

Transportation Input Session
September 19, 2007
Harmony Intermediate School Auditorium

Planning Commissioners Present: Gladys Lewis, Nancy Hsu

Comments from the public:

Samer Beidas, Director of Public Works for the Town of Purcellville, provided the audience with extensive comments on the CTP on behalf of the Town and Town Council. Mr. Beidas read his comments from written talking points that have been attached to this memo.

Joe Gertig, Chairman of the Planning Commission of Hillsboro, stated that he has learned that in order to implement a through-truck restriction (through Hillsboro on Route 9), there must be a suitable alternate route for trucks to take. He asked whether it would be possible to require trucks to take the proposed connector as that alternate route.

George Phillips stated that it would ultimately be VDOT who would make that decision.

Amy Manasco Newton, a resident of Hillsboro and chair of a volunteer committee (Northwestern Loudoun Citizens Commission) for traffic concerns in Hillsboro, brought a petition with 80 signatures from all over the area in and around Hillsboro. The committee's mission is to achieve an equitable solution to excessive volume problems. They have seven guiding principles that they are providing to staff and the Planning Commission that they would like to be considered in the CTP update: reduce traffic volumes on Rt 9, reduce speeds along Rt 9, coordinate with officials from other counties and states, the benefit of citizens of the Rt 9 corridor should take precedence over others, the rural and historic nature of the area should be preserved, the viability of Hillsboro as a safe, pedestrian-friendly town should be preserved, and lastly, the growth of residential development should be limited. The committee recommends that: staff and the Planning Commission set aside all revisions to Rt 9 in the draft CTP until a study of all alternatives can be completed, the County establish a Rt 9 citizen task force, the County work with the task force to complete a comprehensive study of the corridor within 18 months, request adequate funding to complete the study, aggressively accelerate traffic calming in Hillsboro, and implement safety measures throughout corridor including lower speed limits, truck inspections and additional crosswalks. Finally, she requested that staff look at best practices of other states and above all put priority on Rt 9 citizens.

Don Vore, of Tranquility Road, stated that he is against the connector road running south to Business Route 7. He believes that this does not serve any purpose and would encourage traffic on Tranquility Road, a residential road.

Randy Cantrell, of Charles Town Pike, stated that he is not opposed to any plan that helps with traffic calming and lowering impacts to the County, however citizens of Loudoun should not have to spend money to accommodate out of County residents. He stated that

the County should work with our West Virginia counterparts to look at other opportunities such as bringing a road off of Rt 340 that minimizes impact to Loudoun.

Larry King, who lives off Bookcliff Court, stated that he is against the Hillsboro bypass (Rt 9 to Rt 7 connector) or any traffic diverter on the Virginia side of Rt 9. He also stated that he is a member of the commission described by Amy Manasco Newton and requested other citizens to sign the petition. He further explained what congestion pricing means (he was asked at the previous meeting) and mentioned where it is used. He is an advocate of this concept for the Rt 9 corridor. Finally, he mentioned his concerns for visual impacts of the construction of new roads.

Tim Canan, a resident of Purcellville and outgoing chair of the Purcellville Planning Commission, stated that he appreciated the changing of tonight's meeting date to accommodate the Purcellville Planning Commission schedule. He encouraged further coordination with the Towns of western Loudoun County. He also requested that members of the audience be kept in the loop of future NEPA processes. Finally, he asked how decisions will be communicated to participants.

George Phillips stated that all comments will be forwarded to the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Hsu stated that at the next Planning Commission meeting on October 1st (unconfirmed), the subcommittees will report the results of these meetings to the entire Planning Commission. After that, further schedule for the CTP update review will be established. She stated that the public is encouraged to attend all Planning Commission meetings. Commissioner Hsu asked OTS staff if a blog format could be added to the website.

Lorna Parkins, the CTP consultant, explained that a blog is not within the project scope, but all comments are scanned and added to site, and a log is posted from web inputs.

Commissioner Hsu stated that she and staff will look further into having a blog added.

Mark Pfoutz, a resident of Short Hill Road stated that he is pleased with the "more reasonable" alternative presented for Hillsboro's traffic issues. He encouraged the County to continue to move in this direction.

Devon Thatcher, of Bookcliff Court, asked what the note from the presentation about maximizing traffic on Rt 340 meant.

Lorna Parkins explained that Rt 340 will be 4 lanes in the near future. She also explained recommendations for widening Rt 7 in the CTP update in response to an additional question from Mr. Thatcher.

Paul Norris, also of Bookcliff Court, asked about the time horizon for the alternatives presented.

Lorna Parkins responded that the time horizon for the entire plan is 2030.

Mr. Norris also asked how many people live in this region of the County.

Lorna explained that she did talk about this topic and the relationship of land use and population and traffic at the last meeting. She recommended that he look at the previous meeting's presentation.

Mr. Norris also stated that he wants double yellow lines and lower speed limits on Rt 9 now. He also wants more enforcement on Rt 9 now. He feels that these measures should be implemented today rather than 2030.

John Lovegrove, of Cider Mill Road, stated that he appreciates the regional solution to issues that has been presented. He asked whether shoulders would be required on some of the roads that had been proposed for improvements. He stated that he recommended congestion pricing and expressed his continued desire for the connector road to go away.

Joe Smith, also of Cider Mill Road, stated that he wants to ensure the language in the CTP draft update is changed to reflect removal of connector road.

Commissioner Hsu stated that the bypass (connector) is no longer being recommended as decided by the Planning Commission. She explained that new language would be provided to reflect this change. She also stated that the only way to restrict any type of traffic through the Town is to provide an alternate route, and thus the inclusion of a new alternative for a northern bypass.

Mr. Smith also stated that he wants the original bypass line off the map too.

George noted that there is a comment with the line on the map explaining the Planning Commission's previous decision.

Commissioner Hsu stated that ultimately the Board could put the bypass back into consideration if they so choose.

Mr. Smith stated his belief that it would be more likely for the Board to reconsider the original bypass if they see that it is still on the map itself.

Commissioner Hsu concluded by summarizing the process and stating that as a result of these meetings they are putting together alternative recommendations to give to the Board in lieu of what was originally proposed.

Mr. Smith concluded his comments by stating that getting community input is the right way to go about completing the CTP and that the proper time should be taken to accomplish this.

Maura Walsh-Copeland, from south of Hillsboro, showed a map of a Hillsboro bypass alignment obtained from OTS. She also thanked the team for explaining that an alignment is not needed on the map to conduct a study of a corridor. She discussed a thorough review of statistics based on public comments on the CTP from all sources. She stated that overall they show that the recommendations of the draft CTP update (i.e. bypass/connector) are not supported. Finally, she asked the audience members who were against the bypass to stand up. A large number of people from the audience stood up.

Patti Flowers, a resident of Purcellville, asked how the commuter percentages were determined for trip origins/destinations from the presentation.

Lorna explained that a tool in the transportation model is used to determine these percentages. She further explained that the model is based on households and jobs that generate trips (including nearby jurisdictions)

Commissioner Hsu explained that the model makes a series of assumptions in order to reliably predict future traffic.

Lorna concluded by saying that the model also takes into account survey data in order to properly calibrate/validate its results.

Ms. Flowers also stated that the proposed enhancement of two lane roads would affect safety considerations on these roads. She believes that improvements shouldn't make these roads less safe.

Vick Thompson, as resident of Round Hill stated that the intersection of Williams Gap Road and Woodgrove Rd is a death trap. It is extremely difficult to make a right turn onto Woodgrove Road from Williams Gap Road due to speeding traffic and limited sight distance. He believes that a stop sign should be provided on Woodgrove Road to alleviate safety concerns.

Bob Brodowski, a resident of Purcellville, stated that the revised plan (from tonight) is reasonable and he supports an incremental measured approach to address the problems. He stated for the record that he does not support the connector road.

Kristen Thatcher of Bookcliff Court thanked the staff for listening to comments from the previous meeting. She asked for clarification of the widening of Rt 340 and Rt 7.

Lorna explained that Rt 340 is planned to be widened to four lanes to Rt 7 with Rt 7 to be 8 lanes from Rt 9 to Leesburg.

Dennis Upton, a resident of Purcellville, stated that he believes a connector will just increase traffic. He also feels that improvement of north-south routes results in de facto connectors with speeding traffic.

Lorna stated for the record that the new alternative did assume a new interchange at Rt 7 and 690.

Ben Lenhart, a resident of Neer Lane, stated that he helped work on the Common Ground petition. The purpose of the petition is to give voice to those impacted by Rt 9 issues, and to give time to come up with the right solutions. He believes that the issues should not have artificial deadlines. He also stated that the new alternatives are “food for thought.” He still however feels that the update should not be rushed. Finally, he asked about Section 7 of the draft CTP which references heritage resources. This states that Rt. 719 is a scenic byway. He asked whether this would impact the proposed plan to improve the route.

George Phillips stated that he is not aware of any prohibitions that would limit these types of improvements.

Lorna stated that VDOT has guidelines for byways that allow some flexibility that would permit such improvements.

Henry Stribling, a resident of Hillsboro, stated that he is also part of Common Ground. He stated that he believes that this meeting is even more reason for forming task force since it is another proposed improvement affect additional people. He asked Commissioner Hsu to explain the tunnel.

Commissioner Hsu stated that the tunnel is a feasible way to get through the mountain in terms of engineering. She also mentioned that a tunnel engineer is in the audience.

Mr. Stribling stated that the tunnel seems expensive.

Commissioner Hsu says the tunnel would be less than a mile and would not involve property acquisition to the same extent as a connector. She acknowledged that a tunnel requires further study. She then asked the tunnel engineer to discuss some of the technical details of such a proposal.

The tunnel engineer (name inaudible) stated that tunnels are frequently done in Europe because of tight space. For this location, the tunnel would be a concrete structure, approximately 4000' long, and it would be safe and water-tight. He stated that if asked, he could provide cross-sections and sketches of a proposed tunnel. Finally, he estimated the cost to be around \$20,000 per linear foot.

Tony Cockrell, a resident of Charles Town Pike, asked whether data was gathered about traffic coming into and out of Loudoun beyond just West Virginia.

Lorna explained that yes, in fact, these jurisdictions were taken into account.

Mr. Cockrell stated that he didn't understand that the meetings would build on each other. He feels that that land owners on the north of Hillsboro will not appreciate the tunnel concept going through their property.

Lorna explained that they are proposing a corridor study, not necessarily a northern bypass.

Mr. Cockrell further stated that he doesn't like congestion pricing because he feels this may cause a ripple affect of others charging tolls. Finally, he stated that diverting traffic is bad because it hurts other jurisdictions.

Elaine Walker, the mayor of Lovettsville, stated that she wants public transportation to be addressed. She stated that Mark Magreggor proposed a bus route plan for the towns that should be part of this plan. She stated that she is concerned about added traffic on Rt 690 due to a bypass and wants to be kept informed regarding these proposals. Regarding traffic calming on Berlin Pike, she stated that she would like uniformity in of speed limit in the Town. She also stated that she is pursuing construction of pedestrian/bike improvements in the Town. She would like a park and ride to be considered for the Lovettsville area. Finally, she stated that she has concerns about additional guard rail on Rt 287.

Judith LaFleur, a resident of Cider Mill Road, stated that she is concerned about the speed of the process and wants environmental and historical concerns taken into account. She also wants to know how much eminent domain would be required for any proposals. She reiterated her desire for the process to be slowed down. Finally, she stated that staff should allow time for comments on a tunnel.

Matt Danielson, a resident of Hillsboro, stated that he applauds the effort made. He also wants the staff and Planning Commission to take more time. He stated that he believes the tunnel is a way of burying the problem. He is worried that due to its cost, it may not happen, and thus the recommendations proposed would fail.

David Alexander of Woodgrove Road stated that he is opposed to the connector, but is in favor of a northern bypass. He feels that Round Hill has blossomed with a bypass.

Shawn Lyons of Bookcliff Court thanked staff and the Planning Commission for opening up dialog. He also stated that the process should be slowed down. He said that he understands some not wanting to toll because it could be seen as hostile, but he is also concerned about Loudoun citizens. He proposed that a toll/congestion pricing could pay for a tunnel. He also suggested that a toll might encourage carpool. He requested that the County increase interstate communication for transit and encourage telecommuters. Finally, he recommended that the CTP include language about protecting the environment.

Sam Brown, a resident of Purcellville, reiterated his concern that the southern collector is not a fast way out of Town. He believes that 50% of commuters stop to shop on their

way home and the same will happen in Purcellville and therefore the Southern Collector would be bypassed. The Southern Collector will also split his farm and cause safety concerns. He also stated that the Southern Collector will require a bridge over Crooked Run and this is a major deer crossing. He believes that the Rt 7/690 interchange will improve things and that staff should see how this affects the need for a Southern Collector. He also asked for an update on the Rt 7/690 interchange.

George Phillips told Mr. Brown that an RFP for the conceptual design of this interchange is currently being drafted.

Luke Wiseman, of Hillsboro, stated that he is concerned that if the tunnel goes away, the bypass may be to the south of Hillsboro and thereby destroy the Catocin Creek and cause noise issues in the Town, and affect his family farm. He stated that he is firmly opposed to a southern bypass of Hillsboro.

Commissioner Hsu stated that none of these proposed improvements are funded at this time and that the staff and Planning Commission are looking for the best solution.

Jeff Whitten, as resident of Hillsboro, stated that he is concerned that it is the length of the road that is the driving factor for the bypass and that if the tunnel is too expensive, a southern bypass will be approved.

Lorna explained that the length only had to do with making an accurate model representation for analysis.

Commissioner Gladys Lewis reiterated that the plan is built on current projections for land use. These projections are reflected in the plan through the high volumes of traffic and she views this as a major problem. She also expressed concerns about “improvements” on two lane roads such as turn lanes.

Commissioner Hsu thanked everyone for coming and asked all of the public to come to the Planning Commission meetings. She reiterated her desire to improve CTP website.

The meeting concluded at 9:23pm.

**TOWN OF PURCELLVILLE COMMENTS
ON THE
LOUDOUN COUNTY COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

TALKING POINTS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in this forum on your Countywide Transportation Plan.

I'm Samer Beidas, Director of Public Works for the Town of Purcellville. I am here on behalf of the Town and Town Council to present the Town's comments on the proposed plan update.

- You heard from some of our citizens last week at your meeting in Purcellville
- I'm here tonight to follow-up on those comments and provide input from Town staff
- This input has been vetted through our Town Transportation Committee

First, let me say, we applaud your efforts – efforts of the County Planning Commission, County staff and your consultants – on a comprehensive look at Loudoun County's transportation challenges and a coordinated set of solutions

- Not easy to develop such a plan for the 4th fastest growing county in the U.S.
- Town of Purcellville wants very much to work with you to coordinate our transportation planning efforts with your CTP

On behalf of the Town, I'd like to comment on what the plan currently addresses and additional items we believe it should address ... within the Town limits, within the PUGAMP area [Purcellville Urban Growth Area Management Plan], and just outside the PUGAMP area

As a basis for our comments, I'm sure you are aware that the Town recently completed an update to our Comprehensive Plan [December 2006]

- In that plan, we have included planned transportation improvements, as well as implementation strategies for making those improvements reality
- The road network shown in the PUGAMP is reflected in our Comprehensive Plan
- And one strategy of our Comp Plan is for us to complete a more detailed, multimodal Townwide Transportation Plan, which we are currently undertaking

Therefore, based on our Comp Plan and initial findings from our transportation planning efforts, the following projects are the Town's priorities:

1. Southern Collector, which would tie A Street to Route 287 and complete a much-needed link in our Town and within the PUGAMP
2. Interchange in the vicinity of Route 7 and Route 690 and/or the Western Collector

3. Main Street/Maple Avenue area improvements, including capacity improvements, signal upgrades, and pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements
4. Route 7/287 interchange improvements – to increase capacity and efficiency of moving people and goods to and from Town
5. Intersection improvements throughout our Town, including new traffic signals and roundabouts
6. Pedestrian and bicycle access improvements, including wider sidewalks and a more robust network of multiuse trails
7. Transit improvements, including upgraded bus service and facilities and a park and ride lot in the Purcellville area

Given our priorities, it is our desire that you take the following actions:

Continue to show in the CTP the improvements displayed on the CTP map in and around the Town of Purcellville, especially:

- Southern Collector, Northern Collector, Western Collector
- Widening of Route 7 and Route 287
- Interchange with Route 7 and Western Collector

On the CTP map:

- Realign the Northern and Western Collector so that their termini connect with each other [makes the network more efficient]
- Extend the Northern Collector to the east to a logical terminus [currently no logical road is shown ... may need to extend to Route 704 north of Hamilton]
- Include an interchange upgrade for the Route 7/287 interchange [upgrade is described in text but not shown on map ... upgrade needs to be both near term ramp improvements and long-term capacity improvements (e.g., additional ramps)]
- Include planned roundabouts for the four locations shown in the Town's Comprehensive Plan: A St/32 St, A St/20th St, A St/Maple Ave, and Main Street/Route 287
- Include Main Street in the County's planned scenic byway, if appropriate

In the document, include the provision for a detailed transportation study to be linked to the Hillsboro Bypass proposal. Please note that this proposed bypass is not shown on the adopted PUGAMP Plan and, therefore, would need to be approved by the Town of Purcellville and Loudoun County as a PUGAMP amendment.

- We need to understand how this bypass affects the overall transportation network in and around Purcellville
- We need to ensure the Town is not negatively impacted by the introduction of this regional traffic traveling to and from the northwest area of the county

As an overall comment, the Town wants to continue to work with County staff on resolving details of our respective transportation plans.

To that end, any decisions made by the County on the alignment of roads in the PUGAMP area must be coordinated with the Town. We would respectfully request that proposed transportation improvements outside of the immediate PUGAMP area also be coordinated with the Town.

It should be noted that the Town is a taxpayer to Loudoun County, and as part of the County, the Countywide Transportation Plan and the County should include provisions to provide funding of Town Transportation projects such as the Main Street and Maple Avenue Intersection Improvements as a primary road project as Main Street is controlled and maintained by VDOT. Main Street is a heavily traveled route especially with school buses.

Moving forward, our mutual goal is to develop a transportation plan—and to begin to implement planned improvements—that benefit residents and businesses in the Town and in western Loudoun County.

Thank you very much for your support and consideration.

Jefferson C

LEGEND	
ROADWAY ELEMENTS	
ALIGNMENTS	# OF LANES
EXISTING	10 LANES
PLANNED	8 LANES
	6 LANES
	4 LANES
	2 LANES
	FREEWAY
	CONCEPTUAL CORRIDORS (SEE MAP 7)
	PLANNED INTERCHANGE
	PLANNED ROUNDABOUT
	VIRGINIA SCENIC BYWAY
	PROPOSED SCENIC BYWAY
ULTIMATE ROADWAY GEOMETRY	
U	= URBAN (Curb & Gutter)
R	= RURAL (Shoulder & Ditch)
M	= MEDIAN DIVIDED
2 4 6 8 10	= TOTAL # OF LANES
TRANSIT ELEMENTS	
	PROPOSED METRO RAIL ALIGNMENT
	PLANNED METRO RAIL STATIONS
	WOOD SHARED USE PATH
	EXISTING POWER LINES



