



News Release

Date: March 02, 2010

Contact: [Lisa Novak](#)

(202) 372-4633

Coast Guard terminates bridge permit processing for Ambassador Bridge Enhancement

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Coast Guard issued a letter Tuesday to the Detroit International Bridge Company terminating the Coast Guard Bridge Permit application process for the Ambassador Bridge Enhancement Project in Detroit, Mich.

Termination of the bridge permit application process includes all final agency decisions regarding the National Environmental Policy Act environmental analysis process and the Coast Guard Bridge Permit itself.

The Detroit International Bridge Company (DIBC) proposed to construct a six-lane, cable-stayed bridge across the Detroit River, just west of and adjacent to the existing four-lane Ambassador Bridge. Prior to commencing construction, the DIBC must obtain a Coast Guard Bridge Permit because the structure would cross a navigable waterway.

On June 15, 2009, the Coast Guard placed the permit application and NEPA process in abeyance as a result of several uncertainties which surrounded the project. These included the final outcome of construction for the Ambassador Bridge Gateway Project on DIBC-owned property, currently in litigation; the uncertainty over the Ambassador Bridge Gateway Project's impact on the NEPA process for the Ambassador Bridge Enhancement Project; and allegations by the City of Detroit that DIBC does not have the right to build the bridge on Riverside Park. Any change in design would necessitate another NEPA analysis.

Since June and despite meetings between the Coast Guard and DIBC there has been no resolution of the issues which resulted in the abeyance. Developments since the issuance of the abeyance letter include several ongoing lawsuits between DIBC and state and federal agencies, and a court decision that ruled DIBC does not have the necessary property rights to construct the bridge.

Under NEPA, the Coast Guard released a final Environmental Assessment and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact for the Ambassador Bridge Enhancement Project on February 27, 2009. The Coast Guard is not making a final decision regarding whether to issue a final FONSI or elevate the Environmental Assessment to an Environmental Impact Statement, since the validity of the NEPA analysis contained in the Coast Guard Ambassador Bridge Enhancement Project Final Environmental Assessment cannot be determined. Without a completed NEPA analysis, the Coast Guard cannot issue a bridge permit.

If all outstanding issues detailed in the June 15, 2009, abeyance letter are resolved, DIBC can resubmit a permit application package for the proposed project and the Coast Guard will reinstate the bridge permit application process and associated NEPA review process.

A copy of the letter from the Coast Guard to the Detroit International Bridge Company may be obtained through the Coast Guard's Freedom of Information Act Office. Requests may be sent to: FOIA Coordinator, U.S. Coast Guard, Attention: Commandant CG-611, 2100 Second Street, SW, Washington, D.C., 20593-0001. E-mail requests may be sent to: EFOIA@uscg.mil.

###