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MEMORANDUM

From: Eric Yermack, P.E.

To: File

Date: February 11, 2004

Re: Route 70 over Manasquan River
Community Involvement
Officials Briefing
February 2, 2004

Attendees: See Attached Attendance List

On Monday, February 02, 2004, at 10:30 AM, in the Borough of Brielle Municipal Building, the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) held an Officials Briefing to inform public officials from the surrounding municipalities of the status of the Route 70 over Manasquan River project and the proposed plans for noise mitigation and reforestation. The meeting was opened by Mr. Tony Marsella from NJDOT's Office of Community Relations. Mr. Marsella gave a brief overview of the Department's community outreach efforts to date. Mr. Marsella requested that each of the municipalities within the project limits: Brick Township, Borough of Brielle, Wall Township and the Borough of Point Pleasant, all of which the Department had invited to this meeting, give the Department a Resolution of Support after the next Public Information Center. The Public Information Center will be held in Brielle at the Curtis House on February 25, 2004 from 4:00 to 7:00 PM.

Mr. Marsella then asked Mr. Edward Tomaszewski from NJDOT's Bureau of Environmental Services, to present the results of the Department's noise study and the proposed methods of mitigation. During his presentation Mr. Tomaszewski utilized display boards showing noise contours and impacted properties and an elevation and cross sections of the noise wall. Mr. Tomaszewski said that there are existing as well as potential noise impacts to seven properties in Brick Township and to properties along Cedar Lane, Sunset Drive and Riverview Drive in Brielle. The Department is proposing to construct a noise wall along Route 70 Eastbound to mitigate the impacts to the properties in Brielle. The wall would be approximately 1,800 feet long and vary in height from approximately 10 to 16 feet above the roadway profile. The meeting attendees then asked the following questions related to the noise wall.

- *Why can't the noise wall be a constant height of 16 feet?*

Mr. Tomaszewski answered that the additional height of the wall was not warranted and that at the beginning of the wall it was mounted on top of a substantial retaining wall.

- *How high is the retaining wall?*

Mr. Yermack answered that the retaining wall was a maximum height of approximately 20 feet, and there would be a 17 foot high noise wall on top of that.

- *What is being done for noise mitigation in Brick Township?*

Mr. Tomaszewski answered that the impacts to the Herbertsville Road properties were existing and would not be affected by the proposed project. It would not be feasible to construct noise walls to mitigate the impacts to the River Road and Main Avenue properties.

- *Have there been any studies about noise impacts from sound reflecting off Jersey Barrier? Are there any sound-absorbing materials that can be used?*

Mr. Tomaszewski answered that he did not know of any studies. There have been some uses of sound-absorbing materials. However, they have not performed as well as expected and in some cases they have become a maintenance problem.

- *Will the noise wall in Brielle cause noise to be reflected to the properties in Wall Township and create impacts that would not otherwise exist?*

Mr. Tomaszewski answered that the residences in Wall Township are a good distance away from the Route 70 corridor, and they benefit from having a row of commercial establishments between them and Route 70. The Department does not anticipate a negative noise impact to Wall Township properties.

- *Have the residences, which are impacted by noise, been notified by the Department?*

Mr. Yermack answered that they had all been notified. Approximately 110 mailers were sent out to the property owners closest to the Route 70 corridor. It will be verified that all impacted property owners were notified.

Mrs. Cindy Bloom-Cronin was then introduced and she presented the proposed aesthetic treatment of the noise walls and the Reforestation Plan utilizing display boards with before and after pictures with renderings and a plan showing areas of deforestation and proposed areas of planting. She explained that reforestation is required when there is over ½ acre of tree removal and a public forum is required when there is over 1 acre of tree removal. Since there will be more than 1 acre of tree removal on this project, reforestation will be required. The policy is to replant trees on the project site or on other projects within the affected municipalities but not further than 5 miles from the project. If this is not feasible, then funds would be provided to the local municipalities so they could address their

reforestation needs. No questions were asked about the proposed aesthetic treatment of the noise wall. However, the following questions were asked about the Reforestation Plan.

- *What is the total area of trees being cleared?*

Mrs. Bloom-Cronin answered that approximately 2 acres will be cleared. However, because the drainage design was still being worked on and sight distance concerns had not yet been reflected on the plan, the exact area was still being determined.

- *What kind and size of plantings would be proposed in the Reforestation Plan?*

Mrs. Bloom-Cronin answered that the Department would try to replace trees with the same species that would be cleared. For example, since evergreens are growing along Route 70 Eastbound, evergreens would be considered for replanting along the rear face (Cedar Lane side) of the noise wall. The Reforestation Plan will also specify younger, smaller trees, because replanting older, larger trees is more difficult and has a lesser rate of success. However, the proposed trees would not be insubstantial in size.

- *Could noise impacts be mitigated through reforestation?*

Mrs. Bloom-Cronin answered that the Department would try to do this as much as possible.

There were no other technical questions related to the noise wall and reforestation presentations. The meeting attendees were then given the opportunity to ask general questions about the project.

- *The Mayor of Brielle asked if the noise wall could be constructed first to mitigate the noise from the construction of the project?*

Mr. Yermack answered that this might be possible. The request would be considered during the preparation of the construction staging and the construction schedule. Mr. Yermack noted that the Department was trying to minimize the overall duration of the construction project.

- *How long will the construction of the project take?*

Mr. Yermack answered that the estimated construction duration was 2 ½ years.

- *Will the contractor abide by the local noise ordinance, which is 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM on weekdays and 9:30 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturdays?*

Mr. Yermack answered that the Department planned to make the noise ordinance and the restriction from parking on Cedar Lane contract requirements. These issues were raised at previous public meetings. Mr. Yermack was then provided with a copy of the Brielle noise ordinance. (See Attachment.)

- *When will the construction of the project start?*

Mr. Yermack answered that the Department was currently pushing for an award of the construction contract before June 30, 2005 if it is feasible.

- *Are there Right of Way takings proposed for this project?*

Mr. Yermack answered that there were proposed Right of Way takings in Brielle. The impacted properties are along Cedar Lane. The proposed takings are a maximum for the properties closest to the bridge and taper off as we tie back into the existing Route 70 alignment.

No additional questions or issues were raised and the meeting was adjourned.

Attachments (2)

C: K. Patel – NJDOT
T. Marsella – NJDOT
E. Tomaszewski - NJDOT
C. Bloom-Cronin - NJDOT
D. Yacovino - Arora