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GATEWAY PROJECT MEETING

APRIL 4, 2013

6:30 p.m.

Parkview Church

Iowa City, Iowa

1 ANNOUNCER: We will do a brief
2 presentation, Mark and Melissa will take care of
3 that, and then we will open up the mic for comments.
4 We are going to try to get it so that everyone who
5 wants to make a comment has a chance to do that
6 before you circle back around. The other thing is if
7 you're like me and you wake up in the middle of the
8 night thinking gosh, I wish I said that, you have a
9 week to either mail or e-mail comments to us. All of
10 them are equally valid, all of them carry the same
11 weight, we just need them by April 15 to get them in
12 the final document. So with that I will turn it over
13 to Mark and Melissa.

14 MS. CLOW: Good evening. I am Melissa
15 Clow, the special projects administrator with Iowa
16 City. And I am just going to revisit for any of you
17 who don't know, I'm sure most of you do, what the
18 issues are for this project and why we are looking at
19 elevating Dubuque Street and Park Road Bridge.
20 We will be addressing the following issues: Historic
21 floods. In 1993 the road was closed for 60 days; and
22 then in 2008 it was closed for 30 days. And Park
23 Road Bridge was closed, in addition to Dubuque
24 Street, causing backwater all the way up to the Iowa
25 Power River Dam.

1 Almost on a yearly basis we do experience
2 seasonal flooding along Dubuque Street. We almost
3 saw it this year. We've had flooding in the medians
4 quite a bit, but that appears to be coming down.
5 Anytime we have rains an inch or more per hour, you
6 will see flooding and closures on the northbound
7 Dubuque Street lanes.

8 We also have a number of infrastructure
9 issues along Dubuque Street that will need to be
10 taken care of whether or not we raise Dubuque. That
11 includes the pavement, it is over 30 years old. And
12 also turning lanes from Dubuque to Park Road. And
13 we're looking at dual turn lanes from Park Road to
14 Dubuque Street.

15 Talking about Park Road Bridge, it is
16 functionally deficient. We would be looking at deck
17 repair and there are also a number of safety issues
18 with their pedestrian codes and barriers that are
19 required now that currently do not exist.

20 Real quick I will touch on the project
21 purpose and need. This is our third and final
22 meeting for the planning process for the
23 environmental assessment. And our first step, if you
24 remember, was to establish this purpose and need.
25 The reason for the project will be to increase the

1 reliability of Dubuque Street, increase the
2 reliability of Park Road Bridge, reduce that
3 backwater I talked about, and also improve the
4 infrastructure.

5 We will be taking a complete streets
6 approach to the project and we want to maintain this
7 park-like and unique setting that we have coming in
8 to Iowa City.

9 The one thing to note about this project is
10 that it is the one flood protection project that will
11 reduce the flood water elevations of the river.
12 Taking a look at the schedule really quick. Like I
13 said this is the last step of phase one and the
14 planning process. This is the big picture. For many
15 of you we have not gotten in to the fine details, the
16 final engineering, and we are hoping to start that in
17 the next month or two. That will be phase two.

18 We're looking at a year for final design.
19 That will include kind of the look of the project and
20 the landscape plan as well. And then phase three
21 will be two construction seasons in 2014 and 2015.
22 And with that I will turn it over to Mark Pearson.

23 MR. PEARSON: Thanks. Just before we get
24 going with the comment period I thought we would walk
25 through what the preferred alternative is that you

1 have probably seen in the document, that you may have
2 been talking with folks from the city or from the
3 consultant staff this evening.

4 Starting with Dubuque Street, a couple
5 features related to that. As Melissa mentioned we
6 will be elevating the street. The change in
7 elevation will begin at the Foster Road intersection
8 and will tie back in with the existing elevation near
9 Brown Street. In that stretch the changes in
10 elevation will range anywhere from a foot upwards of
11 15 feet, especially near the Mayflower entrance and
12 as you get down to Kimball Road.

13 So it will be a higher street but it
14 follows the same alignment pretty much as it does
15 now, with the noted exception that in the vicinity of
16 Mayflower, between there and Foster, we have proposed
17 moving the alignment a little bit to the west towards
18 the park and away from the residents, from basically
19 Kimball -- or from Park Road north through that
20 corridor.

21 During this time we will also be
22 constructing a number of, as Melissa has mentioned,
23 amenities related to the complete streets concepts.
24 So things like the bus and transit stops that are
25 there currently in the project, we will maintain

1 those either close to or at their exact location. We
2 are going to work to build new trails and sidewalks
3 so that the trail that is along the west side of
4 Dubuque Street currently will be replaced. It might
5 be in a slightly different location, it might be a
6 different elevation, but it is going to be there. It
7 will be a ten-foot multi-use path.

8 On the eastern side of Dubuque Street there
9 will be new sidewalk along the whole corridor. On
10 Park Road Bridge there will be, in addition to the
11 five travel lanes for traffic, there will be two
12 10-foot multi-use paths so you'll have more room for
13 bicycle and pedestrian traffic on the bridge. And as
14 Melissa also mentioned, those will have additional
15 safety features to keep that traffic separate from
16 the pedestrians and bicyclists.

17 Another feature related to the longer Park
18 Road Bridge that we have proposed will be the ability
19 for users of the sidewalks and trails to actually
20 pass underneath the west side of the bridge so that
21 you're not facing a great crossing to get, say, from,
22 the Hancher side to the city park side.

23 One other aspect that I should mention is
24 that if you have existing driveway access on Dubuque
25 Street today, when we're done with the project you

1 will still have driveway access. We made a concerted
2 effort to keep those. It might be, again, slightly
3 different, and we'll work those details out over the
4 next year, but again if you have driveway access
5 today you'll have it when we're done.

6 And also existing intersections with Ridge,
7 Taft Speedway, the entrance to the boathouse and
8 Terrell Mill Park will also be maintained. Again,
9 they will be slightly different but it will look very
10 much the same when we're done.

11 A little bit about the bridge. We're
12 proposing to have a steel or concrete girder bridge.
13 Similar probably in terms of construction type to the
14 new bridge that is on the south side of town -- I'm
15 drawing a blank, on the name -- McCallister. We
16 don't know what it is going to look like yet but we
17 do know that we're proposing a slightly longer
18 bridge, about 450 long instead of 300 feet. And it
19 will be a wider bridge because it will accommodate an
20 additional travel lane. We'll have five 12-foot
21 travel lanes for traffic, and then the additional
22 multi-use paths on either side of the bridge that I
23 mentioned before.

24 It is going to have similar transit access
25 in the vicinity of the bridge or on the bridge. Also

1 some aspect that Melissa mentioned, there will be no
2 backwater caused by this new bridge. In fact, it
3 will have the net effect of reducing backwater that
4 was caused by the current bridge. We will be able to
5 do that by having fewer piers in the water. We will
6 be able to do that by having a longer span with the
7 abutments that are pulled further back to give the
8 water more room to pass. And it will be a higher
9 bridge than the current one. But the net effect of
10 that is that it minimizes or completely eliminates
11 any backwater whatsoever that the current bridge
12 causes.

13 And that kind of concludes the
14 presentation. Really the focus of this session is to
15 hear your comments. So we ask that anybody who is
16 interested in making a comment come on up, take your
17 time, but we do ask that you allow everybody who
18 wants to have a chance to speak at least make that
19 first pass. We're asking that everybody keep their
20 comments to about three minutes.

21 We're going to have a little hourglass just
22 so you have a sense of how much time you have. We're
23 not going to cut you off right at three minutes but
24 we do ask that you keep your comments to the point
25 and on topic. And then if you think of something

1 else you want to add, after everybody has had a
2 chance to make their initial comment, if you want to
3 add something new feel free to do that.

4 We'll get set up here in just a second.
5 And then if anybody has a comment that you want to
6 make on the mic, all we do is ask that you step up,
7 please state your name and what your address is so we
8 know who you are. And we have a court reporter here
9 tonight. She'll transcribe it verbatim and then we
10 have that record of this. So we will get going with
11 that in just a second.

12 And it is real simple, if you want to make
13 a comment, step on up, state your name, residence.
14 And if you don't want to make a comment, that's fine
15 too. We can stick around a little bit later and
16 continue with the open house. It doesn't carry any
17 more weight than it does if you send us an e-mail or
18 write it down in the comment table back there. It is
19 just another means of making your comment heard,
20 so don't be shy.

21 MS. CLINE: My name is Sally Cline, I live
22 at 33 Trevoise, Idlyllwild. It is just a question and
23 I hope you can answer it. But we have heard over the
24 past almost five years that Mayflower is going to
25 actually have a flood wall in front of its building.

1 So if that is correct, then do we see Dubuque Street
2 below that or even to?

3 MS. CLOW: Yes, Mayflower is doing their
4 own separate flood mitigation project and that will
5 begin at the end of the current semester, so they'll
6 be starting this summer.

7 So we were trying to coincide the projects
8 together, but they will be starting this summer, we
9 will start next summer. They are going to have a
10 permanent wall and create a patio up there. On top
11 of the wall they'll have an invisible flood wall
12 which essentially is the removable panels that will
13 go in on top of it.

14 MS. CLINE: That is in front of some of the
15 University buildings, the art buildings?

16 MS. CLOW: Yes, so they'll be protected to
17 the 500-year flood elevation plus two feet. And our
18 environmental assessment is proposing the roadway to
19 be at the 500 plus one foot, so the roadway would be
20 above their first floor by a few feet.

21 MS. WALL: I am Mary Wall. I live on Ridge
22 Road. I have lived here since 1960. And I have been
23 mouthing off about this for a long time so I thought
24 maybe I better come and be informed about what it is.
25 Ever since 1960 parts of Dubuque Street have gone

1 under water every single year. In '93, in 2008 it
2 was much more than usual. But I was joking in saying
3 what are they going to do, build a causeway with an
4 off ramp on the second floor to the Mayflower?

5 As I look at the plans and the things that
6 the engineering firm here has thought, I'm really
7 gratified. I'm glad I came tonight. I know that the
8 money is an awful lot of money, but I think in the
9 long run when things are done it looks to me like
10 they thought it out well and there probably will be a
11 great deal of improvement. That's all I wanted to
12 say.

13 MS. OWEN: My name is Daissy Owen and I
14 live at 2 Bella Vista Place. I have been there since
15 1974, so I am very close to where your work is going
16 to be. My concern is when are you going to quit the
17 noise every day? Is it going to be a 24/7, or are we
18 going to have some time to be able to rest from the
19 noise?

20 MS. CLOW: We do have a city noise
21 ordinance. And Ron, if I'm mistaken please correct
22 me, from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. But we realize this is a
23 residential area so we will be enforcing more strict
24 ordinance that the noisy work be done at a proper
25 time.

1 MS. OWEN: Yes, because we will be
2 listening to the noise all day, we will be -- you
3 know, we need some time to rest at night.

4 MS. CLOW: Right. And there may be a few
5 times where we need to shut down the road entirely to
6 raise grade and meet intersections to keep the road
7 open, so there may be a few periods where there would
8 be longer hours of work, but you would be notified
9 well in advance and we will be communicating with you
10 when that would happen.

11 MS. OWEN: Thank you.

12 MR. KNOCHE: So there are times when we do
13 pour pavement and we have to cut in joints in that
14 pavement, make sure it doesn't crack early and make
15 sure it cracks where we want it to. If they're
16 pouring a pavement during the day and they get out
17 there and they're ready to saw cut at 3:00 in the
18 morning, that's when they'll have to be out there saw
19 cutting. So there may be some times when there'll be
20 some early morning, late evening types of work going
21 on, but we'll keep you informed of when that work is
22 going to occur.

23 MS. CLOW: So it would be one early
24 morning, not three or four in a row?

25 MR. KNOCHE: Correct. It could be later

1 than -- yes, it could be after that 10:00 p.m.,
2 between that 10:00 p.m. and that 7:00 a.m. timeframe.
3 I just want to make sure we don't make any promises
4 we can't hold up to, so --

5 MR. GEERDES: Greg Geerdes, 890 Park Place
6 in Iowa City.

7 More of a question than a comment. When
8 you're raising the roadway the 5 to 15 feet that
9 you're contemplating, do you need to build a
10 retaining wall or anything along the riverside, or do
11 you have enough space to preserve the bank with this
12 new sill on top of it?

13 MS. CLOW: We will be building a retaining
14 wall between the bridge and Terrell Mill Park,
15 because we are very restricted in space there. And
16 to maintain the pedestrian way and create room for a
17 sidewalk on the east side we will need a retaining
18 wall.

19 MR. GEERDES: I can understand why you
20 would need to do that. The only point I would make
21 is I hope you pay attention to the aesthetics of that
22 because that's a big deal.

23 MS. CLOW: Definitely.

24 MR. GEERDES: And I note that you are
25 probably going to be tearing up the median between

1 the north and the south lanes, so I would strongly
2 encourage you to coordinate the aesthetics and the
3 landscaping of this whole corridor.

4 MS. CLOW: Yes, the aesthetics are very
5 important to us and we want to maintain -- the unique
6 look it has right now we want to maintain. The
7 retaining wall we do understand that you're going to
8 be able to view that from city park, so the
9 aesthetics of that is going to be very important as
10 well.

11 MR. GEERDES: Because that would be really
12 a bad deal if you didn't do it right, so --

13 MS. CLOW: Right.

14 MR. GEERDES: Thank you.

15 MR. COULTER: I'm Joe Coulter, I live at
16 1818 North Dubuque. That's my garage that's buried
17 over there right across the street.

18 As I understand, the present northbound
19 lane of Dubuque Street will be essentially abandoned
20 and a sidewalk be put down on the east side basically
21 over the old northbound lane. That would mean that
22 my garage will not be buried.

23 However, my question is that low place,
24 which always floods and receives runoff from Ridge
25 Road from up on the north end of Dubuque Street comes

1 down there. And as I understand it there's not going
2 to be an elevation raise there. How is the runoff
3 going to be dealt with in that low area on the east
4 side of North Dubuque Street between essentially
5 Ridge Road and Foster Road?

6 MS. CLOW: If I understand you you're
7 talking about the drainage ditch that runs along
8 Foster?

9 MR. PEARSON: No. On your side?

10 MR. COULTER: On my side that always
11 floods, that floods first where the culvert is.

12 MS. CLOW: Along Bjaysville. That's a
13 detail we're going to decide during final design. We
14 have talked about sliding the ditch on the west side
15 over with the roadway so we would maintain that
16 culvert under Dubuque Street. And so that's one
17 option is to maintain the ditch. Or we could close
18 it in a box culvert and take it out that way.

19 MR. PEARSON: A lot of that drainage detail
20 still needs to get worked out during design, but what
21 we're trying to do is not just solve the flooding
22 problem from the river but also from the problems
23 that you describe. So there is a lot of drainage
24 study that still needs to be done to get that water
25 out of there and not cause that flooding.

1 MR. COULTER: And as many of you know who
2 live there, in fact much of the water actually comes
3 from the river and it is coming back under the road
4 and that's why the water comes up there. And then it
5 doesn't matter how high the new Dubuque Street
6 Roadway is, if that's still a low place that's still
7 going to receive river backflow into there.

8 MS. CLOW: Right. That's exactly right.
9 That is one of the biggest drainage problems is that
10 at the Dubuque Street/Foster Road intersection the
11 grade of the drainage ditch is about equal to the
12 normal water elevation of the river. So anytime
13 there is high water in the river, it backs up through
14 the ditch all the way to that intersection. So that
15 is one of the hydraulic challenges Mark was just
16 talking about that we will be looking in to during
17 final design.

18 MR. JONES: I am Douglas Jones, I live at
19 816 West Park Road.

20 During the flood of 2008 I was -- my garage
21 floor was about 12 to 18 inches above the high water
22 mark, so it was very close to being inundated.
23 During the flood I walked down and took a number of
24 pictures at the Park Road Bridge. And I have
25 pictures of a white water rapids pouring over Park

1 Road on the west side of the bridge that illustrates
2 the amount of water that bridge held back.

3 It was really acting as a dam. And that dam is part
4 of the reason the water was as close to my house as
5 it was. So I'm really very strongly endorsing the
6 elevation of Park Road Bridge and the creating of a
7 much wider clear channel there so that the bridge
8 won't act as a filter to sieve out all the debris
9 floating in the water and build, what people who
10 worry about drainage, call a debris dam. We came
11 very close to damming the river with all the crud
12 that was sieved out after the water by the railings.

13 As to the elevation of Dubuque Street, I
14 think for the good of the city as a whole it is
15 absolutely essential. We just can't have closures of
16 major access roads to this town during every single
17 high water event, and that's where we have been in
18 the last decades with flooding. We need secure,
19 ready access to Iowa City from the north and we can't
20 handle shutdowns there.

21 When I look at the alternatives, we went
22 through three different preliminary alternatives
23 before this particular outline of the plan was
24 decided on, and this is far more sensible looking
25 than the earlier planning that I have seen. This

1 really coincides with what I thought looks sensible
2 when I looked at those alternatives. And so I really
3 would like to see it go ahead.

4 MR. SOBOCINSKI: I'm Mike Sobocinski, I
5 represent the Phi Delta Theta Household Association.
6 We are technically the landlords for the fraternity
7 house at 729 North Dubuque Street.

8 We're always at -- it seems like we're
9 always giving up something for city projects. We
10 have always worked with the city. My concern this
11 time is the elevation change to Dubuque Street
12 because it will impact our driveway access which is
13 at Brown Street.

14 During the last improvement of Dubuque
15 Street we gave up property traits and property and
16 improved our access. I do not want to see it get any
17 worse because it is a -- it is difficult enough to
18 get in and out with good weather, bad weather, sight
19 line distance, everything. So I would hope we could
20 enter into discussion in to how it is going to affect
21 our property because we are in the valley and we're
22 willing to talk, we just want to make sure we don't
23 lose anything.

24 We have owned the property for -- our
25 organization has owned the property for 90 years,

1 since it was a public quarry, so I believe that makes
2 us the oldest existing owner of the stretch at this
3 point in time. And I did keep the water out of the
4 building in '08, so -- I have signed in, so I would
5 appreciate being brought in to the mix with the
6 design issues.

7 MS. CLOW: Yes. And just so you know it is
8 definitely our intention, once we get in to those
9 final design details with adjacent properties, we
10 will be talking to you about our plan and what we
11 will do to improve the property. It is our intention
12 to look at all these access points and improve what
13 is there already with this project.

14 MR. TOBIN: My name is Sean Tobin, I live
15 at 207 Black Springs Circle.

16 And I am just curious, this is less
17 critical to the economic access on Dubuque Street in
18 and out and the flooding and homes and so forth, but
19 has consideration been given to the waterway passage
20 through the bridge?

21 So primarily there is a -- I'm a former
22 rowing coach and an enthusiast of rowing myself, but
23 there's two-way traffic and so there are rights of
24 way heading up and downstream and it becomes
25 problematic for two reasons: One is that the spread

1 of oars in both directions require, in order to not
2 collide with the bridge abutments, there needs to be
3 adequate room to be able to navigate. And if there's
4 three pillars, which is better than the pillars that
5 are currently in place, depending upon where they're
6 positioned relative to the shoreline, they could
7 either -- they could in effect inadvertently narrow
8 the traffic channel if they are away from the
9 shoreline but not in enough to allow a passage lane
10 to the outside, as well as allowing for passage to
11 the inside.

12 So that said -- but I'm sure there is a lot
13 of expenses that go in to different bridge designs,
14 but certainly a single pillar is fewer obstacles, two
15 pillars might allow a central passage as well as two
16 outer passages.

17 But I don't know -- I know that -- and I'm
18 not speaking on behalf of the University of Iowa or
19 the Athletic Department or Iowa City Recreation, but
20 I know all of those parties are out of town or they
21 have changes in roles so there may not be a
22 representative here to convey those concerns.
23 So primarily it is just if there's going to continue
24 to be that access to the waterway then maintaining
25 safe traffic channels is important.

1 I also was very concerned when the flood of
2 '93 happened, to the gentleman that is familiar with
3 the fraternity, it seemed like the way the
4 orientation of those bridge abutments, it just
5 pointed the water right smack down at the fraternity.
6 And it was -- it seemed like it resulted in a
7 tremendous amount of erosion on the eastern shore
8 while silting in the river on the Hancher side. So
9 it seems to me that obviously being in line with the
10 approaching water as it is coming downstream seems to
11 make sense to not create resistance and then just let
12 it flow out wherever, but I don't know, some kind of
13 orientation.

14 Obviously it would probably be
15 perpendicular to the orientation of the actual bridge
16 orientation, but I guess just the effect it has on
17 receiving the water and pointing the water, that
18 whole corner is on a very steep bend so the water
19 wants to go to the outside and erode to the outside
20 anyway. And so as long as -- so I'm just wondering
21 how the bridge might magnify that dilemma or minimize
22 that dilemma. And I don't know if that speaks to
23 backwater, but --

24 MS. CLOW: As far as your first question
25 with the rowing team, that has been in our

1 discussions the whole time and we've had
2 communication with the university and we want to make
3 sure that where we place our piers will not hamper
4 their operations. Obviously we have a great boat
5 house right there and we just want to enhance what
6 they already have there and hopefully give them the
7 opportunity to have more events.

8 MR. PEARSON: And in regard to your second
9 question about the hydraulics, a lot of that analysis
10 is going to happen over the next year so that the
11 piers get lined up in the river both to avoid causing
12 conflicts with the river traffic but also to be as
13 efficient as possible with the river channel and not
14 cause any resistance. And we can go in to a lot of
15 detail, but the net effect is that we don't want to
16 create any backwater or contribute to destabilization
17 on either side, so a lot of that analysis will be
18 conducted over the next few months.

19 ANNOUNCER: Anybody else? Again, I want to
20 thank everybody for coming out tonight. We are going
21 to hang around for a little bit to talk one-on-one.
22 I know someone might be anxious to see a basketball
23 game, but we are glad you're here.

24 Again, please feel free to send in written
25 comments or e-mail comments to either Website, which

1 is www.iowacitygateway.org, or via old fashion U.S.
2 postal service and that address is on your handouts
3 and also on your comment form. And we will be taking
4 those through April 15th, tax day. So thank you all
5 and good night.

6 (Whereupon the meeting concluded at 7:02
7 p.m., April 4, 2013.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, the undersigned, a Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of Iowa, do hereby certify that I acted as the Certified Shorthand Reporter in the foregoing matter at the time and place indicated herein; that I took in shorthand the proceedings had at said time and place; that said shorthand notes were reduced to the foregoing printed transcript under my supervision and direction, and that the foregoing pages are a full and correct transcript of the shorthand notes so taken; that said meeting was not submitted for review.

I further certify that I am neither attorney nor counsel for, or related to or employed by any of the parties in the foregoing matter, and further that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, or financially interested in the action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ____ day of _____, 2013.

CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER.