



## **COUNTY OF HUDSON / COUNTY OF ESSEX**

### **Local Concept Development Study for the Clay Street Bridge over the Passaic River in the Borough of East Newark, Hudson County, NJ and the City of Newark, Essex County, NJ**

#### **PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER MEETING SUMMARY REPORT**

**DATE:** Monday, April 7, 2014  
**TIME:** 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Community Room, Studebaker Lofts  
368 Broad Street, Newark, NJ

#### **PURPOSE OF MEETING**

The purpose of this public meeting is to introduce the project team, present the project status and schedule, and to obtain input from the general public on the community interests associated with the Clay Street Bridge in developing the project purpose and need.

#### **MEETING SUMMARY**

1. A total of 21 individuals attended the Public Information Center (PIC) meeting in the City of Newark from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Fourteen (14) project team members were in attendance. Seven (7) individuals are listed on the Sign-In Sheet for the PIC Meeting, representing the Studebaker Lofts, and residents from the Studebaker Lofts and Pavilion Apartment complexes.
2. The meeting was designed as an open house format with display boards providing project information for viewing by the general public and to provide reference in addressing any questions from the public. Project Team members were in attendance to present information and assist with questions from the community stakeholders and general public.
3. Two handouts were available at the sign-in table: (1) PIC Project Information Handout and (2) blank PIC Comment Form distributed to the general public upon sign-in to the meeting. The Comment Form could be completed to hand in at the meeting or could be faxed, emailed or mailed to either Hudson County Project Manager, Joseph Glembocki, or to Essex County Project Manager, Luis Rodriguez. The handouts were available also in Spanish. Both the English and Spanish versions of the Handouts are now posted on the project web site. ([www.claystbridge.com](http://www.claystbridge.com), under Community Outreach).
4. The project display boards used to share information during the open house included: (1) aerial map of project study area indicating the deficiencies (2) environmental screening map indicating constraints and (3) cultural resources map showing historic properties in the area.

5. No Stakeholder Surveys were received at the evening meeting in the City of Newark. One completed Stakeholder Survey was received at the afternoon meeting session (2-4pm). The organization has been added to the Community Stakeholders list and Project Portfolio was given to the representative.

6. A screen presentation area was available with seating for viewing the PowerPoint presentation, which was presented at 6:30pm. After introductions from the Project Team, Joseph Glembocki, Hudson County Project Manager provided an overview of the project noting the following:

The Clay Street Bridge is shared structure between Hudson County and Essex County. The need to study the bridge is due to structural deficiencies that will require either a major rehabilitation or replacement. The purpose of this study is to identify how to improve the existing bridge. The costs are too great for the County so it requires Federal funding. This Local Concept Development Study is the first step to the bridge improvements. Hudson County filed an application with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) who is overseeing this phase of the project. The bridge is under both Hudson County and Essex County jurisdiction. It's important getting input from the community stakeholders to decide what improvements are needed for the bridge. Once an alternative is decided, then NJDOT Local Aid would administer the project for the design and construction phases with the Counties using Federal funding.

7. Bruce Riegel, Hardesty & Hanover Project Manager, then presented the project information, status and schedule with PowerPoint presentation slides. Robert Piel (Environmental Specialist, Amy S. Greene Consultants, Inc.) provided information on the environmental resource screening using the display map of environmental screening and Glenn Modica (Cultural Resources Specialist, Richard Grubb & Associates, Inc.) presented information on the cultural resources screening using a display map showing an aerial of the project area with the historic sites indicated. The PIC PowerPoint presentation and the display maps are available on the project web site ([www.claystbridge.com](http://www.claystbridge.com), under Community Outreach).

8. Below are the comments shared by attendees (representatives of civic, social service, business owners, residents and general public) during the Q&A at the end of the brief presentation and during the open house, noted by Project Team members as follows:

a. *Question:* Is the bridge safe enough to drive on?

*Response:* Yes, the bridge is safe to drive and walk on; however, it is in need of major repairs, and if not implemented, the bridge could be posted with a weight restriction (load posted) and eventually closed to traffic.

b. *Question:* How often is the bridge checked?

*Response:* All bridges are inspected every 2 years to ensure safety and determine what maintenance and repairs are needed.

c. *Question:* How about the Pulaski Skyway and its condition?

*Response:* The Pulaski Skyway is in very poor condition and is load posted where no trucks are allowed on the structure. April 12<sup>th</sup> is the beginning of construction where the NJDOT will be replacing the deck structure and must limit traffic to one direction in order to do the work. Visit [www.njcommuter.com](http://www.njcommuter.com) and there's current information on the project.

d. *Question:* Will the Clay Street Bridge be closed during the Route 280, Route 21 project and what ramps are changing in the neighborhood? What about parking along Spring Street?

*Response:* The Route 280, Route 21 Interchange Improvement Project is a separate NJDOT project and is expected to be completed before the Clay Street Bridge moves to the final design and construction phases. Please visit [www.njcommuter.com](http://www.njcommuter.com) and there is information on the project listed under the upper menu bar “In the Works, Our Projects & the Environment.”

e. *Question:* What about the railroad bridge that is north of Clay Street Bridge?

*Response:* The railroad bridge is privately owned by the railroad and is locked in the upright position to allow the passage of marine traffic. The U.S. Coast Guard has jurisdiction of the Passaic River and marine traffic has precedent over railroad/vehicular traffic. Main reason, boats don't have brakes or alternative routes on the water. For the status of that bridge, must contact the owner, possibly Conrail. The Project Team will coordinate with the U.S. Coast Guard and Conrail as to the current long term plans for the bridge.

9. At end of presentation, attendees were encouraged to take copies of the handouts to share information with others. An email notice would be sent once the web site is available at: [www.claystbridge.com](http://www.claystbridge.com). The 30-day comment period ends as of Friday, May 9, 2014 for the purpose and need. The next public meeting would be in the fall 2014 to present the project Purpose and Need Statement and proposed conceptual alternatives for the bridge.

10. Two PIC Comment Forms were received at the evening session in the City of Newark (6-8pm) and three additional PIC Comment Forms have been received after the PIC meetings within the 30-day comment period for the project purpose and need. No PIC Comment Forms were received at the afternoon meeting session in the Borough of East Newark. The PIC Tracking List and Comments received to date are attached. Any responses to PIC comments received would be written and distributed by Hudson County and Essex County.

11. The attendees shared their appreciation for the opportunity to review and comment on the project to individual Project Team members. The PIC open house was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.