

Meeting Summary

Waukesha West Bypass Advisory Group

Workshop 3

Retzer Nature Center,
June 22, 2010
4:00 pm to 6:00 pm

General

The third Advisory Group workshop for the Waukesha West Bypass was held on Tuesday, June 22, 2010 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Retzer Nature Center in Waukesha County. Buddy Desai of CH2M HILL, facilitated the meeting. Twelve members of the Advisory Group and approximately ten members of the community at-large were present at the meeting.

Advisory Group Members Present at the Meeting

David Bahl, Jr.	Perry Lindquist	Dale Pfeiffle
Bob Massman	Maureen Millmann	Bob Tallinger
Chris Hiebert	Faye Amerson for Steve	Kathleen Graber for Carlos
Mike Murphy	Schmuki	Pena
Jeff Panosian	Mike Murphy	

Advisory Group Members Not Present at the Meeting

Suzanne Kelly	Jennifer Becker	Ken Westlake
Mark Stigler	Joe Banske	Paul Day
Jerry Gutjahr	Bob Johnson	Bruce Massman
Jim White	Megan Spreager	

Technical Resources Present at the Meeting

Waukesha County – Gary Evans
WisDOT – Doug Cain
CH2M HILL – Buddy Desai, Charlie Webb, Dan Dupies
Kapur – Kurt Farrenkopf

Meeting Agenda

- 4:00 Convene the Meeting
 - Welcome, introductory comments (Buddy Desai, CH2M HILL)
 - Agenda Review (Buddy Desai, CH2M HILL)
- 4:05 Recap of First Public Information Meeting (Charlie Webb, CH2M HILL)
- 4:15 Recap of CSS Workshops 1 & 2 (Buddy Desai, CH2M HILL)
- 4:20 Engineering Discussion (Charlie Webb, CH2M HILL & Kurt Farenkopf, Kapur)
- 4:45 Group Exercise – Providing Feedback on Initial Range of Corridors
- 5:55 What's Next
- 6:00 Adjourn

Materials Available at the Meeting

Materials available for discussion at the meeting, in addition to the agenda, included a handout showing proposed roadway typical sections, exhibits showing the preliminary alternatives corridors, and an exhibit showing possible alignments through the Pebble Creek area south of Sunset Drive.

Introductions

The meeting was convened by Buddy Desai, CH2M HILL. Buddy welcomed the group and introduced the consultant team and county staff. Once introductions were complete, Buddy reviewed the meeting agenda.

Recap of First Public Information Meeting

Charlie Webb, Consultant Project Manager, CH2M HILL, summarized the general messages the project team received at the first public meeting and described the alignments developed by the study team and those suggested by the public for further study.

Comments and Questions:

Question: Faye Amerson asked how we arrived the number of people who attended the public information meeting supported or opposed to the project and specific alignments?

Response: Charlie Webb responded that the numbers are based on the written comments we received at and after the first meeting.

Comment: Bob Tallinger said that he heard several people suggest that Merrill Hills Drive should be widened.

Comment: A non-committee member asked why we are making this a bypass for large semis. She suggested we have a posted 35 mph speed limit. She also noted that the speed limit on Meadowbrook Road was 25 mph several years ago and now it is 35 mph. She is concerned with future posted speed increases along the corridor in the future.

Recap of Workshops #1 and #2

Buddy provided a recap of Workshop #1, which included identifying the transportation issues facing west Waukesha as provided by the Advisory Group, and the features of a future transportation improvement in west Waukesha. At Workshop #2, the project team gave a PowerPoint presentation about the NEPA process and conducted a weighting exercise that would be used by the group to help determine the priorities of the Advisory Group's goals identified in Workshop #1.

Engineering Discussion

Kurt Farenkopf, Engineering Lead, Kapur, described the features of the two typical sections that are being proposed for the project. Both typical sections were four-lane divided roadways that included a separate 10-foot-wide multi-use path for bicyclists/pedestrians with a general width of 200 feet. One of the typical sections had a 30-foot-wide raised median and the other had a 14-foot-wide barrier median that could be used in certain areas to reduce impacts to sensitive resources. Kurt noted that the barrier median would reduce access opportunities through the median. A copy of the typical section exhibit presented at the meeting is attached to these minutes.

Comments and Questions:

Question: Bob Tallinger asked whether the typical sections shown would have a posted speed limit of 45 mph.

Response: Charlie Webb responded that portions of the corridor could have a 45 mph speed limit, but like today, the segment north of Northview Road could be posted at 35 mph.

Question: Faye Amerson asked whether the roadway needed to have four lanes.

Response: Charlie Webb stated that at the last CSS meeting there was a discussion about the relationship between traffic volumes and the number of lanes. In the design year, the north end of the study area is forecast to have 20,000 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) volumes and the south end 13,000 ADT. WisDOT generally uses 13,000 ADT as the threshold for considering expanding to four lanes.

Comment: Maureen Millmann (DNR) asked for clarification related to the details of the bike path.

Question: Jeff Panosian noted that when one adds up the various pieces of the typical section it does not total 200 feet. What is the width beyond that shown in the typical section used for?

Response: Kurt Farenkopf noted that the 200 feet is a nominal width. Buddy Desai stated that in studies such as this we are intentionally conservative. We want to environmentally clear a corridor that is wide enough to avoid constraining the engineers in the design phase.

Question: Jeff Panosian asked whether the alignments on the meeting exhibits are 200 feet wide.

Response: Kurt Farenkopf said the alignments shown are representative of the alternatives center line but are not 200 feet wide.

Gary Evans noted that the County requires new development to be set back from the County TT corridor in order to allow a 200-foot-wide corridor. He noted that north of US 18 (and south of Northview Road), County TT has a 200-foot-wide right-of-way.

As an introduction to showing the range of preliminary alternatives, Charlie Webb briefly discussed the issue of whether this project is a true bypass. He noted that decades ago when this project was conceived, the proposed project had the appearance of being a bypass. However, with the westward development that has occurred over the years, the intent of this project is to improve transportation in the County TT corridor. This project would be similar to the improvements made to WIS 59, which would not be considered a bypass.

Charlie then reviewed the preliminary alignments in the County SS, County TT, and County T corridor (including the Pebble Creek south area).

Comments and Questions:

Question: Jeff Panosian asked where Retzer's east boundary is. Charlie Webb pointed it out on the exhibit.

Comment: Faye Amerson noted that the County SS alignment was studied as part of HNTB's 1990 study.

Comment: A member of the public at the meeting noted that the County SS corridor is less built up than the County TT corridor.

Question: David Bahl asked how many new acres of right-of-way would be acquired if the alignment went through the Pebble Creek area.

Response: Quantification of impacts will occur as the project moves forward.

Comment: Faye Amerson noted that the County TT alignment that bows out into the Waukesha School District's property and the various alignments through the Pebble Creek area were evaluated during HNTB's 1990 study.

Response: Buddy Desai stated that the project team is aware that some of the alignments have been evaluated in the past, but that the NEPA process requires us to evaluate them again.

Question: David Bahl asked whether a golf course has the same protection as Retzer Nature Center.

Response: Charlie Webb said not if it is privately owned like Merrill Hills.

Question: Jeff Panosian asked whether the roadway envisioned in the County TT corridor would be similar to WIS 59?

Response: The County TT roadway could have similarities to WIS 59, but there may also be differences such as narrower medians in some locations, multi-use path, lower speed limits, and potential differences in the number of lanes.

Question: Dale Pfeiffle asked what the project's Purpose and Need is? Is it to move traffic from I-94 to the WIS 59/County X intersection or is it to accommodate traffic along the existing corridor.

Response: Charlie Webb noted that the Purpose and Need Statement has been developed in draft form and includes several factors in addition to traffic.

Chris Herbert (SEWRPC) then summarized how the project's traffic forecasts were developed. Charlie Webb then noted that SEWRPC is evaluating the ability of the County SS alignment to draw traffic off County TT.

Question: David Bahl asked whether the Purpose and Need Statement will be a public document.

Response: Charlie Webb stated that the document will be public after it is reviewed by WisDOT and FHWA.

Question: Faye Amerson asked whether there will be any opportunity to provide comments on the need factors.

Response: Charlie noted that the public had the opportunity to comment on the need factors at the first public information meeting.

Charlie Webb then noted that there are three alignments in the south Pebble Creek area:

- The far west alignment, which was suggested by Don Reed (SEWRPC) would displace one or more residences on Hawthorne Hills Drive
- The far east alignment is closest to Pebble Creek and the closest representation of the historically mapped alignment south of Sunset
- The alignment between the far east and far west is designed to minimize the displacement(s) and environmental impacts of the other two alignments

Question: David Bahl asked whether the cost of construction becomes more expensive the closer the alignment gets to Pebble Creek.

Response: Charlie Webb said that might be the case if soils in that area would require over excavation or a long bridge to facilitate construction.

Charlie Webb then asked Maureen Millmann (DNR) to comment on the DNR's views of alignments in the Pebble Creek area. Maureen noted that there is a cooperative agreement between DNR and WisDOT that commits WisDOT to minimize wetland impacts on

transportation projects. Maureen said that she did not like the three alignments near the creek because of their wetland impacts and saw other alignments that would minimize wetland impacts. She noted that some of the upland areas south of Sunset, while not under DNR regulatory purview, provide good habitat and should be avoided. Maureen said that the need to treat stormwater on projects like this one is another reason to avoid alignments in wetlands. She noted that trying to treat stormwater south of Sunset would likely result in polluted runoff from the roadway affecting the high quality wetlands.

Question: David Bahl asked whether DNR might support a roadway adjacent to Pebble Creek if a portion of Sunset were removed and used as mitigation.

Response: Maureen said it was an interesting concept and could have benefits for the Butler’s Garter snake which has habitat on both sides of Sunset.

Group Mapping Exercise

Advisory Group members were separated into small groups and asked to list positive and negative aspects of the three preliminary alternative corridors presented at the meeting. The group responses are listed below. Buddy Desai explained that this information will be valuable to the study team as they will work towards enhancing the positive elements and addressing/mitigating/minimizing the negative aspects of each corridor.

Preliminary Alts. Corridor	Positive Comments	Negative Comments
T	Makes use of existing roadway	Difficult to treat stormwater
	Fewer wetland/environmental impacts	Difficult to expand roadway
	Bicycle friendly	Potential historic impacts
	Suited to public transportation	Difficult to raise posted speed
	May attract more people downtown	Safety issues with potentially congested roadway/intersections
	Existing railroad bridge can be used/overpass already exists	May not relieve problems on Meadowbrook Road
		Less design flexibility
		High residential impacts, potential Environmental Justice issues
		Increased noise levels impacting many residents
SS	Affects fewer existing residences	May not relieve problems on Meadowbrook Road
	Speed may be less of an issue	Retzer impacts (Section 4(f))
	All new alignment – no impacts to residences along existing roads	Brandy Brook and Pebble Creek impacts
	Improved access to Pewaukee	Farm land severances
	Facilitates subdivision development	Primary environmental corridor impacts
	Less impact on school children	High land acquisition cost
	Easier construction/less costly	Potential to improve County TT even if County SS is improved
	Reduces traffic on County TT	

TT	Minimal impacts	Pebble Creek impacts
	Addresses traffic/safety problems	Impacts to children at Meadowbrook School
	Improvements have been planned	Residential impacts
	Efficient connection to I-94	
	Accommodates future school expansion	
	Uses existing right-of-way	
	Fewer farmland impacts	
	Can use one large structure over Pebble Creek, railroad, bike trail	
	Can use Sunset Drive to minimize impacts	

In addition to identifying the positive and negative aspects of the three preliminary alternatives corridors, the group was asked to add alternatives (or portions of alternatives) that should be considered along with the preliminary range of alternatives presented at the meeting. The following suggestions were made:

- Beginning at the Wisconsin Southern Railroad extend an alignment south through Merrill Hills Golf Course to WIS 59
- Through the Pebble Creek area develop an alignment at the far west side that would affect at least one residence at the east end of Hawthorne Hills Drive
- From near the Waukesha Christian Academy (County TT) develop an alignment that runs between the west side of Merrill Hills Golf Course and the adjacent subdivision
- Along the County TT alignment, it was suggested that the segment between I-94 and Madison Street should be a 4-lane urban roadway, the segment between Madison Street and Sunset should be a 2-lane/4-lane rural roadway, and the segment in the Pebble Creek corridor should be a 2-lane roadway
- Beginning near the entrance to Kame Terrace subdivision use existing County TT and extend the alignment along the existing alignment on the east edge of Merrill Hills Golf Course.

Adjournment/What's Next

Buddy concluded the meeting by noting that the second public meeting will be on July 14th from 4 to 7 p.m. at Waukesha West High School. He said that workshop #4 is planned currently for August and include the refined corridors based on workshop #3 input and input from the second public information meeting. He added that information about the meeting and the date of the meeting will be forwarded, via newsletter and newspaper ads as well as the web site.

