



Meeting Notes

SUBJECT: W. Dimond Reconstruction Project
PROJECT NO.: MOA PM&E 05-005
GROUP: Citizens' Advisory Committee
DATE: July 12, 2006
TIME: 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
LOCATION: Multipurpose Room, Jewel Lake Plaza, Anchorage AK
MEETING OUTREACH: Emails and phone calls to Committee members. Hand delivery of notebook containing background information and meeting materials.
MEETING ATTENDANCE: 17
MEETING MATERIALS: Agenda; CAC notebook additions
STAFF PRESENT: *MOA PM&E:* John Smith, Julie Makela;
R&M Consultants: Todd Jacobson, Paula Winfree;
Kinney Engineering: Randy Kinney, John Pekar;
Earthscape: Elise Huggins, Deb McGee;
Brooks & Associates: Anne Brooks, Kathy Burgess, Betty Caudle

MEETING INFORMATION:

Committee members were greeted on arrival and asked to sign in, collect a meal, and take their place at the meeting table.

Anne Brooks opened the meeting by starting a round of self introductions. She then gave an orientation to the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) process, rules, and general information. Members were guided through the CAC Charter and asked to sign and turn in a copy by the end of the meeting. Anne gave an introduction to the meeting, its purpose, and the project materials.

Paula Winfree briefed the Committee on the **Context Sensitive Solutions/Context Sensitive Design (CSS/CSD) process**. Discussion highlights are below with answers to questions in *italics*:

- The first step is to engage all the stakeholders, both the municipality and the public. We have started this with meetings with the public and municipality department stakeholders.
- Are we basing this design on municipal design policy or new CSS/CSD standards? *We are using Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines that will be implemented into the city's new policy.*

Anne led a discussion on the **context of the project corridor**. Highlights of the discussion are below:

- The road is a rural one that transitions from a wide commercial boulevard. My major concern is the intersection with W. Park Drive on a dangerous curve. I'd like to keep the road much as it is but make it safer. The two fatalities on the road have occurred near that intersection, and there is potential for much more traffic from the new housing development.
- The hills and curves add character. Lack of long vistas is part of the character of the road.
- There are private water wells in the city right of way.

Anne asked the CAC, "Who are the **users of the road**?"

- Roller skiers in summer, regular skiers in winter.
- Bicycle racers. They value a smooth road surface with shoulders where a bike can pull off for cars to pass. Racers like to be on the road, not a separate path.
- Walkers, kids on bikes, runners.
- People walking their dogs.
- Tour companies train their bus drivers on the road.
- People going to the motocross track in the park.
- It is a school bus route for elementary, middle school, and high school students.
- Individual mail boxes.
- Sky Hills residents.
- Cruisers.
- Motorcyclists.
- Jodhpur has cars parked on it during motocross events from the Dimond corner north. Also street parking during ski events.
- Fire & rescue.
- Snow removal.
- Utilities.
- Construction vehicles.
- There are no informal paths at the roadside; people walk on the road. Occupants of the new subdivision will want to access the park.
- There is no equestrian use; people trailer their horses in to the park to use the trails.
- Wildlife.
- Roller skiers will probably use Kincaid trail along Raspberry when it opens; they may still use Dimond for the hills.

Todd Jacobson and Randy Kinney gave a presentation on **existing corridor characteristics**.

Discussion highlights are below with responses to questions or comments in *italics*:

- East of the pagoda house the hauling of peat for construction caused deterioration of the road, which was never fixed, just patched. The occurrence of this deterioration does not necessarily imply that we need a large facility.
- When I first came to Anchorage, Jodhpur was a dirt road. It was paved with leftover paving from the airport. Pavement was put down and compacted with a bulldozer. It was not well

made or very thick. Water is not an issue if you can get it off the road because underlying gravel is deep. The surface potholes easily.

- We can agree that the current condition is bad and deteriorating. A new facility will be able to handle this sort of traffic much better.
- How important is it to have consistency in the roadway? Generally it is not. We have to consider the function of the road.
- Are traffic volumes for the various segments of the corridor available? *No, but we have the forecast in segments.*
- Prior to 1995 there was a 2-fatality crash (I thought there were separate accidents with fatalities for a total of 2 fatalities?). A Volkswagen swerved to avoid a pothole in the same area where the motorcycle crashed. *The State didn't have data on that crash. Talk to Bob Paulsen and other neighbors about it. During our last public meeting there was a crash on the corridor. There was a Jeep on its side when I went home. It was on the curve.*
- My wife hit a moose on the road. *Crashes are underreported, so there could have been more that we don't have in the official statistics. My mailbox got hit. There have been numerous crashes with trees and vehicles in ditches that never were reported.*
- Why are you showing us these road examples? *We have these so you can understand what the current Municipal standards are. Hillside Drive is the best rural example. Are there any examples outside Anchorage or Alaska? Check www.contextsensitivesolutions.org. We will be giving you homework later that asks you to look at roads. What we are showing is standard, but there is room for flexibility. We will need a justified design waiver authorized by the Municipal Engineer, but it can be done. We could have a combination of sections, too.*
- When trucks going south on Sand Lake approach the intersection, I don't see how they can see down Dimond well enough to turn without pulling into the intersection. If it were perpendicular to Dimond Boulevard it would help.
- The map doesn't show the correct locations of crashes. (pointed out locations on map)
- There were other factors in the crashes besides speed. There was a dead animal in the road. Don't know about helmet use [in motorcycle fatality]. They could have been dodging water coming down the road from the south. The southern lane gets swamped in breakup.
- Safety isn't the only reason for making changes to the road. We can't make this a sterile place just to prevent accidents. We need to have correct information so we can make better decisions for this project.
- There were other deaths at Sand Lake & Dimond before 1995. *We will address that, too. Width, skew, etc. may have been contributing factors to the injury accidents.*
- Why should we care about congestion? *It creates shorter gap acceptance and people turn when it's not safe, so it's a safety issue as well as time waste, increased pollution, etc.*
- Police are saying that traffic lights cause more crashes. *Roundabouts cause all vehicles to enter an intersection at low speed.*

Anne asked Committee members for ideas for **project design solution evaluation criteria**.

Response to questions/comments from the committee are in *italics*:

- Intersection safety at Sand Lake & Dimond
- Intersection safety at W. Park & Dimond

- Pedestrian and bike safety
- Preserves rural character
- Improve safety of curve at Jodhpur/Diamond
- Posted Speed limits
- Controlling speed. How? Enforcement, traffic calming
- Aesthetics
- Smooth transition to connecting roads. *Jodhpur park entrance was chosen as a natural project terminus. This project can't do anything with a State road.*
- Will water mains be put in during construction? The Legislature may be appropriating money for this. *We will get AWWU to inform us.*
- Coordinate with utilities
- Can this project include undergrounding of utilities? They often look at road projects for opportunities. *The road project would have to pay for moving utilities. We will consider it in design study. There is an undergrounding ordinance, but this corridor is not on their plan at the moment. The Community Council might request it. The wide right of way would allow undergrounding to take place later without disturbing the road.*
- Cost
- Minimize impact to property owners during construction and long term.
- Improved road surface

After the discussion concerning the Evaluation Criteria was concluded, a few housekeeping items were taken care of, as listed below:

- A summary of public input received to date was handed out.
- Committee members agreed to sharing their contact information with other members. Email addresses only will be published on the web site.
- The Committee was given an assignment to look at other collector roads in Anchorage and Eagle River, take pictures of features they like and don't like, that would fit or not fit with the West Diamond corridor.

A **final round of comments** was requested from each member of the Committee, per below. Project Team responses to questions/comments are in *italics*:

- I am unconvinced about the traffic projections from West Park to Jodhpur; I want more definition of the projections and more detail to back up the numbers; I think they are too high.
- Think about what they might look like in winter when you look at roads and take pictures. The south side of the road is in shade and has slower snow melting. I want to make sure this is a road that the city will take care of.
- Update the land use map.
- Redo road ownership map—the light color doesn't show up.
- Disclosure: Many people on the project team have worked for my firm as consultants.
- I would like to think out of the box. There is a global source to look at. Look outside Alaska, there are beautiful examples. We only get one opportunity; we shouldn't rush; we should do it well.

- To me the road needs shoulders and that's it. I don't want to do any harm to the road.
- We need to plan ahead so we don't have to redo it later. Let's do it right the first time. Other road users are on the road less than the residents. We like it for the rural characteristics, so let's keep it that way.
- The Sand Lake Community Council didn't make this project a priority. *It was first in 2004, but there are other factors in project choice.* It would be good to know what those factors are. *There is a no build option, but so far safety compels a need to build something.*
- The south side of W. Park may be slated for upscale condos. Is there a way to look at projections for other development? *We can ask someone from Planning.*

There was discussion, but it remained undecided what the date of the next meeting will be. Brooks and Associates will inform everyone when the date is set.

Related documents on file:

- Notebook contents
- Agenda
- Sign in Sheets
- Aerial Photo
- Engineering Drawings