



PUBLIC MEETING NO. 3 MEETING NOTES

SUBJECT: Bogard Road Extension East
DATE: July 12, 2007
TIME: 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
LOCATION: Colony Middle School

PRESENTATION NO. 1

There were an estimated 65 people present for this meeting

Stewart Osgood, DOWL Engineer's (DOWL) Project Manager, introduced the project, gave a brief overview, and then began the presentation. Public comments during the presentation are outlined below. Staff responses are in italics.

Public Comments

There was about \$13 million appropriated from the state under Governor Murkowski's Administration; what are you going to do if the additional funding is not approved for this project? What will DOWL and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) do to make up the balance?

- *Brad Sworts (MSB) answered: There will be attempts to attain the additional state funding through the legislature to proceed.*

Do you have a plan since the money is not appropriated?

- *Brad Sworts (MSB) answered: The MSB will request additional funding from the Legislature.*

Could the Governor stop the project by not approving additional funding?

- *Brad Sworts (MSB) explained that if additional funding is not approved by the legislature, the project will not proceed. Mary Jane Sutliff, State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) Planner, explained the planning process for obtaining project funds.*

What is the future zoning along the road, will it be commercial or residential? If it is zoned commercial what will happen to the congestion down by Carrs grocery store? The Governor vetoed stoplights on Palmer/Wasilla Highway. Palmer does not want to turn into a congested Wasilla.

- *Stewart Osgood (DOWL) explained that the team is designing the road to be a limited access facility. He also explained that as a general rule, traffic flows to where the services are available. DOT&PF reviewed the design options and alternatives and supports tying into Arctic Avenue at a four-way intersection. This is significantly better from a traffic standpoint than the other alignment options that were evaluated by the team.*

In Equestrian Acres the road will back up to houses, what will DOWL and the MSB do about it? There are ATV's all night long running up and down the street causing noise and disturbance. I live five feet from the proposed road and did not receive any information about the project. What will the MSB do about the 8,500 vehicles that will drive right by my property?

- *We will be doing a noise analysis to determine what the impacts will be, and whether abatement is feasible and reasonable, based on factors that DOT&PF has established in their Noise Abatement Policy. The mailing list for the project contains 3,500 names and was assembled from a database that searched tax records, permanent fund addresses, driver's license records, and property owners. The previous project meeting were also advertised in the ADN, the Frontiersman, and through the Mat-Su School District media. We have done our best to blanket the community with information and to encourage public participation. Please provide us with your name and address and*

we will cross-reference it with our mailing list to determine why you did not receive notification.

This is about property value not about indirect costs. The noise will go from 0 to 40 and no one will want to buy our homes. How many decibels make that determination?

- *It depends on site-specific information. We will conduct a noise analysis and if the noise levels indicate that abatement is needed, the MSB will consider abatement options.*

What are the noise levels now to make that determination?

- *It depends on many factors (land use, current noise environment, topography, vegetation, traffic composition, proximity of house to the road, etc.), which will be evaluated as part of the noise analysis. There is no simple, single answer to this question because it is very site specific.*

On the red route (Alternative 2) what properties will be directly impacted?

- *On both alternatives the possible right-of-way (ROW) lines and slope limits are shown in a preliminary fashion. There are conflicts between the proposed alignments and properties. The slope limits are shown on the large maps out front, and we have ROW staff here tonight to talk specifically about these details.*

Will there be cross walks for the school or additional lighting? What will be planned for Valley Trails Subdivision for lighting, crosswalks, and how will you address this? The traffic is horrible already and will you put streetlights in for access for Palmer High school?

- *Steve Noble (DOWL Project Engineer) said that the section of the road near Palmer High School most likely be lighted. We are trying to identify the pedestrian movements and make it as safe as possible. Landscaping trails and cross walks are being evaluated to make sure that there is logical and immediate access across the road. Traffic circulation patterns and flow may also change as we evaluate the interaction of the road and the schools in consultation with the school district.*

I live in Valley View and will be directly impacted (southeast corner). The recommended ROW goes right through my house. Why are the houses on the west end being spared and mine isn't?

- *Steve Noble stated that the team looked at several different road alignments to minimize ROW impacts as well as the cost of the alignment. The shifts presented in Alternative 2 are to reduce the cost of ROW acquisition, and were taken from MSB land as much as possible.*

Is the project team recommending Alternative 2 or is it already selected?

- *The DOWL team will recommend Alternative 2, based on the results of our analysis. Our client, the MSB, will select the final alignment in August and September 2007.*

Alternative 3 will affect less homes than Alternative 2. Why is Alternative 2 a done deal?

- *The MSB Assembly will make a decision based on DOWL's analysis and the input they receive from the public. Many factors are considered in selecting the final route, not just minimizing ROW impacts.*

If this is the presentation that will be given to the MSB Assembly, the line that states "3 fewer residents will be impacted" should be changed. It is more accurate to say that three fewer buildings will be directly impacted, since many more residents will be impacted with Alternative 2 from noise and other indirect impacts. I object to the statement being made to the MSB Assembly.

Was it ever considered to go through the farmlands? Going directly through them will affect fewer residents. Can they farm on both sides of the road? It would be nice to show Alternative 2 with roads that might connect into the extension; not the future roads but the current roads. How far will they really be from the road?

- *There are visual aids to answer this question in the commons area. We will change the graphic to indicate "direct" impact will be to three fewer private properties.*

Alternative 3 does skirt the open farmland area. We do have some representatives here that are farmers.

Stewart concluded the meeting and welcomed any other written comments for the project team to review.

PRESENTATION NO. 2

There were nine people present for this meeting.

Stewart Osgood, DOWL's Project Manager, introduced the project, gave a brief overview, and then began the presentation. Public comments during the presentation are outlined below. Staff responses are in italics.

Public Comments

What are the plans for the safety in front of the schools?

- *The Colony schools are technically outside of the project limits, but the project team anticipates working with the MSB School District to improve pedestrian and automobile flow and safety. Street lighting, pedestrian crossing and signals, grade separated crossings, and changes in traffic flow and circulation in and out of the main schools will be considered and evaluated as the design progresses. It is important to realize that traffic past the Colony Schools will increase with or without the extension of Bogard Road, so some modifications may be warranted in the future even under the "no build" alternative. The same possible traffic and pedestrian treatments will be evaluated at Palmer High School if Alternative 2 is selected. It was pointed out that middle schools are typically given more aggressive protection than high schools from a school zone and pedestrian safety standpoint.*

I am more concerned about the vehicular traffic and with high school drivers. Not talking about changing the road, but just adding crossways and lights to make it safer for the pedestrian traffic.

- *The school district has given the project team some suggestions on this issue. Some of the possibilities the project team is considering are: a right-in and right-out only and possibly expanding access to Colony off 49th State Street.*

I find it incomprehensible that DOWL will be recommending a highway that slows to 20 miles per hour. I find it totally irresponsible.

The last time I was here you said Scott Road is too steep to connect into. I disagree. When you come out of Arctic Avenue it is steeper than Scott Road.

The good thing about Arctic Avenue is it is fairly easy to cut the hill down to reduce grades to an acceptable level. If we try changing the slope from the Glenn Highway we will be chasing grades over very long distances. Even if we solve all the grade problems, there are other problems with connecting at Scott Road. Traffic will need to make a right-hand turning movement out of a T-intersection at peak hours and then cue up for left-turning movements to get onto Arctic Avenue/Old Glenn Highway. This is not a good scenario in terms of moving traffic. Based on traffic models, people do not want to go to Scott Road.

I live on the curve by the high school and all the well-wishing speed limits are good but people will not follow them. Going straight will not slow it down. You have three subdivisions with children and you want to put a highway right through where children are riding their bikes. It is nonsense.

It is silly to put it through all our neighborhoods where our children are playing. I worked 25 years in an emergency room.

I am going to have that much more traffic going down my street.

- *If Bogard is not constructed, and if we allow traffic to grow without bounds, there will be a lot more incentive to find ways through residential streets. Bogard will be a minor arterial street with modest traffic volumes that serves the community well. It is easier to pull traffic out off neighborhoods by giving the motorists other acceptable alternatives then push them out with traffic calming techniques.*

We bought our lot three years ago because it was a quiet subdivision. Everyone knew there may have been a road extending Scott Road. We all thought that, and now you are leaning toward cutting that subdivision in half. We are going to be on an island (on the north side of the red alignment).

When a project gets this far what are the chances of it not going forward? Can a project come this far and not be built?

- *The DOWL project team will make a recommendation to our client (the MSB). I think there are several potential outcomes. One will be a change of the alignment, two will be to cancel the project, or three to make substantive changes of the project. There are things that can be done to mitigate impacts as the design advances. Noise abatement, vegetation buffers, rubberized asphalt, etc. I cannot put odds on whether this project will move ahead in its current form. I encourage you to stay involved so that your specific concerns can be addressed in design.*

We asked the MSB about the road and the MSB said it would go down the section line. We bought with the idea it would not connect into Arctic. The current proposal will cut our property in half.

What is the possibility of making the Palmer-Wasilla Highway a four-lane facility?

- *Brad Sworts (MSB) stated that this is a \$200 million project. Palmer-Wasilla Highway probably will widen eventually, but the MSB still needs to look at other circulation options.*

I am not anti-development; I just do not see why a perfectly good established subdivision needs to be cut in half. We all bought in there with the intention that Bogard would extend down Scott Road. The project will be taking a perfectly good subdivision, and just creating a speed zone, regardless of speed limit signs. What kind of intersections are going to be installed, stoplights, or stop signs getting off north Arabian Lane into the subdivision?

- *We anticipate a controlled access facility with collector streets entering onto the roadway at 1/2 to 1/4 mile spacing. Signals will be installed if the volume or traffic on Bogard and on the intersecting side streets warrants a signal to allow motorists to safely enter and exit. At this point in the design we cannot say with certainty where intersections and signals will be placed.*

Stewart suggested that meeting participants follow him out to the foyer to talk one-on-one and to look at the maps provided.

Stewart concluded the meeting.