



MEETING SUMMARY

Date: October 17, 2018
Time: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Meeting: Consulting Parties Meeting #4
Location: Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, IN

**Complete attendee list begins on page 8.*

Meeting officially began at 5:35 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kia Gillette from HNTB started off the meeting with introductions. Consulting Parties and members of the Project Team introduced themselves by name and organization.

2. Purpose of Meeting

This meeting was focused on the problems and needs for the North Split interchange, as well as solutions and the preliminary preferred alternative. It also reviewed the Historic Property Report Addendum for temporary truck traffic diversion.

3. Section 106 Consultation Process

Kia Gillette from HNTB gave an overview of the following topics:

- National Historic Preservation Act
- Historic properties – those listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places
- Consulting Party roles and responsibilities
- Section 106 steps for the North Split project

4. Historic Property Report Addendum

Leah Konicki from ASC Group discussed the following:

- Temporary truck traffic diversion and the expanded Area of Potential Effects (APE)
- Two-step approach:
 - Step 1 - Survey the existing right-of-way for unique features (brick or stone streets, limestone curbs, stone walls, or historic bridges)
 - Step 2 – If historic or unique features are identified, evaluate surrounding area for resources that could be eligible for the National Register
- Three segments of the expanded APE elevated to Step 2
 - College Avenue

- Limestone arch bridge over Fall Creek (Marion Co. Bridge No. 1803F)
- Contributing element to the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System Historic District
- Rural Street
 - Bridge over Pogue’s Run (Marion Co. Bridge No. 2514F)
 - Contributing element to the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System Historic District
- Massachusetts Avenue
 - Exposed brick pavement at Massachusetts Avenue and Valley Avenue
 - No properties in the area of the brick pavement were determined eligible for the National Register.

Questions (Q) & Answers (A) related to the Historic Property Report Addendum:

- Q: I thought there were sections where we still have limestone curbs in Lockerbie on College?**
A: Those would have already been identified during the investigation of the original APE.
- Q: I’m wondering if you looked at whether heavy truck traffic on side streets could cause damage to historic buildings that are along the street. Did you look at vibration?**
A: We did not look at vibration for temporary truck traffic. These streets already carry traffic. It was a two-step methodology. If we found something in step one, step two took it further to determine if it contributed to a National Register eligible property.
- Q: In the case of the section of brick on the street, it seems like the bricks would be vulnerable to damage.**
A: We felt that the bricks themselves – if they were not part of a larger resource – wouldn’t be eligible for the National Register by themselves. They could contribute to the eligibility of a historic district.
- Q: It would be interesting to get feedback from other parties.**
A: We brought fourth this methodology back in January and sent it out for Consulting Party comment. We did not receive any comments on the methodology.
- Q: Is the bridge on College you referred to the one that is being rebuilt right now?**
A: Yes, it is currently being rehabilitated. [Note, the Central Avenue bridge superstructure is currently being rebuilt. The College Avenue bridge is undergoing some minor rehabilitation work.]
- Q: Which National Register district is that bridge identified with?**
A: Indianapolis Park and Boulevard System Historic District.

5. Alternatives Screening Report

Kia Gillette from HTNB discussed the problems with the North Split interchange, surrounding resources, and public input. High-level points included:

Problems

- The North Split interchange was constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, the pavement is past its life expectancy.
- The interchange is constantly in need of maintenance and repairs due to its condition.
- Bridge conditions are getting worse and there are 11 bridges with a service life of less than 5 years and 16 bridges with a service life of 5-10 years.
- The North Split interchange has crash rates higher than other Indiana urban interstates.
- Fatalities are almost two times higher, injuries are almost three times higher, and property damage crashes are more than two times higher in the North Split interchange.
- There are four top crash locations within the North Split interchange:
 - #1 Pennsylvania Ramp Weave Section
 - #2 Delaware Ramp Weave Section
 - #3 I-65/I-70 Merge/Lane Drop
 - #4 I-70 Curve/Merge
- The highest number of crashes occur on the west leg of the interchange in weaving areas at the Pennsylvania Street exit and Delaware Street entrance.

Purpose and Need/Context

- The purpose and need of the North Split project is to correct deteriorated bridge and pavement conditions, improve safety, and improve interchange operations as well as reduce congestion.
- The North Split project area is surrounded by environmental resources such as historic districts, a park, the Monon Greenway, the Cultural Trail, and the CSX Railroad.
- INDOT and the project team have spent numerous hours meeting and talking with the public at public meetings, community and neighborhood group meetings, advisory committees, and through social media, email and phone calls.
- INDOT has listened to public input and significantly changed the scope of the North Split project – the preliminary preferred alternative does not include added through lanes or large retaining walls.

Alternatives

Seth Schickel with HNTB walked through the alternatives from the Alternative Screening Report. High level points included:

- Three alternatives considered are low/cost or minimal and have been eliminated because they did not meet the purpose and need:
 - #1 No-build
 - #2 Transportation System Management
 - #3 Bridge and Pavement Replacement in Kind
- One alternative was eliminated due to impacts:
 - #5 Full Interchange Reconstruction
- Alternative 4 includes three options that address the purpose and need with trade-offs between access and level of impacts.

- 4a - Pennsylvania and Delaware ramps closed
- 4b - Pennsylvania and Delaware ramps open with all current access
- 4c - Selected ramp access restrictions

Alternative 4c improves safety, removes the worst bottlenecks, does not add through lanes, is more compact, is within the existing right-of-way, has minimal walls, and meets the project purpose and need. INDOT identified it as the preliminary preferred alternative, subject to public and agency feedback.

6. Next Steps

Next steps will be to gather feedback on the preliminary preferred alternative and the Alternative Screening Report through October 29. The project team will then refine the preliminary preferred alternative, as well as analyze effects to historic properties and determine mitigation measures for adverse effects to them. The project team anticipates publishing the Environmental Assessment in early 2020.

7. Discussion and Questions

Questions (Q) & Answers (A):

Q: Is it 69 feet on the north side? Is that what it is today? What is the preliminary preferred alternative?

A: For Alternative 4c, the distance from the edge of pavement to the existing right-of-way would go from 90 feet to 75 feet on the south side, it will be about a 15 to 20-foot difference. There is a drawing and a poster board that has all cross sections together.

Q: Do folks traveling down I-65 to downtown have an entrance from the east leg?

A: They still have access at 21st Street, West Street, East Street, or Meridian Street. Access to Michigan, New York and Ohio would be removed.

Q: Today, you can come around and get off on Michigan and New York, get off on Ohio, stay longer and get off on Fletcher. I-65 coming in blends in and goes over to Fletcher. At the far end, would people still be able to get off at Fletcher? If we're going south, all the people going to Lilly are getting off there. This is important for Lilly people to know.

A: Currently, you can only exit to Fletcher from the collector-distributor system. For Alternative 4c, people would be able to exit at East Street, but not Fletcher.

Q: West Street will likely have increased traffic. Have you done studies about this?

A: Yes. We are continuing to model how it would impact traffic patterns. All entrances are still available. You can still get on at Delaware. Entering traffic would not change. On Alternative 4c, we found that I-70 traffic currently using the Pennsylvania Street exit will likely use the collector-distributor system to Michigan, New York and Ohio, West Street, or 21st Street.

Q: Could we reduce the length of the project on I-70 east of the North Split and use the overall budget to address the area from the North Split interchange west to the West Street interchange?

A: We may not need to do as much along the east leg of the interchange along I-70. The bridges over Valley and Commerce are not in bad condition. They may require some work because of

where the project ties back into the existing interstate. The amount of cost savings is not significant enough to extend the project limits. To extend over to West Street would be significantly more cost because of the large bridge. INDOT will continue to study and refine the preliminary preferred alternative.

Q: Would you ever consider other system-level options like the ones you explored this summer? There would be less impacts on historic districts.

A: Future plans for a project like that is something I think INDOT is willing to talk about, but it is beyond the limits of the of the North Split project.

Q: Does INDOT still have their policy to develop Context Sensitive Design Solutions?

A: Yes. That policy is still in place.

Q: In the presentation you mentioned the four principles from the Indy Chamber, the Rethink Coalition and the City. It is clear you are addressing principles one and two, but I didn't see a lot of attention paid to three and four. Going forward it would be nice to see these two principles addressed in more detail.

A: In general, the two we mentioned have more of an impact on geometry. Those are the two principles that have more of an impact on the phase of the project we're working on right now. Connectivity and economic development will be addressed as we move forward, and we need your input to address these things.

Q: Bring connectivity back. Reconnect those neighborhoods.

A: We know the business owners and the Rethink Coalition will have a big part in this. We're interested to hear what ideas you have.

Q: We're hoping the study we've hired a third party to conduct can be included. It has been a collaboration and we're hoping it can be included as best as possible.

Q: I am very interested in knowing more about some of the meetings you will have. Quite a few neighborhoods still need to be met with including Old Northside, St. Joseph, Cottage Home, Holy Cross and more. They need to be brought in sooner.

Could you elaborate more on the engineering of the streets themselves? Is there a standard? What happens when you widen the road? Does traffic speed up or slow down? What is the minimum lane width for a freeway? What statistically happens when you widen? I know on local streets I'm consistently told that narrowing the right-of-way slows traffic down.

A: The answer becomes complex. The standard lane width is 12 feet, but FHWA is conducting studies about reductions on that standard lane width.

As you widen things, speeds increase. We're trying to move large volumes of traffic as quickly as we can. The problem is when speeds drop drastically. That's where we see the accidents. By providing wider lanes, we're trying to get the curve at a higher speed, so people aren't slowing down as much. As lanes are reduced people become more cautious. You feel kind of cramped in. You want to shy away from that on a high-speed road.

The lane widths are projected to stay the same for this project. We're making improvements and changes to the width of the shoulder because the more lanes added, you need more pull-off space.

Typically, when we go from interstate to interstate, we want to keep the speeds as close as the mainline as possible. For the ramps you want to keep the speed closer to 55. When we start to drop off onto ramps to connecting ramps, we lower the speed accordingly.

There is a difference between design speeds and speed limits. We tend to design so they are safer at a higher speed. You can't design everything at 100 miles per hour, but you design it at 85 percent.

Keep in mind, if INDOT were to pursue options to reduce design speeds those lanes would likely carry less traffic. There would be a lot of pressure to add through lanes. If you reduce the speed they would need to widen the interstate.

Q: Looking at the preliminary preferred alternative, there is a loss of some local connectivity (local access). Is there any consideration to additional access points to make up for this loss?

A: Yes, there was some consideration. We have to think about how we can remove the weaves and other safety issues. What we have come up with is this solution. In almost all the design exercises addition in width of the interstate was required.

There may be room to do this at College, but then there are more effects from traffic to this area. We think we could meet our purpose and need without new access points.

Q: My concern is predicated on losing some local access. You're losing the ability for commuters to exit. If there is an accident and the interchange is closed, there are less places for people to divert. We're losing connectivity and economic development opportunities. Some things become a pass through because people are having to go further and further out.

A: There are only restrictions on two ramps. If this is something that is important to the public, Alternative 4b allows all access. We eliminated it because it was wider, we were looking for a compromise.

Q: There is a large development starting (Hendricks Commercial Properties/Bottleworks). There will be large office buildings and residential buildings. There will be a lot of activity happening in that corner.

A: You can still get to that area by getting off I-65 at Pennsylvania/Meridian and you can still enter the interstate from Delaware.

Q: It seems like it's going to put a lot more traffic on those streets.

A: We have to address the safety issues and eliminate the weaves. With Alternative 4c the solution was to make these restrictions. We are currently studying the possible traffic impacts.

Q: Alternative 4b is wider. That is the trade-off with Alternative 4c. Regarding retaining walls, Alternative 4b and 4c are wider and that's why you're adding retaining walls. If you're rebuilding, why aren't you just making the slopes steeper to avoid the need for a wall?

A: We were actually considering that. There are a couple options. Maybe we could put a seat wall at the bottom of the slope. Maybe it makes more sense on 12th street. That takes a few feet of

height from the top retaining wall. There is a standard design slope there right now. It may be possible to make a steeper slope.

Q: If you're taking the interstate down to the ground are you taking slopes down to the ground? Are we saving trees?

A: The slopes on the south side don't have very many trees at all. Taking slopes down to the ground would only be a concern for the north side. We're willing to consider constructing a slope but it could require the removal of trees on the north side of I-65. A wall may be able to preserve the existing trees.

Q: Looking at the cross-section, it looks like you're adding through lanes.

A: Two lanes are coming in from I-70 and two lanes are coming in from I-65. At Alabama Street there are three lanes, because they are merging together. It looks like we're adding lanes but it is two lanes coming from each interstate. At Alabama Street there will still be three lanes.

Q: Is adding barriers to separate the lanes required? This is an increased width. The south side shoulders are not there currently. Safety shoulders are the only additions.

A: Yes, if you don't have the barrier, people will cheat and change lanes.

Q: It looks like Alternative 4c has the widest shoulders. Is there room to reduce?

A: With four lanes, the standard is a 12-foot shoulder on the inside. We've already reduced that to 6 feet. Some shoulders on the ramps are at 10 feet. There has to be a certain width for emergency vehicles to be able to pass. We've adjusted the shoulders as far as we're comfortable with as designers.

Q: If you're taking away access points, you're shifting where folks can go. That's going to necessitate traffic studies. At what points do folks in the neighborhoods learn more about traffic impacts?

A: We were not originally anticipating any permanent traffic pattern changes. We are working on traffic studies and will continue to discuss this as part of the Section 106 process.

Q: A lot of residents in Fletcher Place and North Square are worried about the Fletcher exit and would like the APE increased to include that area.

A: There are no physical changes to the Fletcher exit. There will be no construction in that area. If for some reason there would be construction there, the APE would be adjusted.

Q: A traffic study would be helpful for our residents. We would like to see the data. We would also like for INDOT to extend the public comment period to accommodate the Rethink Coalition's study. We won't have enough time to review the study and come up with our comments by the deadline.

A: We will need to discuss this with INDOT.

Q: Has anyone seen the Section 106 comments from when the interstate was first constructed?

A: We don't think those exist. We tried looking for them, but because it was constructed in the early 70s and the Section 106 consultation process was developed later, we were not able to find anything. Right now, we have no documentation from that time.

Q: The NHPA was enacted in 1966 and the highway was built in 1976.

A: Indiana was slow to get their historic preservation process moving. The process did not generally start until the late 1980s.

Q: Since it is a Section 106 meeting, historic properties such as Indiana Landmarks and Young & Laramore are concerned about vibration and increased sound. Do you have ways to design the new structures to reduce vibration?

A: Yes. We will use more modern materials and designs. Currently the bridges have several joints that move and cause noise. Now, we don't use joints because we have better design standards.

Q: Was mitigation included in the cost estimates? Loss of use of certain properties? One of the mitigation aspects for a project in Madison, Indiana was helping compensate for the loss of business for certain commercial properties. Is mitigation in this budget?

A: I think there is a certain percentage dedicated to mitigation in the cost estimates. Under Section 106, mitigation is only provided when there is an adverse effect. Effect determinations have not been made yet.

Q: I would like to mention the trees. Some trees near Lockerbie are more than 10 years old. We would like to keep these trees.

A: We recognize that.

Q: Since the preliminary preferred alternative is Alternative 4c, does this project meet the needs for the next 20-30 years? Will it accommodate future capacity?

A: Alternative 4c is a significant traffic operations improvement because it removes the bottlenecks. Alternative 5 would be a longer-term solution because it would add through lanes. Alternative 4b would perform a little better than 4c. To ensure no additional through lanes and minimize widening, Alternative 4c is a compromise.

8. Adjourn

Meeting concluded at 7:45 p.m.

Attendees:

Project Team Members	
Michelle Allen	FHWA
Patrick Carpenter	INDOT
Dave Cleveland	Corradino
Kia Gillette	HNTB
Ali Hernandez	Borshoff
Laura Hilden	INDOT
Leah Konicki	ASC Group

Anuradha Kumar	INDOT
Harry Nikides	ASC Group
Erin Pipkin	Compass Outreach Solutions
Chris Poland	United Consulting
Jeromy Richardson	United Consulting
Anthony Ross	INDOT
Seth Schickel	HNTB
Runfa Shi	INDOT
Ron Taylor	TSW

Consulting Party Members	
Alicia Baker (via WebEx)	John Boner Neighborhood Center
Hilary Barnes	Old Northside Neighborhood Association
Garry Chilluffo	Historic Urban Neighborhoods of Indianapolis
Marsh Davis	Indiana Landmarks
Pat Dubach	Holy Cross Neighborhood Association
Charles A. Hyde	Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site
Joe Jarzen	Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Inc.
Jim Jessee	Cottage Home BOD
Marjorie Kienle	Lockerbie Square People's Club/Historic Urban Neighborhoods of Indianapolis
Paul Knapp	Interstate Business Group
Betsy Merritt (via WebEx)	National Trust for Historic Preservation
David Pflugh (via WebEx)	Chatham Arch Neighborhood Association
Meg Purnsley	Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
Mandy Ranslow (via WebEx)	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Jake Rupp	Hendricks Commercial Properties
Jordan Ryan	North Square Neighborhood Association
Chad Slider	IDNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology
Meg Storrow	Massachusetts Avenue Merchants Association

Wade Tharp	IDNR- Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology
Kelly Wensing (via WebEx)	Holy Cross Neighborhood Association