



Meeting Report

PROJECT: SH 190 (The East Branch)
I-30 to I-20

PROJECT NO: 022522

PRESENT:

DATE: 9/08/2006

The following is our understanding of the subject matter covered in this meeting. If this differs from your understanding, please notify us within five working days.

On Tuesday, August 15, 2006, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) conducted a Public Meeting (open house format) for the purpose of soliciting public comment on the proposed State Highway (SH) 190 (The East Branch) project from Interstate Highway 30 (I-30) to Interstate Highway 20 (I-20) within southeast Dallas County. The meeting was held in Ballroom C of the Mesquite Convention & Rodeo Center, located at 1700 Rodeo Drive in Mesquite, Texas. The meeting was scheduled from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The meeting began at 4:00 pm and concluded at approximately 8:15 pm.

A total of 1,556 public meeting notices were mailed to persons listed on the project mailing list (to include adjacent property owners, elected officials, and interested parties). Newspaper ads for the open house meeting were published in four newspapers:

- *The Mesquite News*
 - Legal notices in classified section on July 13 and August 3, 2006
 - General ad (1/8 page) on August 10, 2006
- *Al Dia*
 - Legal notices (in Spanish) in classified section on July 15 and August 5, 2006
 - General ad (1/8 page, in Spanish) on August 8, 2006
- *The Dallas Morning News*
 - Legal notices in classified section on July 16 and August 5, 2006
 - General ad (1/8 page) on August 8, 2006
- *The Garland News*
 - Legal notices in classified section on July 16 and August 5, 2006
 - General ad (1/8 page) on August 10, 2006

A registration table was set up at the entrance of Ballroom C with sign-in sheets for attendees and elected officials. Handouts made available to the attendees included a fact/information packet, blank written comment form, a SH 190 alignment survey, and a potential alignment map. The East Branch Update newsletter (dated March 2006) was also made available to meeting attendees. The registration of attendance totaled 254. Eleven public officials, five elected officials, and two media representatives registered.

Exhibits displayed at the open house meeting included a preliminary alignment map, contour and floodplain map, typical cross sections, environmental process boards, traffic boards, and matrix analysis boards. Viewing of the project exhibits and informal discussion sessions were held throughout the duration of the meeting to give attendees an opportunity to view the displays and to ask questions regarding the proposed project with project team members present. No formal presentation was provided at this meeting. Thirty-eight written comment forms and 241 surveys were received at the public meeting. The written comments have been

reviewed and will be considered during the development of the project. Of the 38 written comments received:

- 21 written comments supported a possible alignment
- Nine written comments indicated concerns for impacts to residences and properties
- Eight written comments indicated a choice for the No Build Alternative
- Seven written comments indicated either a desire to expedite the building process or a general support for the project

Twelve comments were received prior to the August 15, 2006, Public Meeting. The written comments have been reviewed and will be considered during the development of the project. Of the 12 comments forms received:

- 12 indicated concerns of the effects on residences and properties
- 11 supported a possible alignment
- Six indicated concerns over the effects of noise or other effects on the environment
- Five indicated support for the No Build Alternative

A comment period was given after the meeting to allow comment forms to be mailed to TxDOT. Fourteen additional comments were mailed to TxDOT after the Public Meeting and received as of September 6, 2006. Again, the written comments have been reviewed and will be considered during the development of the project. Of the 14 comments forms received:

- Eight indicated a possible alignment
- Four indicated concerns for impacts to residences and properties
- Two comments concerned tolling

The written comments also included other specific statements regarding the project. The following represents written comments, questions, and concerns received before the Public Meeting, at the Public Meeting, and after the Public Meeting. Due to the overlap and repetition in many comments, similar comments were consolidated and paraphrased to reduce duplication. As a result, the comments that appear are often not precise words found on the comment forms. This has been done to reduce duplication of similar comments that elicited a common response and in no way is intended to obscure the substance of a comment. Also, some comments refer to Routes A through H, which are alignments developed and evaluated by the Town of Sunnyvale in a separate, independent study process.

Comment 1: I believe the Smith Family is buying your votes to avoid their property and impact ours.

Response 1: It is illegal for TxDOT to accept any monetary gifts for favor in alignment decisions. The results of the Environmental Impact Statement process, which evaluates the engineering feasibility, environmental impacts, and public input, including a Public Hearing, will decide the final alternative of SH 190.

Comment 2: Update your aerial maps to show current construction and new buildings; also, add I-635 on your maps.

Response 2: The current aerial photography used in the project map displays at the public meeting was photographed in the winter of 2005. This is the most current aerial photography available for the region. I-635 is not displayed on the maps because each display map shows the maximum size of the original SH 190 study area to show details in the aerial photography. If

the maps showed a larger region to include I-635, sufficient details would diminish due to the small scale and thus not be apparent on the display maps.

Comment 3: I am concerned about the placement of Node N2; this node isolates all the homes and businesses east of Peninsula Drive.

Response 3: The placement of Node N2 was considered the most favorable by the public at the recent public meeting on March 30, 2006. Node N2 connects with the Eastern Extension of the President George Bush Turnpike to the north of the proposed SH 190 and provides the greatest regional connectivity of any node options that were previously evaluated.

Comment 4: The historical value of the Polly area is in memory only. The buildings have not been maintained; these buildings should not be spared impact compared to other areas.

Response 4: A historic resource survey will be conducted as part of the environmental process. The results of this survey, with concurrence from the Texas Historical Commission, will assess the historical value of properties along the project area and be presented in the Environmental Impact Statement.

Comment 5: SH 190 is too close to I-635 and needs to move east of Lake Ray Hubbard and share some burden of the roadway with other counties besides Dallas County.

Response 5: The location of SH 190 serves the need for future traffic demands as a north-south facility for the Dallas County, City of Mesquite, City of Garland, and the Town of Sunnyvale. The location of SH 190 east of Lake Ray Hubbard would not serve the purpose and need of SH 190.

Comment 6: A "high-five" structure needs to be placed at the I-635/US 175/I-20 interchanges.

Response 6: This project covers the construction of SH 190 from I-30 to I-20. The interchanges at I-635/US 175/I-20 are being addressed by TxDOT via other planning projects.

Comment 7: Platted, but yet undeveloped land or larger land owners should not receive the same amount of avoidance as existing residences or smaller land owners.

Response 7: Both existing and proposed development is considered in the process to minimize impacts. In accordance with federal regulations, all residential properties are considered equal in the environmental process without regard to size.

Comment 8: I want mass transit instead of a roadway.

Response 8: Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) provides transit service in Garland. For DART to provide transit service in Mesquite and/or Sunnyvale, these communities must vote to become a member of DART and dedicate a penny sales tax to pay for transit.

Comment 9: Certain alignments impact too many residences, schools, and churches.

Response 9: As part of the environmental process, impacts to residences, schools, and churches are evaluated. A reasonable effort would be made, as part of the environmental process to avoid and minimize impacts to residences, schools, and churches. All acquisitions and relocations would be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended.

Comment 10: I would like to see only full takes on property acquisition from the SH 190 project, no partial acquisitions.

Response 10: Acquisition of properties is based on the need of land and impact to the property based on TxDOT's right-of-way acquisition policies. TxDOT may only acquire the property

required for the roadway project and cannot purchase the entire parcel unless it is determined by TxDOT right-of-way personnel as an "uneconomic remainder."

Comment 11: It is unacceptable to impact any wildlife or creek habitat.

Response 11: Impacts to wildlife and habitat will be addressed as part of the Environmental Impact Statement process. Reasonable efforts would be made to avoid and minimize impacts to wildlife and habitat.

Comment 12: I would like to see the citizens tweak and change the final alignment.

Response 12: A Public Hearing will be held later in the environmental process to further gather public input which in turn may result in further refined alignments.

Comment 13: The SH 190 project will decrease the land value around the project area.

Response 13: Economic land values cannot be predicted for the construction of SH 190. However, previous roadway projects have shown increases in property and land values surrounding major roadway projects. The increase in traffic movement along the study corridor could induce population growth for the area as well as economic growth by expanding the tax base for the City of Garland, City of Mesquite, and the Town of Sunnyvale. Greater flow and access to this area may also indirectly affect land use along the study area by encouraging other land development opportunities for businesses, commercial, residential, and recreational uses.

Comment 14: Concerned about noise impacts for the project and would like a noise wall for the residential areas.

Response 14: A noise analysis will be conducted as part of the environmental studies. Noise barriers would be included where reasonable and feasible, as determined by TxDOT guidelines.

Comment 15: I want to know if my property at 5405 Kingfisher Road would be impacted by SH 190.

Response 15: The current alignments do not show impacts to this property. However, because of the proximity to I-30 and the proposed SH 190, the interchange (of ramp alignments) at SH 190 and I-30 would impact your property. The design footprint of this interchange is preliminary and may change before the final design is approved.

Comment 16: I believe the survey was invalid. Ballots were too easy to obtain, and there was no verification of residency for attendees. Not all people were informed (by mail) before the meeting, and therefore the survey was not a representation of the towns involved.

Response 16: The survey served as a representative assessment to poll the general public's view of the current proposed alignments. Surveys were handed out to each meeting attendee, only one survey per person. Residency was not a requirement for the survey. Opinions from all interested parties were sought. Mail outs informing the public of the meeting were sent to all persons on the project mailing list. The initial mailing notifying the public of the project and soliciting to the public to get involved covered the entire project study area and included a total of 18,665 notices. The current mailing list has been developed from previous meeting attendees and from those individuals who requested to be on the mailing list via the original project survey or the project's website. In addition, the public meeting was published on two occasions in the legal section in four separate, local newspapers. General ads were also placed in the same newspapers.

Comment 17: I do not support the tollroad option. Tax money and money from the Texas Lottery should be used to pay for SH 190. We should not have to use tollroads.

Response 17: TxDOT receives money to fund roadways from the Federal government and from the state gas tax. Federal money and the state gas tax cannot fully fund the current transportation needs for the State of Texas. Other means of funding roadways are considered during the planning process to diminish the burden on current TxDOT funds, including tollroads.

Comment 18: I want the noise wall structures to be constructed of something other than concrete.

Response 18: TxDOT's noise barrier construction materials are selected on functionality and cost. Concrete barriers are used because noise attenuation through the barrier is minimal and the cost and maintenance of the materials is lower compared to other materials.

Comment 19: I want the meetings to lower property values stopped.

Response 19: There are no TxDOT meetings previous, currently, or planned to discuss and lower property values.

Comment 20: I would prefer a parkway for SH 190.

Response 20: An arterial type of facility (parkway) option was eliminated from further evaluation based upon mobility evaluation measures. This option produced the lowest Level of Service (LOS) of all build alignments, showing a LOS F (failing) for the year 2030 with 58 percent congestion and thus would not meet the purpose and need. Furthermore, public investment in a new location roadway should not be proposed with a failing LOS. For these reasons, the SH 190 Study Team eliminated this low speed, signalized arterial type facility from further evaluation.

Comment 21: Visual aesthetics should not be given the same amount of avoidance as residential properties and structures.

Response 21: All resources will be considered for impacts in the environmental document before any alignment is chosen.

Survey forms were completed at the public meeting to rank the alignments that were presented. 241 survey forms were completed and received at the public meeting. Due to the possibility of skewing the ballot totals and /or duplication and submittal of survey forms, the survey forms were only accepted during the public meeting. From I-30 to US 80, alignment N2-M3b, PGBT/Lawson, received the highest score (522) and was ranked first for this section, N2-M3d, PGBT/Lawson was ranked second (score of 506), and N2-M3a, PGBT/Lawson, was ranked third (score of 454). For the alignments from US 80 to I-20, M3-S3, Lawson/East of Falcon's Lair ranked first (score of 456), M3-S2c, Lawson/Falcon's Lair ranked second (score of 348) and M3-S1, Lawson/Falcon's Lair, ranked third (score of 332).

REPORTED BY: Nathan Drozd
