

**I-295/I-76/Route 42 Direct Connection Project
New Jersey Department of Transportation
Public Hearing
Bellmawr, NJ
Wednesday, January 30, 2008
3:00 PM–7:00 PM**

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

More than 150 participants representing the general public in the project area and surrounding communities, local businesses and libraries; local, elected borough and county officials and/or their representatives, state and county agencies such as, DVRPC, DRPA, PATCO, and the Gloucester County Planning Division attended the Public Hearing conducted for the New Jersey Department of Transportation's I-295/I-76/Route 42 Direct Connection Project on Wednesday, January 30, 2008 at the Bellmawr Ballroom in Bellmawr, NJ. The Public Hearing commenced at 3 PM and concluded at approximately 7:00 PM.

The following stations were included in the Public Hearing:

Attendees sign-in table; Registration for Oral Testimony; Project Schedule; Project Milestones (Flow Chart); 200 Scale Plans depicting the five short-listed alternatives; D, D1, G2, H1 and K as well as the Environmental Impacts for each alternative; Power Point presentation of photo simulations showing various locations within the project both with and without noise walls; Alternative D, the Preferred Alternative, was presented on 50 Scale plans; the proposed noise wall locations and design process and the Section 106-Historic Preservation flow chart. Additionally, the DEIS/TES documents including the environmental discipline's results were available for viewing.

Attendees were provided with instructions for Oral Testimony as well as submission of written comments. 12 attendees gave testimony which will be included in the FEIS.

Written comments will be included in the FEIS as well.

Members of the project team were available at each of the stations to assist visitors and provide answers/explanations.

A summary of comments/discussions follows:

- **Many people who drive daily through the interchange were very pleased with Alternative D being chosen as the Preferred Alternative.**
- **A few residents of Bellmawr Park Mutual Housing Corporation wanted to confirm that the new noise wall was still a part of the study and Sharon Paul Carpenter assured them it was.**
- **Sharon spoke with several of the residents, many of whom had attended previous Public Information Centers (PIC's). A common thread was the concern as to which areas were slated for noise walls and Sharon responded to each individual request.**
- **Drew Kapur of Duane Morris, LLP, Special Counsel to the Diocese of Camden and an attorney, Michael McCalley from his office voiced concerns regarding construction vibrations within New St. Mary's Cemetery. Sharon explained that vibration studies are not required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and suggested that they make public testimony regarding their concerns.**
- **Messrs. Kapur and McCalley then asked about noise levels and noise walls regarding New St. Mary's Cemetery and Sharon explained that the project mitigation measures result in no impact to the cemetery; whereas, if the project were not built, a portion of the cemetery would be impacted by noise.**
- **Noise levels impact to the Annunciation School and Church properties were discussed and Sharon explained that as the church is air conditioned, mitigation is not warranted. Regarding the school, a decision regarding investigation for air conditioning will not be made until Final Design. NJDOT learned from the residents at the meeting that Annunciation School will be closed in accord with the realignment of churches and schools.**
- **Throughout the meeting, Craig Johnson talked to people who wanted to know how Alternative D, the Preferred Alternative, may or may not impact their property. Most of the people were satisfied; but a small group questioned the noise wall design for Flanders and Colonial Roads and were concerned about potential property devaluation. Craig and Sharon explained that NJDOT is providing more noise protection in this area than regulations demand.**

- **Linda Hayes, Bill Brooks and John Matheussen of DRPA spoke with Jody Barankin, Craig and Pat Saulino regarding the schedule of the construction repairs to the Walt Whitman Bridge and construction start-up for the Direct Connection Project as it relates to traffic mitigation. At this time if both schedules remain constant, the Walt Whitman repair schedule will be completed prior to the Direct Connection project.**
- **Coleen Bisaga spoke with many of the team members regarding her property at 304 Bell Road in Mt. Ephraim. Ms. Bisaga is concerned about the raising of the Bell Road Bridge and how it may affect her ability to see oncoming traffic from her driveway. She is also concerned about the flooding of Little Timber Creek and the resulting problems of debris and silt blocking the culvert. The team members indicated that stream restoration work is anticipated but timing has not yet been established. When she spoke with Bruce Riegel regarding her property, Bruce advised her to give oral testimony.**
- **Craig spoke with John and Dana Scarborough. John had spoken to Craig prior to the meeting with concerns about impact to his property which he had purchased in 2005 without disclosure from the owner as to the potential impact both temporarily during construction and permanently. There is a small easement taking from the rear of his property. The Scarborough's were satisfied with Craig's explanation and NJDOT promised that they will keep them informed of the project's progress.**
- **Jeannine Sykes, a USPO transportation coordinator, spoke with Jim Heeren regarding traffic patterns during the project's construction. She was referred to Pat Feliciano who will keep her updated on the project's progress.**
- **Pat Saulino spoke with several attendees who had recently received survey notification letters and were concerned about the potential impact to their property. Pat explained that legal notification to the owner is required when properties are being surveyed and in no way do the letters correlate to any impact to their property.**
- **Residents asked various questions which were answered individually and collectively by Pete Agnello, Jim Heeren and Brian Sayre as follows:**
 - **Height of Alternative D at Browning Road – Approximately 65'**
 - **Number of house impacts/relocations – 13 houses; 1 business**
 - **Some attendees were under the impression that the stacked alternatives were being advanced – assured them it was Alternative D**

- Residents on Browning Road across from New St. Mary's Cemetery were pleased with Alternative D
- Request for aerial of Alternative for Gloucester County Planning – Hard copy plan was delivered and electronic file was sent
- Pete spoke with several people who asked about impacts to New St. Mary's Cemetery and most were pleased that no gravesites would be impacted.
- A few people expressed concern to Pete about parking space impacts to Annunciation Church parking lot; driveway access is also a concern. Pete said that temporary connections to the bypass road would be required and coordinated as the design was advanced as well as temporary parking and site circulation during construction.
- Many attendees were surprised and concerned about the timing for construction start-up. They were under the impression that construction was scheduled for approximately 2008/2009. Pete explained that 2008/2009 is currently planned for commencement of design with construction start up currently planned for 2011/2012. Scheduling is predicated on ROW availability and funding.

We believe the foregoing record to be an accurate summary of the discussion and the progress of the meeting. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to the Minutes within five (5) working days of receipt. Without notification, we will consider these Minutes to be a record of fact.

**Sincerely,
Dewberry**

**Patricia Saulino
Project Team**