



## MEETING NOTES

**Project:** East Side Highway Environmental Assessment  
**Subject:** Focused Working Group – Land Use and Access Management #4  
**Date:** February 7, 2013, 5:30 – 7:00 PM  
**Location:** McLean County Government Building, Bloomington, IL

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Minutes of this meeting were prepared by Jamie Bents of Huff & Huff, Inc. Please inform her of corrections or modifications.

**Project Team Attendees:** Jerry Payonk (CDI), Antonio Acevedo (CDI), John Lazzara (HDR), Janice Reid (HDR), Jamie Bents (Huff & Huff), Eric Schmitt (McLean County) and Gene Brown (Normal)

### 1. Introduction and Review (Jerry Payonk)

- A public information meeting is tentatively planned for Summer 2013.
- The team anticipates presenting the preferred alignment for the ESH to FHWA in September 2013.

### 2. Review of Changes to ESH Alignments

Jerry Payonk stated that at the last FWG meeting, the group reviewed the remaining alignments and existing agricultural field access locations. Since that meeting, several alignment refinements have been made, including:

- A change to the systems interchange at I-74
  - The previously proposed cloverleaf interchange that would provide access to the ESH from south of I-74 was revised to a trumpet interchange, which would terminate the ESH at I-74.
- Changes in the alignment at Ireland Grove Road and Fort Jesse Road.
- Consideration of Cheney's Grove Road interchange concept to replace the proposed Towanda-Barnes Road and US 150 split diamond interchange based on PSG comments.
  - The split diamond interchange was proposed due to spacing restrictions; however, an interchange at Cheney's Grove Road instead of Towanda-Barnes Road would meet spacing requirements between Cheney's Grove Road and US 150.
  - Additionally, Bloomington's planned extension of Hamilton Road to the Cheney's Grove Road/Towanda Barnes Road intersection will allow direct access to Bloomington from the ESH.

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- A Cheneys Grove Road interchange will not provide direct access to Towanda-Barnes Road from the ESH.
- Minor changes have occurred in the north end of the project area. At the last FWG meeting, the FWG stated that the Ziebarth Road alternative made more sense than the Northtown Road alternative.
- In previous meetings, the FWG stated that access to the ESH from Towanda-Barnes Road was important in order to reduce cut-through traffic in Downs. At this meeting, the FWG's comments regarding ESH access to Towanda-Barnes Road included:
  - Are the interchanges at the Cheneys Grove or Towanda-Barnes needed? John Lazzara said State Farm traffic would likely use either of these interchanges. A split diamond interchange would access both Towanda-Barnes and US 150 but drivers would need to exit on one to access the other.
  - Should local or through traffic be considered? Jerry Payonk stated that the purpose and need of the ESH states that the project is to support local development and is not a bypass; therefore local traffic should be considered.
  - What is Cheneys Grove Road planned to be in the future? Eric Schmitt said that Bloomington will build Cheneys Grove Road as a two-lane arterial extension to Hamilton Road.
  - One FWG member stated that State Farm currently has 13,500 employees in Bloomington, but he isn't sure how many of those employees would use that route or travel in this direction currently.
  - Janice Reid presented the area's 2035 future land use plan, which shows planned growth near Cheneys Grove Road.
  - Another FWG member said that emergency service response would benefit from the Cheneys Grove interchange with the ESH.
  - Janice Reid said that US 150 is projected to be over capacity in the future, and needs improvement regardless of the ESH project. The projected traffic could be in part due to State Farm traffic, and the extension of Hamilton Road could relieve congestion on US 150.
  - An FWG member commented that the collector-distributor lane on I-55 in Bloomington is confusing, so perhaps a c-d road should be avoided with the ESH.
- One FWG member said that the D4 alignment (from Ireland Grove to I-74) should be studied in comparison to the preferred alternative in this area. He believed that D4 would have fewer agricultural impacts, does not extend diagonally through farmland, and would not result in landlocked parcels. The D4 alignment would use several agricultural parcel remnants from the I-74 project as well.

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- Antonio Acevedo said that a previous concern with the D4 route was that the alignment would result in a skewed interchange at Towanda-Barnes Road, and would include a reverse curve. Also, D4 included an interchange at US 150 that could impact residential areas.
- Jerry Payonk asked the FWG if D4 should be revisited.
- The FWG responded that D4 should be revisited if possible. The alignment could reduce Downs cut-through traffic.
- One FWG member asked if the ESH must be constructed over the exempt railroad near US 150. Jerry Payonk said the railroad could come back into operation, and the ESH must protect the railroad's operating area as if it were currently in operation. This means the ESH needs to be on structure over the railroad and provide room under the ESH bridge for railroad operations.
- Other FWG comments regarding ESH alignments:
  - Will a widened US 150 be accommodated by the ESH. Jerry Payonk said yes.
  - Would the ESH be elevated from US 150 to I-74? John Lazzara said yes.
  - Is the ESH being designed as a freeway due to the use of Federal funds for the project? Jerry Payonk said that the team studied arterial, expressway, and freeway options for the ESH. The freeway option was selected because it is safer than an expressway, has more capacity than an expressway, and projected traffic volumes for the ESH would require the extra capacity.
  - Did the team receive information from the McLean County Farm Bureau regarding farm equipment width? Jamie Bents said that the Farm Bureau did not respond to that inquiry, but the project team contacted John Deere and obtained projected maximum equipment widths.
  - Farm vehicles are slow moving, and will not mix with freeway traffic. The Ziebarth Road alternative makes more sense than the Northtown Road alternative.

### 3. Review of Proposed ESH Bicycle Facilities Plan

Janice Reid reviewed the proposed ESH bicycle facilities plan. Bicycle facilities that are part of the ESH will be adjacent to the ESH but separated from the roadway area by an access control fence.

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- One FWG member asked what the width of the trails would be. Janice responded the trail would be 10' wide with a 2' shoulder on each side.
- Another FWG member asked if the trails would be built at the same time as the ESH roadway or will it require additional government funding. Janice Reid responded that the trails will be planned and environmentally cleared along with the roadway, and construction phasing will be determined at a later date. Some items, such as tunnels, will need to be constructed at the same time as the ESH.
- One FWG member stated that tunnels would create an atmosphere for muggers. He supports trail bridges over the ESH as opposed to tunnels.
- One FWG member said the ESH trails will have no connection to the highway, and asked how emergency responders would respond to incidents between roadways on the trail with no vehicle access. Jerry Payonk said that FHWA does not want to provide ESH access from the trails. Another FWG member asked if the smallest response vehicle could drive on a 10' wide trail. Gene Brown said that emergency response currently accesses trails at the nearest side street.
- One FWG member said that although the project focuses on “green and sustainable” elements, there is no consideration for farmland that can never be replaced.

### **4. Review of Agricultural Accesses with FWG**

The team reviewed existing and proposed agricultural access points with the FWG.

### **5. Closing Remarks**

- A Community Working Group meeting is proposed for July or August; the team will notify the FWG members of the CWG meeting so FWG members can join the CWG if desired.



**East Side Highway Environmental Assessment  
Focus Working Group (FWG) – Land Use and Access Management  
Meeting No. 4 Attendance Roster**

**February 7, 2013 - 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM at the Government Building Basement**

FWG Member	Affiliation	Email	Present (Please initial)
Bill Brummel		blbrummel@hotmail.com	WBF
Guy DiCiaula	Bloomington Normal Area Home Builders	Guy@kaiserhomes.com	GD
Terry Giannoni	Money Creek township	Terry1deb@aol.com	TG
Curtis Hawk	McLean County EMA	Curtis.hawk@mcleancountyil.gov	
Mick Humer	Normal Fire Department	mhumer@normal.org	MH
John Kennedy			
Charlie Moore	McLean County Chamber of Commerce	Charlie@mcleancochamber.org	
Jeanette Otis		obstimatesnooper@gmail.com	JO
James Pearson	Pearson Design Group Bloomington	Jpear764@aol.com	JP
Dave Rasmussen	State Farm	David.rasmussen.ASAN@statefarm.com	DR
Larry Reeser		reeserfarms@gmail.com	LR
Randy Shaalb		Rschaab886@gmail.com	



**Environmental Assessment**

**Focus Working Group (FWG) – Land Use and Access Management**

**Meeting No. 3 Attendance Roster**

2.7.13

~~May 2, 2012~~ - 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Government Building Basement

FWG Member	Affiliation	Email	Present (Please initial)
Mike Swartz	McLean County Farm Bureau	Swartz@mcfb.org	
Rusty Thomas	Sherriff Dept.	rusty.thomas@mcleancountyil.gov	RT
Jeff Trimble		Jtrim817@yahoo.com	
Robert Wall	Bloomington Police Dept.	rwall@cityblm.org	
Frank Weiting		Weiting-08181961@peoplepc.com	FW
ERIC SCHMITT	MCLEAN COUNTY	eric.schmitt@mcleancountyil.gov	ES
GENE BROWN	Normal		GB