

MEMORANDUM

TO: Record

FROM: Linda McDonald

DATE: January 7, 2004

RE: I-295/I-76/Route 42 Direct Connection – Partnering Meeting

CC: Attendees, File: 2652 – Meetings

TIME & PLACE

OF MEETING: January 7, 2004 - 9:00 AM at PBA Hall, Barrington, NJ

PURPOSE OF

MEETING: To review the various Alternatives and the Initial Alternatives Screening Matrix to obtain consensus from the Partnering groups on the Alternatives to be Short Listed and presented to the public at the Public Information Center (PIC) January 28, 2004.

IN ATTENDANCE: Please see attached Attendance Sheets

DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS:

The following is a chronological summary of the discussion by the Partnering Meeting attendees:

1. Bub Kovacs began the meeting with a brief introduction and a summary of the reason for the meeting...to review the alternatives recommended by the various groups (CAC, ACM, DOT, and Project Team) to whom they were previously presented with a view toward obtaining a consensus on the Alternatives to be Short Listed and presented to the public at the Public Information Center (PIC)
2. After attendee introductions and affiliations were made, Nick Caiazza then expanded upon the purpose of the meeting and provided details on the project, including: a description of the project area; the project Purpose & Need; the many design constraints; Local Official and Community and Regulatory Agency Meetings. He also discussed the proposed schedule indicating once the short list is presented at the upcoming PIC work would begin on the TES phase of the EIS
3. Ileana Ivanciu began discussing the alternative screening process using the Matrix Board to illustrate each of the alternatives under consideration and during her presentation questions were fielded from the attendees.

- Robert Guerrieri of the Diocese of Camden pointed out that although the portion of the cemetery affected by the Alternatives was not yet used it was available for future use.
- Mike Sullivan of the NJ State Police questioned cost and upkeep of a tunnel if Alternative “K” is selected. He also mentioned a tunnel would usually exclude “hazmats”. Lou Robbins explained that there are currently three tunnels under construction elsewhere that are “hazmat” friendly. He also stated a Risk analysis of the tunnel construction and “Hazmat” detour route would be performed during the TES stages.
- Morris Bayer of Gloucester County asked how the tunnel alternative got short listed if there are so many problems connected with tunnels. Lou Robbins indicated although it has cost and operational issues it greatly reduces the noise and visual impacts to the community as well as limiting the traffic impacts during construction to the 250,000 motorists that use the roadway daily.
- Hank D’Andrea of South Jersey Port Corporation asked about connecting Routes 295 & 42 south of the interchange and why this was not being addressed before the direct connection project. Bruce Riegel of NJDOT explained that in fact it had been and it is already in the preliminary design phase and is scheduled to be done first as the I-295/Rt. 42 “Missing Moves”.
- Robert Box of PATCO asked if current plans provided for a mass transit route through the intersection currently under study by the DRPA. Lou Robbins confirmed that room for a transit route is acknowledged in the alternatives.

4. Bub Kovaks then interrupted the unsolicited group Q&A’s to explain that we should table our strengths/weaknesses comments for each alternative until we break into smaller groups.

5. Ileana Ivanciu then completed her explanation of the individual alternatives selected by the various groups in the previous meetings explaining that Alternatives “D”, “G2” and “K” were selected by the Project Team. Alternatives “D” and “K” were selected by the NJDOT Core Group and Alternatives “D”, “G2” and “K” were also selected by the Agencies with the provision that “D1” and “H1” also be studied in the EIS process. Ms. Ivanciu further stated that the CAC had selected Alternatives “D” and “K”.

6. Lou Robbins reviewed the process by which the impacts on the residential, commercial and other properties from the various alternatives were calculated. He also further described Alternative “K” which is the tunnel alternative.

7. At approximately 11:15, Bub Kovaks informed everyone they would be broken into three smaller groups to brainstorm and review the various alternatives presented with a view toward walking away today with a short list of alternatives to present to the public at the Public Information Center Meeting on January 28, 2004. Each table had a representative from NJDOT,

the resource agency, community, etc. and selected project team members traveled from group to group to assist in answering questions. The groups were asked to pick a “chairperson” as well as a scribe to record their suggestions/decisions.

8. After the groups had brainstormed and scribed their comments “pros/cons”, we broke for lunch.

9. After lunch, we reconvened and the groups made the following suggestions/decisions as to which alternatives should be short listed.

GROUP #1– CHAIRPERSON -- CHARLES “CHICK” DOUGHERTY, DVRPC

- **ALTERNATIVE “D” - KEEP**
 - **Removes AIJo’s curve – allows for wetland mitigation area**
- **ALTERNATIVE “D1”- KEEP**
 - **Keeps AIJo’s (accidents)**
 - **More wetland impacts**
 - **More (better) weave distance**
 - **Less visual impact from ramp**
- **ALTERNATIVE “H1” - DISMISS**
 - **40’ high, keeps AIJo’s curve (why keep 2 “#1” alternatives)**
- **ALTERNATIVE “G2” - DISMISS**
 - **40’ high, removes AIJo’s curve—maintenance and emergency services problems**

GROUP # 2 –CHAIRPERSON - ROBERT CUBBERLY, NJDEP

- **ALTERNATIVE “D” – KEEP**

Pros:

 - **Possibly countered by property exchange**
 - **Possible mixed use of same land**
 - **Minimal impact on community/surrounding property (except for cemetery)**
 - **Moderate construction costs**

Cons:

 - **Loss of future expansion of cemetery (6-8 mausoleums)**

- **ALTERNATIVE “K” – KEEP**

Pros:

- Possible mixed use of cemetery property
- Moderate impact compared to Alternative “D”

Cons:

- High cost...more than double Alternative “D”
- Loss of future expansion to cemetery
- More community/surrounding property impacts
- EMS/Police problems – concerns about tunnel access
- Concerns about tunnel access for hazmat carriers/transporters
- Emergency response communications problems in tunnel

- **ALTERNATIVE “H1” -- DISMISS**

Pros:

- Moderate Cost (More than Alternative “D”---less than Alternative “K”)

Cons:

- Maintain AIJo’s curve – potential stacking
- Stacking 295N and 295S
- Loss of future expansion for cemetery
- Moderate environmental impact (twice floodplain impact)
- Greater community impact
- Less possibility for remediation of natural resources
- Doesn’t meet goals

- **ALTERNATIVE “G2” – DISMISS**

Pros:

- Eliminates AIJo’s curve
- High potential for environmental remediation/minimal environmental impact
- Minimal community/surrounding property impacts

Cons:

- Stacking 295N/295S (visual impact)
- High cemetery impact
- Moderate costs (higher than Alternative “D”)
- Higher air/noise impacts

- **ALTERNATIVE “D1” – DISMISS**

Pros:

- Lower cost (less than Alternative “D”)

Cons:

- Maintain AIJo’s curve
- Higher environmental impacts/less environmental remediation
- High cemetery impact
- Moderate community/surrounding property impacts

GROUP # 3 – CHAIRPERSON -- MIKE HAYDUK – US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

ALTERNATIVE “D”AND “D1” – KEEP BOTH

Pros:

- Maintain Both
- Provide a host of similar alternatives

ALTERNATIVE “G2” – KEEP

- Double-stacked highway that eliminates AIJo’s curve

ALTERNATIVE “H1” – DISMISS

- Reluctantly dismissed – similar to Alternative “G2” as a double-stacked highway but included AIJo’s curve

ALTERNATIVE “K” – KEEP

- Keep—however, need to add “security” to the matrix

GROUPS’ CONSENSUS:

ALTERNATIVES “D”, “D1”, “G2” and “K” WERE SELECTED.

10. Mike Hayduk stated that some in his group #3 did not feel comfortable making a decision regarding reducing the number of short listed alternatives to this small a number without the benefit of the TES’s. That is why they recommended four alternatives be carried forward.

11. In discussing Alternative “D1” specifically, Robert Stokes of the CAC committee and a long-time resident of Mt. Ephraim answered Mike’s statement that in his opinion leaving this

alternative in (which keeps AIJo's curve) will still create a bottleneck of summer/shore traffic and will not solve the situation.

12. Robert Guerrieri of the Diocese of Camden asked if mausoleums can be built beneath an elevated roadway, since a portion of the cemetery may be affected by the one or more of the alternatives. Mr. Robbins and Mr. Kook (NJDOT ROW) indicated that was a distinct possibility and had already been discussed with FHWA and a positive reply had been received.

13. Mike Hayduk solicited opinions from state and federal representatives as to their commitment to spend more money on a tunnel alternative if that was the final recommended Alternative. Lourdes Castaneda of FHWA said they would fund the higher cost if it showed appropriate benefits. Jeanette Mar of FHWA said in her opinion the process would be better served with all the alternative impacts (i.e., community and traffic ---AIJo's curve; wetlands; church expansion; ROW impacts) identified early on.

14. Jim Watson of Gloucester County understands Mike Hayduk's opinion for wanting more options. However, he thinks 4-5 are more than adequate on which to perform the more detailed study.

15. Chick Dougherty of DVRPC explained to the group the structure and implementation of this process and how we got to the alternatives being reviewed and short listed by our group today...several separate group meetings were held and the alternatives we are looking at today are the ones decided upon by the interested groups' representatives. After three or more meetings, no other alternatives have been offered. Chick's feeling was that at today's meeting attendees would come up with a consensus of the final short listing.

16. Chick further explained that the project is already in the NEPA study stage. He feels that the process to date for this project has been handled very appropriately and in fact, is the best he has seen "this side of the Rockies". Further that there has been a tremendous investment at such a level to get to this stage to make sure it is right. Chick also pointed out that this process was laudable and state and federal agencies should support consensus arrived at by the Group.

17. Robert Cubberley of NJ DEP informed the group that the analysis used to eliminate the other alternatives is currently part of the record and that the NJDEP is satisfied as long as the rationale and results obtained to date are included as an addendum to the Alternatives Analyses presented for the "permits".

18. Cheryl Walters, attorney representing Bellmawr Park Mutual Corporation asked who would make the decision as to what alternatives would go forward for technical study and Bub Kovaks replied that concurrence at this meeting plus comments at the PIC would be the final determination and Robert Cubberley agreed.

19. Freeholder William Krebs stated that he was pleased to see that our process is consistent with major projects in the corporate world as he worked with a major pharmaceutical firm for many years prior to holding elected office. He commended our process.

20. Kevin DeFosse of NJDOT wondered why we are keeping Alternative “G2” (stacking) as one of the short listed Alternatives and Chick Dougherty said Group #1 dismissed it because of visual impact...i.e., the height. It is deceptive as it appears high on the far side by the cemetery while at Bellmawr Park, one level appears higher than the other. There are also noise and emergency access issues with this alternative.

Ed Robin offered that right now, we appear to have four alternatives going into the PIC and after that we will commence the TES portion of the EIS process.

The group reached consensus to short list Alternatives “D”, “D1”, “G2” & “K”.

21. Jeff Hewitson inquired as to the next step and Bub Kovaks replied that it is the PIC Meeting on January 28, 2004, followed by the TES process. During that process, ACM and CAC meetings will be scheduled. Bub said that approximately nine months to one year from now we will be back for another Partnering Session!

22. Bub Kovaks then asked the group to finish up and summarize what the groups’ goals would be for the completion of this project...in other words “BEGIN with the END in mind”!!!

COMBINED GROUPS’ VISIONS:

- Don’t hear I-295/I-76/Rt.42 on traffic reports
- Newspaper headline...”Accident Rate Reduced Below State Average”
- Commuters Happy...Improved Travel Time
- We leave the community/project better than we found it
- Community feels life is better after the project
- Local traffic relief because motorists stay on Interstate/Freeway
- Everyone proud of process...all want to take credit
- Fishing resumes on AlJo’s curve
- Project comes in under budget and ahead of schedule with minimum impact to public
- Officials elected at beginning still being reelected year after year
- Meets present and future needs
- Be the benchmark for subsequent projects
- Scientific process with community input
- Acceptance of alternatives through a public process
- Reduce congestion
- Project has inter-model systems in mind
- Ratable boom south of the project
- Identify “Partners” who have supported the improvements
- The “Partnering Process” is reaffirmed

23. Fred Stine of the Delaware Riverkeeper Network had to leave the meeting in the morning, but asked that his written comments be made part of the record. They are as follows:

Goals/Concerns:

- Water quality and natural resource protection of the Delaware River and its tributaries—including living resources such as aquatic species
- Stormwater Management – How will NJ’s new stormwater regulations be incorporated into the planned alternatives?
- If stormwater Best Management Practices are part of the design, scheduled monitoring and maintenance must be “hard wired”; i.e., written into DOT’s annual maintenance program....man hours must be incorporated into a budget.
- High priority should be given to mitigating wetlands loss within the sub-watershed where they are filled.

24. After discussing all the groups’ comments, Nick Caiazza & Lou Robbins thanked everyone for their efforts both in attending and contributing their input and experience to obtain a consensus regarding the alternatives to be short listed and presented at the PIC Meeting. They further explained that the “Missing Moves” project also will be represented at the PIC Meeting so that the residents can see how each project has its separate purpose and need as well as different construction schedules with the “Missing Moves” project being constructed first.

25. Bub Kovaks adjourned the meeting at approximately 2 pm.

We believe the foregoing record to be an accurate summary of the discussion and the progress of the work. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to the Minutes within five (5) working days of receipt. Without notification, we will consider these Minutes to be a record of fact.

Sincerely,
Dewberry

Patricia Saulino
Project Team