

Meeting: West Highland & Country Club Neighborhood Meeting
Date/Time: February 19, 2008
Location: R.J. Reynolds High School
Attendees: 32 Attendees
Jumetta Posey – Facilitator
David Spainhour – NCDOT Presenter

Agenda Items:

Welcome/Introduction

- Ms. Posey welcomed attendees to the West Highland & Country Club neighborhood meeting for the Business 40 Improvement Project.
- The facilitator introduced David Spainhour and other NCDOT representatives.
- The slide show presentation began.

Community Outreach

- Ms. Posey discussed the outreach process.
- How community outreach has been conducted (door-to-door surveys, neighborhood business surveys, downtown business surveys).
- The canvassing process (19 core neighborhoods were being surveyed).

Project Overview

- Mr. Spainhour gave a brief history of Business 40.
 - ✓ Business 40 is the oldest interstate in North Carolina.
 - ✓ It originally wasn't intended to be an interstate.
 - ✓ Business 40 carries on average 70,000 cars a day.
- Mr. Spainhour discussed why the project is needed.
 - ✓ Business 40 is over 50 years old and is starting to deteriorate.
 - ✓ The bridges have major design problems. (The steel beams are deteriorating; the bridges have clearance issues, etc.)
 - ✓ Business 40's lanes tend to be narrow.
- Mr. Spainhour then provided proposed solutions for Business 40's existing flaws.
 - ✓ All 11 bridges crossing Business 40 will be removed and replaced.
 - ✓ Sidewalks and bicycle lanes will be considered for the roads crossing Business 40.
 - ✓ Drainage on Business 40 will be improved.
 - ✓ Widen Business 40 auxiliary lanes in addition to placing full shoulders.
 - ✓ Reconfigure the entrance- and exit-ramps.

The West Highlands survey results were presented to the meeting attendees.

- **Question – How long have you lived at your current address?**
 - ~25% - Have lived at their current address for 0-1 year
 - ~20% - Have lived at their current address for 2-4 years
 - ~15% - Have lived at their current address for 5-9 years
 - ~35% - Have lived at their current address for 10+ years
 - ~1% - Did not answer
- **Question – Do you plan to be living in West Highlands in 5-7 years?**

- ~70% - Will be living in West Highlands in 5-7 years
- ~26% - Will not be living in West Highlands in 5-7 years
- ~1% - Undecided

- **Question* – What bridges do you typically use?**

- ~41% - Use Broad Street Bridge
- ~29% - Use Peter's Creek Parkway Bridge
- ~15% - Use Cherry Street, Marshall Street, or Stratford Road Bridges
- ~11% - Use Main Street Bridge or All of the bridges
- ~7% - Use Silas Creek Parkway Bridge
- ~ 4% - Use Liberty Avenue or Hawthorn Avenue Bridges
- ~ 8% - Use other bridges crossing Business 40

*Some residents put more than one answer for this question

- **Question* – How can transportation be improved in your neighborhood?**

- ~53% - No complaints
- ~7% - Requested better bus service
- ~4% - Requested sidewalk improvements
- ~2% - Requested posted speed limit signs or reduced speeding
- ~ 1% - Request more police patrols, stop lights, or more travel lanes

*Not all residents answered this question

- **Question* – Is there anything else you would like to add about transportation issues in your neighborhood?**

- ~57% - No complaints
- ~ 5% - Requested more bus routes
- ~ 4% - Requested speed bumps, improved sidewalks, and bike routes
- ~ 2% - Requested reduced speeds

*Not all residents answered this question

- **Question – What is your preference during construction?**

- ~60% - Completely close Business 40 for up to two years
- ~35% - Partially close Business 40 for up to six years
- ~1% - Undecided
- ~1% - Neither

The Country Club survey results were presented to the meetings attendees.

- **Question – How long have you lived at your current address?**

- ~10% - Have lived at their current address for 0-1 year
- ~16% - Have lived at their current address for 2-4 years
- ~13% - Have lived at their current address for 5-9 years
- ~56% - Have lived at their current address for 10+ years
- ~1% - Did not answer

- **Question – Do you plan to be living in Country Club in 5-7 years?**

- ~95% - Will be living in Country Club in 5-7 years
- ~3% - Will not be living in Country Club in 5-7 years
- ~2% - Undecided

- **Question – What bridges do you typically use?**

- ~17% - Use all of the bridges
- ~13% - Use Peter's Creek Parkway Bridge
- ~11% - Use Broad Street, or Cherry Street Bridges, or are unsure
- ~10% - Use, Marshall Street
- ~8% - Use Main Street or Knollwood Avenue Bridges
- ~3% - Use Silas Creek Parkway or Liberty Avenue Bridges
- ~2% - Use Stratford Road, Spruce, or Fourth Street Bridges

- **Question – How can transportation be improved in your neighborhood?**

- ~70% - No complaints
- ~8% - Requested better commutes
- ~6% - Requested road repair
- ~5% - Requested Bridge repair
- ~3% - Requested more police patrols
- ~2% - Requested reduced traffic, sidewalks, improved blind spots, more travel lanes, or reduced speeding

- **Question* – Is there anything else you would like to add about transportation issues in your neighborhood?**

- ~33% - No complaints
- ~27% - Requested improved sidewalks
- ~ 6% - Requested bike routes
- ~ 5% - Requested more bus routes
- ~ 3% - Requested speed bumps

*Not all residents answered this question

- **Question – What is your preference during construction?**

- ~68% - Completely close Business 40 for up to two years
- ~29% - Partially close Business 40 for up to six years
- ~3% - Undecided

Ms. Posey talked about future plans for the Community Outreach process.

The Business 40 improvement project will be speaking with:

- Large institutions with intranet access.
- R.J. Reynolds
- Wake Forest University
- Winston-Salem State University
- Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center
- Wachovia Bank

The Business 40 Improvement project will be using other forms of community involvement including:

- Issue working groups
- On- and Off-ramp surveys
- Neighborhood Meetings
- Corridor-Wide Meetings

The slide show then concluded and the question-and-answer period began.

PROJECT RELATED QUESTIONS:

Q: Considering that there has been an extensive outreach process surrounding this project, how come we don't have concrete answers regarding a time frame, alternative routes, etc.?

A: NCDOT wanted to start the outreach process a few years ahead the proposed construction so they could plan how this project would progress and be implemented. However, as time goes on, more answers will be available to the public before the project itself starts.

Q: What factors will be taken in to consideration for choosing either the two-year option or the six-year option?

A: NCDOT is specifically looking at what will be most beneficial to the people who will be most affected by the proposed changes of this project, the residents of Winston-Salem. NCDOT is also taking into consideration traffic control, etc.

Q: Will the cost of the project increase as longer the project continues (e.g. Will the 2 two-year cost be significantly less than the six-year cost)?

A: NCDOT is not sure as to whether the six-year option will cost more than the two-year option. There are so many factors to consider, and at this point in time NCDOT does not have an accurate answer to that question.

Q: How will construction on Business 40 affect access to the new Ballpark off of the Peter's Creek Parkway exit?

A: NCDOT understands that the Peter's Creek Parkway exit from Business 40 is a major hub and because of that simple fact, it will most likely be the first bridge that will undergo construction. However, NCDOT does not have any definitive answers regarding how construction will affect traffic to and from the new ballpark.

Q: Has any study been completed regarding how excess traffic will be re-routed when construction begins?

A: NCDOT, at this point in the project, is unsure what alternate routes will be. However, once the outreach process has been completed, The Business 40 Improvement Project will give all of the information regarding alternative routes to planners and they will decide what the alternative routes will be. From there, the planners will create alternative routes that are similar to the roads that are closed.

Q: Are we voting for a two-year versus a six-year option of construction on Business 40?

A: This is not a voting system. The outreach process is a merely a method of maintaining information about how the residents of Winston-Salem travel throughout the city. Once the outreach process ends, The Business 40 Improvement Project will hand off the information that it has compiled to NCDOT so they can make an informed decision regard construction.

Q: What information are you going to get from this series of neighborhood meetings that will affect how you design the alternate routes if you do choose to build under the two-year plan?

A: One of the reasons why The Business 40 Improvement project is not only to tell the residents of Winston-Salem about the project but to give information to move further in the project, towards the corridor-wide meetings and eventually construction itself. A good construction project is about balancing all issues and finding a solution that is beneficial to all concerned. The Business 40 Improvement Project was created for that reason. After all of these neighborhood meetings are complete, we will start compiling the information that we've received from all of the residents that participated in these neighborhood meetings and once the corridor-wide meetings come around, we intend to have the answers to the questions that you've asked us during this series of neighborhood meetings.

Q: It seems there has been an extensive process to speak with the residents of Winston-Salem, how are you contacting neighborhood businesses?

A: The Business 40 Improvement Project is currently in the process of speaking neighborhood businesses. That entails our Outreach Specialists going to businesses within neighborhoods and surveying the employees as well as the owners of these businesses that will be affected by changes on Business 40.

Q: It's been said at this meeting that Business 40 was originally a parkway and was never intended to be an Interstate Highway, why keep the label of 'interstate highway' if Business 40 can't handle that kind of traffic that would be on I-40, for example?

A: There is no restriction as far as NCDOT is concerned to maintain the title of 'interstate' in regards to Business 40.

Q: How will you contact the thousands of employees that work with Emergency Response Systems?

A: The Business 40 Improvement Project has been fortunate enough to gain intranet access into the majority of these systems and we are receiving surveys via email from these Emergency Response Systems.

Q: What is the time frame to repair or reconstruct a bridge under both scenarios?

A: Under traffic, NCDOT expects the construction of one bridge to take 18 months. If the contractors are working without traffic, it could be completed in ten months.

Q: How will residents receive future information about the project?

A: The Business 40 Improvement project will send announcements regarding corridor-wide meetings, information on issue-working groups and logistics regarding those meetings. The Business 40 Improvement project will also send out newsletters either quarterly or when project milestones are completed.