

EVENT: Indian River Inlet Bridge Project Design Unveiling
EVENT DATE: Sept. 17, 1 p.m.
EVENT LOCATION: Indian River Inlet site, construction trailer.
By DelDOT Secretary Carolann Wicks

GOOD AFTERNOON.

IT IS A GOOD DAY TO BE AT THE INDIAN RIVER INLET PROJECT SITE.
AND I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT'S NOT ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE.

AN AWARD HAS BEEN ISSUED AND A CONTRACT SIGNED FOR
SKANSKA SOUTHEAST TO BUILD THIS BRIDGE.

THE BRIDGE BUILDERS HAVE OFFICIALLY ARRIVED!

THE SKANSKA TEAM IS HERE TODAY. OF THE THREE PROPOSALS
RECEIVED FOR THIS PROJECT, SKANSKA HAD THE LOWEST PRICE,
HIGHEST TECHNICAL SCORE AND PROPOSED THE QUICKEST
COMPLETION TIME. THREE OUT OF THREE.

NOW THAT THE DESIGN-BUILD TEAM HAS BEEN SELECTED, WE ALSO
FOR THE FIRST TIME KNOW WHAT THIS DESIGN WILL LOOK LIKE.

BEFORE UNVEILING, I WANT TO RECOGNIZE THE TEAM UP HERE WITH
ME AND THE ELECTED OFFICIALS WHO ARE JOINING US IN TODAY'S
EVENT.

BUT FIRST, I WANT TO START BY THANKING OUR GOVERNOR, RUTH
ANN MINNER FOR HER LEADERSHIP ON THIS PROJECT THROUGH
SOME DIFFICULT TIMES. GOVERNOR, YOU HAVE BEEN A CHAMPION
OF THIS DEPARTMENT AND I TRULY APPRECIATE IT. YOU HAVE BEEN
STEDFAST IN YOUR COMMITMENT TO BUILDING THIS NEW BRIDGE, A
CRITICAL LINK FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THIS AREA AND FOR ALL THE
VISITORS WHO ENJOY THE BEAUTY OF OUR DELAWARE BEACHES. I

HOPE WHEN THIS PROJECT IS COMPLETE, YOU WILL JOIN ME IN A RIDE OVER THIS FABULOUS NEW BRIDGE.

ALSO JOINING US TODAY IS:
(SEE SEPARATE HANDOUT)

NOW, LET'S SEE THIS NEW DESIGN. GOVERNOR MINNER, WOULD YOU JOIN MR. MACKENNA AT EITHER END OF THE FIRST BOARD. AND, THE REST OF THE TEAM, PLEASE TAKE YOUR POSITIONS.

GOVERNOR MINNER, WOULD YOU AND MR. MCKENNA LIFT THE FIRST VEIL.

THANK YOU GOVERNOR. I ALSO WANT TO RECOGNIZE AGAIN SENATOR GEORGE BUNTING AND REPRESENTATIVE GERALD HOCKER WHO HAVE BEEN SOLID SUPPORTERS OF THIS PROJECT AND THIS DEPARTMENT. ALSO, THANKS TO CONGRESSMAN MIKE CASTLE, U.S. SEN. TOM CARPER AND U.S. SEN. JOE BIDEN FOR THEIR SUPPORT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL FOR SECURING ADDITIONAL BRIDGE FUNDS SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS PROJECT. OUR PARTNERS AT THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION HAVE ALSO BEEN CRUCIAL TO US GETTING TO THIS POINT. IN ADDITION TO THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY FUNDS THEY HELP TO MANAGE, WE HAVE ALSO BENEFITED FROM THEIR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DURING THE PROCESS.

THIS DESIGN IS DRAMATIC, BUT FUNCTIONAL. IT MAY REMIND SOME OF YOU OF THE ROTH BRIDGE OVER THE CHESAPEAKE AND DELAWARE CANAL. UNLIKE THE ROTH BRIDGE THIS HAS FOUR CABLE-STAYED STRUCTURES. SIMPLY, THIS DESIGN ALLOWS A MORE

NARROW PROFILE OVER THE INLET AND PROVIDES GREATER STABILITY. IT IS AN EFFICIENT DESIGN.

THE BRIDGE WILL BE 2,600 FEET LONG, INCLUDING 900 FEET FOR THE ACTUAL CLEAR SPAN OVER THE INLET, WITH 1,700 FEET OF THE BRIDGE OVER LAND. IT WILL BE SUPPORTED BY PIERS IN THE GROUND, AND OUT OF THE WATER.

IMPORTANTLY, IT HAS A MINIMUM 100 YEAR DESIGN LIFE, AND WILL BE BUILT TO WITHSTAND THE EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS IN THIS AREA.

DURING CONSTRUCTION, WE WILL HAVE SITE TOURS AND PLAN TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EDUCATION EFFORT. WE HAVE MUCH TO SHARE ABOUT THE MANY PHASES OF THIS PROJECT AND WE ARE EXCITED TO SHARE THIS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY.

MANY OF THE SAME MEN AND WOMEN WORKING ON OUR NEW BRIDGE HAVE WORKED ON SIMILAR OR LARGER PROJECTS WORLDWIDE, MOST RECENTLY THE COOPER RIVER BRIDGE, IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA. SKANSKA IS AN ESTABLISHED COMPANY, WHO HAS PROVEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN THAT IT GETS THE JOB DONE. SIMPLY, THEY ARE BRIDGE BUILDERS.

AS MANY OF YOU KNOW, I AM A CIVIL ENGINEER AS WELL AS BEING SECRETARY OF DELDOT. I CAN UNDERSTAND DESIGN DETAILS AND CALCULATIONS, BUT CERTAINLY WOULDN'T CALL MYSELF A BRIDGE BUILDER. SO, I HAD TO LOOK ELSEWHERE TO FIND WAYS TO

DESCRIBE THE EFFORT THAT YOU WILL SOON WITNESS. I FOUND GREAT EXAMPLES IN A BOOK PUBLISHED ABOUT SKANSKA'S BUILDING OF THE COOPER RIVER BRIDGE.

IT SAYS:

"BRIDGE BUILDING REMAINS A RAW AND RISKY ENDEAVOR ... DESPITE ADVANCES IN CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY, BRIDGE BUILDERS STILL GRAB HUGE STEEL BEAMS WITH THEIR HANDS AND MUSCLE THEM INTO PLACE WITH PRY BARS. THEY WORK HIGH OVER LAND AND WATER, EXPOSED TO THE WEATHER ... THE WORKERS BUILT THIS BRIDGE WITH SWEAT, COFFEE, PRANKS AND MORE THAN A LITTLE YELLING."

THE BOOK CONTINUES TO SAY, "THEY WORKED IN RAIN SO HEAVY THEY COULDN'T SEE PAST THE TIPS OF THEIR HARD HATS, WORKED SO LONG AND HARD THEY PASSED OUT IN THEIR CHAIRS AT HOME, AND WOKE THE NEXT MORNING IN YESTERDAY'S CLOTHES."

THIS COMMENTARY PROVIDES YOU INSIGHT INTO THE WORLD OF BRIDGE BUILDING. WHEN THE HEAVY CONSTRUCTION BEGINS, PEOPLE WILL TRAVEL TO SEE THESE BUILDERS IN ACTION, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHOWCASING OUR PROGRESS THROUGH PROJECT TOURS AND EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH INITIATIVES.

I HOPE YOU CAN TELL THAT WE ARE ALL VERY EXCITED ABOUT WHAT IS COMING, BUT I CAN'T STAND UP HERE TODAY AND GLOSS OVER WHAT HAS OCCURRED IN THE PAST.

ELEVEN MONTHS AGO, I STOOD HERE WITH THIS SAME DELDOT TEAM TO ANNOUNCE THAT I MADE THE DIFFICULT DECISION TO CHANGE THE DESIGN OF THE BRIDGE AND THE ROADWAYS LEADING UP TO IT. I MADE THOSE DECISIONS BECAUSE THE FIELD DATA WE WERE RECEIVING WAS INCONSISTENT WITH WHAT WAS PREDICTED TO OCCUR.

I PROMISED THEN TO FULLY INVESTIGATE HOW WE GOT TO THAT POINT, AND THAT IS WHAT I DID. I EXPECT IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, WE WILL HAVE CONCLUDED THAT REVIEW.

I WAS CERTAINLY AWARE THEN THAT MY DECISION WOULD GENERATE SCRUTINY FROM THE PRESS, RESIDENTS AND LEGISLATORS. FOR SURE, THE SCRUTINY CAME. BUT WE STOOD TALL, STOOD TOGETHER AND KEPT MOVING FORWARD.

A DEFINING MOMENT DURING THAT TIME WAS A PROJECT TEAM MEETING TO DISCUSS A SCHEDULED LEGISLATIVE HEARING. WE HAD NO IDEA WHAT TO EXPECT. AS WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WHO WOULD ATTEND AND OTHER MATTERS, I CLEARLY REMEMBER JOHN EUSTIS – NEVER ONE TO BE BASHFUL FOR SURE – TELLING US THAT WE NEEDED TO STAND TALL. HIS EXACT WORDS WENT SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF ... "I AM DARN PROUD TO BE PART OF THIS TEAM, AND DARN PROUD TO WORK AT DELDOT."

JOHN, SO AM I.

THE DELDOT TEAM IS READY TO BUILD THIS BRIDGE, ALONG WITH SKANSKA SOUTHEAST, OUR WINNING BRIDGE BUILDERS.

AS WE MOVE FORWARD WITH THIS PROJECT, I WILL CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE FREQUENT AND TIMELY COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE. MY GOAL IS THAT YOU ARE NEVER SURPRISED BY WHAT IS OCCURRING IN THIS VERY VISIBLE LOCATION.

WE HAVE MORE THAN TWO YEARS OF CONSTRUCTION WORK AHEAD OF US. THERE WILL BE UPS AND DOWNS, THERE WILL BE ISSUES. BUT I EXPECT – JUST LIKE WE HAVE IN THE PAST -- TO TAKE THEM ON, ADDRESS THEM AND MOVE FORWARD.

WE ARE READY TO BUILD THIS BRIDGE, AND TODAY YOU ARE MEETING THE TEAM THAT WILL DO IT.