



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Project Update

November 2005

The purpose of this mailing is to update the public about the status of ODOT's project that will relocate a segment of State Route 750 near the Columbus Zoo. The project also involves widening State Route 750 between Wellington Boulevard and Sawmill Parkway, and improving a segment of State Route 257 near Glick Road and the Zoo. This newsletter is being distributed to all parties on our mailing list for this project.

Project Overview

The project is divided into two phases, to optimize the timing and sequencing of construction. As such, construction of the new alignment can be started sooner and opened to traffic before improvements are started on the remaining sections of State Routes 257 and 750.

Phase "A" will occur first, and involves construction of the new SR-750 alignment from SR-257 to Wellington Boulevard. The design of Phase A is advancing, and construction is anticipated to begin during the Summer of 2006. It is currently projected that the new road will be opened to traffic in late 2007.

Phase "B" includes the section of SR-750, between Wellington Boulevard and Sawmill Parkway, plus the improvements to SR-257. So far, only preliminary design work has occurred for Phase B.

Summary of the Public Meeting

A public meeting was held on June 16, 2005. The latest information about the project was displayed, and the public was invited to provide input. Over 50 people attended. About eleven written comments were received, several of which covered similar concerns. They are summarized on the next page.

What's Next?

During the coming months, most of the effort will focus on completing the design plans for Phase A of the project, so that construction can begin next summer. After those drawings are finished, then the emphasis will switch to designing Phase B. When more detailed plan drawings are available, ODOT will schedule another public meeting.

Questions

Any inquiry about the project should be directed to Bruce Birch, of ODOT District 6, who is the project manager. He may be contacted by phone, at (740) 833-8187, or by e-mail at bruce.birch@dot.state.oh.us.

Comment

Residents on Canterbury Drive expressed concern about flooding of the stream that flows through their backyards, and wondered whether the project will affect the amount and rate of stormwater runoff going to that stream. They also wondered about how the Zoo's proposed parking lot expansion project would affect the situation.

Some residents on Oxford Drive and Tavistock Circle whose backyards abut SR-750, are concerned about the proximity of the project to their backyards and inquired about adjusting the alignment to be further away.

Residents of the Big Bear Farms subdivision raised the following concerns in the form of a petition:

- Loss of trees and fence along the north side of SR-750 will be an adverse effect on aesthetics and consequently their property values.
- The plans shown at the public meeting depicted the proposed multi-purpose path along the north side of the road will be within 10 feet of their ponds and have no intervening safety barrier.
- Their irrigation system will be disturbed by the project.
- Increased traffic noise.
- They would like the road widening to be evenly divided along the north and south side of the existing roadway.

Response by ODOT

The existing flooding problem falls under the responsibility of the Delaware County Engineer's office. ODOT has notified that agency about the situation. Also, the residents may contact the County directly. As for the highway project, it is the normal practice of ODOT to not divert water from existing watersheds. Therefore, the roadway drainage system will not alter the sizes of existing drainage areas and the amount of water flowing to the streams. The Delaware County Engineer's office is reviewing the Zoo's drainage design for the parking lot project. The Zoo will need to comply with the County's requirements.

The proposed alignment was established based on multiple factors. To the west of Wellington Boulevard, where the new alignment begins, the degree of curvature conforms to highway engineering design standards for this type of highway. To the east of Wellington Boulevard, the desire was to keep the existing straight alignment and optimize the use of existing right-of-way as much as possible. Under the currently proposed scenario, it is already necessary to acquire a strip of land from the properties along the north side of SR-750 for new right-of-way. To shift the alignment still further away from the Oxford and Tavistock residences would necessitate even more land to be acquired on the north side of SR-750, and would push the proposed road closer to New Hope Church. ODOT will conduct another public meeting when more details are known about the proposed design of Phase B. A noise impact and abatement analysis will be performed as part of the design process for Phase B, and the results will be shared with the affected residents.

The drawings shown at the meeting were only at a preliminary stage for Phase B of the project. Further refinement of the project's design needs to be done in order to address and/or answer the questions about real estate impacts. ODOT will conduct another public meeting when more details are known about the proposed design of Phase B.

A noise impact and abatement analysis will be performed as part of the design process for Phase B, in accordance with ODOT's policy and procedures regarding this issue. The results will be shared with the affected residents.

The footprint of the proposed roadway will be designed to utilize the existing right-of-way to the optimal extent possible. In the vicinity of Big Bear Farms, the existing SR-750 roadway is not centered within the available right-of-way. At the time the housing development was established, the swath of land between the white fence and the roadway was dedicated for public right-of-way. More widening will occur on the north side of the existing roadway because that's where there's more right-of-way already available for use.
