

**Staley, Angelina**

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**Subject:** FW: August 28 meeting

Could one of you read into the record the below text?

"I am sorry that I am unable to participate in the Committee meeting and public hearing [on August 28th](#) regarding the Main Street Bridge as I am out of town on a long ago planned trip. I would like to share my views, although I acknowledge that in doing so I have not had the opportunity to hear and weigh other views that will arise in the meeting.

I believe we should approve the engineering contract and move forward with all possible speed to replace the current bridge with a pedestrian bridge that includes emergency vehicle access.

There are four main reasons I have reached this conclusion

1- i know there are residents who passionately believe that we should reestablish the long ago bridge carrying vehicle traffic. While I respect their views, I believe there are many other residents who would prefer the pedestrian bridge that has existed for more than 15 years. These residents value a park that is not bisected by an active roadway. These residents prize what has been achieved by the Mill River Collaborative in establishing a peaceful yet interesting park space adjacent to the City Center. These residents prefer the modest isolation of a pedestrian only area.

Bottom line, while views inevitably differ, it is not the case that there is a public consensus that the active roadway of more than 15 years ago should be reestablished.

2- While we now do intend to provide emergency vehicle access, to my knowledge there is no one in public safety who has expressed any reservations on the existing format which does NOT provide emergency vehicle access. Those residents who claim there is a public safety aspect that requires full vehicle access do not appear to have the support of the professionals who operate in this field.

3- There are compelling reasons to move forward with replacing the bridge on an accelerated time schedule. We are told that the current structure is in great danger of failure. We are told that reverting to a vehicle bridge design will entail delays of several or more years.

4- There are compelling financial reasons to move forward with the pedestrian bridge alternative. We have funding to build the pedestrian bridge. We are told that reverting to a vehicle bridge will entail substantially increased costs and the funding is open to substantial uncertainty.

Thank you for allowing me to submit these thoughts to my colleagues on the Operations Committee and the Public at large

**Respectfully**

**David Watkins  
District 1**

**Sent from my iPhone**