



**Montgomery Road Project
Stakeholder Focus Group Meeting # 2
May 7, 2014**

Stakeholder Focus Group (SFG) Meeting #2

The second SFG meeting for the Montgomery Road Study was held on May 7, 2014 at the Montgomery Village Hall, 200 N. River Street, in Montgomery, Illinois from 2:00-4:00 PM.

The meeting included a PowerPoint presentation, which provided background information on the Phase I Engineering study; a summary of SFG Meeting #1; illustrations of the 3-lane and 4-lane alternatives for Montgomery Road and intersection designs; and graphics of the five (5) alternatives for the west-end of the corridor. Exhibit boards, displaying the five (5) west-end alternatives plus the results of the alternatives analysis, and roll plot maps, showing the 3-lane and 4-lane alignments, were provided for viewing by attendees.

18 participants (15 members of the Stakeholder Focus Group in addition to KDOT and the study team) attended the meeting. The participants represented area residents, businesses, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations, including:

Village of Montgomery
Montgomery Economic Development
Corporation
Forest Preserve District of Kane County
City of Aurora
Pace Suburban Bus
Fox Valley Park District

Phoenix Home enterprises
Aurora Township Highway Department
C21 Commercial
Montgomery-Countryside Fire Protection
District
Kane County Division of Transportation

To announce the May 7, 2014 SFG Meeting #2, e-mail invitations were sent to members on April 24, 2014 and three (3) direct mail invitations were sent to members without known email addresses. An email reminder was sent to members on April 30, 2014. Follow-up phone calls were made on May 6, 2014 to members who had not yet responded regarding attendance.

Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Project Background
- Summary of Meeting #1
- Present Alternatives
 - a. 3-Lane vs. 4-Lane



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- b. Douglas and Hill Avenue Geometry
- c. Discussion/SFG Input
- d. West End Alternatives
- e. Discussion/SFG Input
- Schedule
- Wrap Up

Proposed Roadway Design Alternatives

The purpose of the Montgomery Road Study is to improve traffic operations and upgrade existing facilities on the 3-mile section of the Montgomery Road corridor from IL 25 on the west to Hill Avenue on the east. The project is needed to meet future capacity needs, provide safe travel conditions, and better accommodate bicycles and pedestrians.

The first step of the study process, including data collection and analysis, has been completed. The study team has more recently been engaged in environmental studies and the development, evaluation, and refinement of alternatives for Montgomery Road, including a focus on the west-end also referred to as the “S” curve. Next steps include the selection of a preferred alternative and design approval.

SFG meeting attendees participated in 2 workshops. For the first workshop, a detailed overview of the 3-lane and 4-lane roadway alignment alternatives was provided by the study team. An interactive session followed, with SFG members providing feedback on the two roadway alternatives. The discussion centered on the following themes: Level of Service (LOS) resulting from the 3-lane vs. 4-lane alternatives; existing and future (2040) average daily traffic counts; intersection improvements at Montgomery Road and Hill Avenue; coordination with the City of Aurora on intersection improvements at Farnsworth Avenue and with IDOT on intersection improvements at IL 25 (both intersections are outside the scope of the Montgomery Road Study); and access/safety improvements associated with the Virgil Gilman Trail.

For the second workshop, a detailed overview of the five (5) alternatives for the west-end of the Montgomery Road corridor was provided by the study team. An interactive session with SFG members provided feedback on the advantages and disadvantages for each alternative and the overall trends for west-end improvements. The workshop resulted in the decision to dismiss Alternatives #2, 4, and 5.



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Next Steps

Following this SFG meeting, the study team will consider the stakeholder input that emerged from the workshops and, combined with the technical data and analyses will further refine the 3-lane and 4-lane alternatives as well as alternatives #1 and #3 for the west-end of the corridor. SFG members will be notified if a third SFG meeting is to be held in the summer 2014, prior to the Public Hearing.



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Workshop #1: 3-Lane vs. 4-Lane Alignments
(Summary of Workshop Feedback)

3-Lane Alternative

- Preferred at Douglas Avenue and Montgomery Road.
- Less LOS than the 4-Lane alternative but acceptable.

4-Lane Alternative

- Prefer dual acceptance lanes on WB Montgomery Road.
- Two through lanes will allow traffic to move through the signal.
- Drainage west of Hill Avenue south of Montgomery Road.
- LOS is acceptable; Generally speaking, C is the desired and D is the minimal LOS.

Questions and Answers

Q. How will these improvements affect the Virgil Gilman bike trail and the crossing at Montgomery Road?

A. A high visibility crossing will be studied at the location where the trail intersects with Montgomery Road.

Q. Will crosswalks to the path be provided?

A. Yes, crosswalks will be provided where necessary. Also, a 10-foot mixed use path on one side of the roadway and a 5-foot sidewalk on the other side of the roadway are planned and will start at Phillips Park, continuing west. These project elements will be refined once a preferred alternative is selected.

Q. Will there be any impact on Metra?

A. The roadway improvements on the west-end of the corridor will not impact Metra tracks or service.

Q. Several businesses on Montgomery Road are closing. Will any assistance be provided from KDOT?

A. During construction, businesses will be impacted. However, after construction there is generally resurgence in business development and activity.

Q. How will these projects impact home prices for those residences behind the "S" curve? (question from SFG member notes page)



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A. Generally speaking, an improvement to existing traffic conditions leads to an overall improvement in the area. However, no determination can be made towards the value of properties post construction.

Discussion

- Farnsworth Avenue (outside the scope of the Montgomery Road study)
Recommendations/Statements from SFG:
 - Coordinate Montgomery Road improvements with the Farnsworth Avenue improvements being planned by the City of Aurora.
 - Plan for safe left turn movements from Farnsworth Avenue to Montgomery Road.
 - Concept plan for Farnsworth Avenue is scheduled for completion at the end of 2014. Funding for Phase II Engineering has been identified.

Response:

- The Montgomery Road study report will include information about adjacent roadway/intersection projects. Safety aspects and concerns will be documented.
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- IL 25 and Montgomery Road Intersection
Recommendations/Statements from SFG:
 - Improve the IL 25 and Montgomery Road intersection at the same time as the Montgomery Road corridor (which lies in the current study area). Left turn lanes off IL 25 are needed since IL 25 backs up at the bridge.
 - Improvements to the IL 25 and Montgomery Road intersection and the Fox River bridge should be a combined project.

Response:

- The Montgomery Road study report will include information about the IL 25 intersection issues and IDOT's plans for IL 25 improvements. Any improvements will be coordinated with IDOT as IL 25 is under IDOT jurisdiction. Existing intersection will accommodate traffic at an acceptable level of service up to a design year of 2035.



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Workshop #2: 5 West-End (S-curve) Alternatives
(Summary of Workshop Feedback)

Alternative #1

- Advantages
 - Roundabout design takes Emergency Vehicles into account.
 - Uses existing alignment.
 - Has higher safety considerations; safer roadway.
 - Strong gateway into downtown.
 - Slows traffic in vicinity of park.
 - Better bike/pedestrian connectivity to the park, especially if a 10-foot path is built on the north side of Montgomery Road.
- Disadvantages
 - Does not help flooding problems (response: All roadway related drainage will be accommodated. It is not the intent of the project to resolve flooding issues in the surrounding areas that exist currently)
 - Property acquisition; impacts on property owners.

Alternative #2

- Advantages
 - Less impact to surrounding properties.
- Disadvantages
 - No SFG support for Alternative #2.
 - Close to no-build option.
 - Public perception of roundabouts vs. traffic circles—roundabouts are less desirable.
 - Need facility that serves purpose—to slow down traffic and improve safety.
 - Painted pavement is less desirable; east bound travelers will take the curve too fast.

Alternative #3

- Advantages
 - Many advantages to Alternative #3.
 - Increased privacy and safety.
 - Fewer buildings are impacted.
 - Cul-de-sacs work for emergency vehicles.



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- Roadway is designed for the speed limit so no need for traffic calming.
- Alignment addresses “S” curve.
- Prefer Alternative #3.
- Disadvantages
 - Police are generally opposed to cul-de-sacs; they take more time to patrol.
 - Left turns onto Montgomery Road may be an issue (response: gaps in traffic will be created to facilitate turning movements).
 - The roadway runs through a floodplain
 - Does not provide traffic-slowing alternatives (response: slowing traffic is not needed with this alternative since the roadway design is speed appropriate).
 - Possible wetland impacts (ACOE)

Alternative #4

- Advantages
 - Alignment addresses “S” curve.
- Disadvantages
 - Impacts to property on the south side of Montgomery Road.
 - Confusing traffic pattern/way-finding.

Alternative #5

- Advantages
 - Addresses speed concerns.
- Disadvantages
 - Two intersections are close together.
 - Longer distance to cul-de-sac for emergency access, plowing, and patrolling.
 - Turnaround looks like a choke point.
 - Confusing traffic pattern/way-finding.
 - Safety concerns.

Overall Trends

- Dismiss Alternatives # 2, #4, and #5.
- Trade-off--Alternative #3 moves traffic away from the residential area while Alternative #1 moves traffic through the area.
- Prefer the 5-foot sidewalk vs. the 10-foot path on the south side of Montgomery Road.
- Prefer either a 10-foot path or sidewalk, rather than both.



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- From an emergency services perspective, existing roadway conditions are more concerning than roundabouts.
- The park name was changed from Porter Park to Austin Park and plans should reflect the accurate name.

Questions and Answers

- Q. Are there any cost estimates on Alternatives #4 and #5?
A. This alternatives analysis doesn't consider the project cost. Costs are factored into Phase II Engineering when detailed design work is performed (in anticipation for construction). As an estimate, changes to the existing alignment will be more cost effective than a new alignment.
- Q. Who decides which roadway alignment will be proposed to the FHWA for approval?
A. Kane County and the Village of Montgomery will make the decision, based on technical aspects and public input.
- Q. Why has JULIE been identifying utilities?
A. Field surveys are being performed for this Phase I Engineering study. However, the identification of utilities is not part of the Montgomery Road project. Full environmental impacts are being studied for this project, including archeological studies.
- Q. Is there a short-term fix for the "S" curve in an effort to keep traffic moving?
A. In lieu of traffic lights, roundabouts are designed to slow down traffic, create a consistent traffic flow, and provide safe maneuvering.
- Q. Will Jiffy Lube and three homes be acquired/relocated so that any further roadway expansions could be possible with minimal impact? (question from SFG member notes page)
A. Only the Right of Way needed to construct the roadway will be targeted for acquisition. Any future projects would commence in the same manner.
- Q. Will the road, going through the wetland, be elevated? (question from SFG member notes page)
A. Typically, the existing ground elevation is mimicked when designing the roadway profile in order to minimize the overall footprint of the roadway. All efforts will be made to minimize impacts to the surrounding properties.