



Springmill Community Meeting

August 19, 2011

Springmill Club House

Attendees: Project Team members Andrew Bing, Bill Hellmann, and Ed Thomas; 55 people from the community including Representative Quinn Johnson and Senator Bruce Ennis.

Andrew Bing began the meeting by thanking everyone for attending and expressed appreciation to the Springmill representatives who had arranged and set up the meeting. Andrew pointed out that Senator Bruce Ennis and Representative Quinn Johnson were in attendance. Andrew explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide a preview of the August 31, 2011 US 301 Public Workshop (postponed to September 6, 2011) and to update Springmill residents about project refinements, especially those in the vicinity of Springmill, that have been made or are under consideration since the last public workshop held in March 2009. Andrew mentioned that the project has been divided into four design sections and that the focus this evening would be on Section 2, which includes the Springmill area. He introduced Bill Hellmann who used a PowerPoint presentation to:

- review the project purpose and need;
- provide a brief history of the project;
- explain recent project team design progress;
- review recent economic development and jobs data;
- provide a brief description of the approved Green North + Spur Road Alternative and refinements;
- point out the location of Springmill in relation to the New US 301 Mainline and the earth berm that will provide mitigation for the community; and
- Summarize project next steps.

Andrew pointed out that the end of the comment period for the August 31st public workshop (postponed to September 6th) was September 12th (extended to September 16th) and urged Springmill residents to attend and to provide comments, which will be considered as the project moves forward. He stated that the project website had recently been updated and that all materials, except the workshop PowerPoint presentation, are on the website (<http://deldot.gov/information/projects/us301/>) and that the PowerPoint would be added in the next few days. He emphasized that the website is now the focus for providing information to the public as the project progresses and encouraged people to visit the website frequently.

A question and answer session followed the introductory presentation. A summary of the questions and comments follows:

1. What is the purpose of the Spur Road?

The purpose of the Spur Road is to address existing and projected traffic congestion (e.g. existing Summit Bridge Road and Choptank Road/Bethel Church Road), improve safety and manage and separate truck traffic to and from the north (Glasgow, Newark, Pennsylvania, etc.).

2. What is the projected cost for the Mainline sections 1, 2 and 3?

The estimated construction cost of the US 301 Mainline is approximately \$445 million in year of expenditure dollars (YOE \$'s).

3. Will the tolls result in trucks using local roads to avoid paying the toll?

Long-distance through heavy trucks, not having a local origin or destination, will likely use new US 301 and not existing US 301. There will be no connection between existing and new US 301 in the vicinity of the MD/DE line, prior to the Mainline toll facility.

Trucks with a local destination, to and from the south, are also likely to use new US 301, in view of the truck prohibitions planned for local roads in Maryland and Delaware in the vicinity of the MD/DE line.

Trucks with a local destination, to and from the north, will have the option to use new US 301, paying a toll at the local interchange they select (likely at either Levels Road Extended or Summit Bridge Road, in the vicinity of Armstrong Corner Road), or they could continue to travel toll-free by using existing US 301, Boyd's Corner Road, US 13 and the toll-free ramps south of the Roth Bridge.

One of the primary purposes of the US 301 project is to remove truck traffic from the local roadway network. This will be accomplished in multiple ways. First, the new limited access roadway will provide a much more attractive route (no traffic signals and no congestion) than current US 301. Second, tolls will be structured to discourage long-distance trucks from leaving new US 301 to go onto the local road system. Trucks are likely to pay a toll very similar to those at the I-95 Newark Toll Plaza, regardless of where they access new US 301. For example, truck tolls at the US 301 Mainline plaza may be \$9 and they may be slightly less, say \$8, at the ramp plazas for the three US 301 interchanges. The Mainline plaza and ramp plaza truck tolls will be kept similar in order to minimize truck toll diversions to local roads; the goal being to keep trucks on the US 301 Mainline. Third, trucks will be restricted along key potential diversion routes such as Warwick Road and Strawberry Lane.

4. Does Maryland have a plan to limit access on its part of US 301?

US 301 in Maryland, from Queenstown to the Delaware state line does involve a number of at-grade intersections and interchanges. Maryland currently does not have a plan to replace the limited number of intersections with interchanges. However, in the past, they have upgraded intersections to interchanges when necessary due to increased traffic or accidents, e.g. Maryland Routes 213, 290 and 291. Maryland is expected to continue this practice in the future. At the same time, Maryland has acquired access between existing intersections and thus additional intersections on US 301 in Maryland are not anticipated.

5. How many toll booths will there be on the Mainline portion?

There will be one US 301 Mainline toll plaza located just north of the Maryland/Delaware line which will include two highway speed EZ-Pass lanes and three EZ-Pass/Cash lanes in each direction. There will be three sets of ramp toll plazas, located on the north-serving (to and from the north) interchange ramps. Each ramp toll plaza will include one EZ-Pass lane and one EZ-Pass/coin machine lane.

6. Will people who live in the Middletown area have to pay a toll every time they use New US 301?
Traveling on new US 301 will require paying a toll. The SR 1 toll-free ramps to and from the north (just south of the Roth Bridge) are not affected by new US 301. Local residents can still travel south along local roads to avoid paying a toll, i.e., via existing US 301 to Levels Road Extended and relocated Warwick Road, through Warwick, via MD Rt. 282 (Cecilton-Warwick Road) to MD Rt. 213 to existing US 301 south of the Delaware/Maryland line.
7. Will New US 301 take truck traffic off existing US 301?

Without new US 301, existing US 301 is projected to carry 5,100 trucks per day through Middletown in 2030. With the new US 301 constructed, existing US 301 is projected to carry approximately 1,400 trucks per day in 2030, a 70% reduction.

8. Will adding traffic lights on existing US 301 encourage trucks to use New 301?

Should additional traffic lights be added to existing US 301, it may encourage trucks with local origins or destinations to access new US 301 at the closest interchange. However, additional signals must meet national signal warrants. Furthermore, long-distance through trucks, with neither an origin nor destination in the Middletown area, are projected to use new US 301.

9. What will the relationship of New US 301 be to I-95 in the Christiana area?

New US 301 will tie into SR 1 just south of the Roth Bridge. A significant portion of the US 301 traffic is projected to travel from US 301 to SR 1 to I-95, in the vicinity of Christiana Mall. The Department recently widened, to five lanes, I-95 from SR 1 to the I-95/I-295/I-495 interchange. DeIDOT has recently awarded a construction contract to improve the I-95/SR 1 interchange at the Christiana Mall. DeIDOT has also recently initiated a study to widen SR 1 from the Roth Bridge to I-95/SR 1 Interchange at Christiana Mall. All three projects assume the additional traffic from new US 301.

10. What will the impacts of New US 301 be on the Springmill community?

No significant impacts are anticipated on the Springmill community, other than a moderate increase (5 to 6 dBA) in noise levels in the extreme northwest corner of the community. New US 301 will not be visible from the Springmill community, due to existing tree lines / wooded areas and the proposed 6' high 1,800' long landscaped visual earth berm.

11. What will the closest point of New US 301 be to Springmill?

The nearest distance between a Springmill community property line and the edge of a new US 301 travel lane is 770 feet (US 301 north of the Spur Road interchange and the northeast corner of the community). South of the Spur Road interchange, the closest distance between a Springmill community property line and a new US 301 travel lane is 1,270 feet.

12. What improvements will be made to existing US 301 (widening starts just north of Springmill)?

Existing US 301 (Summit Bridge Road) will be improved from south of Armstrong Corner Road to north of new US 301, to include 2 lanes in each direction with a concrete curb median. A new signalized intersection will be provided at Summit Bridge Road and the connector road to the new US 301 interchange. Access to existing driveways will be maintained. The Summit Bridge Road intersection with Armstrong Corner Road/Marl Pit Road will be widened and reconstructed to accommodate dedicated turn lanes.

13. What percent of the needed right-of-way has been purchased to date?

Approximately 20% of the right-of-way has been acquired which has involved advanced acquisitions protecting the project corridor from development and properties that were total acquisitions. In order to complete the remaining acquisitions, final construction plans are required to identify the portions of properties needed to construct the project. The final design of the US 301 Mainline is nearing completion, the needed properties have been identified, and the right-of-way acquisition process (appraisals and negotiations) is actively underway. It is projected that the right-of-way acquisition of properties required to construct the US 301 Mainline will be completed about this time next year. Right-of-way acquisition for the US 301 Spur Road is projected to be completed in 2012 and 2013.

14. Will any parts of the Mainline or the Spur Road be above ground (elevated)?

The new US 301 Mainline will be elevated on structures passing over Armstrong Corner Road, Summit Bridge Road (existing US 301), the Norfolk-Southern Railroad, Boyds Corner Road and SR 1, north of the Biddles toll plaza (northbound US 301 only). Local roads passing over new US 301 include: Strawberry Lane, Levels Road Extended, Bunker Hill Road, and Jamison Corner Road. The Spur Road will be elevated and pass over new US 301 (northbound ramp only) and the improved

SR 896 curve south of Summit Bridge. Local roads that will be elevated and pass over the Spur Road include: Armstrong Corner Road, Old Schoolhouse Road, Churchtown Road, and the northbound ramp from Bethel Church Road over the southbound Spur Road.

15. Will parts of the new road be visible from Springmill?

See response to question no. 10.

16. What can you tell us about when construction will start and end?

See Attachment No. 1.

17. We have heard about a major new development that may be located near or on US 301; would that project expedite the construction of New US 301?

Not possible to make that determination at this time.

18. Originally no development was proposed for the land between Springmill and the new highway, is that still the case?

The property between Springmill and new US 301 is anticipated to become land-locked by the new US 301 project. The Department is not currently aware of any development plans associated with this parcel. The Department may acquire this property, assuming it is land-locked.

19. Can DelDOT condemn that land?

DelDOT can condemn that portion of the property required to construct new US 301. DelDOT can also acquire land-locked properties. However, the property owner has the right to retain the land-locked property, if they so desire.

20. Why would a landowner want to retain ownership on a land-locked property?

Example: Should a land owner believe there is a potential to secure access through an adjacent property.

21. Is the Spur Road already designed?

The Spur Road is currently in the preliminary design phase. Design of the Spur Road is scheduled to be completed in 2012.

22. How many lanes will there be? Using the Spur Road travelling from Maryland would you start with 4 lanes go to 2 lanes and back to 4?

US 301 currently tapers from two lanes in each direction to one lane in each direction, in Maryland. The construction of new US 301 will extend for a short distance into Maryland. DelDOT will remove the tapered section in Maryland, providing continuity of two lanes in each direction. The Spur Road will be constructed as a divided highway with one lane in each direction.

23. What is the priority of this project when considering other DelDOT projects throughout the state? Senator Ennis stated that since toll revenues and federal funds will be used to pay for this project there would be no priority issues impacting the US 301 project. Representative Johnson concurred saying that as a result of using tolls revenues and federal funding this project will not have to compete with other projects seeking state funds.

The US 301 project is proposed to be funded primarily with toll revenue bonds and some federal funds, in order to minimize its impact on other projects included in the statewide Capital Transportation Program (CTP).

24. Will New US 301 have a federal number?

New US 301 will carry the US 301 federal number / shield. Existing US 301 will be renumbered.

25. Will the Spur Road be part of financial analysis or only the Mainline?

The project financial plan, to be updated in the fall of 2011 and presented to the Secretary of Transportation in December 2011, will only involve the US 301 Mainline. The US 301 Spur Road will be addressed as a separate issue in the future. See Attachment No. 1 and Public Workshop Display Panel 5A.

26. Are there any problems with the railroad?

No, the new US 301 Mainline will pass over the Norfolk Southern Railroad on bridges that will provide a minimum vertical clearance of 23 feet 6 inches.

27. Is it correct that when widening US 301 going north all improvements will be made on the west side and not on the railroad's side?

Existing US 301 will be widened to the west, holding the existing edge of the northbound pavement. However, there will be miscellaneous construction to the east of existing US301 such as shoulder, curb and sidewalk construction.

28. Does DelDOT intend extending the widening of existing US 301 north of Mt. Pleasant, before completing new US 301 project?

No, it is anticipated that new US 301 will be completed and the effects of new US 301 on existing US 301 traffic evaluated before any decision is made regarding the extension of the widening of existing US 301 north to Mt. Pleasant.

29. Will sections of the Mainline be built and opened at different times?

No, the three sections need to be opened at the same time, in order to initiate toll revenue service.

30. Will construction contracts have an end date?

Yes, since US 301 will be a toll facility, it is important that the entire project be constructed as quickly as possible, in order to minimize capitalized interest payments during construction and begin toll collection the earliest possible date. Significant penalties will be imposed upon contractors should they not complete their construction projects on time.

31. Are there any remaining environmental hurdles, like the Bog Turtle, that could stop the project? **No. However, DelDOT will need to secure a number of permits from the Environmental Resource and Regulatory Agencies, such as the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC). Because of the extensive coordination with these agencies during the project planning and design phases, it is anticipated that the permits will be secured in a timely fashion.**

ATTACHMENT 1

When Will US 301 Get Built?

- We cannot provide you with a specific construction start date for the US 301 Mainline or US 301 Spur Rd.
- US 301 will be constructed once we confirm that traffic and revenue projections will result in a financial plan that will be favorably received by the bond market and is acceptable to the Secretary, the Governor and the Legislature.
- We intend to update the financial plan this fall and present the results to the Secretary in December.
- It remains the goal of the Department to fund the construction of the US 301 project with primarily toll revenue bonds and some federal funds, thus minimizing impact on the state's Transportation Trust Fund and the statewide Capital Transportation Program.
- Once the General Assembly authorizes the sale of toll revenue bonds, about 3 ½ to 4 years would be required to bid and award the construction contracts and to complete the actual construction of the US 301 Mainline.
- The US 301 Mainline has been and continues to be a higher priority than the US 301 Spur Road.
- Contract 4A, the 896 and Bethel Church Interchange, can be constructed and become operational prior to or as part of the US 301 Spur Road.
- It is anticipated that construction on the US 301 Spur will not happen for a number of years. It is currently contemplated that construction of the US 301 Spur Road would begin sometime after the opening of the US 301 Mainline.
- More information is available on Public Workshop Display Boards 1, 5 and 14.