



G R E S H A M
S M I T H A N D
P A R T N E R S

SR 136 Safety Project Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting #2

June 10, 2010

MEETING NOTES

P.I. NO.: 0008314
CSSFT-0008-00(314)
GS&P Project No. 26340.09

MEETING DATE: MAY 26, 2010
MEETING TIME: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
MEETING LOCATION: PICKENS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

PARTICIPANTS: Community Work Group
Mimi Jo Butler, Marble Valley Historical Society
Tammy Bell, Marble Valley Historical Society
Linda Geiger, GA Chapter Trail of Tears
Honorable Rodney Gibson, Blaine Masonic Lodge
Buddy Callahan, Business Owner
Edsel Dean, Property Owner

Staff Work Group
Chetna Dixon, FHWA – Georgia Division
Kelly Whitson, FHWA – Georgia Division
Joey Low, Pickens County Land Development
Kevin McAuliff, Northwest Georgia Regional
Norman Pope, Pickens County
Larry Coleman, Pickens County Water
Commissioner Robert Jones, Pickens County

Project Team
Kent Black, Gresham, Smith and Partners
Jody Braswell, Gresham, Smith and Partners
Scott Shelton, Gresham, Smith and Partners
Ronda Coyle, Gresham, Smith and Partners
Derrick Cameron, GDOT Traffic Operations (PM)
Michael Nash, GDOT Traffic Operations
Wes King, GDOT District Six
Jill Brown, Edwards-Pitman Environmental
Lisa Crawford, Edwards-Pitman Environmental

DISCUSSION: CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) #2

A. Introductions

Kent Black opened the meeting and asked the meeting participants to introduce themselves. Kent then briefly summarized the meeting agenda and advised the committee that they would be receiving alternatives to review and score as part of the CAC process.

Kent Black recapped the action items that had been identified from the first CAC meeting which included the technical work needed to develop preliminary alternatives for presentation today at CAC #2. Kent commented that additional technical work would be completed after CAC #2 based upon the comments and suggestions of the CAC. A preferred alternative for each critical area will be combined into a proposed conceptual improvement for the entire length of the corridor to present to the general public at a Public Information Open House (PIOH). The PIOH display will be shown to the CAC in the fall prior to the PIOH.

B. Comments from CAC #1

Kent Black shared with the committee the critical comments made by the committee members during CAC #1. These comments included high rates of speed along the corridor, motorist confusion or unfamiliarity with the corridor, potentially endangered species and historical resources. Per comments from CAC #1, GS&P re-verified and refined the locations of all the fatal crashes on the corridor and plotted the beginning and ending points of each crash. Kent noted these crashes were primarily mapped out along the horizontal curve areas.

C. Environmental Resources

Since the last meeting, Edwards-Pitman's (EP) historian and archeologist visited the corridor with CAC members to capture the historical and cultural significance of the area. Fort Newnan and the Caramel Mission were not contained in the study area so they were not evaluated for historical significance. The Kelly House has now been included as part of the Blaine Community and the boundary at the Blaine House has been reduced. Segments of the Old Federal Road highlighted in blue on the display board were identified and will be protected or mitigated if impacted.

EP's next phase of work will include identifying the natural areas and protected species in the area. This process can only be done once the preferred alignment is determined. EP will work with GDOT and GS&P to fine tune the preferred alignment to minimize impacts.

EP will also evaluate the noise and air pollution for the preferred alignment. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) has not concurred with EP's findings to date.

D. Alternatives Development

Five (5) critical areas were identified along the corridor. These areas include SR 136 Connector, Antioch Church Road, Priest Circle, the sharp horizontal curve, Ellijay Road and SR 515 Access Road. The alternatives were designed per the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) design criteria. The alternatives improve safety and operations while minimizing potential impacts to historical and environmental resources. The design team evaluated each alternative for impacts or improvements to the environment, corridor preservation, design, safety and cost and presented their findings graphically on each alternative. Each alternative provided to the CAC members contained a table of the key design, cost, environmental and corridor preservation information needed to evaluate the alternative.

Base improvements were presented that would be appropriate to use with any of the alternatives such as advance warning signs, center line and shoulder rumble strips, shoulder widening, and curve delineation. Kent advised that on their own, these base improvements would not be sufficient enough to reduce crashes, but included with a preferred alternative, should enhance the safety aspect of the corridor.

Commissioner Rob Jones inquired if the raised pavement markers would be removed from the road. GDOT stated that the center line raised pavement markers would be re-installed after construction.

Kent instructed the CAC to review and consider each alternative for the five (5) critical areas appropriately and rank each alternative and/or provide an additional alternative, and provide feedback for each alternative.

E. Open Discussion

Buddy Callahan asked Kent if the preferred alternative had been decided. Kent assured Buddy and the other CAC members that neither GS&P nor GDOT had made any decisions on the preferred alignment for the corridor. Kent stressed that a number of data points have to be evaluated and considered in order for the engineers to make a recommendation to GDOT. Data points include consensus of the property owners, property access, and historical preservation.

Buddy Callahan commented that roundabouts cause too much confusion for people trying to access his property and departing his property and he is concerned that people will not stop at his store if a roundabout is built. Kent

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assured Buddy that if a roundabout has any merit in this corridor; GS&P will work with Buddy to maintain property access.

GS&P has designed and GDOT has built numerous roundabouts throughout Georgia and each time GDOT coordinated with businesses to maintain access after completion of the roundabout.

A CAC member expressed concern that a roundabout would put Buddy out of business. Kent Black reiterated that the intent of a roundabout is to address safety and traffic concerns and not put anyone out of business. Kent advised the CAC that GS&P would provide members with a traffic simulation of some roundabouts including a roundabout located in the rural area of Douglas County. The roundabout traffic simulation would assist the CAC in understanding the operation and how to navigate through a roundabout. Kent reiterated GS&P and GDOT were not in Pickens County to sell roundabouts.

This represents our understanding of the items discussed at CAC Meeting #2 on May 26, 2010. If you have any questions or comments concerning any of the information contained here, please contact Scott Shelton.

Prepared by: Ronda J. Coyle

RJC