

Stakeholder Working Group

MEETING #3 MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, November 14 at 2:00 p.m.

Location: Mt. Pleasant Waterworks, 1619 Rifle Range Road, Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Steering Committee Attendees

Name	Organization
John Wright	AASC Historic Commission
Les Blankenship	Berkeley County
Councilman Herb Sass	Charleston County Council
Katie Zimmerman	Charleston MOVES
Jason Crowley	Coastal Conservation League
Chris Staubes	Mt. Pleasant Chamber of Commerce
Councilman Bob Brimmer	Mt. Pleasant Council
Jim Glennon	Mt. Pleasant Waterworks
Richard Habersham	Phillips Community
Tim Henderson	SCDOT
Garrett Nichols	SCE&G
Mayor Will Haynie	Town of Mt. Pleasant

Other Attendees

Name	Organization
Councilman Kevin Cunnane	Mt. Pleasant Council
Josh Johnson	SCDOT

Project Team Attendees

Name	Organization
Cal Oyer	Charleston County
Jim Armstrong	Charleston County
Shawn Smetana	Charleston County
Brad Morrison	Town of Mount Pleasant
Amanda Heath	USACE
Ivan Fannin	USACE
Michael Darby	HDR
Shannon Meder	HDR
Samantha Dubay	HDR
Jim Fisher	Stantec

Stuart Day	Stantec
Matt Miller	Reveer Group
Cheryl Harleston	CHH Communications
Ed Givens	Fellowship Strategies
Natalie Lawrence	Joyst Communications

Below is a summary of the Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) Meeting #3 held on Wednesday, November 14 at 2:00 p.m.

Welcome & Introductions

- Cal Oyer welcomed the group and introduced elected officials and project team members.

Highway 41 Corridor Improvements Project Presentation

Cal Oyer (Charleston County Project Manager), Shannon Meder (HDR Project Manager), and Michael Darby (HDR Design Lead) led the group through a presentation providing updates that have taken place since the Alternatives Open House in May 2018, reviewing the refined reasonable alternatives and proposed interim improvements.

Refined Reasonable Alternatives

The project team has developed two alternatives based on public comments, existing and future traffic volume projections, large planned developments and cultural and environmental considerations in the area, and has introduced Alternative 5a and Alternative 7a for further evaluation.

- Alternative 2 – This alternative was eliminated from further consideration because an additional traffic analysis confirmed that the portion of Highway 41 through the Phillips Community would not provide the level of service to meet the purpose and need.
- Alternative 5a – The project team received requests from the public to reconsider Alternative 5, which creates a parallel roadway to Highway 41. Alternative 5, as it was presented, did not meet the project's purpose and need and was therefore eliminated in early 2018. The project team introduced Alternative 5a in effort to look at other ways to distribute traffic in the area and reduce congestion on Highway 41. Alternative 5a consists of a parallel five lane roadway primarily along a power line easement running from Highway 17, through Laurel Hill County Park, and tying into Highway 41 near Harpers Ferry Way.
- Alternative 7a - In response to public comment in opposition to Alternative 7, a modification of this alternative was developed to avoid and minimize impacts to residential areas along Bessemer Road. The modified alternative became Alternative 7a and will replace Alternative 7 in the development process. Alternative 7a re-routes Highway 41 parallel to Bessemer Road and onto Laurel Hill County Park property, follows along the existing power line easement, and then continues back along existing Dunes West Blvd. Alternative 7a impacts would be minimized to residential areas and would incorporate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations to keep connectivity in the area.

Therefore, Alternative 1, Alternative 5a and Alternative 7a are being recommended for further evaluation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process as they meet the purpose and need of the project. The

project team continues to evaluate these alternatives through detailed environmental and traffic screenings. If alternatives are found to not meet the purpose and need of the project, they will be eliminated.

Interim Improvements

Interim improvements are being pursued to help relieve congestion until a final project can be built. Proposed interim improvements consist of introducing a new south bound lane on Highway 41 from Joe Rouse Road to Highway 17 and minor intersection improvements to improve signal timing and intersection function at Highway 41 and Highway 17.

Connection to Billy Swails Boulevard

The project team is currently evaluating options to connect Highway 41 with Billy Swails Boulevard.

SWG Questions & Project Team Action

- Amanda Heath, with the US Army Corps of Engineers, clarified that the Corps will place the locally preferred alternative on public notice for a 30-day public comment period and will consider holding a public meeting if requested by the public.
- Jason Crowley inquired about the addition of the interim improvement project and the NEPA process. The project team responded that USACE has confirmed that permitting and construction of the proposed interim project would not invalidate the NEPA process conclusions.
- Mayor Haynie noted that the Mt. Pleasant Town Council supports the interim improvement project and is currently reviewing state laws regarding local consent as it pertains to the reasonable alternatives.
- Councilman Brimmer inquired about the interim project's impact to Hamlin Road traffic.
- Richard Habersham noted the need for immediate improvements at Bessemer Road.
- Katie Zimmerman stressed the importance of pedestrian/bicycle improvements in evaluating a viable intersection design at Highway 17 and Highway 41.
- Councilman Brimmer noted the possibility of extending or creating a free-flow lane onto Bessemer Road to help ease traffic in the interim.
- The group discussed potential mitigation options for wetlands. The project team shared that we were aware that mitigation banks in the area were limited on credit availability and that the project team is actively considering mitigation options for the project, including monitoring of existing and planned banks and consideration of permittee responsible mitigation.
- Members inquired about the process involved in identifying the recommended preferred alternative.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.