

## MEETING NOTES

### MACON/PLEASANT HILL PROJECT

MASTER CONTRACT#: TOOELNV100523 · TASK ORDER#: 10 · PROJECT#: NHIM0-0016-01(092), BIBB

Version #: 1.0

Issue Date: 2/19/13

**Attendees:** GDOT: Clinton Ford, OPD; Eric Duff, OES; Kraig Collins, Area Engineer; Kimberly Larson, Communications; Scott Roberts, ROW;

**EnviroResolution (ER):** Tommy Craig, Jeff Dickerson, Banks Craig

**PHNIG:** Captain Willie May

**Location:** 4499 Riverside Drive, Macon, GA

**Date:** 2/19/13

**Purpose:** Macon/Pleasant Hill – Mitigation Progress Meeting

**CC:** Peter Givens; Naomi Johnson; Della Henderson; Captain Willie May; Pastor Billy Graham McFadden; Tony Lowden; Representative Nikki Randall; Senator David Lucas; Representative James Beverly

## Discussion

### Item 1: Community Outreach Activities

#### Action Item(s)

Tommy Craig began the meeting by explaining that Clinton Ford, Karlene Barron, Jeff Dickerson, and Banks Craig have been engaging in community outreach activities. Tommy Craig asked Jeff Dickerson to provide a more in depth discussion of these outreach activities:

- Jeff explained that meetings have been held with Pastor Billy Graham McFadden, Rep. Nikki Randall, Sen. David Lucas, and Rep. James Beverly.
- Jeff reported that the meetings went well, and he explained that GDOT is trying to include as many people as possible in the project. In addition, Jeff described how every person contacted has been helpful in providing GDOT with more contact information to further expand its outreach efforts.
- Rep. Randall and Sen. Lucas both expressed concern for making the interchange safer due to their personal experiences and the experiences of their constituents.
- Sen. Lucas and Rep. Beverly both showed interest in seeing more minority participation in the mitigation work.
- Rep. Beverly also voiced concerns about timing and wanting all of the mitigation to be completed before any construction begins on the interstate. In addition, he wishes that the offers on homes would take into consideration the intrinsic value of living the Pleasant Hill neighborhood for so many years.
- Captain May explained that he is Vice-Chair of the Shalom Zone in Pleasant Hill, and he discussed the mitigation efforts with some of the members of this group. He said that he understands the fears of Peter Givens and others in the Community that getting more people involved in the mitigation discussions might require going back to 2004 to get people up to speed. However, he also commented that there are many people he knows who are interested in the project that would come to meetings if invited. Therefore, he also understands why these community outreach efforts are necessary.
- Clinton Ford commented that our goal is for community leaders to come to the meetings and then go back to friends and community members and report what we talked about at the

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mitigation progress meeting.

- Jeff Dickerson then reported on an outreach meeting with the Macon Telegraph Editorial Board. Jeff explained that the Telegraph was very receptive to our visit and agreed to allow us to use their website to disseminate important project information. Further, Jeff described how we are looking for people to author op-ed articles to the newspaper.

#### Item 2: Right-of-Way Acquisition

##### Action Item(s)

Scott Roberts began an update of right-of-way acquisition activities:

- Scott explained there are seven owner occupants who are eligible to participate in the Exchange Agreement by having their houses moved to new lots and renovated. They will be provided rental housing paid for by the Department until their house is renovated. We are currently in negotiations with seven property owners and six of these owners are owner occupants.
- Little Richard's House should be acquired shortly if all goes well and according to plans.
- Captain May asked whether appraised values are based on comparable sales in the Pleasant Hill neighborhood. Scott responded that appraised values are based on comparable sales in the neighborhood or in close by/ general areas of Pleasant Hill.
- Captain May asked what happens if owner occupants want to stay with their houses. Scott explained that GDOT will pay moving costs and expenses and temporary housing expenses until the home is renovated and moved to the new vacant lot. There will be no costs to the owner.
- Captain May asked how many houses are vacant. Scott explained that 16 houses are vacant.
- Eric Duff explained that GDOT must do historic structures reports to determine if the houses are structurally sound enough to be moved.
- Jeff Dickerson commented that one of Scott Robert's right-of-way specialists presents the traditional Uniform Act option to the owner occupants, and Jeff presents the Exchange Agreement option so owner occupants don't feel pushed in either direction. In addition, Jeff described how important it is to make sure that all owner occupants are aware of the Exchange Agreement option. Therefore, Jeff will mail a copy of the Exchange Agreement and approved cover letter to each owner occupant once he has completed his initial visit with all of the owner occupants.
- Captain May asked the general age of the owner occupants. Tommy Craig responded that most of the owner occupants are older. Jeff Dickerson commented that in most of the meetings with the owner occupants they had someone present.

#### Item 3: Collecting of Oral Histories

##### Action Item(s)

Eric Duff gave an update on the collection of oral histories:

- Eric stated that Mary Beth Reed is working hard to collect oral histories. The oral history aspect of the project will not be a quick process because we want to make sure that we are collecting the histories from everyone who has something to share. Oral histories may include many things such as photographs or recordings.
- Eric explained that we are always looking for local informants or people who have information to share about Pleasant Hill. Eric asked that Captain May go back to his circle of friends and ask around for anyone who can provide more information about Pleasant Hill.

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- Eric stated that Mary Beth has hired a liaison that has been resident of Pleasant Hill for 11 years to help her collect oral histories.
- Captain May said that he has people in his church that can provide important history of Pleasant Hill. He asked if Steven Duvall has been contacted because his brother has collected a lot of historical items.
- Eric asked that Captain May provide names of any people who can contribute oral histories to Eric, Clinton, or ER. Captain May said that he would provide names to GDOT.

#### Item 4: Updating the Website

##### Action Item(s)

Jeff Dickerson provided information about the upcoming plans to update the website:

- Jeff said that we are in the process of putting a link on the existing project website. The website address is: [www.il6i75.com](http://www.il6i75.com).
- We are trying to provide information about the project to as many people as possible, and the website is a great way to reach out to certain groups.
- A lot of the residents are older and may not use the internet, but the website is a good way to reach out to other interested groups, journalists, or people who have moved away from Pleasant Hill but are still interested in the community.
- Clinton Ford remarked that renderings of the project are already on the website and have been for years.

#### Item 5: Quarterly Newsletter

##### Action Item(s)

Banks Craig discussed plans to create a project newsletter:

- Banks explained that we are in the process of creating a project newsletter to be distributed quarterly. The newsletter will contain important project information and milestones. This will be an important community outreach activity to keep as many people informed about the project as possible.
- The target date for the first issue of the newsletter is March 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Captain May said emailing the newsletter is not as efficient as distribution to churches and direct mailings. In addition, he does not believe putting information on front doorsteps has worked well in the past.

#### Item 6: Vacant Lot Plan Approval

##### Action Item(s)

Tommy Craig discussed approval of the vacant lot plan:

- Tommy explained that Peter Givens has the vacant lot plan. We are asking Peter to return his written comments to us by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Tommy told Captain May that he should contact Peter by the end of February if he has any ideas or input that he would like to go into the vacant lot plan.

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#### Item 7: Design of Mitigation Elements (parks, streetscapes, bridges)

##### Action Item(s)

Eric Duff led the discussion about the mitigation elements:

- URS is the consultant in charge of the design of Jefferson Long Park and the streetscapes
- They are under contract, and we are inviting them to attend the next meeting.
- There are several items URS can be working on now such as the environmental studies on the vacant lots. The vacant lot environmental studies should be ready by mid-March.

#### Item 8: Noise and Visual Barrier Meetings

##### Action Item(s)

Clinton Ford led the discussion of the noise and visual barriers:

- GDOT needs FHWA's approval of the community outreach plan. This plan includes the mitigation and design outreach.
- Once FHWA approves the plan, GDOT has notice to proceed on its outreach meetings concerning noise and visual barriers.
- There will be a separate meeting with each affected community. Each community will be given an opportunity to give comments on the noise and visual barriers. We will receive input from each community regarding how the walls will look from their backyards.
- Eric Duff stated that GDOT will host a meeting with local governments to discuss the noise and visual walls. We have been discussing using certain themes such as a "Cherry Blossom" or a "Music" theme.
- Clinton commented that the planned future meetings should bring out more ideas concerning the walls.

#### Item 9: Community Feedback

##### Action Item(s)

Captain May led the community feedback portion of the meeting:

- Captain May expressed that there is a lot of concern throughout the community about the project, and many people want to be kept abreast and informed.
- Jeff Dickerson asked if it would be helpful for GDOT and ER to attend a Shalom Zone meeting.
- Captain May stated that this would be helpful. He explained that the group meets every third Saturday at 9:00 a.m. at the Dan High Crime Prevention Center in Pleasant Hill (2000 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue).
- The next Shalom Zone meeting will be held on Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.
- GDOT and ER will attend and provide general project overview information.

#### Item 10: Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 27th

##### Action Item(s)

Clinton Ford stated that the next mitigation progress meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> at the GDOT Macon area office.