



City of New Westminster McBride-Sapperton Residents' Association

Public Meeting and AGM Minutes

Location: Knox Presbyterian Church

Date of Meeting: November 22, 2016 @ 7:15 pm

Attendance: Approximately 150+ residents and special guests, including Mayor Jonathon Cote, Judy D'Arcy (MLA), Councillor Patrick Johnstone, and Director of Engineering Jim Lowrie

Executive: Rnold, Wes, Lutz, Jerry, Kevin, Anita, Dee, Ross, Geoff, Babar, Monica (minutes)

Regrets: None

Presenters: Jennifer Locke, Janelle Erwin and Thomas Jun (Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure), Ken Curry, VP – Parsons, and Mike (?) – Communications Facilitator

- 1. Welcome and Introduction of Executive** **Rnold**
- 2. Approval of Minutes from September 20, 2016 Meeting** **Rnold**
- 3. Brunette Interchange Project** **Rnold and MOTI presenters**
 - Rnold expressed gratitude to everyone for the turnout and pride in the RA membership. He thanked the MOTI representatives for agreeing to come to this meeting, especially at short notice. He also welcomed our special guests.
 - To clarify why Parsons is involved in the process rather than the Ministry using in-house people, he explained that he had been told by MOTI reps that Parsons was hired because MOTI staff do not have the necessary level of expertise for this project.
 - Janelle Erwin then explained the roles of everyone present. In regards to the three Options being presented for consideration by MOTI, she said that all three are “technically feasible”. She said MOTI is open to public feedback and acknowledged, for example, that they have heard from people that there is a need for more information about each option than has been provided so far.
 - Ken Curry of Parsons then took over the presentation. He discussed the “key considerations” involved. He emphasized that this is a “very complicated site” with lots of traffic going through. He went through the criteria for the project, including cost, travel time, traffic safety, property impacts, access to RCH, pedestrian/cycling access, transit impacts, environmental impacts, community plans, and regional goods movement.

- Janelle interjected at that point to state that Technical Reports and Traffic Volume studies for this site are available on the B.I.P. website.
- Ken Curry then went through each option:
- Option A:
 - The intention with this option is to stay within the existing corridor with the connection between New Westminster and Coquitlam being the priority. This option disconnects the Braid industrial site from the highway. The connection to the highway involves connecting Braid to Blue Mountain. This option will involve closing the railway crossing at Braid/Brunette intersection. The connection from United Brunette will be via an overpass over the Skytrain line. There would be a connection for local traffic through Rousseau Street. He admitted that feedback so far from the public has been that Rousseau see an increase in traffic as a result of this design.
- Option B:
 - This design has similar intentions as Option A. There would be Brunette and Braid connectivity and access to the highway. This option involves multiple ramps.
- Option C:
 - This is a variation of Option B, but came from a discussion with the City of New Westminster to keep traffic away from Brunette. This is the option that involves a tunnel connecting United and Brunette rather than an overpass. He said it would be a “complex” tunnel to get under the railway tracks and through the industrial area.
- Ken stated the number of lanes will be based on projected traffic volumes to 2045; Parsons uses the Translink planning model to do their projections. They use this model to quantify overall traffic time savings and delays.
- At this point, there was a question/answer session. The questions and answers are summarized as follows:

Question: Which option best aligns with Coquitlam’s desires?

Answer: Options A and B is what MOTI has heard so far.

Question: Are some criteria given more weight than others?

Answer: “At this time, no. At this time, we want to look at all options and then we will need to look at making tradeoffs.” He said that mitigations can be made during engineering.

Question: If Coquitlam likes B and NW likes C, and the only difference is the tunnel, then could MOTI not just proceed with C?

Answer: “We cannot speak for Coquitlam.” Also, other groups have vested interests in project.

Question: “What is the timeline for the project?”

Answer: Feedback period ends Dec. 23. Mike (the communications coordinator) will be presenting the feedback to MOTI in the new year. They could not give a definite answer on the timeline from there, but said it would take about one year to design, and three to four years for construction.

Question: From an environmental point of view, has a noise assessment been done?

Answer: K.C. – “We have not done that level of detail at this time”. He said they would go into more detailed analysis as time goes on, but said that MOTI policy requires that noise must be analysed.

Question: How does this fit into the regional transit big picture?

Answer: Basically a non-answer was given to this question, except to say that the railways have been consulted.

Question: Re: Rousseau Street and impacts on property owners. “Is this not an unfair burden on the few to benefit the many?” This was followed up by a question about how compensation is determined.

Answer: “We are always working collaboratively with property owners.”

Question: Would Rousseau have on-street parking removed?

Answer: One side of the street would have its parking removed.

Question: As part of the “big picture”, when will we have a decision on the Patullo Bridge? Should this project not be tied in with the Patullo Bridge project to ensure proper traffic flow?

Answer: “We are not working on the Patullo Bridge project”. They then said that they need to fix one area at a time, and that they started looking at the B.I.P about 1 – 1 ½ years ago.

Question: A question was asked about funding for this project and whether the tunnel aspect of Option C would increase the project cost.

Answer: The B.I.P. is a priority, so the money needed for it will be made available. The tunnel would increase the overall cost of the project.

Question: A question was asked about the feasibility of a Stormont Connector to connect Hwy 1 to McBride Boulevard.

Answer: “The Stormont Connector is not in anybody’s plans. What is being worked on is what is known.”

Question: Has livability in the area been given any weight as part of the factors of the project?

Answer: “We want to understand if there is more to livability than what we are considering”, and then explained that to them, livability meant ameliorating traffic volumes in an area. The answer from the crowd in attendance to this question was a resounding “yes” (i.e. there is more to “livability” than just making it faster to get from A to B).

Question: Why can’t the managers of the various projects coordinate and work together? (i.e. project managers of the Patullo Bridge project, B.P.I., etc.).

Answer: “We are talking, but we can only do a bit at a time”.

Question: A question was asked about the decision-making process.

Answer: People will be informed; there will be “no surprises”.

Question: What will be the impact to the Brunette River with Option C?

Answer: There will definitely be “big impacts” due to the tunnel construction, though it is still technically feasible to do.

Question: (from Judy D'Arcy) How is it possible for the community to feel genuinely consulted given the short time frame for public consultation and feedback?

Answer: "We are giving people time to weigh in on the options." They also said it "takes a balance" between giving enough time for consultation and moving forward with decisions.

Question: A question was asked about consultation done within the trucking industry by the industry itself.

Answer: Representatives from the trucking industry contacted the two cities plus the Ministry of Transportation, and then went to their members with their own survey.

At this point, the question and answer session wrapped up, and the MOTI representatives left the meeting. A community discussion followed.

Community Discussion

The following is a summary of some of the comments and questions raised during the discussion.

- "This presentation tonight did not feel like a conversation."
- The importance of giving individual feedback to MOTI was emphasized, particularly in response to the Ministry reps' question of "what livability means" to us. The question was posed to the audience: "What does livability mean to you?" The following are some of the responses given:
 - Greenery, not concrete.
 - Being able to sleep at night with my bedroom windows open.
 - Being able to have a conversation in my front or back yard and hear it.
 - Feeling safe walking through the neighbourhood with my six year old, not worrying about traffic speeding by.
 - Not having to wipe car exhaust off patio furniture twice a day.
 - Wanting to spend time in my neighbourhood, not trying to avoid it.
 - Not having negative visual impacts, or noise/air pollution.
 - Being able to sit in back yard with a cup of tea or glass of wine and not have the constant noise of traffic in the background.
 - Not worrying about the long-term effects of air pollution in my neighbourhood.
- A few residents noted that is important to know how the whole traffic system works together, and not just focus on the individual pieces.
- Rnold noted that the City has produced and made available a comprehensive position paper on the B.I.P. project.
- A question was asked about where the "line of compensation" gets drawn?
- Someone noted the elevation of the overpass would be about 9 metres (30 feet).
- At this point, Mayor Cote spoke. His comments included the following:
 - He thanked everyone for being here, and noted that tonight's meeting was "critically important".
 - He said that the City has expressed its concerns and has articulated what they felt would be the MSRA's feelings, but he said there were skeptics at the Ministry

about that. He is glad that we validated the City's advice to MOTI through our presence and concerns expressed tonight.

- He said we will be the most affected neighbourhood, even compared to those that will be affected in Coquitlam.
- He said the cost of the project is approx. \$500 million, half the cost of replacing the Patullo Bridge. It is therefore a massive project, and an expensive way to move a traffic problem further into New Westminster. It needs to be done right. He worries about the impact of this project on New Westminster, as it is an expensive way to move lots of traffic further down the road system. The City was extremely frustrated that the UBE component was brought up again, almost as if past discussions on this subject with Translink had never occurred. He feels that livability must be front and centre and that the City has already articulated this to MOTI.
- He doesn't know where the project is headed, but it is a top priority at an intergovernmental level. It is better if NW and Coquitlam work together with MOTI on this. He believes the preliminary feedback from Coquitlam (but he emphasized that this information is NOT from the Coquitlam mayor or council) is that Coquitlam prefers Option B.
- In response to a question about whether Coquitlam and NW can come up with another Option, he said NW will not be closed-minded to other possibilities. He said: "I am not prepared to sacrifice Lower Sapperton to find a 'gold-plated solution' to the industrial lands."
- In response to a question about whether we can have a joint master plan with other organizing bodies, Mayor Cote noted that there are competing visions at play, and that this is one of the major challenges. He encourages people to look at the website for the Patullo Bridge and see the detailed planning being done there.
- In response to a question about what we can do, he advised everyone to look to the examples of public engagement with the UBE and Patullo Bridge as ways we worked together to help shape the final outcome.
- Judy D'Arcy commented that we "need to slow this process down" as we need more time for proper consultation and feedback. She feels that it is unreasonable for MOTI to expect that this can be worked out in three weeks, especially leading up to Christmas.
- Rnold and Wes emphasized the necessity of spreading the message about this project amongst our neighbours: "We all need to speak up."
- Some residents expressed concern that the noise impacts and air quality impacts are not going to be assessed until AFTER a decision is made by MOTI about which option they will pursue. It was emphasized that these considerations should be part of the decision-making process .
- **Wes put forward two motions:**

1. That the RA write a letter to MOTI asking that the decision-making process be delayed, and public consultation process be extended until the end of February. That the letter request the opportunity for each community to be able to meet to understand the needs and concerns of

each, as this is an important piece of information. That we be able to see and understand the details of each option in more detail. **Vote – Motion carried.**

2. That the RA aggregate feedback from residents prior to the December 23 deadline, and, with the approval of the Executive, write a letter to MOTI with the RA's official position on this project. **Vote – Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned: 9:20 pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 24, 2016 @ 7:15 pm