



Meeting Purpose:

PA Turnpike/I-95 Interchange Project
Design Advisory Committee (DAC)/Public Officials Meeting #9

Date and Time:

May 22, 2013 at 11:00 a.m.

Location:

Project Office, 900 Northbrook Drive, Suite 300, Trevose, PA

Attendance:

See Attached List

Handouts:

Agenda, DAC #8 Meeting Summary (available to attendees)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Jay Roth (Jacobs) introduced himself, thanked all the attendees for coming to the meeting, and led a round of self introductions. Jacobs is the lead consultant on the design management team, and the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) is the lead agency for the project. This is the ninth meeting of the Design Advisory Committee for the PA Turnpike/I-95 Interchange Project. The purpose of the meeting is to share information on where the project staging and schedule stands, as well as to provide updates on environmental mitigation commitments and public involvement initiatives.

2. Project Update – Staging and Schedule

Jay Roth gave a detailed update on the project status. He presented the information in conjunction with a map showing the Anticipated Construction Schedule, which depicted the project limits and staging of the project. The project scope includes three stages. For the last few years, we have been focused on Stage 1. The project, including all three stages, received environmental clearance (FEIS and Record of Decision) in 2003. Preliminary design has been completed for all work proposed in Pennsylvania, but did not include work on the Delaware River Bridge. The project plans have been shared with the public, and Stage 1 is in final design. Stage 1 is fully funded and is on the DVRPC TIP for PA, which is the regional transportation funding program. To date, two bridge replacements have been completed: Galloway Road and Bristol-Oxford Valley Road. Stage 1 includes the construction of four mainline overhead bridges (three over the Turnpike and one over I-95), new toll plaza facilities (mainline toll plaza in Bensalem and a new Delaware River Bridge plaza westbound), and flyover ramps from I-95 North to the eastbound Turnpike and westbound turnpike to I-95 South, with associated highway widening (I-95 mainline movements). The westbound Delaware River Bridge toll plaza will be converted to an all electronic tolling facility. The existing plaza at US 13 will be removed, and a new mainline toll plaza will be constructed between the Richlieu Road and Galloway Road bridges and will have Express E-ZPass lanes through the center and conventional cash lanes on the outsides. The flyover ramps will be two lanes in each direction, designed to allow travel at highway speeds. The completed ramps will allow continuous travel from I-95 onto the New Jersey and Pennsylvania turnpikes. By about 2018, construction of Stage 1 should be completed, with the final step being the signage changes associated with the re-designation of I-95 and I-195 sections in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.



3. Ford Road Bridge Replacement (ongoing)

Ford Road Bridge is a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) bridge on a township road that crosses over I-95. The new bridge is being constructed on the same alignment, and traffic has been detoured since last year. The new beams for the bridge were placed in late April, and they are currently working on the bridge decking. Construction is anticipated to be completed by the fall of 2013. Traffic signal timings have been adjusted along the detour route periodically to address shifting traffic patterns and access to local properties along Ford Road has been maintained up to the bridge on both sides of I-95.

4. Richlieu Road Bridge Replacement (ongoing)

Work on the Richlieu Road Bridge replacement has been proceeding as planned. The bridge is being replaced on a different alignment, immediately east of the existing bridge, to maintain traffic during much of the construction. The new bridge will be wider than the existing bridge and will have one lane in each direction, as well as 8-foot shoulders. Detours are planned only for the period when the approaches are tied in to the new bridge and to allow utility work on the bridge. The detour is anticipated to start mid-June and run till the end of August 2013. The plan is to try to have the bridge open before the new school year begins. Jay Roth pointed out the designated detour that will utilize Galloway, Mechanicsville and Street Roads on a map. He also noted that signals will be looked at and timing adjustments may be made as needed to account for the shift in traffic. The overall project should be completed by the fall of 2013. Information regarding the detour will be posted in advance at the bridge approaches, the PTC will send out appropriate press releases, and the information will be posted to the project website. Additionally, the TMA Bucks has been very helpful in distributing releases and posting information to their website.

A question was asked whether the project team had been notified by PECO of work that they have planned that would involve closing some nearby Township state routes, including Mechanicsville Road. Mechanicsville Road is part of the PennDOT approved Detour Route for Richlieu Road Bridge. The project team has not been informed of this work. The Township will provide a copy of the letter to Jay Roth and appropriate follow-up conversations and coordination will be initiated [this occurred by the end of the following week, resulting in a mutually acceptable, coordinated summer work schedule for these activities].

5. Advance ITS Construction (ongoing)

The Advance Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) contract is also substantially completed. The ITS will include a camera and dynamic message signs to supplement the existing system and inform motorists of traffic conditions along the highways in the overall project area. Eight sites are proposed for signage, including two signs on the Turnpike and six signs on state routes near the Bensalem and Delaware Valley Interchanges on the Turnpike: northbound US 13, southbound US 13, northbound US 1, southbound US 1, northbound Street Road, and southbound Street Road. Those signs on state roads and I-95 will be managed by the PennDOT District 6-0 Traffic Management Center (TMC), while the Turnpike will be responsible for signs on the eastbound Turnpike at the approach of US 1 and the westbound New Jersey



Turnpike extension before the Delaware River Bridge. A camera will be installed near the US 13 interchange area on the Turnpike. The Advance ITS contract is in advance of the mainline construction and will later be supplemented by the similar highway devices to be built. PennDOT and PTC are working together to see that the system works effectively and seamlessly. The testing period for the ITS system will begin this summer.

6. Wetland Mitigation Site Construction (completed)

The creation of a wetland mitigation site on existing PTC property off Zimmerman Lane in Middletown Township has been completed. The PTC acquired the property some time ago, in anticipation of an interchange. The 40-acre site provides most of the wetland mitigation for the project. The agencies are happy with the results of the work. Some additional replanting and regrading are currently occurring and should be finished by the next month. There have been some issues with illegal ATV entry and use on the site. The site has been posted as private and the Turnpike is working with local and state police to avoid damage to the newly established wetlands.

A question was asked if the public would be able to access the property for recreational purposes. The site is private property, owned by the Turnpike. While the Turnpike is not encouraging active public use, passive use is not anticipated to be an issue. Destructive use will be monitored and not tolerated as the environmental agencies expect the site and its mitigation characteristics to be maintained as a condition of our project-wide permits.

7. Upcoming Construction

A. Stream Mitigation (starts 2013)

There are other mitigation commitments that arose out of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and corresponding Mitigation Report, such as stream impacts that will require either stream enhancement or creation. Jay Roth pointed out a stream on the aerial map that flanks the Turnpike near the Richlieu and Galloway road crossings. Culverts are being extended during the widening. There will also be a new culvert to bring the stream under the highway. The stream will be recreated to the north before crossing the Turnpike to the south. This mitigation work will be done as part of the Toll Plaza contract. There is also a creek that will be impacted during the construction of the flyover ramps and Section D10. Coordination between the Turnpike, the township, and environmental agencies has been undertaken to minimize and mitigate stream impacts.

A stand-alone Stream Mitigation site project will begin soon on an approximately 2000 foot stretch of Mill Creek immediately downstream of the footbridge between the Plumbridge and Mill Creek Falls developments in Bristol Township. Stream degradation has been noted on the creek, and as mitigation, the project will include stream enhancement and reinforcement of the stream banks to reduce this degradation. Notice to proceed has been given to the contractor and work is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year.

A question was asked whether the stream mitigation contract had been let. The stream mitigation contract was indeed awarded and the same contractor who did the wetland mitigation work happened to be the awarded bidder.



B. Toll Plaza Construction (starts 2013)

Jay Roth pointed out the construction boundaries on the project staging map. The project has been bid and awarded. It will take about 4-6 weeks for the contractor to mobilize until activity is started. The first step will be to reinforce the median drainage and shoulders to allow them to carry traffic. Two inside lanes will carry traffic in each direction while work on the new outside lanes of the toll plaza is completed. Once those lanes are completed, traffic will be moved to the outside and work on the inside will be completed. A new mainline toll plaza facility will be built between Richlieu and Galloway Roads in Bensalem Township. EZ pass will be accepted in all lanes, and highway-speed EZ pass-only lanes will be located in the center of the toll plaza. Construction is anticipated to begin this summer and last for 2½-3 years.

As part of the toll plaza contract, the Delaware River Bridge All Electronic Toll Facility will be constructed to ultimately collect one-way tolls for traffic entering PA. This toll plaza will use EZ pass or license plate recognition with mailed invoices. After both toll facilities have been built and are operational, the US 13 (Interchange 358-Delaware Valley) and existing Delaware River toll plazas will be removed.

C. Interchange Sections D10 (2014 start) and D20 (2015 start)

The last part of Stage 1 will be the D10 and D20 contracts. D10 involves mainline Turnpike widening and reconstruction between I-95 and US 13, partial construction on the flyover ramps to connect I-95 and the Turnpike, and the realignment of some ramps to US 13. This work is anticipated to start in 2014 and will also take about 2½-3 years to complete.

PennDOT has a US 13 project currently underway in construction; therefore, the Turnpike is waiting to commence work associated with the PA Turnpike ramps to US 13. Jay Roth described the planned work and how PennDOT improvements are accommodating the work proposed by the Turnpike. After PennDOT completes their work on US 13, a subsequent stage 1 contract will realign the ramps from the Turnpike to US 13, creating a signalized, at-grade intersection to replace the current limited access ramp interchange configuration, further improving safety and easing vehicular movements through this area.

In 2015, Stage 1 Interchange Section D20 is anticipated to begin construction. D20 includes the widening and reconstruction of I-95 from Neshaminy Creek to the Turnpike and completion of the future I-95 mainline flyover ramps. This D20 work is anticipated to start in 2015 and will also take about 2½-3 years to complete.

Mainline ITS cameras and dynamic message signs will be constructed within the Toll Plaza, D10 and D20 limits and will complement the deployment of such devices previously by PennDOT along I-95 and Us 1 in the project area. This complete network of highway monitoring and traffic maintenance devices will permit the PA Turnpike and PennDOT to manage these facilities as one seamless network in the future upon completion.



When Stage 1 is completed around 2018, the tolling will have been switched to the new plaza and the interstates will be redesignated as I-95 and I-195 in PA and NJ. The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the NJ Turnpike will be responsible for New Jersey signage, while PennDOT and the PTC will undertake signage in Pennsylvania. A public outreach campaign will be utilized to help communicate the changes to the public, including business owners.

8. Remaining Project Stages, Design and Construction

Portions of Stage 2 have recently been advanced into the final design and permitting phase. Funding for construction has not been identified and therefore construction timeframes are approximate, however, the Turnpike is hopeful that funding will continue to be programmed. Some advanced bridge work is being planned to allow for Stage 2 to be completed. This involves the replacement of the Hulmeville Road, Bensalem Boulevard, and New Falls Road bridges, all over the Turnpike. Hulmeville Road cannot proceed until the toll plaza section has been almost entirely constructed due to the shifting traffic patterns on the highway. Bensalem Boulevard Bridge is anticipated to be closed and detoured, with construction starting no earlier than 2015.

A question was asked regarding when the noise walls adjacent to Stage 2 highways sections (such as those for the Villas of Chancellor's Glen) would be constructed. This community and a number of others on both sides of the Turnpike east of there are included within the limits of Section C of Stage 2, which is currently in final design. Noise impacts and barriers (walls) need to be analyzed and designed, respectively, as part of the final design phase. And construction does not occur until the associated/adjacent highway widening (additional lanes) receives final approvals and permits and advances as a package to the construction phase. There is currently no funding for Stage 2 mainline highway sections, nor is there a timeline for construction of Section C or Section A (also active in design and located west of the toll plaza through the Turnpike Bensalem Interchange).

Also during Stage 2, an extension of the current ITS network will be completed along the Turnpike within the project limits.

9. Right-of-Way Acquisition Status and Outlook

Acquisition of entire properties (with related relocations) containing residences or businesses for right-of-way (ROW) is completed. Demolition of structures and grading is complete, and PTC is maintaining the properties. Further relocations and total acquisitions for Stage 1 are not anticipated, although partial property acquisitions will continue through the design process as needed and final design is advanced. ROW acquisition usually precedes construction by 1-2 years, so the Turnpike expects more partial acquisitions as the design proceeds. Those for the Toll Plaza section are completed and the approximately 20 partial acquisitions for the D10 and D20 sections are currently underway.

10. FEIS Environmental Mitigation Commitments Update



The project team is constantly confirming the findings mitigation commitments of the EIS through the final design process.

A question was asked whether the stream mitigation contract had been let. The stream mitigation contract was indeed awarded and the same contractor who did the wetland mitigation work happened to be the low bidder.

Threatened and endangered species mitigation in association with the red belly turtle will be undertaken in the Silver Lake Park area. The project team is working with environmental agencies and the nature center to identify areas to enhance turtle nesting and basking areas and related details and construction timing.

11. Public Involvement

This morning the Incident Management Committee (IMC) meeting was held, which includes emergency management and emergency responders, among others. Jay Roth provided a summary of the discussion held at the morning IMC meeting. Pre-construction meetings are also held with the IMC for each section of the project. As the designs are finalized, additional IMC meetings will be held to be sure the project adequately accommodates emergency response access during and post construction. This may include features such as access points/doors in the noise walls and dry standpipes for fire response on the highways.

All analysis has been completed for the erection of noise walls along the D10 Section project corridor. The project team has met with Bristol Township and Bucks County Parks and Recreation, and community meetings with those potentially impacted by the noise walls were held. Those impacted by the approved noise walls have input on whether the walls are constructed and what they look like, and they were provided the opportunity to vote on the finish of the walls that face their properties.

The noise walls will have a consistent look on the roadway side, and the majority of the residents in each section will determine the finish on the residential side of the wall. There are four textures available in a variety of colors as well as a red brick finish. Jay Roth displayed the different finishes that will be available. We are currently waiting for ballots to be returned for the NSA 9, 19, and 20 noise walls in Section D10. Once the results are known, a letter with the results will be mailed to those invited to the meetings.

Mimi Doyle, PTC, noted that she has been sending out press releases regarding construction and will continue to do so. The project website is continually updated with design and construction related information and is a resource available 24/7 to the public, and the Project Office is available to answer questions by phone or in person (by appointment).

A question was asked whether a recent letter regarding flooding near Fleetwood Drive was sent by the Turnpike to some homeowners. The project team is not aware of any letter sent out to residents near Fleetwood Drive.



12. Status of Other Projects in the Area

The project team is aware of other projects in the area and is coordinating with these projects. PennDOT's US 1 project at the Maple Avenue (PA 213) bridge and interchange will be completed by early 2014 and the next section south (frontage road area) is awaiting construction funding. PennDOT's US 13 work between PA 413 and Tullytown has started and will occur through 2014.

A question was asked about the status of the Scudders Falls bridge project. It is believed that the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) is waiting to move forward on the project while procurement decisions and related studies are being completed.

Jay Roth thanked everyone again for their cooperation and attendance and reminded them to contact the project office if they or their constituents have questions or concerns. The meeting then concluded.