constructed in a way that is consistent with all the standards that we currently have, consistent with DEP and consistent with the Coast Guard regulations.

Ms. Olman gave her opinion as to why they should repair the old bridge.

Ann Marie Tierney - is the DOT prepared to move forward at this time.

Mr. Kolluri stated that he intends to work with this community.

Mayor O'Neil stated that there was never any option presented, it was always a fixed bridge.

@10:29 - can't hear man speaking it was inaudible.

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Unidentified man stated that it seems that the engineers don't have the ability to take what is there and make it right.

Mr. Kolluri stated that the report has been submitted to the council.

Unidentified Man then asked if they have gone to any other bridge and looked at what was done to perhaps maintain or repair.

Mr. Handley stated that the difference between this bridge and some other bridges is that this is a harsher environment. He stated that the department did look at the repair of the bridge and that it was just not a cost effective alternative.

Unidentified man asked why should we trust you with these numbers that keep changing?

@10:34 – can't hear too many people speaking.

Someone questioned the overhead signage.

Someone asked if there was any information whether a curved bridge was more dangerous or not during the winter precipitation.

Mr. Kolluri – in audible.

A man stated that with regard to homeland security, is there not an advantage to have someone watching out over the marine comings and goings?

@10:37 – inaudible.

_____ of 29 South Bay Avenue - asked how much beach property would be taken.

The engineer stated that it would be zero.

Miss Thomas stated that what she has seen from the drawings is that it would be about five or ten feet of grassy area.

Mayor O'Neil thanks everyone for coming out this evening. He stated that what the table has asked him to ask is this, open up the public commentary and also is it a possibility to change the design.

@10:50 – Inaudible.

Mayor O'Neil offered a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Nolan and all were in favor.

The Meeting adjourned at 10:51 P.M.

NINA LIGHT FLANNERY, BOROUGH CLERK