

Memorandum of Meeting (Draft)

Date: 10/21/04

Date of Meeting: 9/21/04

Time: 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm

Location: Carlisle Fire Company Banquet Hall

Type: Milford Area Working Group Meeting #4

Attendance: See Attached

The following is a summary of the discussion at the Working Group Meeting:

- Bob Kramer called the meeting to order at 5:35. He welcomed the Working Group back from their Summer hiatus; then turned his attention to the large general public turnout. He indicated that an error had been made and that this evening's meeting was not a Public Workshop but a Working Group meeting. He further indicated that the public was welcome to stay, that no decisions would be made tonight and that this meeting was intended to give the Working Group their first view of potential preliminary alternatives. He asked that everyone please sign the sign-in sheet so that their names could be added to the mailing list if they were not already on the list.
- The meeting broke to allow the working group members an opportunity to get a bite to eat and resumed at 5:50. Mr. Kramer asked the members to introduce themselves since there were some new members to the group and asked that they indicate any affiliations that they might have. Following introductions, Mr. Kramer indicated that there would be a lot of detail for the members to review this evening and then turned the floor over to Monroe Hite III, DelDOT's Project Manager.
- Mr. Hite addressed the general public first indicating that the Public Workshop for the Milford Area would be held on November 8th, 2004 at the fire house and secondly reinforcing Mr. Kramer's request that those in attendance sign the sign-in sheets. Next, he turned his attention to the Working Group and indicated that he hoped that they had a relaxing summer. He indicated that the Project Team had been busy over the summer and that there was a considerable amount of information to go over. He indicated that there was a correction to the information in the first pocket of their hand-out materials- east in the title block should be west. He indicated that the Working Group would shortly break up into smaller teams to review and comment on the various preliminary alternatives. He then turned the meeting back to Mr. Kramer.

- Mr. Kramer reviewed a list of recent meetings and briefings that had been held since the last meeting with the Working Group in May. He indicated that he expects the number of meetings to increase with the amount of detail that the group will see shortly. He indicated that if there are community or business groups who would like a presentation that the Project Team is available to meet and discuss the project with them.
- Mr. Kramer then addressed a number of potential misunderstandings that the Project Team has heard through the meetings and briefings that were reviewed previously. The first misconception is that the “DelDOT has already made up its mind to go with on-alignment”. Mr. Kramer indicated that the initial emphasis on On-alignment is based on extensive experience in working with the regulatory agencies, which will be involved in reviewing the environmental documentation for the project and the eventual permitting, that full and total consideration must be given to the On-alignment options before they will consider Off-alignment options. Both On-alignment and Off-alignment options will be fully considered. However, absolutely no decisions have been made by DelDOT.
- The second misunderstanding is that “DelDOT is trying to do this on the cheap.” Mr. Kramer indicated that cost is a factor but not the only factor and that all factors will be weighed in making a decision. He also indicated that the Project Team is just beginning to put together costs and is no where near knowing the costs of any of the options at this time.
- The third misunderstanding is that “DelDOT is intending to turn US 113 into a fully controlled access highway just like SR 1 from I-95 to Dover.” Mr. Kramer indicated that the effort, on-alignment, is to create a limited access roadway. Limited access does not mean no access as is the case with a controlled access highway like SR 1.
- The final misunderstanding deals with “the outcome (of this project) is already a done deal.” Mr. Kramer indicated that if there was an option that is without issues, then there would be a preferred choice. Since no “silver bullet” option exists, tough issues associated with all options are going to be addressed and trade offs made and pain experienced. Therefore, a decision on a preferred option is a long way off. Unfortunately, this process is not a painless process and the Working Group, the general public and the agencies will have to work through that pain. However, not planning now, backing off and not doing anything will only make the next effort that much more painful and options available today won’t be options in the future. This process is designed to develop a broad base of support for a logical option based on facts. One solution for the entire 30+ miles of the project area is unlikely given the diverse conditions throughout the corridor. A different solution tailored to each diverse condition in the project area probably is closer to what may eventually be the outcome. This will be a challenge and an opportunity, if action is not taken now for future choices will be much more difficult to make and to implement.
- Mr. Kramer then introduced Bill Hellmann to introduce the details for this evenings meeting. Mr. Hellmann reinforced the point that there is no easy or obvious solution. A lot of hard work has gone into developing each of the options to be presented and to make them as workable as possible. He indicated that the Working Group is moving from the concept level of 1000 foot wide yellow bands to preliminary alternatives and that the first step in evaluating these alternatives is to get your feedback.

- Mr. Hellmann then introduced Joe Wutka who reviewed the western Off-alignment options for the Milford Area.
- Mr. Wutka then introduced Jeff Riegner who reviewed the eastern Off-alignment options. During Mr. Riegner's description of the preliminary alternatives, he indicated that the length of the eastern alternatives is between 14 and 15 miles. Mr. Kramer interjected that most of that length is existing roadway (US 113 north of Milford and the Milford Bypass). Mr. Riegner indicated that that was correct and that new roadway construction was approximately four miles in length for the various eastern Off-alignment options.
- Mr. Riegner then reviewed the On-alignment options for the Milford area. During this explanation, Connie Fox asked for a clarification on the movement of ambulances from Shawnee and Old Shawnee Roads, west of US 113 to NB 113 and to the fire house. Mr. Riegner explained how an ambulance west of 113 on Shawnee Road would access NB 113 and proceed to the Fire House. He then indicated that NB access to US 113 could not be developed at Old Shawnee Road. Glen Stevenson asked how access to Fitzgerald's/Johnson Road would be achieved with the On-alignment option. Mr. Riegner explained that access from both roads to both directions of US 113 was achievable on the On-alignment option.
- Mr. Riegner then turned the meeting back to Mr. Hite, who broke the Working Group into smaller groups to review the various preliminary alternatives with assistance from members of the Project Team.
- As a result of the effort by the Working Group members in their breakout session, the following comments were reported back to the entire Working Group:

East Bypass

- Overall, direction of travel for all options appears more east/west than north/south. However, prefer east bypass versus west bypass
- Shorter, cheaper, fewer interchanges, greater impact on future development - better than impacting existing homes and farms - work it out with developers
- Proposed that future development should carry less weight than existing residences and farms
- East bypass works for Perdue
- Less wetland impacts, less farm impacts
- Need to show proposed bridge locations crossing existing roadways along bypass routes
- Need to show all ramp movements at tie-in locations along US 113
- Emergency access with SR 1 needs to be explored and evaluated. How do you get to the east side of 1 without going around via Rt. 36?
- Concern about closing off Wilkens Road access at existing SR 1 crossover. How does Wilkens Road traffic east of SR 1 access SR 1? Will the crossover be closed?
- No direct access to east side of SR 1 from Wilkens Road/Access issues for to and from east of SR 1
- Safety concerns at SR 30/SR 1 intersection.
- What is happening north of SR 1/US 30 interchange?
- Alternative B appears to be unnecessary. Why travel northwest to access US 113 southbound?

- There appear to be more wetland impacts associated with Alternative B
- Consider intersection @ B & Old State to handle new development
- B is backtracking, has substation, and still impacts Fitzgeralds
- B and F are out of the way
- B has environmental impacts
- B creates a good development border
- B has less farm & historical impact
- Northern alignment B creates development boundary
 - Less farmland impact
 - Less historic impact
- Safety concerns about tie-in location north of Johnson Road – recent fatal accident
- Alternatives F3 and D3 don't seem too bad - more detailed study (cost, impacts, etc.)
- City prefers east, especially Alts. E & F
- F3 and D3 seem to minimize farm impact at US 113
- Alternative F seems inconvenient and out of the way, defeats the purpose of the bypass
- Group supports Alternative F
- Alternatives D and E appear to have less impact with more logical bypass routes
- Direct impacts to backside of Christian Tabernacle School with Alternate D
- D/3 & F/3 had support (3 follows property line)
- Alternative 1 does not seem reasonable considering its significant impact to the potentially historical (250+ years?) farm east of US 113
- Alternative 2 too much impact to historical farm property/Alt. 2 is too impactive
- Alternative 3 seems to have the least impact, aligning more closely to the property line of adjacent historical properties, encouraging
- Decision needs to be made soon
- Move SR 1 south, try to impact fewer properties south of Haflinger Road
- Land costs for developable land (\$70K per acre) skyrocketed in past two years
- Need regular ESP crossovers
- Could disrupt planned development
- Not compatible with water and sewer plans
- Quality of life will be destroyed for current residents
- Objective – most accessibility with least disruption
- Merging issues with numerous decisions points for proposed interchanges
- Details crossovers – would roads be cut-off
- Full access both directions to and from 1 to 113 and vice versa
- Cost due to development activity
- School impact W/D
- Series of merges/diverges @ NE end → look @ this
- No support – not needed
- Define extent of local road improvements
- Shorter, cheaper, fewer intersections
- Better to impact developers than existing residents

West Bypass

- Overall, little or no support for western bypass alternatives
- Alternative “J” does not appear to accomplish much, but would like to see more details such as costs. Any possibility of combining it with additional bypass segments?
- No benefit to J → doesn’t fix enough
- Lot of time spent on option J - reality is it does not look as good as it might seem.
- More information needed for J → less \$
- Alt. J is interesting, but not really enough benefit
- Environmental impacts for all alternatives are severe. Alternative 4 will impact the only undeveloped pond area at Abbot’s Pond.
- Environmental impact
- Alt 4 impacts Abbot’s Pond; encourages development
- Impacts to Farms, wetlands, etc.
- Major environmental impacts
- Alternative “G” will encourage more development, creating requests for more interchanges in the future
- G is far too long → business will suffer
- G4 allows Milford to grow
- Alt. G preferred
- Alt. G would encourage development too far west
- Alts. H & I impact vets. home, etc.
- Also look at I
- Alt. E is better
- SR 14 would need to be upgraded
- Emergency service – consider how access to incidents on road will be accomplished
- Truck traffic through town – Argot Corner to Harrington Granary only one route
- New alignment connection suggested at south end
- Concern about length and cost of western off-alignment options
- Too long: impact & costs
- Access issues – impact to Silver Haven Lakes, maintenance of traffic
- This distributes traffic/trucks out of downtown
- Too long, farm impacts (farms that have been in families for 80-90 years). Significant Wetland impacts

Plan Comments

- OPTION J** - Revise access to 113 on south end of alignment
 - Look at access to development north of Haven Lake, west of 113 by extending bridge over R.R. to include new roadway access immediately adjacent to R.R.

*Property located west of 113, north of 14 approximately 4000’ west of the 14/113 intersection should have preliminary development plan. Get that plan and plot on mapping

OPTION J - NB and SB access to Old Landing Road (How would that be addressed?)

- Show DelDOT proposed realignment of SR 15 at SR 14 on mapping
- Potential Historic Site at the Rt. 36 crossing of Alternate 4. Emphasized property seems to lie back in the woods about 500 feet WNW of Rt.36
- Safety Issue?! Identified at the signalized entrance to the shopping center and Industrial Park on 113 north of the 14 / 113 intersection
- Hollyhill Road mis-labeled – should be road to the east. Hollyhill Road label placed on property line / Private road

Alternative G - Where it splits south of 14 goes through two family farms held for almost 100 years each

Alternative 5 and Cross-over from Alternative H to 5 - Impact chicken houses and other resources around Hollyhill Road where it crosses Lednum Branch

Disadvantages Listed for Alternative G-5:

- ❖ Very long (costly)
- ❖ Agricultural Impacts
- ❖ Wetland Impacts
- ❖ Numerous Structures (costly)

Alternative 4 - east of SR 36 crossing 6th generation farm
- east of SR 36 and west of alignment properties identified as not subdivided (Look at Ownership)

- Consider option of crossing from Alt. 5 to Alt 4 east of Johnson Br. / Abbott's Pond
- Eliminate X connection between Alt's 4 and 5 south of Rt. 14
- Does it make sense to shift cost and use culvert (s) rather than bridges? – comment directed at Alt. 5 crossing just east of Griffith Lake
- Eliminate Alternative H. Consider feasibility of current DelDOT Interchange Layout at Thompsonville Int. with Alt. I

*New Veterans Hospital Location Identified in Alt. H Corridor east of Canterbury Road

On Alignment

- Concern about SB US 113 access for buses leaving Banneker Elementary School located east of 113
- Problems for school buses heading south
- Emergency vehicle access issues throughout corridor
- Cutting off N. Shores hurts emergency access – 1 entrance isn't enough

- Emergency access to retirement facilities
- Emergency access to/from west @ Shawnee, Old Shawnee, Seabury
- Lack of support for either option at SR 14. Option 2 eliminates RR crossing and requires shorter bridge, but has too much impact to surrounding development
- Either SR 14 intersection is a major impact → improving SR 14 isn't enough benefit
- No support for SR 14 intersection, but Option 2 is a little better than Option 1
- Overall, the on-alignment options appear to be much more restrictive relative to existing conditions
- Interested to see a cost breakdown comparison between on-alignment and off-alignment alternatives. Unit cost per mile or something similar
- Concerned the on-alignment options will divide the town and change the character of Milford
- Divides town, creates misdirection for ESP, destroys Q of L, similar to old days with railroad through town
- Issues related to farm access, especially for bridge overpass where side road goes over US 113. Larger farm vehicles may have difficulty traveling steep approach grades
- Prefer to see combination of access options along the west side of 113 near Hudson Pond development to avoid impact to existing homes. Mix and match at south end.
- Look @ NB 113 to SB 1 ramp (may help businesses)
- Problem with one-lane ramps @ SR 1/ US 113 splits
- Some elements may be good even with a bypass
- SR 1 B/NW 10th is a problem intersection – don't put more traffic through it
- Ex. Curve on Airport is problematic
- Perdue trucks use NW 10th → bridge to Airport would be ideal
- Alt. Option: bridge @ Airport, R/O @ Buccaneer Blvd. (and fix Airport curve) - back connection is critical
- Eliminates Haven Lake crossing for local traffic
- Tie TMPR to Frontage Rd even with bypasses
- Old Shawnee area hurts local access (esp. Lakeview/Kings)
- Developers want to build shopping centers south of town
- South of Fitzgerald's – generally okay
- Negative business impacts
- Tremendous negative business impacts
- Enormous construction impacts to businesses
- Too many gotchas
- Increased insurance costs with increased distance - based on distance from fire station
- Construction impacts on businesses
- Maintenance of traffic
- Consider southbound SR 1 access at northern end of Milford bypass
- Weaving problem at Milford bypass
- Elevated section through Milford - could it work?
- Doesn't help E-W in downtown
- Option 2 is worse than Option 1
- S. of Milford isn't as bad
- Circuitous routes: "How do you get from X to Y?"
- Forget "on alignment" - hate it.
- Local access to circuitous - too tough to get around.
- Can't get to and from businesses.

- Worried it will be selected as cheapest alternative.
 - Divides the town in half.
 - Might be selected because it's cheaper
 - Determine how crossroads are handled
 - North of Johnson – Milford
 - South of Johnson – Ellendale
 - Paramedic (Lincoln) – both ways
 - Want more information on the timing of the improvements
 - Priority should be Sussex County residents and not beach bunnies
 - Agree - need to plan for the future
 - DO WHAT'S BEST FOR LOCALS
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- Following the reports from the breakout groups, Mr. Kramer indicated that the Project Team's next effort will be geared to looking at factors such as cost, traffic, environmental impacts, etc.
 - Skip Pikus asked the question, since the Working Group is obviously heading toward either an Eastern or Western Off-alignment option based on the breakout session reports, should the On-alignment options be dropped and not carried forward in future discussions.
 - Mr. Kramer explained that the resource agencies will require that an On-alignment option be evaluated/considered through the entire environmental process. As with the no-build option, an option On-alignment and an Off-alignment option or options will most likely be evaluated through the entire process.
 - Mr. Pikus asked when could the public anticipate the construction of an option.
 - Mr. Hite indicated that when you combine all the steps in the process, it will take about ten years before any major improvement will be on the ground.
 - Mr. Kramer emphasized the need to plan now, work through the process and get, probably before next summer, to a point where alternatives for detailed study are identified. The Department will then be in a position to protect these options. He further emphasized that we don't want to move the process too quickly, where we miss dotting all the I's and crossing all the T's and leaving the process open to be sent back to square one.
 - Brooke Clendaniel asked how much will be changed in the preparation of the alternatives by next month. The people from the general public who were in attendance this evening, appeared to have problems understanding the maps.
 - Mr. Kramer indicated that how the information will be presented at the November Public Workshops will be a topic at the next Working Group meeting. The Project Team will make a presentation with options as to how to present the information to the public at the next Working Group meeting.

- Mr. Hite indicated that the next Working Group meeting will be October 25th at the Fire Hall and that the Project Team will be making changes to the options based on the comments from the breakout sessions, as well as a presentation on how the information will be presented to the public in November. He also indicated that the Public Workshop, in the Milford Area, will be November 8th from 4 to 7 pm at the Fire Hall.
- Mark Mallamo asked if the Project Team had considered elevating the road in the median of US 113 through Milford.
- Mr. Kramer indicated that a similar request is being evaluated in conjunction with studies on Route 1 from Lewes to Rehoboth and that those evaluations will be shared with the Working Group at the next meeting.

The Working Group meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.