

**NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
I-295/I-76/Rte 42 Interchange Reconstruction
Ninth Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
October 19, 2006 6pm - 9pm
Bellmawr Borough Courtroom**

MEETING MINUTES SUMMARY

CAC Meeting Attendees

Diane Garcia (Mt. Ephraim resident)
Richard Middleton (Bellmawr Baseball, Inc.)
Robert Guerrieri (Diocese of Camden – Department of Real Estate)
Kenneth McIlvaine (Diocese of Camden)
Hayley Knopple (Korman Commercial Properties)
Jerry Segal (Korman Commercial Properties)
Bruce Huntsinger (Gloucester resident)
Harry Moore (Bellmawr Park resident)
Dale Keith (Senior Citizens United Community Services of Camden County)
Frank Monari, Esq. (McKernan, McKernan & Godina)
Richard Hideck (Reaves C. Lukens Company)

Project Team Attendees

Jody Barankin (NJDOT)
Bruce Riegel (NJDOT)
Nick Caiazza, (NJDOT)
Patricia Feliciano (NJDOT)
Craig Johnson (Dewberry)
Christina Gray (Dewberry)
Patricia Saulino (Dewberry)

SUMMARY

Jody Barankin thanked everyone for attending and for their continued interest and commitment to the Direct Connection Project. Jody then explained that the purpose this evening was to discuss a Preferred Alternative (PA). The Core Group has reached concurrence on a PA. The Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM) populated by the regulatory agencies is scheduled for October 24th and the Public Information Center (PIC) would be held some time in January, 2007. Jody stated that it was hoped that this group would be able to reach the same conclusion so that the project could move forward into the design phase.

Jody then turned the meeting over to Craig who presented a Power Point presentation to bring the group up to date on the progress of the alternatives for the Direct Connection Project:

1. Craig Johnson reviewed the Alternatives Analysis Process, the Alternatives, the Impact Criteria, the Engineering Summary, the TES Findings and the Alternative Comparison Matrix
2. For the alternative analysis process, Craig described the approach used by the Project Team in comparing the five build and the no build alternative to select the preferred alternative as follows:
 - a) The first threshold was that the project would need to meet Purpose and Need as agreed to by the stakeholders. The Purpose and Need of this project involves improving traffic safety, reducing traffic congestion and meeting driver's expectations for the users of the highway and the surrounding communities. The No Build alternative does not meet the Purpose and Need.
 - b) The criteria which are the same for each of the Build Alternatives were then eliminated to allow the distinguishing criteria to stand out.
 - c) The next threshold considered was how well the project was in harmony with the community. The two stacked alternatives (G2 and H1) provide a reduced footprint with less ROW and ecology impacts than the rest of the built alternatives; however due to their significant visual impacts, additional noise impacts, high build costs, long construction duration, and high maintenance and security impacts there are better alternatives available as the preferred alternative.
 - d) Alternatives D and D1 were compared next due to their numerous similarities. Additional ecology and ROW impacts for Alternative D1 are not considered justified since this alternative accomplishes the same goals as Alternative D does with less impacts, therefore D is preferred amongst the two.
 - e) Alternative D and Alternative K impacts that differ were then compared for the remaining criteria:

MPT	Favors Alt. D
Security	Favors Alt. D
Maintenance	Favors Alt. D
Cost to Build	Favors Alt. D
Construction Duration	Favors Alt. D
Noise	Slightly Favors Alt. K
National Ecosystem	Favors Alt. D
Visual	Favors Alt. K
Historic Resource – Visual	Favors Alt. K

The comparison yields Alternative D as the Preferred Alternative subject to concurrence by the CAC, ACM and at the PIC. As stated previously, the Core Group has already determined that Alternative D should be advanced as the Preferred Alternative.

QUESTIONS/ANSWERS/COMMENTS:

At this point, the meeting was opened to the group for questions and comments as follows:

- ❖ Bob Guerrieri asked if we had a photo simulation of Alternative K by the cemetery as it appears that Ramp C is closer to Annunciation Church. Craig presented a number of the photo simulations to the group.
- ❖ Harry Moore asked about the noise impact to Fir Place and Craig explained that Ramp C after it crosses Browning Road starts to return to grade. The existing noise wall is 25' high when combined with the new noise walls and will provide similar protection to that which exists.
- ❖ Craig indicated that construction methods would be used to minimize vibrations, especially when adjacent to buildings like the mausoleums.
- ❖ Ken McIlvaine asked the height of the stacked alternatives (G2 and H1) and Craig said it would be approximately 85' including noise walls.
- ❖ Ken questioned why the noise walls were not being constructed for Annunciation Church and school. Craig indicated the school would be air conditioned. Ken added that even though, they would be installing air conditioning, there would be times in the spring and fall that the Church and school would want to open their windows. As the noise expert was not in attendance, Nick said that we would forward more information on our noise walls analysis in this area to Ken for his review.
- ❖ While reviewing the matrix, Dale Keith asked how many months the southbound diversion would be in place under Alternative D as compared to Alternative K as he is very concerned that as traffic now backs up for miles so it is obvious that it will be backed up considerably longer under Alternative D. Craig responded that under Alternative D, the southbound diversion requiring a weave similar to the existing northbound condition would be 8 months. Further, he explained the NJDOT will work with Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to develop mitigation measures (carpooling, staggered work hours, use of mass transit, etc.)
- ❖ Jody said that the rating of one criterion in this matrix will not affect the choice of a PA. He stressed that under Alternative K, the traveling public as well as the residents of Bellmawr will have 24 months of additional construction staging impact.
- ❖ Jody then went on to tell the group that we have presented a great deal of information which has been collected through the various processes. All the information presented tonight is the result of an objective analysis. It is our goal to reach consensus with each of the groups and agencies involved in order to be able to announce a PA prior to Thanksgiving so that we can hold a PIC meeting in early January.

- ❖ Diane Garcia said she appreciates all the work, time, effort and expense that has been put into this project and the professionalism that NJDOT has exhibited. However, everyone must understand how important this project is to the residents of Bellmawr and environs.
- ❖ Harry is concerned for BPMHC and the impact of noise under Alternative D rather than Alternative K. He would like more information regarding the impacts of Alternatives D and K to BPMHC.
- ❖ Both Dale Keith and Bruce Huntsinger would like to review the TES Traffic results. Ken, Bob, Harry and Rich Middleton would also like copies of the photo simulations depicting Alternatives D and K both with existing conditions with noise walls as well as without noise walls.
- ❖ Ken asked for more information about Alternative K. Craig told the group that not only would it cost approximately \$200 Million more than Alternative D but it would also take 24 months longer to build. The construction is challenging in that you have to excavate 25-35' below grade at which point you are in groundwater and need to dewater. Since the construction is a cut and cover operation, it must be repeated 3 times in order to maintain traffic during construction.
- ❖ Ken asked how many retention basins there would be within the project. Nick explained there would be 5 which are considered bio-retention basins; one at the infield near Creek Road and 4 others within the footprint of the interchange. They will be fenced and landscaped and not visible from the highway while driving at grade. Nick went on to say that the water will run into pipes and out into the creek and will not be permanently standing water.
- ❖ Ken then asked about the amount of information given to the LOB who met earlier in the day and Craig responded they were given the facts but in the condensed version.
- ❖ Jody then informed the group that at this afternoon's LOB meeting, Mayor Filipek said he was concerned about Alternative K and the impact on the EMT responses and the additional training that would be necessary for the members of the squads if Alternative K should be chosen. The Mayor said that the municipality did not want Alternative K. Further, Jody then told the group that he asked the Mayor if he was satisfied with Alternative D. The Mayor said that Alternative D was acceptable to the Borough. Paul J. Kain, City Clerk and Administrator of Gloucester City also supported Alternative D.
- ❖ Jody informed the group that the "Cost to Build" and "Construction Duration" is a very large determining factor and asked that the CAC members take that into consideration when making a decision.
- ❖ Diane asked if we have currently have a monetary commitment for this project and Bruce Riegel said that as this is a major project, a Financial Management Plan will be required under the "Transportation Act". This will require a commitment of significant future financial resources to complete the project. Nick added that for 2007, only \$600 Million has been designated for highway construction for the entire State of New Jersey.

- ❖ Bruce Huntsinger said that all people traveling these roads who will be subject to delays must be informed and Craig said NJDOT will let people know via the internet, flyers, newspaper, TV and radio.
- ❖ Francis Monari of the law firm of McKernan, McKernan and Godina representing New St. Mary's Cemetery asked the timing of the various groups reaching consensus and advancing a PA. Craig said a majority of the Core Group responded in support of Alternative D as the Preferred Alternative; the CAC would be meeting tonight; the ACM on October 24, 2006 and a PIC in January, 2007 at the Bellmawr Ballroom.

Craig then reviewed the next steps which are as follows:

- Funding for Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) approved 9/18/06
- Prepare pre-DEIS and DEIS
- Prepare Conceptual Army Corps Permit
- Prepare Section 4(f) Documentation for Bellmawr Park Mutual Housing

Craig informed the CAC members of the EIS Schedule beginning with FHWA's review of TES in 2006 with the Final EIS currently planned for spring 2008. The Design Phase will take approximately two or three years and the Construction Schedule will be influenced by the funding which is key to this project. It is currently planned that construction would start in late 2009/2010 with an advanced contract and completed by 2015+/-.

The general consensus of the CAC members is that they were satisfied with the screening out of Alternatives G2, H1 and D1. They indicated they need more information on traffic, visuals and noise before truly supporting Alternative D or Alternative K as the Preferred Alternative.

Jody thanked the group for their participation, requested comments on tonight's discussion and reminded them to call Patricia Saulino at 856 802 0843 X 128 if they had any questions or needed to get in touch with anyone on the Project Team. Additionally, Comment Sheets were distributed to all present and will be sent to the non-attending CAC members as well. Stamped post cards are also available for members to write to the Project Team.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9 pm.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Saulino
Dewberry- Goodkind, Inc.

