

<b>Subject:</b>	Technical Advisory Group (TAG) Meeting Minutes
<b>Project Number:</b>	RICH-070421 Richmond By-Pass
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	February 10, 2010
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	Village of Richmond, Illinois
<b>Notes by:</b>	Chris Caldarella – SEC Group, Inc. an HR Green Company

**Attendees:**

Charles Eldredge, McHenry County 2030 Plan Commission and McHenry County Economic Development Committee (MCEDC)
Chris Hiebert, SE Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission (SEWRPC)
Rich Jacobson, Richmond Township
Barry Goad, Village of Genoa City
Sandy Salgado, McHenry County Board Transportation Committee and Board Member
Elizabeth Kessler, McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD)
Dan Oest, Richmond Burton School District 157
Cindy Skrukud, Sierra Club and Environmental Defenders
Dave Bockelman, Richmond Township
Steven Byers, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC)
Edward Collins, MCCD
Ernest Varga, McHenry County Division of Transportation (MCDOT)
Bruce Hunter, Village of Richmond Business Owner
Lauri Olson, President, Village of Richmond
Charlotte Hollenbach, Village of Richmond Trustee
Tim Savage, Village Administrator, Village of Richmond
Chris Caldarella, Public Involvement Task Lead, SEC Group Inc. an HR Green Company
Ted Hamilton, Project Manager, SEC Group Inc. an HR Green Company
Tim Hartnett, former Village Engineer, SEC Group Inc. an HR Green Company
Ed Coggin, Village Engineer, SEC Group, Inc. an HR Green Company
Akram Chaudhry, Technical Manager and Grants and Funding Coordinator, SEC Group, Inc. an HR Green Company
Stacy Woodson, NEPA/Environmental Task Lead, HR Green Company

**Meeting Materials Provided:**

- Copies of latest alignment alternatives
- Purpose and Need Summary

Village of Richmond Administrator, Timothy Savage, opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. and gave a brief overview of the project.

Chris Caldarella reviewed the rules of conduct for the TAG meetings as follows:

- Only one person shall talk at any given time.
- The person speaking shall announce their name and the agency that they represent before speaking. (This will assist in assembling meeting minutes from tape recording of meeting.)

- Comments will be limited to five minutes each.
- Everyone shall have a chance to speak and everyone should do so.
- Be polite to each other.

## **INTRODUCTIONS:**

Introductions were made. Cindy Skrukruud suggested including Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) the Farm Bureau and Nippersink Creek Watershed Agency at future TAG meetings. Stacy Woodson indicated that agencies such as those mentioned will be involved in the process but not necessarily as TAG members. Public and agency coordination are parts of the environmental process as is the Technical Advisory Group.

Charlie Eldredge discussed the Charrette done by the Urban Land Institute and the Northern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) Vision Grant. Consensus was to find that information and put it on the Richmond Bypass website.

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW:**

Tim Hartnett presented the history of the project from the 60's through today. The project now has Illinois DOT (IDOT)/County/Village funding along with Federal money and legislative support. Phase 1 was authorized almost 1.5 years ago.

Ted Hamilton presented more technical background regarding the proposed Richmond Bypass project.

One of the purposes of the bypass is to improve capacity on US 12 between the junction with IL 31 and the Wisconsin State line for future traffic needs. The proposed project is needed to:

- Reduce existing and projected traffic congestion and delays through the Village of Richmond.
- Improve traffic operations on US 12 between the junction with IL 31 and the Wisconsin State line.
- Improve system linkage and continuity on US 12 from Wisconsin line to the junction of IL 31.
- Provide access to the Village of Richmond to maintain the area's economic development initiatives.

By 2030, traffic on US 12 is forecasted to increase nearly 60% under the No Build scenario. The greatest traffic increase is between IL 173 and the Wisconsin State line. The existing average daily traffic volume (ADT) is 15,400 vehicles and the 2030 forecast under the No Build scenario is 24,000 ADT. This volume of traffic is over the 17,000 ADT typically associated with a two or three lane roadway and would exacerbate already poor traffic operations in downtown Richmond.

As part of the Feasibility Study for the Richmond Bypass, a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was formed to gain a better understanding of local issues and concerns.

Public meetings were held to solicit comment and input on alternatives. There were three TAG meetings and three public meetings held. Through coordination with local officials and

residents, seven Build Alternatives for the Richmond bypass were developed and compared relative to one another. In addition to the No Build Alternative the following Build Alternatives were developed and evaluated:

- Keystone Corridor
- FAP 420 Corridor
- Solon Mills Corridor
- Railroad Corridor
- Couplet Corridor
- Near East Corridor
- Far East Corridor

The alternative recommended in the Feasibility Study was the FAP 420 Corridor located one mile west of existing US 12. The corridor would utilize a significant portion of right of way purchased by IDOT in the 1960's for a planned north-south expressway. The FAP 420 corridor alternative was recommended to be constructed predominately as a parkway. However, to be consistent with the design of the connection to US 12 in Wisconsin, the northern section would be designed as a freeway.

The feasibility study was completed in 2007. We are beginning what the IDOT refers to as Phase I which includes the environmental clearance and preliminary design components.

## **PURPOSE & ROLE OF TAG GROUP:**

Stacy Woodson reviewed the environmental aspects of Phase 1 of the project. These include an environmental assessment, agency coordination, and public involvement.

As this project is using federal funds, compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is required. The Federal Highway Administration decided that an Environmental Assessment (EA) was the appropriate level of documentation needed for this project.

The EA is being prepared to understand the impacts the alternatives discussed in the Richmond US 12 Bypass Feasibility Study would have on the natural and human environment. Preliminary impact analysis conducted as a part of the Feasibility Study will be used in the EA, as necessary. Additional field survey information is being collected to provide a more in depth evaluation of impacts.

Also included in the NEPA process is agency and public involvement. Appropriate federal, state, regional, and local agencies as well as the public will be solicited for input at key milestones throughout the development of the EA.

The Feasibility Study area and the Phase 1 Assessment area include a 4 mile wide x 2 mile area surrounding all corridors. The Feasibility Study and the Phase 1 Assessment include indirect and direct environmental impact, i.e., effects on soil, wetlands, watershed, groundwater, habitat, trees, and air, and economic considerations to the Richmond Downtown area. Comments regarding the project were requested of the TAG members. The following comments were received:



- Bruce Hunter is concerned with future ownership and maintenance of existing US 12 through the center of the Village. He does not want the Village to pay for US 12 maintenance in view of the \$1 million already paid by the Village for the bypass study. Bruce, and many others, is also concerned with the impact to existing businesses on existing US 12 and negative impacts to existing Village residents.
- Tim Hartnett said that part of the study was to determine impacts to Village residents and businesses.
- Ted Hamilton indicated that gateways and entryways were to be studied as part of the project.
- Cindy Skrukud requested a copy of the Feasibility Study. Chris Caldarella said it would be posted to the website for the project: **[www.richmondbypass.com](http://www.richmondbypass.com)**
- Cindy also wanted to know why the FHWA said that the Phase 1 Environmental could be done with an assessment and not a study. Stacey Woodson responded that it was because it fits their requirements. If something significant is found as part of Phase 1, the federal government could require an Environmental Impact Study (EIS).
- Tim Hartnett mentioned once again that we are about 1.5 years into the Phase 1 Environmental and Engineering portion of the project which is overall, expected to take 3 to 4 years to complete.
- Tim said that issues related to accessibility to property slowed down the project last year but that these issues have been resolved.
- Ted Hamilton said that the Phase 2 Engineering portion of the project will take 3-4 years which would result in plans done by 2014-2015. Tim Hartnett added that ROW takes and Utility relocations could add years to the project prior to actual construction.
- Ted indicated that actual construction could be phased to accommodate funding and grants and Tim added that progress on the project usually results in more funding and grants.
- Stacy Woodson reviewed why the TAG members were needed. They are an advisory group formed to provide feedback and advice to the project managers and Village and act as a sounding board. It is important that they give their perspective of the project.
- Tim Hartnett stated that the engineers' and the Village have developed the initial "purpose and need" for the project but that must be refined and that it would ultimately be provided to the property owners and the government.
- Tim Hartnett added that fair discussions of environmental impacts to avoid adverse impacts and to enhance the project must be considered.



- Stacy encouraged the group to look at indirect impacts on the environment, too.
- Cindy Skrukruud asked what the bypass was going to look like. Would it have a parkway? A three-lane section, etc.?
- Ted Hamilton indicated it will have a variety of typical sections (freeway, parkway, boulevard, and arterial) dependent on use and location.
- Tim Savage believes that a significant part of Richmond's future growth will be to the west and he wants SEC/HRG to ensure that they just don't move vehicles and create a "concrete curtain" segmenting the town. He encouraged the use of "pass throughs" for pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.
- Bruce Hunter asked that caution be taken with Broadway Street and re-emphasized the importance of the growth potential for downtown Richmond.
- Dave Bockelman wanted to know why the governments spend their money on the corridor using the FAP 420 right of way since it is likely the cheapest alternative. Stacy Woodson said that all corridors are to be considered per government rules regardless of cost.
- Barry Goad reminded everyone what happened to Genoa City with the construction of their US 12 bypass in the early 60's and strongly advised that downtown Richmond be protected.
- Charlie Eldredge reiterated how vital it is to have gateways to downtown. Also, he would like the Village to get money from the state if they have to take over old Route 12. He recommended lots of landscaping, too.
- Elizabeth Kessler is focused on the conservation perspective. She encouraged everyone to think in innovative ways and "outside the box". She believes that the existing Oaks are very important. She also believes that there is a recreational perspective related to the project and with *Glacial* Park and recent MCCD purchases that there is great potential for the bypass to be a catalyst for eco-tourism.
- Steve Byers stated that some of the potential corridors had environmental issues related to groundwater. Elizabeth Lake, Genoa Lake, and the Sage Meadow rely on groundwater and Phase 1 should take that into account.
- *Ed Collins reminded the group that over 40 years have passed since the existing FAP 420 corridor was purchased and that much of the purchase was undertaken before current environmental policies were in place and prior to extensive biological inventory work has been completed in the general area of the study. He noted that given the existing knowledge of the region that has been amassed since the mid 1960's it is likely that slightly different alignments might have been the result had that knowledge been available initially.*



- President Lauri Olson indicated that the Village's economic development is getting better and mentioned that the Corridor Planning previously done by the Village will assist in this process.

### **REVIEW OF PURPOSE AND NEED:**

Stacy Woodson reviewed the current project "purpose and need" as follows:

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve capacity on US 12 between the junction with IL 31 and the Wisconsin State line for future traffic needs. The proposed project is needed to:

- Reduce existing and projected traffic congestion and delays through the Village of Richmond.
- Improve traffic operations on US 12 between the junction with IL31 and the Wisconsin State line.
- Improve system linkage and continuity on US 12 from Wisconsin line to the junction of IL31.
- Provide access to the Village of Richmond to maintain the area's economic development initiatives.

Suggestions were made to include in the first sentence "in an environmentally sensitive manner and respecting the historic significance of the area."

The flow of traffic has been identified, predominately, from the north and northwest suburbs.

Tim Savage added that he wants the purpose and need to include "to contribute to the long-term vitality of the Village and environment."

Stacy Woodson said that the comments would be considered when revising the project's purpose and need. The revised purpose and need will be sent to the TAG members.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

Tim Hartnett asked that people think about the project after they leave the meeting and provide any additional comments via the Richmond bypass website or directly to Chris Caldarella at [ccaldarella@secgroupinc.com](mailto:ccaldarella@secgroupinc.com).

Chris Caldarella will e-mail meeting minutes to all TAG members and inform them of future meetings, as applicable.

Chris Caldarella will email the revised purpose and need to the TAG when available.

Chris Caldarella will post Feasibility Study to website and, if possible, the Charrette/ULI Study too.



**SEC Group, Inc.**

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# Meeting Notes

**REVISED 03/23/10\***

*These meeting notes are assumed correct unless the author is notified within fourteen calendar days of publication.*

cc: All Attendees

Mr. Mark Eisenberg, Village of Spring Grove

Mr. Scott Lesser, Tamarack Farms

Ms. Kathy Chernich, Army Corps of Engineers

Mr. Rick Gallas, Richmond Fire Protection District

Mr. Shawn Cirton, USF&W

Mr. Randy Stowe, Nippersink Creek Watershed Planning Committee

Mr. Ed Weskerna, McHenry Soil and Water Conservation District

*\*Revisions are in italics text.*

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