



FIREWEED LANE/LATOCHE STREET UPGRADE

MEETING NOTES

SUBJECT: Fireweed Lane/LaTouche Street Upgrade W.O. D58819
Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

DATE/TIME: September 22, 2005 / 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

LOCATION: DOWL Engineers, Training Room

GROUP: 11 Committee Members

STAFF PRESENT: *DOWL Engineers* – Steve Noble, Bill Coghill, Brad Melocik, Kevin Doniere, and Nan Llewellyn
MOA, PM&E – John Smith and David Gardner
MOA, Traffic - Bob Kniefel
Residents – Joe Bernardini, Bill Rice, and David Evans

MEETING MATERIALS: PowerPoint presentation, Informational binder, Comment forms and comment box, Sign in sheets

MEETING INFORMATION: Eleven members attended the first Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting on Thursday, September 22, at DOWL Engineers. Steve Noble discussed the role and responsibilities of the CAC and gave a PowerPoint presentation that included a description of the project, the scope of work, and the proposed schedule. Comments and questions submitted by the CAC members are summarized in the following pages. Project staff's comments and responses to questions are shown in italics.

- *The purpose of the CAC is to advise DOWL and the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) on the problems and improvements that members see as necessary, and to provide feedback on the proposed improvements' effect on the community. The MOA is the ultimate decision-maker.*
- *This is the first of four CAC meetings. DOWL is planning to hold CAC meetings each month, in an effort to keep the project moving. The next CAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 27, before the 35 percent design submittal; the third meeting will be held between the 35 percent and 65 percent design submittals; and the fourth meeting will be held before the 95 percent design submittal. In addition to CAC meetings, project staff will provide monthly briefings to the Rogers Park Community Council on the project status. The second public meeting is planned to be held after the 65 percent design submittal.*
- In 2003 the Rogers Park Community Council sent Steve Gillette a letter expressing concern about the storm drain line on Juneau Street.
- What is the status of the planned Juneau Street bike path project? *DOWL and the Municipality are aware of this project, but do not know the project status at this time. By the next CAC meeting DOWL will find out whom they should coordinate with on the bike path project and the funding source for the trails project.*
- Is there money for the soccer field project? *DOWL and Municipality staff are not aware of a specific project planned for the soccer field.*

- When the Juneau Street drainage issue was added to the Fireweed/LaTouche Upgrade project was the project budget increased accordingly? *There is enough money to amend DOWL's contract to include the drainage issue in the scope of work. Further along in the project when the answer to the drainage issues becomes clearer, the dollar amount in the CIP will be refined.*
- Does Municipal Light and Power (ML&P) own the overhead electrical lines in the area? *Yes. ML&P's five-year plan states that ML&P plans to underground the overhead utility lines. Citizens who support this plan should email Lance Powell of the ML&P and let him know they would like the overhead lines to be put underground. DOWL will need to find out what the exact plan for the utilities is (does ML&P plan to underground the lines on both the north and south side of Fireweed, or just one?)*
- *A multi-use trail along Fireweed is planned. It is important to note that the planned trail along Fireweed west of the Seward Highway is a separate project.*
- What are the units for the accident data included in the presentation? *Crashes per million entering vehicles.*
- A CAC member had read that traffic on the Seward Highway was projected to double in the next ten years. *This projected increase assumes that the Seward Highway to Glenn Highway connection will be built.*
- *The percentage of Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for the project corridor during the peak p.m. hour is between 15 and 17 percent. This percentage is higher than the average peak p.m. percentage of between 9 percent and 11 percent. The MOA's design guidelines state that if the percentage of ADT during peak hour is 15 or higher, then 11-foot turn lanes are required.*
- *The project team presented various cross-sections typical of collector streets and discussed the design features, advantages, and disadvantages of each. For this project, there is 60 feet of right-of-way available.*
- *It is likely that the buffer between the roadway and sidewalk will not be less than seven feet wide. Snow removal is typically stored in the buffer, and anything less than seven feet can create maintenance problems.*
- *Would the shoulder be striped as a bike lane? The shoulder will have appropriate roadway striping and would be wide enough to serve as a bike lane, but would not be designated as a bike lane because it would be discontinuous at the LaTouche Street/Northern Lights Boulevard and Fireweed Lane/New Seward Highway signalized intersections.*
- *If the overhead utility lines within the right-of-way (ROW) have to stay, would the 2-foot buffer between the roadway and sidewalk be eliminated? The buffer area would need to be reduced to allow the pedestrian pathway to go around the utility poles.*
- *There was a general discussion about the width of the landscape buffer. Several people who attended the Public Scoping Meeting expressed a desire to have a well-designed, separated pathway, and the project team presented a cross-section with a landscape buffer on the north side of Fireweed Lane that reflects the public's wishes.*
- *Why is the minimum width for shoulders 3½ feet? This minimum width allows for snow storage and a place for disabled vehicles to pull off the roadway.*

- How do the Municipality's design standards compare to other northern cities? *The Municipality recently published a report by an Anchorage-based engineer, Randy Kinney, that compares Anchorage's collector design standards to other northern cities. DOWL will bring copies of Kinney's report to the October CAC meeting.*
- *Although neighborhoods sometimes favor narrow streets, narrow streets are not always better. An example of a narrow collector street is Timberline. The residents initially wanted a narrow street, but when the project was finished and the effects of the narrow street became apparent, the neighborhood regretted the decision. There is no on-street parking, so people park in the road, as a result.*
- If a bioswale is used on Fireweed Avenue, how will it affect people who need to access their homes on the south side of Fireweed Avenue? *Each driveway would need to have a culvert, which would significantly increase maintenance and limit the length of the bioswale.*
- *The MOA issued a letter six months ago stating they were not going to maintain driveways and backyard access off of Fireweed Avenue, but Municipal staff will review this decision. In a couple of recent projects, the MOA has not installed driveway cuts, but instead has installed mountable curbs to help recreational vehicle access.*
- Has anyone looked at the old plat notes regarding access to homes off of Fireweed? *DOWL did review these, but the plats did not address this issue.*
- *Whenever portions of a road are converted to urban sections, the roadway often has to be lowered to improve drainage, but project staff have to be careful to avoid ponding in areas behind the curb and gutter.*
- Could the driveways off of Fireweed be slightly swaled? *This would negate the need for culverts. This would not work well for RVs that use these driveways.*
- *Bob Butera, a Roger's Park resident, is strongly in favor of curb and gutter the whole length of the project because it will "narrow up" the appearance of the road and significantly reduce maintenance and prolong the life of the asphalt.*
- Bill Rice discussed the Chester Creek 206 Study that HDR prepared for the Army Corps of Engineers in October 2000. The Report recommends using an area south of the soccer field as an infiltration area for storm drain runoff. *Brad discussed these options with Bob Butera (who wrote the report) at the Public Scoping Meeting on Monday night. At the CAC meeting, Bill and Brad discussed the options of using bioswales versus treating the runoff in the wooded areas south and east of the soccer fields. Treating the runoff at the end of Juneau Street would treat more water than just that on Fireweed and LaTouche, and would therefore have a greater effect on water quality. It was determined that DOWL would request additional survey for the wooded areas to see if it is feasible to treat the water in the wooded areas as discussed in the HDR report. The use of step-pool configurations vs. piping were also discussed. DOWL will develop alternatives after the completion of the survey to be discussed at the next meeting.*

ATTACHMENTS: Sign-in sheet
Action items