

## Minutes of Meeting

April 14, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Transportation Corridor Committee (TCC) Meeting  
Caton Farm – Bruce Road Phase I Study

**ATTENDANCE:** See Attached Roster

Mr. Andres began the meeting by giving a history of the project. The beginning of the project commences at the intersection of Caton Farm Road/U.S. Route 30/Gaylord Road and ends at the intersection of Cedar Road and 159<sup>th</sup> Street (IL Route 7). Fifty river crossings were looked at that include a bridge over a waterway within the Chicagoland area and each crossing carries approximately 25,000 – 40,000 vehicles per day. The existing bridge along IL Route 7 across the Des Plaines River carries approximately 24,700 vehicles per day and is congested. The Des Plaines River Valley is a natural barrier to east-west traffic circulation and concentrates the traffic at the existing river crossings. Over the last 40 years, the study area has been identified by numerous planning studies as a key location to provide a high-mobility roadway facility providing east-west continuity through the County and across the Des Plaines River Valley. The Strategic Regional Arterial Study identified the need for a continuous east-west regional corridor because the existing roadways cannot meet future travel demands. I-355 provides north-south regional mobility and the planning for Caton Farm-Bruce Road included I-355 and the proposed interchanges.

The benefits of a good transportation network are better quality of life, economic growth and prosperity and to provide these things, there is a need for long range vision. There is a need to plan for change, rather than react to change. “No-build” does not mean “no-change”. There is also an opportunity and responsibility to assure compatible land use and transportation.

Ms. Young reviewed the federal process and tasks that are required to meet the federal requirements for a transportation project. The Project Purpose is to provide a transportation system that will:

- Address capacity, operational, and safety deficiencies.
- Satisfy projected 2040 travel demands within a regional corridor extending between Caton Farm Road at U.S. Route 30 and IL Route 7 (159<sup>th</sup> Street) at Cedar Road.

The project needs are the following:

- Accommodate population and employment growth.

- Improve system linkage.
- Accommodate projected transportation demand.
- Optimize modal interrelationships.
- Increase travel safety.

Fifteen preliminary alternatives were developed in 2002 to 2003 and three were carried forward by the Transportation Corridor Committee. Based upon the NEPA/404 Merger process and discussions with FHWA, it was necessary to take a step back and look at all potential river crossings to determine their feasibility and whether there are any fatal flaws and whether they meet the purpose and need. After the river crossings were evaluated, 14 alternatives were developed and evaluated. An alternative was dropped from further study if it did not satisfy the purpose and need and if it affected a nature preserve. The remaining alternatives were evaluated for impacts to the following:

- Wetlands.
- Floodplains.
- Section 4(f) Land.
- Historic Structures/Properties.
- Special Waste Sites.
- Environmental Justice.
- Threatened and Endangered Species.
- Displacements.
- Right-of-way Acquisition.

Of the 14 alternatives, 6 were carried forward for further study and presented at public meetings, which were:

- Caton Farm-Oak-Gougar
- Caton Farm-Oak-Middle
- Caton Farm-Oak-Bruce-Gougar
- Caton Farm-Oak-Bruce-Middle
- Caton Farm-Bruce-Gougar
- Caton Farm-Bruce-Middle

The alignments involving Cedar Road were not carried forward because when comparing the north-south segments, the Cedar Road alternative would have the largest impact to floodplains, eligible historic structures, and displacements. It would also require substantial ROW acquisition from existing residential developments, multiple schools and churches, and the Homer Township Fire Protection Facility, particularly between 163<sup>rd</sup> and 159th. The TCC felt those impacts were not acceptable in comparison to the other available alternatives, which was discussed at the 2006 TCC meeting in advance of the Public Meetings in 2007.

It was determined that the Caton Farm-Bruce Corridor impacted the Hine's Emerald Dragonfly Critical Habitat and Buffer Zone and impacted approximately 4.5 acres of Dellwood Park West and were dropped from further study. The remaining 4 alternatives had comparable quantitative impacts and it was necessary to evaluate them based on

qualitative criteria. The Oak alignments were compared to the Oak-Bruce alignments. Oak Avenue is classified as a local street while Bruce Road is classified as a collector west of Gougar Road and arterial east of Gougar Road. Development along each has been consistent with the functional classification. As developments were occurring along Bruce Road, the City of Lockport required enough right-of-way to be consistent with the functional classification of the roadway and future widening of Bruce Road. Both Caton Farm-Oak Corridor alternatives were dropped from further study.

The projected future east-west traffic is substantial and accommodating this growth on Gougar Road will impact existing land uses not compatible with a major arterial. Double-linking east-west traffic onto a north-south roadway is operationally undesirable. The Middle alignment is a rare opportunity to plan future land uses compatible with an arterial highway. In May of 2009, the Transportation Corridor Committee identified that the Caton Farm-Oak-Bruce-Middle as the preferred alternative. In July of 2009, the Will County Board passed a resolution selecting the Caton Farm-Oak-Bruce-Middle alignment as the preferred alternative.

Ms. Young discussed the status of the environmental and engineering studies for the project. IDOT is preparing a Biological Assessment for the Hine's Emerald Dragonfly (HED). Historic and cultural resources studies are continuing. Special Waste studies are complete and a Draft Environmental Assessment has been sent to IDOT and FHWA for review. Bridge studies, MAP-21 major project requirements, project phasing plan, and preparation of the draft Design Report are ongoing. The drainage studies and geometrics/roadway studies are complete.

The next steps of the project are the following:

- Complete HED Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Complete historic/cultural coordination.
- Obtain Environmental Assessment approval.
- Hold a Public Hearing.
- Receive a Finding of No Significant Impact.
- Obtain Design Approval.

Mr. Gould reviewed the formation of the TCC and the coordination that occurred with the TCC to arrive at the preferred alternative. This is a regional project and many communities are involved in the TCC and the process. Public meetings have occurred in 2002, two public meetings in June of 2007, and thirteen TCC meetings, some prior to the initiation of the project. At the May 2009 meeting, the TCC recommended the preferred alternative. Another meeting was held by the County Executive to confirm the TCC recommendation, and the resulting resolution of the County Board in July of 2009 supporting the preferred alternative.

Several TCC members expressed concern that the TCC coordination in 2009 occurred during the elected official turnover and that current elected officials, Village Boards, and constituents do not fully understand how the "Middle Alignment" was selected as part of the preferred alternative vs Gougar Road or Cedar Road.

Several TCC members would like more communication about the project so that they can bring information back to their constituents. Mr. Gould stated that there is a website, where information can be obtained. The website is [www.cfb-study.com](http://www.cfb-study.com).

All TCC members are supportive of a new river valley crossing, the proposed improvements west of the Des Plaines River, and the connection between Oak Avenue and Bruce Road east of the Des Plaines River.

There was a suggestion that the eastern project terminus should be I-355 (Veteran Memorial Tollway) since the Will County 2030 Transportation Plan recommends an interchange at Bruce Road/I-355. [Post meeting note: *The interchange is listed as a Tollway project in the unconstrained portion of the plan which represents a wish list without considering priorities or the financial limitation of implementing agencies. This interchange is not included in the fiscally constrained plan projects*).

It was discussed that IDOT, FHWA, and other NEPA/404 coordination agencies established the logical termini for the project to be Caton Farm/U.S. Route 30 on the west and Cedar Road/159<sup>th</sup> Street on the east to match planned IDOT improvements to 159<sup>th</sup> Street (U.S. Route 6/IL Route 7). The logical termini requirements were established with full knowledge of the I-355 extension, which was also acknowledged in the previous Caton Farm-Bruce Road corridor SRA Study. The project must address the needs within these logical termini.

Homer Glen read a letter from the Village Board (attached) to the TCC indicating that they feel the “middle alignment” is unnecessary.

There was discussion about the implications of reopening the preferred alternative discussion to consider other options than the “middle alignment” as the preferred alternative. It was stated that this would need to be coordinated with IDOT, FHWA, and the NEPA/404 resource agencies since they have formally concurred with the preferred alternative. It was discussed that this could mean going back a couple/few years and reopening many aspects of the project including environmental surveys, NEPA/404 coordination, alternatives development and evaluation, and public information meetings, even if only for the east end north-south connector.

Mayor Streit stated that the City of Lockport is supportive of an improvement that will remove truck traffic from the downtown area and make it more livable.

Mr. Fremarek stated that the project is a regional project and that he supports the new bridge. He said that it appears the biggest issue is how to connect Bruce Road to 159<sup>th</sup> Street.

After discussion, there was a motion for an additional informational meeting to be held to provide more detailed information to the current elected officials, Village Board members, and constituents on how the preferred alternative decision was made, can the logical termini be adjusted to I-355, and what the impact to the project schedule and additional engineering costs would be if the north-south portion of the preferred alternative is reconsidered. The Village of Lockport offered to host the meeting at the Lockport Village Hall, with invites going to Lockport, Homer Glen, and Homer Township.

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The meeting will be informational only, with no TCC action taken. The meeting will be targeted for June 2015 after the newly elected officials are sworn in. All concurred.

The TCC meeting was adjourned at 1:15 P.M.

# Attendance Roster

Project Description: *Cotton Farm - Bruce Rd TCC Meeting* Date: *4-14-15*  
 Meeting Location: *Will County Exec. Bldg* Time: *11:00 AM*  
 Attending:

NAME / AFFILIATION	TEL	EMAIL
<i>USA DOROTHY / CITY OF JOLIET</i>	<i>815 724 4211</i>	<i>ldorothy@jolietycity.org</i>
<i>Michael Salamowicz / U of Homer Glen</i>	<i>708 301 0632</i>	
<i>Cameron Davis / Village of Homer Glen</i>		<i>cdavis@homerglen.org</i>
<i>Don Gould, County Board</i>	<i>725-76605</i>	
<i>Ben Benson / City of Lockport</i>	<i>815 838 0549</i>	<i>bbensone@lockport.org</i>
<i>Ron Alberico LKp. Twp Supervisor</i>	<i>815-838-0380</i>	
<i>PAM Meyers Homer Twp Supur</i>	<i>708 301 0522 815-955-9262</i>	<i>p.meyers@homertownship.com</i>
<i>Tony Fremarek Plainfield Twp Supervisor</i>	<i>815-274 4467</i>	<i>tfremarek@plainfield-twp.org</i>
<i>Mary Young / Civiltech Engineering</i>	<i>630-735-3948</i>	<i>myoung@civiltechinc.com</i>
<i>STEVEN STREET / CITY OF LOCKPORT</i>	<i>630 804 3503</i>	<i>street@lockport.org</i>
<i>BRUCE D. GOULD / WCDOT</i>	<i>815-7278476</i>	<i>BGOULD@WILLCOUNTYILLINOIS.COM</i>
<i>LARRY WALSH / County Executive</i>	<i>815 774-7480</i>	<i>lwalsh@willcountyillinois.com</i>
<i>Christina Kuptowski / WCDOT</i>	<i>815/727-8176</i>	<i>ckuptowski@willcountyillinois.com</i>
<i>TIM BALDERMANN / New Lenx</i>	<i>715 462-6425</i>	<i>tbaldermann@newlenex.com</i>
<i>MIKE DeLUVO Hme Twp &amp; ROADS</i>	<i>708 301 0246</i>	<i>HOMERTHIGHTWAY@AOL.CO</i>
<i>JOAN CIELEŃSKI, Lockport Township Hwy</i>	<i>815-2766056</i>	<i>LockportHwy@SPCCO.ILLINOIS</i>
<i>Denise Kunchak / LKPT TWP CLERK</i>	<i>815-838-1031</i>	<i>denise@lockporttownship.org</i>
<i>MIKE MATKOVIC / C&amp;B&amp;Z</i>	<i>847/823-0500</i>	<i>mmatkovic@C&amp;B&amp;Z.COM</i>
<i>Joel Christell / Civiltech</i>	<i>630/735/3941</i>	<i>Jchristell@civiltechinc.com</i>

# Attendance Roster (p. 2)

Project Description: *Cotton Farm Bruce Rd. TCC Meeting* Date: *4-14-15*  
 Meeting Location: *Will Co. Exec. Office Bldg.* Time: *11:00 AM*

Attending:

NAME / AFFILIATION	TEL	EMAIL
<i>Bob Andrus - Civiltech Engineers</i>	<i>630/735-3354</i>	<i>randres@civiltechinc.com</i>
<i>Mary Tatroe - WCSAO</i>	<i>815-727-8872</i>	<i>mtatroe@willcountyillinois.co</i>
<i>JEFF RONALDSON - WCDOT</i>	<i>815-727-8476</i>	<i>jronaldson@willcountyillinois.com</i>
<i>CLAIRE BOZIC - CMAP</i>	<i>312-386-8744</i>	<i>CBOZIC@CMAP.illinois.gov</i>
<i>Bruce Friedl. Will County</i>	<i>815-7408371</i>	<i>b.friedl@willcountyillinois.com</i>
<i>NICK PALMER - Co EXEC</i>	<i>815-774-7488</i>	<i>NPALMER@WILLCOUNTYILLINOIS.COM</i>
<i>MAE CONVERY CREST HILL</i>	<i>815-609-8050</i>	<i>mconconvy@gmail.com</i>
<i>CHARLES CONVERY ANDERMAN / CITY OF CREST HILL</i>	<i>815-609-8052</i>	<i>CCONVERY@cityofcresthill.com</i>
<i>Kathy Hillman / St Rep Margo McDermid</i>	<i>815-277-2079</i>	<i>mcdermed@ILHouse.gov</i>
<i>RICHARD SCHROEDER</i>	<i>708-670-2118</i>	<i>LYRCA50@SCHROEDERMAT.CO</i>
<i>William Schroeder</i>	<i>708-670-2120</i>	<i>  </i>
<i>LYDIA SCHROEDER</i>	<i>708-670-2119</i>	<i>LYDIAS@SCHROEDERMAT.CO</i>
<i>MARY ELLEN WHITE</i>	<i>815-838-2020</i>	<i>mewhite2588@att.net</i>
<i>Thomas A. Thanas</i>	<i>815-838-0549</i>	<i>tthanasc@lockport.org</i>
<i>John Vershey Ald CREST Hill</i>	<i>815-726-4087</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>WILL NASH</i>	<i>815-4626490</i>	<i>WNASH@NEWLENOX.NET</i>



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*Community and Nature . . . in Harmony*

April 13, 2015

Members of the Transportation Corridor Committee

Re: The Proposed Caton Farm Bruce Road SRA

Dear TCC Members,

We would like to thank Bruce Gould and the Will County Highway Department for taking the lead on the Caton Farm Bruce Road (CFBR) SRA project. As we all know, this is certainly a monumental task. We also believe that a new bridge crossing of the Des Plaines River Valley is essential. Traffic across the 9<sup>th</sup> Street bridge in the City of Lockport is continuing to increase, leading to congested roads to and from the bridge. Also, with the nearest crossings at least three and a half miles in either direction, there is no viable way to avoid the congestion. As mentioned, we certainly support a new bridge across the Des Plaines River Valley. However, we are very concerned about the alignment of the road system east of the proposed bridge.

The February 2006 CFBR Study references the need to create a well-spaced grid network of arterial routes. However, the proposed road system on the east side of the new bridge, referenced to as the "middle alignment", provides an unnecessary duplication of roadways, in close proximity to other important existing roads. There are already three existing north-south roadway corridors, between I-355 and Cedar Road, within a little over a mile and a half distance. These are I-355, Gougar Road and Cedar Road (which is already classified as an SRA route). Is there really a need for a fourth corridor in this same mile and a half stretch of land? In addition, Bruce Road, between State Street and Cedar Road is currently classified as an SRA route.

In a letter dated June 25, 2010 to Mr. Henry Meader of the Will County Farm Bureau, Mr Gould noted that, "At the time of the approval of the logical termini for this project, it was not known when the I-355 extension from I-55 to I-80 would be constructed or if there would be an interchange at Bruce Road. For this reason, the termini were established as US Route 30 and IL Route 7, matching the approved SRA report for the corridor prepared and approved by IDOT in 1995." This SRA report Mr. Gould referenced is now 20 years old. Certainly, we all know that things have changed since this report was approved back in 1995. Mr. Gould further noted that these roads (US Route 30 and IL Route 7) were included for expansion in the Will County 2030 Transportation Plan. What can be taken from these comments is that the proposed road system on the east side of the new bridge, the middle alignment, including the termini, is largely based on 1995 data. Considering

we have known since 2005, when construction began, that the I-355 extension would be a reality, we strongly feel that the east side road system should be reviewed and modified to include the new I-355 extension.

Even now, the current alignment for the CFBR SRA does not include an interchange at I-355. However, we know that Will County's 2030 Recommended Transportation Plan, dated March of 2009, not only includes IL Route 7 and US Route 30 for expansion, but also includes a new full interchange at I-355 and Bruce Road. In addition, Will County's 2030 Recommended Transportation Plan includes several other roadway expansions in the same region as the CFBR SRA route, including: the widening of the existing Cedar Road SRA to four lanes, between Bruce Road and 159<sup>th</sup> Street; the widening of Cedar Road to four lanes, between Bruce Road and US Route 6; and the widening of Gougar Road to four lanes, between Bruce Road and US Route 6. Since the expansion of these roads is already figured into Will County's Recommended 2030 Transportation Plan, would it not be more prudent and cost effective to terminate the proposed CFBR SRA route at I-355 and utilize the existing roadway system east of I-355 to disperse traffic? Ms. Claire Bozic, a Senior Analyst with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) noted in a March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015 correspondence that, "Yes, although it is uncommon, an SRA can terminate at a Tollway interstate such as I-355. Currently, US20 and Boughton Road SRA designations terminate at I-355, and Roosevelt Road SRA designation terminates at I-294."

"Does the proposed middle alignment, east of I-355, actually make sense?" Without the I-355 interchange at Bruce Road, traffic intending to head west on the proposed CFBR SRA would need to exit at 159<sup>th</sup> Street and head east one and a half miles to reach the new CFBR SRA, then head another two and a half miles south, to reach the potential I-355 interchange location at Bruce Road. This results in nearly an extra two miles of zig-zag travel. Again, would it not be more logical to allow traffic to remain on I-355 and exit at Bruce Road, rather than add unnecessary traffic to the local roadway system? The primary goal of CMAP's own Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program is to support surface transportation projects and other related efforts that contribute air quality improvements and provide congestion relief. Wouldn't the reduction of traffic from the local roadway system, with accompanying reduction in lane miles traveled, fit directly into the CMAQ program?

We know the CFBR SRA will not be constructed as a single project, but rather, it will be constructed in segments, as funding becomes available. We can also assume that the first segment of the project to be constructed, will be the most needed segment, the bridge across the Des Plaines River Valley. As this will most likely be the first segment constructed, it will need to rely on the support of the existing roadway system. Again, would it not be more prudent to upgrade the existing roadway system, some of which are already proposed in Will County's Recommended 2030 Transportation Plan, rather than spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a new roadway, which parallels existing roadways in the region? At the very least, we are seeking a review of the alignment east of I-355. We understand that this project has been on-going for quite some time; however, we believe that with the construction of a new interchange at I-355 and Bruce Road, the

termini can be revised to I-355, thereby eliminating nearly two and a half miles of roadway from the project, saving tens of millions of dollars for the overall project.

As previously mentioned, we completely support the need for a new bridge across the Des Plaines River Valley. We also completely support the need for the bridge portion of the project to be completed first. However, we can all agree that any delay to the construction of the bridge will not be the result of an additional review related to the completion of the Phase I report. Any delays for this project will likely be the result of a lack of funding for the project, especially considering the financial condition of the State of Illinois and Federal funding challenges. With these items considered, we would respectfully request a new vote on the proposed alignment, east of the proposed new bridge, at an upcoming meeting of the TCC.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Village Manager Cameron Davis or Development Services Director Michael Salamowicz at (708) 301-0632.

Respectfully,

**VILLAGE OF HOMER GLEN**