



WORK SESSION of the Greenbelt City Council held Monday, July 21, 2008, for the purpose of an update by the State Highway Administration (SHA) on the status of the US 1/ MD 201 Project Planning Study.

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. It was held in the Council Room of the Municipal Building.

PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Konrad E. Herling, Edward V. J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts, and Mayor Judith F. Davis.

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Michael McLaughlin, City Manager; Amy Hofstra, Community Planner and Cindy Murray, City Clerk.

ALSO PRESENT WERE: Kameel Holmes, Project Manager, Eric Tombs, Sr., Assistant Project Manager, State Highway Administration; Robert Maimone, Environmental Planner/NEPA Specialist, McCormick Taylor; Jim Wynn, Project Manager, Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani; Sheldon Goldberg, Advisory Planning Board; Kap Kapastin, Beltway Plaza; Laura Moore, Office of County Councilman Dernoga; Christi Tousignant, Gazette; Tom White, News Review; Johan Ford, Bill Orleans and others.

Ms. Hofstra explained background on US 1/ MD 201 study which was reinitiated in January of 2006. The study is being done to develop and evaluate possible improvements to the US 1/ MD 201 corridor from MD 198 to the Capital Beltway.

Ms. Holmes explained the three stages of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process as it relates to the US 1/ MD 201 Project Planning Study. She noted the SHA has completed Stage 1 of the process which included the following: Development of the Purpose and Needs Statement, Preparation of Environmental and Engineering Inventories, Development of Preliminary Alternatives, Holding Alternates Public Workshop and Selection of Alternatives for Detailed Study. They are currently in Stage 2 of the process with the Development of Detailed Alternatives complete and the draft Detailed Environmental and Engineering Analyses expected to be complete in the fall.

Mr. Wynn noted that the environmental considerations of the project include Indian Creek and associated floodplains and wetlands, woodlands and habitat for forest interior dwelling species and rare, threatened, or endangered species, developed properties along US 1 and throughout the study area, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, parklands and historic sites and environmental justice populations. Mayor Davis said she was concerned about the impact of the project on communities with low income and minority populations.

Ms. Holmes and Mr. Wynn provided details and maps of the seven alternatives selected for detailed study for the project.

- *Alternative 1 – No Building (Maintenance only)*
- *Alternative 2 – TSM Improvements (Consistent Four/Five Lane US 1, US 1 and MD 201 Intersection Improvements) TSM Improvements may be included as part of any Building Alternatives*
- *Alternative 3 - US 1 Widening to Six Lanes*
- *Alternative 4 East – MD 201 Widening on New Alignment to Old Baltimore Pike*
- *Alternative 4 West – MD 201 Widening on New Alignment and New Connection Across US 1 to Western Laurel*
- *Alternative 5 East – US 1 Widening to Six Lanes and MD 201 Widening on New Alignment to Old Baltimore Pike*
- *Alternative 5 West – US 1 Widening to Six Lanes; MD 201 Widening on New Alignment and New Connection across US 1 to Western Laurel*

Mayor Davis asked if sidewalks and bicycle lanes would be included as part of the project. Mr. Wynn said the design criteria included sidewalks for pedestrians and accommodations for bicycles.

Mayor Davis asked what would become of the stone bridge on Edmonston Road south of Sunnyside Road. Mr. Wynn said they are looking at keeping the stone bridge in place and building an additional bridge.

Mr. Herling asked if there had been any change from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on environmental impact levels. Mr. Maimone said what is considered an environmental impact hasn't changed, but the FHWA levels of acceptance are now much stricter.

Mr. Roberts commented building any new roads to accommodate increased vehicular traffic encourages people to continue to drive their automobiles and he felt this was the worst environmental impact of the project. He mentioned other alternatives should be considered such as the expansion of Metro service. Mr. Putens asked if changes could be made to the project if any changes in Metro service develop. Mr. Wynn said changes can continue when the project moves to the design phase.

Mr. Roberts questioned the environmental impacts of the project on the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center. Mr. Maimone said once the environmental impacts are determined, they will be included in the Environmental Impact Document (EIS) and a copy would be provided to the City.

Mr. Putens commented the project plans should not only consider current land use, but what will be there in three or more years. He mentioned the possible impact development of Greenbelt Station could have on the project.

Mr. Herling asked if the SHA traffic count projections have taken into account the decrease in vehicular traffic over the past few months. Ms. Holmes noted the study doesn't address this change specifically but noted traffic counters are in place at all times.

Mr. McLaughlin asked for an estimated timeline for the draft EIS and for official comments on the study. Ms. Holmes said the draft EIS would be complete in early spring 2009 and a public hearing would be scheduled later in spring 2009. She said comments on the project would be accepted at any time throughout this stage. After some discussion between Council and staff, it was decided to first refer the draft EIS to the Advisory Planning Board for their comments prior to the Council drafting their official comments.

Other Matters

Mr. McLaughlin reported that Eileen Peterson had passed away.

Mr. Putens distributed an e-mail message announcing the General Services Administration is inviting bids for leases of office and related space in Montgomery County and Prince George's County. He mentioned this may be related to the proposed change from retail to office space in the development plans for Greenbelt Station.

Mayor Davis said she had met with Prince George's County Executive Johnson this morning for an informational meeting concerning the possible soccer stadium relocation.

The meeting adjourned at 10:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Cindy Murray
City Clerk*