



IL 47 Improvement Study

From Kennedy Road in Yorkville to Cross Street in Sugar Grove

MEETING SUMMARY

Community Advisory Group Meeting #1

January 27, 2011

The first meeting of the IL 47 Improvement Study Community Advisory Group (CAG) was held at the Sugar Grove Public Library on Thursday, January 27, 2011, at 6:00 P.M.

Representing IDOT's Study Team were the following individuals:

- Ted Fultz, Location & Environmental Studies Engineer (IDOT)
- Dave Alexander, Studies and Plans Unit Chief (IDOT)
- Mike Zorn, Consultant Project Manager (H.W. Lochner, Inc.)
- Jeff Schlotter, Consultant Facilitator/Urban Planner (H.W. Lochner, Inc.)

Presented below is a summary of the meeting, organized by the meeting's agenda items. Elements that appeared on the flip chart are designated in *blue italics*. Items in [brackets] are materials added to augment the flip chart text.

I. INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING REMARKS

- IDOT opened the meeting by welcoming the CAG members and introducing the IDOT Study Team for this study. Their roles on this study were also explained.
- Jeff Schlotter, the Study Team's facilitator then invited the CAG members to introduce themselves and to state either the organization they represent, or their main interest in the study.
- Mr. Schlotter then announced the goals for the meeting: 1) to understand and agree on roles, responsibilities, and operating procedures; 2) to describe the study, its status, and schedule; 3) to get feedback on the study's Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP); 4) to discuss the study's Context Audit exercise; and, 5) to engage in general discussion about the study and to answer questions.

II. ADVISORY GROUP DETAILS

As the Study Team's facilitator for the CAG meetings, Mr. Schlotter described for the CAG members, IDOT's objectives for the CAG, its official standing, and the roles and responsibilities of both the CAG and IDOT. The key points are summarize as follows:

- The objectives of the CAG are: 1) to ensure that the opinions of the broader community are shared with the IDOT study team; 2) to ensure that information developed by the project team is distributed throughout the community; 3) to help to identify and evaluate the



needed transportation improvements; and, 4) to generate interest and knowledge among the general public about the IL 47 study.

- In general, the purpose of the CAG is two-way communication between the individual members and the IDOT study team, along with the members serving as liaisons between IDOT and the broader community.
- Regarding the official standing of the CAG, Mr. Schlotter stated that it's important that everyone understand that on IDOT projects CAGs are advisory. IDOT is seeking the CAG members' input and advice but retains the responsibility for making final decisions about the study.
- Regarding the CAG's responsibilities, Mr. Schlotter stated that everyone has responsibilities to each other: CAG members are expected to attend each CAG meeting and participate in Group discussion and activities; to participate openly and honestly, respecting the opinions of other Group members; and to represent their organization, constituency, or broader community interests.

Mr. Schlotter then explained to the group the suggested method for conducting the CAG meetings, noting that because the CAG is advisory, it won't be engaging in formal voting; instead, the emphasis will be dialogue and consensus. Because of this, it will not be necessary to operate using formal parliamentary procedures. Instead, Mr. Schlotter suggested use of what is sometimes called the "Informal Method" to ensure that meetings are productive, efficient, and that all parties are heard. This method is based on the use of a facilitator to guide the meetings. Mr. Schlotter explained that the facilitator:

- Maintains open communications between all participants
- Keeps work group on agenda
- Remains neutral to opinions and outcomes
- Maintains an open environment to allow expression of diverse opinions
- Protects individuals from personal attacks
- Maximizes participation of all group members and manages time and commitments

The style of the meeting notes under the Informal Method was then explained as revolving around the idea of recording the key questions, ideas, concerns and conclusions on flip charts, so that 1) the whole group can see what's being written; 2) a visible record of group's work (often referred to as "Group Memory") is provided. It was stated that the flip chart notes are later augmented by the Study Team to include comments, responses, etc., before they're distributed back to the CAG members.

Mr. Schlotter then asked if there was anyone on the CAG who could not endorse this process. Upon hearing no reply, he then asked if everyone can endorse it, and by a nod of heads the group affirmed its endorsement.

Mr. Schlotter then discussed the subject of the ground rules the CAG would operate under. He described the set of ground rules listed in the study's Stakeholder Involvement Plan, and then distributed a handout listing some additional guidelines for effective meetings.

The group also endorsed and agreed to abide by the ground rules and guidelines, as presented.

III. PROJECT STATUS REPORT

Consultant Project Manager Mike Zorn then presented the status of the Route 47 study, to date. Key activities undertaken so far include:

- Data collection of engineering and environmental information and public comments
- A Local Officials' Kickoff Meeting was held to present the study's goals, objectives and process to local government officials
- A Public Kickoff Meeting was held to present the study's goals, objectives and process to the general public. Another purpose of the meeting was to solicit general public membership on this advisory group.

Mr. Zorn then described the next steps in the study, which include continued data collection activities, including information from this advisory group. He also described the purposes and time frame of the remaining CAG meetings, stating that three additional meetings are anticipated, and described the other general public meetings on the study, which include an Alternatives Open House and an official Public Hearing.

IV. GROUP ACTIVITIES

Next, Mr. Schlotter introduced the two group activities scheduled for the meeting: discussion of the study's Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP) and Community Context Audit exercise.

Regarding the SIP, Mr. Schlotter mentioned that each CAG member had been sent a copy of the document as part of the agenda package for tonight's meeting. He then gave a brief overview of the contents of the document for the benefit of those CAG members who may not have done so on their own, prior to the meeting.

Mr. Schlotter noted that the purpose of the SIP is to formally document the methods IDOT will use to provide appropriate opportunities for stakeholders to learn about the study and to inform IDOT about their preferences, concerns, and questions. Key elements of the plan include:

- This advisory group
- Public meetings and hearings
- Study website
- Small group and individual meetings
- Agency coordination, through Project Study Group

He then asked the CAG members what questions or comments they have about the document and what changes they would advise IDOT make to it? The members' comments were noted as follows:



Stakeholder Involvement Plan

- *Add Ledger-Sentinel*
 - *IDOT will review if the media contacted for public meetings provides appropriate coverage of the study area (including the Village of Montgomery)*
- *The leadership of the study is the team that is here tonight*
 - *CAG input is not subordinate to the [IDOT's] Project Study Group*
 - *The IDOT and consultant project managers were in attendance*
- *The Active Transportation Alliance is a possible alternative to the [Fox Valley] bike group*
 - *Consideration will be given to soliciting their participation in the CAG*

With these minor changes, clarifications, and suggestions made, Mr. Schlotter asked the group if there is anyone who cannot endorse the SIP. With none of the members indicating they could not endorse the document, Mr. Schlotter confirmed that the group endorsed the document.

Mr. Schlotter then introduced the Community Context Audit exercise. He began by reminding the group that the study had been designated by IDOT as a Context Sensitive Solutions project, and that the context audit is important in ensuring that the important contextual elements are identified. He further explained that by identifying these elements at the beginning of the study, the study team can ensure that the design concepts developed to meet the project needs are sensitive to them.

Mr. Schlotter then distributed the study's Community Context Audit exercise document and explained its content and intended use. In terms of its content, he explained that the document is in two parts, with the first part being educational, explaining the concept of context with respect to highway projects, and the second part containing a series of questions, organized by category, for each CAG member to answer.

Mr. Schlotter asked the CAG members to consider this to be "homework," to be completed by each member and returned to IDOT by February 11. He then asked what questions the members had about the purpose of the audit and the exercise itself. The group had no substantive comments or questions about the audit or their assignment.

The Community Context Audit was placed on the project website and a copy was emailed to CAG members that provided an email address. The format was a .pdf file that allowed responses to be typed and emailed to the study team.

V. DISCUSSION

Next, Mr. Schlotter began the concluding portion of the meeting by asking if the members had any comments or concerns about their role, function, or operating procedures. He also asked if Thursday evenings were convenient for the members, noting that it is difficult to find one day of the week that is convenient to everyone in a group of more than a dozen members. One member stated (Kane County Farm Bureau representative) that Thursday was inconvenient, but that issue was later resolved (see notes, below).

Mr. Schlotter noted that no specific action items had been assigned during the meeting, and then opened the floor for general comments and discussions, as noted below:

General Discussion

- *How would IDOT handle realignment of local roads?*
 - *[As required per design criteria and in coordination with the agency having jurisdiction over the local road]*

- *Any concerns from the railroad?*
 - *can the railroad contribute funding?*
 - *[The roadway is likely within railroad right-of-way so the railroad would not be required to fund improvements to bridge structures which would be necessary for roadway improvements]*

- *Summary of Prairie Parkway given [by Ted Fultz, to illustrate this study is not influenced by the Prairie Parkway Study's decisions]*
 - *current decisions have long-term effects*

- *Initial review of cross sections*
 - *[Preliminary review of projected traffic volumes indicate the need for two through lanes in each direction]*

- *Can past studies be made available for review?*
 - *[IDOT will review which past studies are available and determine how they may be made available to the CAG]*

- *March meeting may coincide with spring break, etc.*
 - *[The next meeting is anticipated to be moved to April 2011.]*

- *[Regarding] railroad question: there is no railroad funding as part of the study*
 - *[IDOT would have to fund replacement of bridge structures as necessary]*

- *[While Thursdays aren't generally good for the Kane Co. Farm Bureau to meet,] the 4th Thursday of the month would be okay*

There being no other comments, Mr. Schlotter and the rest of the Study Team thanked the members for their attendance and closed the meeting, at approximately 8:00 P.M.