

CANALWALK MEETING

NOTES from April 24, 2008

Present: Bruce Fowler, Nancy Sachs (note taker), Maggie Bergin, Kari Gatzke, Carlos Vega, Sandra Mongeon, Sandy Ward, Judy Sherman, Kate Thibodeau, Nona Hatay, Elaine Pluta, Octavia Mackay, Denis Luzuriaga, Marjorie Latham, Craig Della Penna, Cynthia Sommer, E. Denis Walsh, Tim Purington, Pat Duffy, John Kaminsky, Ed Toole

Welcome and introductions. Maggie Bergin gives presentation on CanalWalk Project (see presentation outline below.) She distributes handouts with explanations of project players: City of Holyoke (project leader), Tigh and Bond (engineering design firm) and MassHighway (administrators of the funding for project). She outlines the 5 important steps of the approval process necessary to get a transportation project to bid.

She notes that as of late March there was some discrepancy between the City and the Mass Highway Department as to the current design phase. In conversation, MassHighway indicated to her that Phase Ia is at 75%. Office of Planning and Dev has been led to understand the project is at 100%. At this point the project has been assigned a project number and a project manager. One attendee shares that she has had a conversation with Mayor Sullivan who mentioned that the project was out to bid.

There is some group discussion and questions asked: Why can't City and State get this thing going? Can the funds be lost/taken away? Has there been interest earned on the \$5.8 million over 10 years? What are the obstacles to the next phase(s) of the project? Discussion of easements and eminent domain as a historical problem since project's inception. Another attendee shares some historical info: The influence of Ted Kennedy in obtaining original funding and the bankruptcy of the original design firm. Remarks that the City Council has been behind the project 100%. The need for public support is noted. Another attendee mentions a range of time frames for similar projects: 3-22 years.

Group is given task of brainstorming specific activities to support the CanalWalk Project and move the project forward. After all ideas are noted, each group member is given a pen and asked to place a mark next to their top three actions.

After tallying votes, most popular actions are: 1. Meet with Mayor and/or Kathy Anderson. 2) CanalWalk tabling at farmer's market. 3) A walking tour of project. (refer to attachment for complete list)

In the close of the meeting, the group decides they would like to include two activities in next meeting: 1) Invite City's Economic Development Department director to brief group on status of project. 2) Discuss the results of brainstorming activity/next step.

Presentation by Maggie Bergin follows:

THE HOLYOKE CANALWALK
PREPARED FOR THE FRIENDS OF THE CANALWALK
By The Art of Politics: A Government Affairs Consulting Company

1. Project Leaders

City of Holyoke

The City of Holyoke is the project leader, working in collaboration their engineering and design consultant, Tighe and Bond, and MassHighway. The City's Office of Planning and Development administers the project locally.

Holyoke Office of Planning and Development

Kathy Anderson, Director

andersok@ci.holyoke.ma.us

413.322.5655

Tighe and Bond

Thus far, the City of Holyoke has retained the engineering and design firm of Tighe and Bond for all engineering work on the Canalwalk.

Tighe and Bond

Dave Loring

53 Southampton Road

Westfield, MA

413.562.1600

MassHighway

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation is known as MassHighway. MassHighway administers most of the funding for this project, and oversees the Canalwalk's engineering, planning, and specifications. MassHighway has two levels of project overseers, the Boston office and the local office. Holyoke is served by the District II local office. MassHighway's Boston office assigns a Project Manager while MassHighway's District II Office provides local guidance and feedback to the Boston office.

Mass Highway, District II

Rich Massey

811 North King St.

Northampton, MA 01060

Phone: 413.582.0507

MassHighway Boston

Guatam Sen, Canalwalk Project

Manager

617.973.7800

2. The Approval Process

The city/town, the consultant/engineer and MassHighway each play a role in the management of a transportation project. All federal transportation funds are passed to the state and administered by MassHighway. In order for a community like Holyoke to draw the funds down from the state, it must meet MassHighway's engineering, planning and environmental specifications, and must locally match a small portion of MassHighway's spending on a project (Usually an 80/20 split.) Each transportation project managed by MassHighway is given a project number and assigned a Project Manager.

Steps Toward Approval

Transportation projects have many iterations, but before construction begins, there are only five official measurements of a project's readiness:

1. 25% design phase,
2. 75% design phase,
3. 100% design phase and,
4. PS&E (Plans, Specifications and Estimates)
5. Project goes out to bid.

Generally, the following actions are required at each step, with exception of step five, when the project goes out for bid:

1. City/town submits project plans to MassHighway local office.
2. MassHighway local office adds feedback and forwards plans to Boston Office.
3. Boston office engineers, planners and environmental staff each add comments.
4. Project manager consolidates all comments and responds to City/town
5. City/town and its consultant reviews MassHighway feedback and implement necessary changes/additions.

At step five, generally the following happens:

1. MassHighway issues public RFP.
2. RFP is open for 90 days.
3. At end of 90 days, MassHighway reviews bids. This can take as little as 30 days or as long as 60 days.
4. MassHighway awards bids to construction company.
5. Construction begins

Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout the process, the three project participants have the following basic roles and responsibilities:

City/Town – Work with Consultant to ensure project is designed and engineered according to City/Town’s specifications. Organize and hold statutorily required public design hearings. Submit plans to MassHighway

Consultant – Prepare environmental plans, engineering plans and plan specifications and estimates. Present plans at public meetings. Amend plans based on feedback from MassHighway and client.

MassHighway – Review and comment on submitted plans at 25%, 75%, and 100% design. Send project out to bid when the PS&E is complete. Manage bid process and supervise project construction.

3. Project Phasing

Phase I

The initial 75% design submission for Phase I of the Canalwalk contained both sides of the first level canal from Appleton to Lyman Streets. Subsequent to the original 75% design, the city submitted a “Revised 75% Design” that broke the original Phase I into two segments: Phase IA and Phase IB. The revised 75% design is at MassHighway for comment. MassHighway’s District II Office has sent their comments to the Project Manager in Boston. When MassHighway’s Project Manager receives all comments, he will forward specific change requests for 100% design back to the City and Tighe and Bond.

Phase IA

Phase IA is located on the eastern side of the first level canal from Appleton to Dwight Streets. This segment is on the opposite side of the canal from Heritage State Park. The MassHighway assigned project number for this Phase is **603262**.

Phase IB

MassHighway has asked the City or Tighe and Bond to wait on planning phases beyond Phase IA. MassHighway wants Phase IA to be completely designed before the City works on further Phases. MassHighway personnel currently assume that Phase IB will include both sides of the first level canal from Dwight St. to Lyman St. because those areas were included in the original 75% design submission, but this is only speculation. There is no project number assigned for this or any additional phase of the Canalwalk.

Future Phases

In 2003, an overview of the Canalwalk included the following descriptions and costs:

Phase	Canal	Streets Included	Cost
Phase One	First Level Canal	Appleton to Lyman St.	\$1,979,000

Phase Two	Second Level Canal	Appleton to Dwight Street	\$4,042,000 (includes \$2,000,000 in-kind contribution for utility relocation)
Phase Three	Second Level Canal	Hamilton to Appleton and Dwight to Lyman St.	\$3,186,000
Total Estimated Cost of Phases I, II and III			\$9,207,000

4. Funding Summary

The Holyoke Canalwalk is the recipient of three large federal appropriations. The Holyoke Canalwalk has also received significant support from the Commonwealth. The City will seek additional funding for future phases once it has spent funding already allocated.

State or Federal	Year	Account	Amount
Federal	1991	ISTEA Transportation Authorization Bill	\$258,188
State	2000	Transportation Appropriations Bill	\$51,638
State	2002	Urban Recreation Account within Environmental Affairs Bill	\$700,000
Federal	2004	Transportation Appropriations Bill	\$1,200,000
Federal	2005	SAFETEA Transportation Authorization Bill	\$3,500,000
Total Federal and State Funding¹			\$5,709,826
Additional Funding Needed, Based on 2003 Cost Estimate of Phases I, II and III²			\$3,497,174

¹ This list was verified using publicly available documents. The Art of Politics makes no guarantees that this list is complete.

² City matching contributions are not known and not included. Federal transportation programs require a 20% state/local match.