



**MEETING MINUTES**

**Project:** I-16/I-75 from I-75 at Hardeman Ave. to I-16 at Spring St.  
NH-16-(104) – Bibb County, P.I. 311410  
**Meeting:** Pleasant Hill Coordination Meeting  
**Location:** Booker T. Washington Community Center  
**Prepared By:** Will Sheehan  
**Prepared On:** August 17, 2006

Meeting Date	08/16/06
MA Project No.	311410
CC:	File 99516A
	Attendees
	Liz Sanford (Sycamore)
	Dom Saulino (HNTB)

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss modifications to the project that have occurred since the last meeting, to gain more feedback from the Pleasant Hill community, and to continue to develop a “reasonable and appropriate” plan for mitigation. Mr. Brad Hale, project manager for consultant Moreland Altobelli, conducted the meeting with the assistance of Mr. Peter Givens of the Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Improvement Group (PHNIG).

**Coordination with Pleasant Hill since last meeting**

Mr. Hale outlined the following activities that had occurred since the last meeting with Pleasant Hill on January 25, 2006.

- A workshop with Pleasant Hill leaders was held on March 29, 2006. The purpose of this workshop was to gain additional feedback from community leaders.
- The PHNIG drafted a proposal letter to the GDOT, dated April 20, 2006, which included several requests for changes/additions to the proposed project within the Pleasant Hill neighborhood.
- The GDOT drafted a response letter to the PHNIG proposal on July 21, 2006. Many of the PHNIG requests were incorporated into the project.

**Recent changes to project**

It was stated that this would not be the last meeting with Pleasant Hill and that coordination would continue. The following is a summary of the changes/additions that have been made to the project so far:

- 1) The frontage road on the west side of I-75 would be closed and converted to green space between First Avenue and Second Avenue. In addition, a cul-de-sac would be constructed at the dead end of First Avenue.
- 2) First Avenue and Second Avenue would be resurfaced between the Frontage Rd. and Pursley St.
- 3) A 10’ wide sidewalk would be added to the reconstructed Walnut St. Bridge. Mr. Hale also mentioned the possibility of coordinating the sidewalk with a proposed multi-use trail in the area that is not associated with this project.
- 4) GDOT and MA are investigating construction staging alternatives for the Walnut St. Bridge. As requested by several members of the PHNIG, GDOT’s goal is to reconstruct this bridge without closing Walnut Street.
- 5) Middle St. will be extended to Walnut St. The exact alignment of Middle Street and location for the proposed Walnut Street intersection will be determined following further coordination with the neighborhood.
- 6) The design team will investigate options to cover the drainage canal and convert it into a green space. In-depth studies will have to be completed to determine actual impacts to the drainage channel.



Following the discussion of the recent plan changes, Mr. Hale briefly described the options available for aesthetic walls and visual barriers. Mr. Peter Givens stated that significant progress had been made in the discussions with the GDOT and that the “door was left open” for continued negotiations.

**Questions & Answers**

- **Will on-street (parallel) parking be taken away from Walnut Street in order to construct the 10’ sidewalk?** *The widened 10’ sidewalk is currently only proposed on the new Walnut Street Bridge over I-75. The plan currently does not impact parking along Walnut Street.*
- **Mr. Givens requested that the entire area between First Ave. and Fifth Ave. and from the drainage canal to reconstructed Middle St. be converted to a green space. He noted that many of the properties would have to be acquired anyway to construct the shifted Middle St. GDOT can only acquire property for transportation purposes.**
- **How many residents would be displaced as a result of the shifting of Middle St. to the east?** *There would be approximately eighteen displacements depending on the final alignment of the relocated road.*
- **What is the future of the David Lucas pedestrian bridge?** *The plan currently proposes to reconstruct the David Lucas Pedestrian Bridge in its present location.*
- **Can architectural finishes be added to the bridge structures to make them look better?** *Yes. GDOT has committed to add architectural finishes and/or streetscaping to the proposed Otis Redding Bridge. Each bridge on the project will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.*
- **If landscaping is added along Middle St., who will maintain it?** *Maintenance of the local streets and associated landscaping would be the City of Macon’s responsibility following the completion of the project.*
- **Will the level of environmental documentation be an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?** *The level of environmental documentation on a federal aid project is ultimately decided by FHWA. FHWA has concluded that an EA is appropriate for this project.*
- **Will this project impact the Linwood Cemetery and the Rodney Davis gravesite?** *There will be no physical impacts to the cemetery and gravesite due to the interchange project.*
- **How long will the new Walnut St. Bridge be? Will it extend further into the neighborhood?** *The limits of the Walnut St. Bridge will remain approximately where they are now. Building retaining walls will accommodate the widened interstate footprint.*
- **Is the impact to Pleasant Hill a result of FHWA’s requirement to have only right-hand exits from I-75? If so, could the interstate system through Macon be renumbered so that the segment of I-75 through Pleasant Hill would become I-475, thereby eliminating the need to reconfigure the I-16/I-75 interchange?** *An undesirable, complex weave currently exists on I-75 northbound between the entrance ramp from Hardeman Ave., and the exit to I-16. Correcting this problem requires ‘braiding’ the successive entrance/exit ramps mentioned above. This accounts for all but one of the potential displacements within the Pleasant Hill District. Renumbering the interstates through Macon had been discussed with FHWA at one time, but was eliminated from further consideration.*
- **Will Middle St. still connect with Hardeman Avenue?** *Yes.*
- **How will this project impact Little Richard’s childhood home?** *The current alignment of relocated Middle St. would require either removal or relocation of this structure. The alignment of Middle Street could be shifted to miss the house; however, this could require two or three more displacements.*



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- **Have the potentially displaced residents been notified yet?** *It is too early in the design process to determine which residents will definitely be displaced. Once the plan in Pleasant Hill has been finalized, all affected residents will be duly notified in a timely manner.*
- **Can improvements be made to the appearance of the Rodney Davis gravesite?** *GDOT will consider landscaping, etc. in this area within reason.*

Some citizens expressed concerns regarding impacts to the elderly and sick residents located along Middle Street. Their concern regarded the displacement of some of these residents on a fixed income. If they are displaced and moved into another house (which is probably more costly than what they are currently living in), how will they be able to afford the property taxes on a more expensive house.

### Next Steps

Following the question and answer session, Mr. Hale outlined the next steps in the design process. He noted that the preliminary engineering would be ongoing while the environmental document was being updated. In addition, a Public Information Open House (PIOH) would be held in the fall of 2006 and a Public Hearing would be held in the spring of 2007. He concluded by again emphasizing that coordination with the Pleasant Hill community would continue throughout the design process.



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<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>PHONE</b>
Ben Buchan	GDOT – Urban Design	404-699-4407
Jeff Simmons	GDOT – Urban Design	404-656-5444
Theresa Holder	GDOT – Urban Design	404-656-5444
Jennifer Mathis	GDOT - OEL	404-699-4408
Brad Hale	MA - Project Manager	770-263-5945
Chris Kingsbury	MA - Landscape Arch / NEPA Specialist	770-263-5945
Shrujal Amin	MA - Environmental	770-263-5945
Will Sheehan	MA - Highway Designer	770-263-5945
Peter Givens	PHNIG	
Amni? Hassan	We Care Group	
Alveno Ross	Macon City Council	
Johnny Lowdes	Pastor - St. Mary's	
David Biggors	Community Church of God	
Jim Thomas	Macon Planning & Zoning	
Bill Causey	City of Macon	
Randy Harshbarger	Resident	
Naomi C. Johnson	Resident	
K. Miller	Resident	
Chester Gibbs	Resident	
Willie James Irvin?	Resident	
Yolanda Carswell	Resident	
Adonis Thomas	Resident	
Mary Powell	Resident	
Ora Bess	Resident	
Theresa T. Watkins	Resident	
Greg Floyd	Resident	
Robert J. Williams	Resident	
Margaret Thompson	Resident	
Rosezenia? Benes	Resident	
Cora Bivins	Resident	
Carolyn Odon?	Resident	
Stephen Chanin	Resident	
Samuel Williams	Resident	
Caralyn Williams	Resident	
Carolyn C. Nedd	Resident	
Willie F. Wright	Resident	
Mrs. Mae Belle Culler	Resident	
Virgil Burton Sr.	Resident	
N.A. Pietrzak Sr.	Resident	
Nicholas Pietrzak II	Resident	
Alex Pietrzak	Resident	
Russell Claxton	Resident	
Vernon Ryle	Macon MPO	