

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Location: City of Beaver Dam,
Municipal Building, Council
Chambers

Project No.: 45-0314.00

Date/Time: March 27, 2014, 2:00pm – 4:00pm

Re: Local Officials Meeting #3

Attendees: See sign-in sheet

Project I.D. 1110-00-09
USH 151 Freeway Conversion Study
Columbus to Waupun
Dodge County

Notes By: Dan Schrum, Matt Barr

I. Overview

The local officials meeting was held on Thursday, March 27, 2014 at the City of Beaver Dam Municipal Building with several project exhibits on display for officials to review. An agenda was distributed along with comment forms. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation (presentation) was given at 2:15 pm. The purpose of the meeting was to review the preliminary roadway concepts that have been developed and discuss those prior to holding the next public involvement meeting. The presentation gave a recap of the project purpose and need and the study's progress made since the last set of public meetings in 2009. Individuals attending from the project study team included:

Ayres Associates

Matt Barr – Project Manager
Dan Schrum – Design Engineer

TranSmart Technologies

Charles Wade – Planner

WisDOT

Mark Westerveld – WisDOT Project Manager
Tom Koprowski – WisDOT Planner

Brandon Lamers – WisDOT Supervisor

II. Presentation

Dan Schrum passed around handouts to everyone in attendance and also passed around the sign-in sheet. (See attached hand-out packet and sign-in sheet.) Mark Westerveld from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mark provided some background about the project and introduced Matt Barr and Dan Schrum from Ayres Associates along with Chuck Wade from TranSmart. Matt asked everyone to make sure that they signed in on the sign-in sheet. After introductions were completed, Matt began the presentation. The presentation lasted approximately 30 minutes and was split between Matt, Dan and Chuck (see attached slides for the presentation). The agenda of the presentation was as follows:

- Review purpose and need of study
- Discuss official “mapping” process
- Summarize completed tasks
- Summarize impacts of freeway conversion
- Discuss roadway alternatives
- Review study schedule
- Gather input

III. Questions and Answers

The meeting was then opened up to questions and a variety of topics were discussed as noted below.

1. Q – Some of the interchanges show a lot of space between the ramp and the frontage road connection. What is the purpose of showing such a large impact to properties when it is feasible to shorten the distance and have fewer impacts?

A - Mark talked about the ¼ mile spacing for the crossroads at the interchanges and the reason for the spacing has to do with development and traffic issues with areas where the crossroads are too close to the interchange ramp intersection. Mark also explained that a traffic impact analysis (TIA) would be completed to look at traffic volumes and if the spacing of the crossroads could be brought closer to the interchange. Chuck also mentioned that, for environmental documentation purposes, it is more beneficial to start with a conservative area as opposed to developing alternatives to the minimum standard.

2. Q – Will there be any early acquisitions as part of the project?

A – There is no funding for the project. It is a planning study for mapping purposes. Once a map is prepared, WisDOT has the opportunity to review any improvements (60 days) property owners propose for their property to determine if they will purchase the area mapped or take no action. If no action, the improvement would be acquired as part of a future construction project.

3. Q – As part of this study, will WisDOT help farmers that have lands currently in FPPA that would be removed, thus lowering their acres in FPPA?

A – WisDOT has Real Estate staff that would work directly with impacted property owners to address these issues.

4. Q – There are some areas in the corridor protected by conservation easements. Does the project team have experience working with lands that have conservation easements?

A – WisDOT has Real Estate staff that would work directly with impacted property owners to address these issues.

5. Comment – Several towns and Dodge County are currently in the process of updating their comprehensive plans within the next year and a half.

6. Q – Is there any outreach planned to the towns as part of the rest of the study?

A – Separate meetings have not been planned; however, the study team is available to meet with the individual communities as requested. Once we have identified a preferred alternative, we can conduct more outreach to the communities.

7. Comment – Dodge County would like to coordinate closely with the study team for both the County C and County DE corridors. The County has identified projects for

both corridors and the location of new interchanges with US 151 are important to the County.

8. Q – The Gunn Road interchange as shown in Alternative 2B would result in redundant connections that could end up as town roads. There are better options for this area.

A – Mark W. spoke with the gentleman after the Q/A period. There was some confusion as to how the frontage roads and ramps were represented on the displays. His redundancy concerns were answered once it was clarified that some of the lines on the displays were interchange ramps and not frontage roads.

9. Comment – Dodge County will be reconstructing County C and they prefer Alternative 5B which includes a new interchange with US 151. The project will likely occur within the next four to five years. The County would like to have a meeting with WisDOT to discuss the various options for the County C connection to US 151.

10. Q – In discussion of the worst case scenario, can you design the alternatives to the minimum standards to reduce the potential impacts?

A – We plan to study the most conservative footprint to ensure that we have cleared the area to be mapped for the potential environmental impacts. This avoids delaying a possible project for additional environmental documentation that could be required.

IV. One-on-One Discussions

Some other discussions occurred during the open house sessions that were not part of the formal question and answer period.

Mark Westerveld's Discussions

Mark spoke with the Town of Elba chairman and a board member. Their concern was with the CTH S interchange. They preferred an interchange at Bethel/Moriah Roads. They also suggested an overpass at Bethel/Moriah if an interchange can't be located there.

Mark spoke with several individuals about the alternatives at CTH DE. Mark mostly explained the pros and cons along with access for adjacent parcels. There seemed to be a preference for the DE location versus Gunn Road. See question 8.

Matt Barr's Discussions

Matt talked with Brian Field and Pete Thompson from the Dodge County Highway Department. They confirmed that they prefer the alternative with a new interchange at County C. They have been meeting with property owners along County C about the project they are working on and have been surprised by the amount of traffic using it. There are a lot of trucks that use that route to get to Fox Lake instead of taking STH 68. In reviewing the displays, they questioned the need for a new road connecting Breezy Point and Redwood Roads east of US 151. That would require a lot of farmland and might only benefit a couple of property owners. They also mentioned that County DE was recently reconstructed with concrete pavement which is mainly due to the heavy truck volumes traveling to the co-op.

Dan Schrum's Discussions

Dan spoke with two gentlemen about the interchange at County S. The two voiced their concern over the amount of traffic that currently crosses 151 and with the location of the proposed interchange; they will have to go out of their way to cross 151 in the future. The two men were also concerned with the west end of the County S interchange and the fact that County S terminates at the intersection with the frontage roads. Both men were adding ideas about moving the interchange to the south and even adding a grade separation connecting Bethel Road to Moriah Road. Dan explained that the location of the proposed interchange is typically due to maintaining proper interchange spacing (2 mi.) and connecting to county highways for increased regional connectivity.

Chuck Wade's Discussions

None to note.

V. Written Comments

Comment sheets were also available at the meeting, which could be filled out or mailed to Ayres staff. One comment sheet (attached) was received by Matt Barr from Neal Stippich, Town of Beaver Dam Chairman.