

Detroit River International Crossing Study

Local Advisory Council/Local Agency Group

March 28, 2007 – 7:00 PM

Southwestern High School

Purpose: To review the progress of the Detroit River International Crossing Study.

Attendance: See attachment.

Discussion:

Introductions

Mohammed Alghurabi began the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves. Following introductions, he indicated that the meeting was to be conducted so that the observers could comment at the beginning and end of the meeting. The Local Advisory Council and Local Agency Group members would conduct their business uninterrupted in the core of the meeting.

Agenda Review

Mohammed Alghurabi asked if there were any comments or revisions to the agenda. There were none.

Public Comments

Mohammed Alghurabi asked if any member of the general public wished to speak. There were no public comments.

Meeting Notes

There were no comments on the notes of the February meeting.

Status of the Deep Drilling Program

Joe Corradino used a slide to show the two sets of seven holes to be drilled in each of two corridors on each side of Ft. Wayne. He noted that Hole #3 will not be drilled, because Holes #3 and 5 migrated closer together in gaining right to enter the properties where each hole is located. Therefore, drilling both holes would not produce meaningful data in the geophysical analysis more than drilling Hole #5 will produce. Joe Corradino indicated that in Corridor X-10 all holes have been drilled except for #7, which is a core hole and is still underway. This means the rock core from the hole is brought up and saved for examination. Hole #7 should be done in another 5-7 days. In Corridor X-11, Holes #10, #12, #13, #16 are done, with #14 expected to be done later that night. Holes #11 and #15 are still to go. Hole #11 will be a partially cored hole.

Holes #14 and #15 are the only ones with nearby residences. Residents within 300 feet of the bore hole were provided compensation to relocate temporarily. There will be special security guards present 24/7 for the duration of the drilling there.

No voids have been detected so far, and there has been no hydrogen sulfide gas release.

After the holes have been drilled, there will be trucks coming and going that will be using devices that can make an underground “MRI-type” image of the rock to look further for voids and for information about the rock that would allow understanding of how a void might propagate upward to the surface, if one were present.

In Canada there is a similar drilling/geotechnical program with multiple rigs going simultaneously.

There were no comments or questions on this topic.

March 21 Public Meeting

Joe Corradino noted that the handout materials include the notes of the March 21 public meeting and comments received. He reviewed the land use concepts introduced at the meeting, -- three alternatives in West Delray and two in East Delray. In the west, there is a greater emphasis on residential redevelopment, while in the east there is a greater emphasis on light industry and logistic support (distribution/warehousing).

Implementing the plans will require partnering among agencies. MDOT can be the catalyst by investing in the roadway development, access improvements and related enhancements plus provide payments/assistance to those who are relocated by the project. For example, residents relocated from the plaza area, could be relocated to West Delray, if they so chose. This would create a market for infill housing.

Displays showing the land use are being placed around the area in a variety of public locations for people to see. On April 26, 2007, there will be another public meeting at which the land use and Context Sensitive Solution work will begin to be knit together.

Revisions to Interchanges

Value Planning was a week-long exercise that brought in “new eyes” to examine the proposed interchanges connecting I-75 to the new plaza. Engineers examined and validated what has been done and looked for ways to make further refinements. As a result, two new interchanges are being considered which will have fewer impacts in the Delray area, if they are deemed practical.

By June it is intended to reduce the number of alternatives. Some interchanges look less favorable than others and some plaza configurations may be dropped, as well.

A new element in the plans is the concept of a “Gateway Boulevard” on the west side of the proposed plaza that would carry traffic from Jefferson at the south to, and across I-75. The boulevard would be landscaped with a narrow median. But, it will have impacts that were displayed at the March 21 public meeting.

LAC/LAG Comments

Q. Where will the Gateway Boulevard go?

A. In one example, it will pass by the Produce Terminal, cross over the rail lines and eventually connect to Jefferson.

Q. Please elaborate on the land use plans.

R. In east Delray, the idea is to have light industry and logistics support (distribution/warehousing), which is consistent with public input at earlier workshops. In West Delray, the focus is residential revitalization.

It should be noted that, in the Delray area, there are about 1500 vacant parcels owned by government. Many of these are owned by the City. So, a partnership with the City is key to revitalizing Delray.

Another point to make is that MDOT is working to reduce or eliminate the train traffic on the line through Delray. The Transflo facility at the east end may be moved. A new piece of rail line may be built near Westend Street to allow the coke trains moving into and out of Zug Island to have more direct access and not pull all the way through Delray.

Q. Would truck traffic from the plaza get to the Gateway Boulevard?

A. No. The Gateway Boulevard would be for local traffic, to allow it to get to and across I-75. The plaza will have direct ramps to I-75 and the trucks would have no reason to get onto local streets.

Q. Did you say that the Livernois interchange would be closed?

A. Yes. There would be a number of ways to cross over I-75; and the Springwells and Clark interchanges would remain open. But, there are too many interchanges between Dearborn Avenue and Clark Street to introduce another one for the new crossing. Nonetheless, service drives will carry local traffic along I-75 to the interchanges that remain open.

C. Something needs to be done at Springwells and Fort.

R. It is likely some change will come with the DRIC project at that intersection.

Q. If you close the Livernois/Dragoon interchange, where will the trucks go?

A. To Springwells and Clark via the service drives.

C. Springwells is too tight.

R. As noted earlier, it is likely some change will come with the DRIC project at the Fort and Springwells intersection.

C. There are buses on Livernois that carry children to Southwestern High School.

R. The DRIC analyses will cover what happens to bus routes – where they will reroute to – and to pedestrian links.

Q. Will there be any kind of warning system on the plaza, say if there is a truck spill or an incident?

A. That is a Customs and Border Patrol issue. That kind of issue would be part of the discussion with Customs.

Q. My concern is I-75 and Fort and Jefferson. If I-75 is backed up, I use Jefferson and Schaeffer. What would our route be in the future?

A. Fort and Jefferson will remain open. The ramps to I-75 from the plaza, for example, will be over Fort Street.

Q. I have three kids with asthma and am concerned about particulates. What kind of air quality studies will be done?

A. An Air Quality Protocol has been developed by MDOT in conjunction with other agencies. It calls for analysis of carbon monoxide, air toxics and particulates, both PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀. For CO it will be a quantitative analysis to compare to the Federal Clean Air Act standards. For particulates, it will be qualitative analysis consistent with federal guidance. The analysis will be done for 2035, the “design year” of the project, and for 2013, when the project is expected to be opened to traffic. Analysis will cover the plaza and along I-75.

Q. I have heard that at the airport they got new windows. Would there be anything like that with this project.

A. Airports fall under the rules of the Federal Aviation Administration. Different agencies have different rules about what is allowed with a project. Likely, new windows were related to noise, not air pollution. The Federal Highway Administration does not have provisions for new windows for air quality or noise.

Public Comments

Q. In the air quality analysis will there be consideration of what people in Southwest Detroit already breathe?

A. The air quality analysis must consider the background/existing conditions. New air pollutant monitors have been placed in the area. Trends in pollutants from these, and other monitors near in project area, will be reported.

Upcoming Meetings

The next Drilling Meeting (and likely the last) will be April 25, 2007 at 5:30 PM at Southwestern High School. The next combined LAC/LAG meeting will be that same evening at 7 PM. The next day, April 26 will be the next meeting on Context Sensitive Solutions, at which the land use concepts will begin to be integrated into the CSS effort.

Other Business

John Nagy announced that the City Council had approved the expansion of the compost business south of Delray on Fort Street on a reversal of a provisions vote. He urged all those in attendance to contact the council members to try to get at least one vote changed to reverse the decision by the next Tuesday.

With that, the meeting adjourned about 8:30 PM.