CITY of BOSTON
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor

NORTHERN AVENUE BRIDGE

Task Force Members Written Comments (September 2018)

Task Force Member	Concept	Subject	Comments
Patrick Sullivan, Seaport TMA	**Strengthen Resiliency**		
		Raise the bridge at each end	We support raising the new bridge to a height that will protect it from damage/disruption that may be caused by sea level rise of 40 inches by 2070 as projected in the Climate Ready South Boston Action Plan. That being said, we do want to be considerate of how raising the bridge may impact the grade of the bridge and the abutting buildings directly on either side of the channel. We will be looking to the project team to provide a better sense of what design and engineering strategies are possible to raise the bridge without creating a difficult slope that imposes upon abutting buildings.
		Raise the bridge over the navigation channel	We support raising the bridge over the navigation channel to a height equal to the Moakley Bridge to allow a greater number of boats to pass through the channel and access the docks at the Children's Museum and Intercontinental Hotel.
	Honor History		
		Fixed Bridge	We support moving forward with a design for a fixed-span bridge and finding ways to honor the history of the movable bridge through art and/or a display so that future generations understand the history of the Fort Point Channel and the movable bridges along the channel.
		75-year design life	We fully support a bridge design that will have a life of at least 75 years.
		Preserve	We have not come to a final position on this issue yet. Honoring the history of the bridge is a priority, and the shape of the existing bridge has become an icon symbol of the Fort Point Channel/Seaport. We would like to see designs that find ways to incorporate the truss bridge aesthetic but are open to reinterpreted

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			designs that incorporate more modern elements as well.
		Replicate	(see above)
		Reinterpret	(see above)
		New Bridge	(see above)
Richard Martini, The Fallon Company	**History and Mobility**		The new Northern Avenue Bridge should be able to accommodate many forms of transportation – existing and future – some forms probably unknown to us today. We fully support a bridge structure designed for pedestrians, bicycles, emergency vehicles, HOV+ vehicles and yes – even general traffic, if that is necessary. The actual program and use of the bridge – when it opens, as well as 25-50-75 years from now, ought to have the capability and flexibility to adapt to the evolving needs of a growing City. We should also not lose sight of the age and condition of all the transportation infrastructure connecting the Seaport to the rest of the City and Commonwealth. Although we will all despise the day another bridge or tunnel requires substantial repairs, it will happen. The City of Boston would be well served to design and build a new Northern Avenue Bridge that is completely flexible in terms of loading, capacity and programing, so it can provide one of those important links.
Susan Goldberg, US Courts	**Strengthen Resiliency**		I agree that raising the bridge at each end and raising the bridge over the channel are interrelated and prudent. A raised bridge design, that will increase resiliency, is critical given the projected sea level rise in the area. I remain concerned about the impact on the adjacent properties as the design for a raised bridge develops. Specifically, I am concerned about the impact of the necessary increased grade of Northern Avenue on the courthouse and would like to be actively involved in further discussions regarding the proposed

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			design. In addition, I remain concerned about the placement of the vehicle travel lane over the bridge. With the vehicular travel lane proposed on the channel side of the bridge, a moderate turn will be required when approaching the bridge from Northern Avenue. I would like to better understand any impact such a lane shift may have on traffic in the neighborhood.
	Honor History		I support a fixed span bridge design as it is necessary as a reliable means of egress in emergencies. Further, given the capital outlay required to design and construct this bridge, planning for a 75-year design life is the most responsible option. About the level of preservation in the design (i.e., Preserve-Replicate-Reinterpret-New Bridge), our primary concern is to implement the most cost-effective, least encumbered design that will allow for the restoration of this span. This likely means a new bridge, however, if any of the other options remain feasible to implement in a timely fashion, I would not object.
	Placemaking		I understand additional discussion regarding placemaking will take place at the September Task Force meeting. My initial reaction is to allow the Northern Avenue Bridge activation to "evolve over time." It is difficult to make recommendations for the activation of the bridge without having a clear funding plan. Ensuring that this important path of travel is restored as quickly and efficiently as possible is my primary concern.
	Mobility		As indicated on the Discussion Matrix, I understand that this topic will be discussed at the September meeting. It is clear that the bridge design should include pedestrian and bicycle access. The bridge design should at a minimum support emergency vehicle access as a security issue for the courthouse. To the extent other vehicles are allowed on the bridge, my preference is for access limited to public transportation and shuttle buses. The

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			projected impact of any design on the vehicular traffic along Northern Avenue in front of the courthouse remains a concern.
Susanne Lavoie, Wharf District Council	**Strengthen Resiliency**		
		Raise Bridge at each end	Maybe - Concern for limited among of space available at both ends
		Raise Bridge over Navigation Channel	Yes
	Honor History		
		Fixed Bridge	Yes
		75- Year Design Life	Yes
		Preserve Old Material	No
		Replicate	No
		Reinterpret	Yes
		New Bridge	Yes - should be a two-barrel bridge
	Placemaking		
		Area of Respite	Yes
		Active Area	Yes
		Connection to the Water	Yes
		Let It Evolve over Time	No - Do it now
	Improve Mobility		
		Pedestrian	Yes
		Bicycle	Yes
		Emergency Vehicles	Yes
		HOV+	No
		General Traffic	No
	Other Comments		
			Vehicular traffic should not be included in the design without a traffic study and impact analysis on the area.
			Would like the inclusion of a Boston Maritime History Museum as a destination site.

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Bud Ris, Green Ribbon Commission	**Strengthen Resiliency**		
		General resiliency comments	I wish to comment on the Resiliency item on the matrix. It seems to me that the NAB design should make good use of the resiliency planning that the City has undertaken for the Ft Point Channel area and the Seaport. I believe the BFE being used for that work is 15.00 NAVD88 at the mouth of the Ft Point Channel, which is based on the assumption that 40 inches of SLR is likely between 2070 and the end of the century. (Barring dramatic reductions in greenhouse gases globally, the findings from the BRAG report done for CRB would suggest about a 50-50 chance that this amount of SLR will occur in Boston). I would suggest that the bridge ends be designed at least to the 15.00 NAVD88, if not higher.
		Raise the bridge on each end	Alternatively - given the challenge of matching the existing grade elevations at either or both ends of the bridge - perhaps we should be looking at ways of deploying temporary flood walls or permanent gates in those locations that could be raised during times of flood to protect the grade level connections to the bridge? Also, I encourage you to consider whether elevating the bridge ends could facilitate the design of a HarborWalk under the City side of the NAB - needed to close the current gap in the HarborWalk at that location. It may be necessary to anticipate that a HarborWalk under the bridge would flood with increasing frequency over time, but perhaps a creative design could be developed that would safely accommodate that condition - maybe even emphasize it to illustrate the growing exposure of the City to flood risks? (The HarborWalk under the Seaport side of the Moakley bridge already floods pretty regularly, as I am sure you know.) Also, since NOAA's Boston Harbor tide gauge is located right next to the existing NAB, I encourage

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			you to think about how an exhibit explaining SLR etc. could be incorporated into the bridge design. All eyes will be on that tide gauge in the decades ahead as the water in Boston Harbor rises!
			Finally, how will the proposed pedestrian wharf running perpendicular to the bridge at its center be designed to minimize or accommodate flooding?
	Honor History		
			Re the History section of the matrix, I would favor incorporating some of the old historic features in an entirely new bridge - if it turns out that fully restoring the old bridge in a fixed position would be too costly or infeasible. (The engineering reports suggesting that 75-93% of the old bridge would have to be replaced or restored in order to maintain the original design in a fixed position seem quite daunting!)