

NORTHERN TIER EXPRESSWAY – ROUTE 11 CORRIDOR STUDY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #2
Canton, NY
June 2, 2006

Agenda: See attachment.

Attendance: See attached sign-in list.

Presentation:

Bob Juravich opened the meeting by welcoming all present. He then introduced Mike Morehouse from Wilbur Smith Associates (WSA) to give his presentation. Mike Morehouse asked for any feedback from Technical Memorandum #1 and then proceeded to give the presentation on Technical Memorandum #2: Existing and Future Conditions Report. Questions, answers and comments are as follows:

Question: Dave Werner. What is classified as a truck relative to data concerning truck accidents?

Answer: Kwesi Brown. According to the data provided by NYSDOT, trucks were defined as any vehicle larger than a pickup truck or van.

Question: John Miller. Was traffic between Canada and New York State taken into account in traffic projections, level of service calculations or congestion analysis?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. No, these projections did not take this traffic into consideration.

Question: Jim Feeley. Should Committee undertake effort to get special Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding for needed corridor improvements?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. Yes. (See attachment concerning this subject.)

Question: Bob Hagemann. Should the committee promote the production of the State Safety Plan so that HSIP funds can be used for corridor improvements? If NYS doesn't pursue Safety Plan, can committee produce its own?

Answer: Scott Docteur. NYSDOT is working on this issue.

Question: Jim Halpen. Was data collected for spurs and were they included in growth projections?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. Yes, the spurs were included.

Question: Kathryn Mullaney. How does the Route 11 Corridor Study relate to the Can-Am Study?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. Not too much work has been done on the Can-Am Study since the study contract is still being negotiated. So, it is too early to tell. (Note: WSA is also the consultant for the Can-Am Study.)

Comment: Kathryn Mullaney. The NTE - Route 11 Corridor Study should be an integral part of the Can-Am Project, but previous work should not be duplicated.

Comment: Bob Juravich. The committee should be briefed on the Can-Am Project from time to time. The project study team should try to get a copy of the Can-Am Project Scope of Work to Study Advisory Committee. Glen Wiesbrod is serving in a similar capacity on the Can-Am Study Team as he did for the North Country Transportation Study (NCTS). Can-Am Study is much like NCTS but larger in scope.

Comment: Jeff Smith. Route 52 (old NYS Rte. 374) should be considered as a spur in the study. It may be dropped as the study progresses but it should be reviewed now because it's a direct route into Canada.

Question: Dave Werner. Can we assume that Champlain, not Plattsburgh, should be the terminus for the NTE since the Can-Am Corridor would go through Champlain?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. A lot has to do with results from Can-Am Study but demand, as far as NTE is concerned, seems to be to go to Plattsburgh.

Comment: Dave Werner. A bridge across Lake Champlain would be too costly. An origin and destination study at Ellenburg would be helpful in making determination.

Comment: Rodney Brown. Currently, most trucks tend to go to Champlain and most cars down Route 190 to Plattsburgh.

Comment: Mike Morehouse. We can't make a decision yet.

Comment: Bob Juravich. Agreed, it's too early to make a call between Champlain and Plattsburgh.

Comment: Mike Morehouse. Remember, the Can-Am Corridor is designated as a high priority corridor.

Question: Kathryn Mullaney. Are high accident locations shown in Tech Memo II a lot higher than average? Is there a relationship between correcting High Accident Locations (HALs) and corridor improvements?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. Yes, to both questions. Accident rates are expressed in accidents per million vehicle miles traveled.

Comment: Kathryn Mullaney. The committee should be able to help NYSDOT with HSIP program?

Comment: Bob Juravich. Get information on HSIP out to Committee.

Comment: Scott Docteur. NYSDOT will do that.

Question: Jim Halpen. Is funding available for corridor improvements? What is the status of the \$6.1M?

Answer: Bob Juravich. There is \$6.1M allotted in the Federal Transportation Act for this project. These dollars have to be appropriated and there is no clear idea on how they are to be spent.

Update concerning the Fort Drum Connector Project, the Route 11 Safety Project, the Route 11 Access Management Project and other projects along the Route 11 Corridor.

Al Ricalton made a short presentation on this subject.

Question: Bob Hagemann. When will the Fort Drum Connector report go out?

Answer: Al Ricalton. The report will go out in about two weeks for public comment.

Question: Bob Hagemann. What are the safety improvements being planned along Route 11 in the Fort Drum area?

Answer: Al Ricalton. Improvements being planned include the introduction of a median barrier on Route 11 to limit left turns and the installation of new traffic signals in the vicinity of the new Wal-Mart Super Center (see copy of handout).

Comment: Bob Juravich. There is a lot of long term planning being done regarding Fort Drum, housing development and Route 11.

Public Involvement Process

Jim Donovan gave an update on the public involvement process relative to the NTE-Rte. 11 Corridor Study. He touched on “tools” to be used as part of the process. NYSDOT, DANC and WSA are looking at different ways to get the public involved in the study process. (There will be changes between what was spelled out in Tech Memo I and the plan that will actually be carried out—looking for suggestions.)

Question: Bob Juravich. Could you give the committee some details on the plan? When will the first public meetings be held in each of the counties?

Answer: Jim Donovan. There will be public meetings/workshops held in each county in the September 2006 timeframe.

Comment: Bob Juravich. We will make sure there is a committee meeting before public sessions.

Comment: Mike Morehouse. Put everything on the table and refine with committee and reduce our emphases to 10 main areas. Schedule depends on process WSA makes with getting material ready for scheduled events.

Comment: Bob Juravich. We need to get process set concerning public meetings, committee meetings, etc.

Comment: Kathryn Mullaney. It is not premature to get out with public involvement.

Comment: Jim Halpen. Radio/TV sessions should be held after meetings with committee but before public meetings.

Comment: Jim Feeley. WSA should provide the committee with a condensed version of the PowerPoint presentation with audio on DVDs so that committee members can distribute to legislators and others to discuss with their constituents in advance of public meetings.

Comment: Mike Morehouse. WSA will get out two levels of information—video and scaled down PowerPoint presentation in DVD format.

Comment: Bob Juravich. Get data tech memo out in DVD format ASAP.

Question: John Miller. Will there be minutes from this meeting?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. There will be meeting notes and other materials sent out ASAP.

Question: Bob Juravich. What is the study schedule or timeline?

Answer: Jim Donovan. The process is development of improvement alternatives, presentation of alternatives to advisory committee, refinement of alternatives, presentation of refined alternatives to committee, public outreach and public meetings.

Question: Rodney Brown. What can we expect for level of improvement and what would be the level of detail? Will some alternatives be multi-locations—as an example, at steep slope areas would climbing lanes be added?

Answer: Mike Morehouse. Scope of recommended improvements could range from by-passes to safety improvements to installation improvements to large scale reconstruction of “Segments of Independent Utility.” The improvements in rural areas would not show too much detail since concepts would be at a scale of 1” to 1000’. The improvements in urban areas would show more detail as concepts would be at 1” to 200’ scale.

Other Issues

Comment: Mike Morehouse. Environmental section will be sent out shortly as a supplemental to Tech Memo II.

Comment: Bob Hagemann. The future economic development growth scenario of 1.6%/year does not seem like much.

Comment: Mike Morehouse. The 1.6% in traffic growth, although it doesn’t seem like a lot, would result in a 30% growth over 20 years.

Comment: Kathryn Mullaney. Traffic growth, related to economic development, should be put into perspective. We should look at and compare Northern New York to other areas.

Comment: Bob Juravich. We should look at other high priority corridors such as Route 17 in the Southern Tier of NY State. Fort Drum has to be considered as an advantage as well as growth at Plattsburgh.

Comment: Dave Werner. There is a significant increase in truck traffic that impacts communities and traffic congestion; trucks have a significant negative impact on communities and are an important part of our story.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 AM.

The next Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Friday, September 8, 2006, at 10:00 a.m. (probably in Canton).