

# Sellwood Bridge type deemed less important than location, width

By Lee Perlman  
The Southwest Portland Post

The Sellwood Bridge Community Task Force completed its work, at least temporarily, last month. Having made their recommendations as to "bridge type" for a proposed new Sellwood Bridge, outreach coordinator Elaine Cogan said, the group would cease to meet while project staff analyzed and developed the options selected for further study.

These include refurbishing of the existing span, building a new bridge in the same location, or building a new bridge that would swing to the north, avoiding some housing developments in Sellwood and accessing the west side at the location of Staff Jennings

marina.

One option also calls for a separate, smaller bridge exclusively for bicycles and pedestrians. The Task Force would begin meeting again in the spring to review this work.

As its last task, the group recommended "bridge types" that could be used with each of the proposed options.

A week later the Project Advisory Committee, composed of representatives of participating jurisdictions, recommended box girder and delta frame designs as "moderate cost" options, deck arch and through arch for higher cost, and cable stayed and stress ribbon for the bicyclist and pedestrian bridge.

Multnomah County public affairs coordinator Mike Pullen reported that

the subject had been aired at a public open house in November, and in an e-mail survey. The strongest vote getter was the through arch design, with a deck arch second. For the bike-ped bridge, "a suspension type was by far the first preference," Pullen said. However, he added, "It was by far the lowest turnout of our open houses."

There were 69 people in attendance, 80 percent of them from Sellwood, as opposed to 230 at an earlier session at Sellwood School. "Even those who came indicated they weren't particularly interested in bridge type," Pullen said. "I think we engaged people so much on where the bridge should go, and how wide it should be, that they're focused on that."

More than 1,000 people took the e-mail survey, where they favored a



The old Sellwood Bridge as seen from the east bank of the Willamette River in June, 2007. (Post file photo by Don Snedecor)

delta frame design. Even here, however, they indicated that the bridge's durability and other issues were more important than its design.

Many of the Task Force members had a similar view. Barbara Barber later told *The Post*, "I'd like to see a pretty bridge here; who wouldn't. But it's a luxury issue."

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