

Bridge

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ly impact anything below or above ground in the immediate area. His explanation allayed the fears of close-by residents concerned about damaged wells, septic systems, cracked foundations, and structural damage caused by flying debris.

Carrao emphasized that every precaution and consideration for safety had been taken. That is the reason for homes within 1,500 feet north and south of the bridge, called the "clear zone," will be evacuated for the duration of the events, he said.

The new Jamestown Bridge and Route 138 on either side of the bridge is scheduled for closure from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the day the demolition takes place. The event will be well-advertised in newspapers and announced on 1630 AM radio. Signage and boards will be in place within the next few weeks posting routes for detours and schedules for the bridge closings, Carrao noted.

Marine navigation will be closed to all boats for 3,000 feet from the demolition site during the event, he added.

The four-hour closing was the worst-case scenario, Carrao said. If everything goes as planned, the bridge could be closed no longer than one-and-a-half to two hours. During a question and answer period after the presentation, School Superintendent Kathy Sipala said that school buses going to North Kingstown had to leave the island no later than 1:30 p.m. to pick up students. Carrao looked into the matter and announced in a later interview that the DOT will rent school buses and drivers to pick up the students on time in case the regu-

larly scheduled buses cannot leave the island as normally scheduled.

Town Councilman William Kelly also spoke during the question and answer period and asked why the event was scheduled during the middle of the week. "In my 30 years of experience in town management, I've been involved in quite a few of these events, and they all have been scheduled for the weekend so commerce was not effected," he said. Carrao said that he was sure the scheduling was considered to have the least impact on all areas involved. In a telephone interview with the DOT's Chief Public Affairs Officer Dana Nolfe, she said: "We consulted the towns on both sides of the Jamestown and Newport bridges to see what times would least impact all areas. Obviously, we cannot please everyone. However, the consensus was that Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were the lowest traffic days and would inconvenience the fewest travelers."

On April 11, or the day of the first event bringing down the center span, Governor Donald Carcieri will gather with Senator Lincoln Chafee and the media on the Kingston side of the bridge. The governor will press the button or plunger detonating the explosives after a warning horn sounds followed by a 10-second countdown.

Carrao noted that if all goes well, the demolition could take place by 10:30 a.m., followed by a half-hour cleanup, and the roads could be open as early as 11:30 a.m. However, that is if we lived in a perfect world, he noted. "Obviously, we will stage the event as quickly as possible and open the roads as soon as they are deemed safe," he said.

The second event will take place approximately six weeks later, around the end of May, before Memorial Day, Carrao said. At that time, the deck truss and girder spans on either side of the center span will be brought down. Both sides will go down at

the same time. The same four-hour window will be required for this event that will take place on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday of the scheduled week.

The third event will take place at the end of June or after July 4. This event will be the removal of the remaining superstructure and substructure. The same procedure and safety precautions will be required for all three events. Route 138 and the new Jamestown Bridge will be closed from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the days that explosives are scheduled. Mandatory evacuation of the clear and safe zones and traffic detours will be required. The schedules will be announced well in advance, and the instructions will be made clear throughout the impacted area, Carrao said.

From July through October, 30-minute closings of the bridge will happen from time to time as needed. These events will be announced well in advance and will occur at times that will least inconvenience travelers who depend on the bridge being open to traffic.

The proposed fishing pier on the North Kingston side of the bridge will have to be rebuilt. The present structure was deemed unsafe by the DOT and is not worth repairing, Carrao noted.

The 6,000 tons of structural steel salvaged from the bridge will be recycled. The 43,000 tons of concrete will be used to make artificial reefs at Sheep Point and Gooseberry Island.

At the beginning of his presentation, Carrao acknowledged all who were involved in the success of the bridge dismantling, mentioning many by name. He particularly praised the work of Cashman Equipment Corporation of New Orleans that was awarded the \$19.9 million contract. He also gave special mention of the Demtech Corporation of Dubois, Wyoming, the demolition experts hired for the project.

Carrao was given an enthusiastic ovation from the audience.

Time to play ball; baseball registrations end tomorrow

This is the final week of registration for Jamestown baseball.

Registration forms are available at the Community Center and at Baker's Pharmacy. Registrations for all age groups must be submitted by Friday, March 31. Late registrations are subject to refusal.

The annual indoor baseball tryouts will be held on Saturday, April 1, at 8 a.m. at Sam Horn's Around The Horn Indoor Sports Complex on Route 2 in East Greenwich. The tryout will last approximately two hours. First-time major league candidates, both boys and girls, are required to attend this tryout, and candidates must be a minimum of 9 years old on April 30. Players who cannot attend must call Tony Rafanelli at 423-3953. Those who have already played in the major leagues do not have to attend these tryouts.

Only those players who have submitted registration forms by the deadline will be allowed to try out.

Around The Horn is located at 3377 South County Trail. Its phone number is 885-5959.

Players and families should

refer to the Jamestown Press in the next few weeks regarding announcements of the outdoor practices/tryouts that will take place in April. During the first week of April, outdoor tryouts will be for the Babe Ruth and Major League level candidates. During the remainder of the month, outdoor practices will be held for all age groups.

These outdoor sessions will occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30 p.m., Saturdays at 9 a.m., and Sundays at noon at the Lawn Avenue ball fields, weather permitting.

Parents are needed to help. Baseball experience is not necessary. Contact Steve Heath at 423-0160 to volunteer.

Jamestown baseball is asking civic organizations to consider sponsoring recycling receptacles. Contact Tony Rafanelli at 423-3953 for more information. Also, the league is in need of a weather-proof public address system.

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