



Cortaro Farms Road/Magee Road:
Thornydale Road to Oracle Road
Community Advisory Committee Meeting



Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2009
6 – 7:30 p.m.
Pima Community College, Room A-207

CAC Members Present at Meeting:

- George Ballesteros
- Robert Barr
- Molly Frazer
- Kathy Gatto
- Dennis Hansen
- Steve Sisson
- Tom Unger
- John Whitehill-Ward
- Bernie Wiegandt

CAC Members Not in Attendance:

- Kathryn Culver
- David Jacobs
- Steven Kresal
- William Scott
- David Williams

Attending from Project Team:

- Pima County Department of Transportation (PCDOT): Jonathan Crowe, Rick Ellis, Jacqui Andrade, Julie Simon
- AECOM: Bill Schlesinger, Roberto Murrieta
- EcoPlan: Mike Dawson
- Sound Solutions: Bill Holliday
- Artists: Nina Borgia-Aberle, Stephen Grede
- Gordley Design Group: Barb Alley, Angie Brown, Jan Gordley

Materials Distributed:

- Agenda
- Noise Report and Maps
- Art Comment Forms
- Art Packet

Bill Schlesinger, AECOM, welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the CAC meeting. Bill stated that the purpose of this meeting was for the CAC members and Bill asked that the public hold their questions until the CAC part of the meeting was

adjourned. Bill also stated that there would be an open house on Thursday, June 11. Steve Sisson, CAC Co-Chair, started the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves and whom they represent. Steve asked if the CAC members had any comments prior to starting the meeting. A CAC member brought up an issue with a utility company doing work in the proposed project area. Bill said he was in talks with all the utility companies in the project area and had asked to be informed on any work being done in the area.

Bill gave a project update:

- Submitted Stage 1 Plans to PCDOT
- Waiting on comments to come back from PCDOT
- Nearing completion of draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and draft Design Concept Report (DCR) – will send to PCDOT for review
- In June/July, the EA will go out to the CAC members
- Within 30 days the CAC will need to write letter of recommendation
- In August/September, will be the hearing before the Pima County Board of Supervisors (BOS)

A CAC member mentioned they would like to receive the EA as soon as possible. Rick Ellis, PCDOT, said that as soon as PCDOT has reviewed the documents, the CAC would be able to begin looking at the documents, along with the Stage 1 plans.

Bill introduced Nina Borgia-Aberle and Stephen Grede, the artists creating the art plan. They will not be creating any physical art on this improvement project. Nina told the group that her and Stephen's job would be to research the area and make recommendations as to what kind of art should be created, and where the art may be appropriate to be placed along the corridor. They have been looking at the corridor and are in the process of evaluating art potential by interviewing residents, finding out wants, needs, wishes and who they are as a community, as well as researching the site for its cultural history. Stephen stated it was important to start the dialogue now on art to make sure there are no missed opportunities, as the project gets further into design.

Nina said it is very important to be informed when the CAC starts talking to their neighbors and friends about the art that may be included as part of this project. She stated that tonight's presentation was specifically for the CAC, and as they receive comments back from the CAC members, those comments would be incorporated into documents that would be presented at the open house. Nina informed the group that they were given questionnaires that the artists would like the members to pass out to their neighbors and friends to obtain feedback. That information would be compiled and shared at the open house in June.

The PowerPoint presentation that Nina and Stephen presented showed a variety of examples of how art can be used on transportation projects. The full presentation may be viewed on the project Web site at www.roadprojects.pima.gov/cortaromagee. At the end of the presentation, Nina asked if the CAC members had any questions.

She explained this project has three phases; there would be a different artist chosen for each phase. Although each phase will be different, the goal is to tie all three sections together in a cohesive manner. Nina said the art recommendations would be compiled before the call goes out to solicit artists for the three phases of this project. A panel consisting of community members and local artists, coordinated by the Tucson Pima Arts Council (TPAC), selects the artists. The artists on the projects will continue to communicate with the public as they design their concepts for the corridor.

A question was raised about vandalism. Nina stated that the artists would do what they could to use materials that would deter vandalism.

Nina asked that the questionnaires she handed out to the CAC be returned to Angie Brown, Gordley Design Group, within 10 days. That should give her and Stephen enough time to compile all the information they will need for the public meeting in June.

Bill turned the floor over to Mike Dawson, EcoPlan, and Bill Holliday, Sound Solutions, for the presentation of the noise study. The presentation concentrated on results and recommendations. He had several handouts for the members: summary table showing the 2030 results under the build and no-build alternatives; summary table showing impacted receivers relative to reasonable criteria; and maps showing where noise walls might be warranted at this time.

Mike informed the group that this project, due to receiving federal funding, would be following the Federal Highway Association (FHWA) guidelines when it comes to the noise report. He said noise mitigation is warranted when the sound levels approach 67 decibels (dBA), which is defined as 66 decibels (dBA), or when there is an increase in noise of at least 15 dBA. County standards allow for a 3 dBA reduction in sound with the use of rubberized asphalt; however, FHWA does not allow for the 3 dBA credit in their guidelines. Mike explained that the FHWA guidelines apply to all states. Rubberized asphalt performance varies by climate. The material works well in the southwest, but is less effective in colder climates. FHWA is looking into the possibility of amending their policy to include a dBA reduction for our region in the future.

Mike gave an overview on how the noise study was taken. He said actual noise readings are taken for verification of the Traffic Noise Model (TNM). To calculate future noise levels, multiple reads are taken onsite to assess current levels to ensure the model is accurate. Other factors are added to the model; for example, projected increase in traffic volumes as obtained from the Pima Association of Governments (PAG). Those figures, along with increase in number of lanes and closer proximity to homes, are added to the model to calculate projected noise for the improvements out to the year 2030.

Mike stated that there were 22 locations along the corridor that warranted consideration of noise abatement. Mike also explained that if there were changes to the design plans once the project team has completed their 30-percent plans, the noise study would be recalculated to ensure its accuracy.

Mike explained that even if noise walls may be warranted, they must also be feasible, and there are several criteria that must be met:

- The walls must be continuous with no breaks. Breaks in the walls allow sound to enter and bounce back and forth between a residence and the wall. This is not effective noise mitigation.
- A noise wall must provide a minimum reduction of 5 dBA.
- It must be a cost effective, not to exceed \$35,000 per benefited receiver. (No single benefited receiver would receive a wall – too expensive.)
- At least 51 percent of those residents who qualify for a wall must want the wall for it to be constructed.

Mike concluded his presentation by showing the members a rendering of what the wall height might look like. He stated that the wall height would vary from 6 feet to 10 feet, depending on the area. The determination of the height will come later in the process.

Q: Why are the noise readings different from block to block on the same street?

A: There are developments that currently have walls, some homes are closer to the street and there are different elevations along the corridor, all contributing to various fluctuations in noise.

Q: Where in the city can I drive on rubberized asphalt?

A: Rick Ellis, PCDOT, gave several locations around Tucson, which have rubberized asphalt, such as Craycroft Road between Sunrise Drive and River Road.

Q: Do trees help with noise abatement?

A: No. Trees would need to be hundreds of feet thick to act as a noise barrier.

As stated earlier, Mike said another noise report could possibly be done at final design depending on any adjustments made to the original design or traffic forecasts. Additional discussions clarified information on the handouts.

Bill went over the construction schedule:

- Phase 1: Mona Lisa Road to La Cañada Drive – late 2010 to early 2011
- Phase 2: La Cañada Drive to Oracle Road – after the completion of Phase 1
- Phase 3: Mona Lisa Road to Thornydale Road – after Phase 2 has been completed

Cash flow will dictate the completion of all phases; expected timeframe for all three phases is 10 to 15 years. The above-mentioned per-benefited cost for noise walls is at today's prices. There will be increases, due to rising construction costs, approximately every two years.

A request was made for the traffic numbers used in the noise report. Bill stated he would get those numbers back to the CAC.

Nina addressed the group asking that the comment forms be returned to Angie no later than May 20.

Meeting dates were discussed and it was decided that the May 18 meeting to further discuss the noise study was not needed. The team would move forward with the already scheduled June 1 meeting at St. Mark's United Methodist Church.

Comment: There are several homes for sale along the Cortaro Farms Road/Magee Road corridor; need to make sure improvements are being disclosed to potential buyers.

Additional Questions:

Q: How was the noise measured at Paseo Monserrat since the road is not yet built?

A: The noise was measured with current conditions, then computer modeling was done with the proposed improvements.

Q: Where were the readings taken?

A: The source of the noise is calculated from the center of the lane; the receiver location is based where outside use areas are located and can vary slightly depending on the profile of the roadway.

Q: How were the predictions for the traffic counts made?

A: The numbers were obtained from PAG.

Q: Won't the noise be much greater if the traffic doubles as anticipated?

A: No, doubling traffic only increases the noise by approximately 3 dBA. This increase will be wiped out with the use of rubberized asphalt, which decreases road noise by 3 dBA.

Q: Don't higher speeds increase noise?

A: Yes, the model takes that into account.

Q: At what speed is the modeling calculated?

A: The calculations are done at the maximum of 45 mph.

Mike stated the noise study would be on the Web site for all to view prior to the June 1 meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.