



Section 200 Focus Group Meeting #1 Minutes

MEETING DATE: April 5, 2006
 TIME: 6:30 pm
 PLACE: Joppa/Joppatowne Fire Hall

Attendees:

NAME	TELEPHONE	EMAIL	AFFILIATION
Melissa Williams	410-537-5651	mwilliams9@mdta.state.md.us	Maryland Transportation Authority
Simela Triandos	410-537-1092	striandos@mdta.state.md.us	Maryland Transportation Authority
Mike Perrotta	410-537-5651	perrotta@pbworld.com	Maryland Transportation Authority
Glen Smith	410-537-5665	Gsmith2@mdta.state.md.us	Maryland Transportation Authority
Lindsay Reilly	410-537-	lreilly@mdta.state.md.us	Maryland Transportation Authority
Steven Swarr	410-329-3100	SSwarr@jmt.com	Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson
Mike Rothenheber	410-329-3100	MRothenheber@jmt.com	Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson
Mark Parker	410-235-3450	mparker@wrallp.com	Whitman, Requardt and Associates
Linda Moreland	302-366-0227	moreland@remline.com	Remline Corp
Lieutenant Ulysses Perry	410-537-1156	uperry@mdsp.org	Maryland State Police
John Mettee III	410-838-7900	jvm@fredward.com	Army Alliance
Joan Hatfield	410-825-0022	jhatfield@baltcountycc.com	Baltimore Cty. Chamber of Commerce
Sharon Klots	410-887-8023	sklots@co.ba.md.us	Baltimore Cty. Dept. of Economic Development
Peter Bosworth	410-340-8031		Developer
Janet Gleisner	410-638-3230	jggleisner@co.ha.md.us	Harford Cty. Dept. of Planning and Zoning
Tom Schaech	410-638-4700	tgschaech@co.ha.md.us	Harford Cty. Volunteer Fire & EMS Association
Sgt. Joe Van Seeters	410-692-7872	vanseetersj@harfordsheriff.org	Harford Cty. Sheriff's Office
Vern Bingham	410-272-1119	vern.bingham@hmscop.com	Maryland House Welcome Center
Anne Ferro	410-644-4600	aferro@mmtanet.com	Maryland Motor Truck Association
Aaron Moszer	410-297-9292	aaron@ripkenbaseball.com	Ripken Stadium/Aberdeen Iron Birds
Gene Bandy	410-732-9573	gbandy@baltometro.org	Baltimore Metropolitan Council



Introductions

Section 200 Project Planning Team:

- Melissa Williams (MdTA)
- Simela Triandos (MdTA)
- Mike Perrotta (MdTA)
- Glen Smith (MdTA)
- Lindsay Reilly (MdTA)
- Steven Swarr (JMT)
- Mike Rothenheber (JMT)
- Mark Parker (WRA)
- Linda Moreland (Remline Corp)

Discussion

Simela Triandos opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and introducing the project team and members of the Focus Group. She then gave the group a brief overview of the status of the I-95 Section 200 Project Planning Study and the relevance of forming a focus group. Ms. Triandos turned the meeting over to Mike Rothenheber who began the presentation by describing the Focus Group composition and their roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Rothenheber gave an overview of the I-95 Master Plan and the project limits for each of the four sections. He then described the three concepts that were carried forward from the I-95 Master Plan:

- No-Build – This does not mean that nothing will be done. This concept includes programmed maintenance and minor improvements along the corridor to improve safety and to address existing infrastructure serviceability concerns, including bridges.
- Managed Roadways – From New Forge Road to MD 24, two managed lanes will be added in each direction (4 GP and 2 ML SB/4 GP and 2 ML NB); from MD 24 to MD 543, two managed lanes and one general purpose lane will be added in each direction (4 GP and 2 ML SB/4 GP and 2 ML NB); and from MD 543 to north of MD 22, one general purpose lane will be added in each direction (4 GP SB/4 GP NB).
- General Purpose Lanes – From New Forge Road to MD 152, two general purpose lanes will be added in each direction (6 GP SB/6 GP NB); from MD 152 to MD 24, one general purpose lane will be added in each direction (5 GP SB/5 GP NB); from MD 24 to MD 543, two general purpose lanes will be added in each direction (5 GP SB/5 GP NB); and from MD 543 to north of MD 22, one general purpose lane will be added in each direction (4 GP SB/4 GP NB).



Mr. Rothenheber reviewed the project schedule touching on environmental fieldwork and documents, focus group meetings, and public workshops and hearings.

He reviewed traffic numbers from the I-95 Master Plan for each segment of Section 200. The Level of Service indicators show that most of the roadway will have failing LOS levels in the year 2020. In addition, the number and severity of congestion-related accidents will likely increase if improvements aren't made. He explained that the study team would take into consideration seven major economic development initiatives that will play a role in increased traffic in the area. A map packet was distributed which showed the development locations.

Mr. Rothenheber reviewed the Section 200 Purpose and Need statement, explaining to the Group that any selected alternate must fulfill the purpose and need for the project.

Mark Parker talked about the features, issues and constraints that each of the four interchanges within the study area poses to the Planning Team. The Section 200 I-95 interchanges include MD 152, MD 24, MD 543, & MD 22. The Maryland House is located between MD 543 and MD 22. Each interchange will be analyzed to determine the appropriate configuration and traffic controls to accommodate predicted future traffic volumes for the year 2030.

Steve Swarr talked about the existing environment for the Section 200 study area. He discussed the fieldwork required for the environmental documents that would be completed during the NEPA process. He mentioned that the limits for the study area for all fieldwork would be from New Forge Road to Maxa Road, including 200 feet from edge of pavement along northbound and southbound I-95. He stated that the natural, cultural, and socio-economic resources would be identified in technical reports.

Mr. Swarr explained that there are over 30 stream crossings according the NWI mapping in the area along with major waterways – Big Gunpowder Falls, Little Gunpowder Falls, Winters Run, Bynum Run, Bird River, and Bush River. He also discussed impacts to Gunpowder Falls State Park, a major recreational attraction,

Linda Moreland briefly talked about the public involvement activities that will take place throughout the project including meetings, public workshops, website, flyers and mailings.

Questions & Answers

- Tom Schaech (Harford County Volunteer Fire & EMS Association) asked if BRAC (Military base realignment initiative at Aberdeen Proving Grounds) had been taken into account in the traffic numbers that were presented. He believes that BRAC will affect I-95 from MD 22 to MD 152 and that the Section 200 traffic study should be modified to include BRAC numbers. Joan Hatfield (Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce) stressed the need to have those numbers before presenting information to the public. She suggested including a slide that acknowledges the impact that BRAC will have on the project.



Melissa Williams (MdTA) explained that they are mandated to use the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's (BMC) traffic model. She also stated that Section 200 would indeed incorporate BRAC into the traffic projections and assessment of improvement alternatives. The BMC is working on allowing their traffic model to accommodate the new traffic numbers to figure out how they will affect the project. Gene Bandy (BMC) stated that once the final BRAC numbers are available, they could be programmed. The new model should be available for use in a couple of months.

Mike Rothenheber stated that they would have the lead engineer responsible for the traffic projections attend the next meeting.

- Janet Gleisner (Harford County Dept. of Planning and Zoning) expressed concern regarding incorporating bike/ped paths in any improvements that are made to area roadways. Mike Rothenheber stated that the Authority has already begun coordination with the County and that the project team will address bike/ped paths during the Section 2000 study.
- Ms. Gleisner asked how we are reaching businesses at the MD 543 interchange. Linda Moreland explained that there would be a mailing to the communities, including the business communities in the project area to let them know about the project, and encourage their comments on the project and attendance at the public workshop and hearing.
- Anne Ferro (Maryland Motor Truck Association) expressed concern over the shortage of truck parking in the general area of the interstate. She explained that there are only 2,200 truck parking spaces statewide. Ms. Ferro suggested identifying mall areas or distribution centers where trucks can park. Simela Triandos (MdTA) said the Authority is looking at reconfiguring parking at the Maryland House and the Chesapeake House to allow for more truck parking.
- Ms Gleisner asked if there would be a bottleneck when the traffic is funneled from four lanes into three over the Susquehanna Bridge. Ms. Williams stated that MdTA is aware of potential issues at the Susquehanna River. The next I-95 Master Plan Project, Section 300, will address the Tydings Bridge.
- The Focus Group was concern about traffic congestion if two sections of I-95 were under construction at the same time. Ms. Williams stated that construction on Section 100 would either be completed, or very close to it before construction on Section 200 begins. Ms. Ferro asked when the public would be informed about construction traffic. Mr. Rothenheber explained that traffic mitigation would be investigated and discussed with the public when the concepts have been better developed.
- Ms. Williams asked the two attending law enforcement officers on the focus group what type of accidents they see the project area. Are rear end and sideswipe accidents higher than other types? Lt. Ulysses Perry (Maryland State Police) said most accidents are



minor. There are a lot of rear end accidents due to driver inattentiveness and sideswipes from vehicles drifting into another lane. The root of the problem seems to be congestion. He was not sure if the incidents in Section 200 are higher than other areas of I-95.

Sgt. Joe VanSeeters (Harford County Sheriff's Office) added that MD 24 is gridlocked in the rush hour and all around very congested. However, they do not capture a lot of data about the type of accidents because they generally are not reported.

Meeting Wrap-Up

The focus group agreed to hold future meetings at the HEAT Center in Aberdeen.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on May 24th at 6:30pm at the HEAT Center in Room 201.