

Meeting Minutes

To: SH 34 Community Advisory Group

From: Halff Associates, Inc.

Subject: State Highway 34 Corridor Study &
Environmental Assessment

Meeting Date: August 2, 2005, 6:30 pm-7:30 pm

Location: City of Kaufman Fire Department Training
Room, 301 S. Madison, Kaufman, TX

Minutes Date: August 12, 2005

Project: State Highway 34 Corridor Study & Assessment: from Kaufman (SH 243) to
Terrell (north of IH 20)
TxDOT CSJ: 0173-04-026; Halff AVO 22015/WO10

Attendees:

“See Attached Sign-In List”

- 1. INTRODUCTION** Stephen Endres, Project Manager for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), welcomed the attendees and briefly discussed the project. Following Stephen Endres, the attendees introduced themselves and told what organization or community they represented.
- 2. CONTENT** Matthew Craig with Halff Associates gave a 25 minute slideshow presentation, discussing public involvement, mobility plans, previous studies, scope of current work, and community concerns.
- 3. COMMENTS** Following the presentation, the floor was open to comments and suggestions from the attendees. The first commentary came from Kaufman County Judge, Wayne Gent. He recalled a study completed in 1977, where the general consensus was to improve existing State Highway 34. At that time, the project was put on a 20-year plan. Then again in 1997, the project was put on a 20-year plan. The Judge expressed relief that the project may finally begin. He also believed that improving existing State Highway 34 may be less expensive than building a completely new roadway. The Judge also expressed concern about whether or not the Trans Texas Corridor will affect the State Highway 34 project.
- 4.** A property owner mentioned the public meeting held in October, 2004. There was an overwhelming response from the general public. However, the attendees generally did not prefer any of the alignments. The property owner suggested that the cause of this was the existence of too many alignments. He stated that most of the alignments were not reasonable, as they cut right through established neighborhoods. Due to the high number of alignments, more

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homeowners were potentially affected. He proposed that a lower number of alignments would lead to fewer complaints from the public. Larry Tigert, Mayor of Post Oak Bend, agreed with these views on the October 2004 public hearing. He stated that many upset residents of Post Oak Bend were contacting him with complaints about the project months after the meeting. The Mayor suggested that if many alignments are represented to the public, that a likelihood of choosing each alignment is also represented.

5. One gentleman asked that Halff Associates provide detailed information about the study. He would like to be able to see the actual information Halff has gathered and also check to see if anything had been missed. His concern was that maps presented at the meeting did not provide enough information. During the presentation Matt Craig informed attendees that a website would be made available in the future that would have more detailed information about the study. One Kaufman resident asked if Halff Associates or TxDOT considered truck traffic in the study corridor. He acknowledged that many trucks travel south through Kaufman rather than the City serving as their destination.
6. One attendee asked how the Kaufman Bypass has any relation to the State Highway 34 corridor study. Judging by the map, he acknowledged that the Bypass leads northward toward the old railroad. The gentleman reasoned that since the location of the Bypass is basically set in stone, it makes sense to use the old railroad as the preferred alignment. He asked if the existence of the Bypass eliminated any alignments to the west of the railroad. Jan Heady with TxDOT, talked briefly about the Kaufman Bypass. There were many complaints about truck traffic through Kaufman, which led to the planning of the Bypass. These causes made the project progress well. She said that now a route connecting Kaufman and Terrell needs to be addressed. This route will not necessarily tie into the Kaufman Bypass. Jan also recognized that there is no funding for the State Highway 34 project at the present time.
7. John Blain Jr., Oak Ridge Councilman, spoke up about existing State Highway 34. He recommended that project managers be careful when considering expanding State Highway 34 because there are many subdivisions and utilities running alongside the roadway. There are also more subdivisions expected to be built. Mr. Blain also pointed out that the area between State Highway 34 and the Kaufman Bypass is only two lanes. Because the Kaufman Bypass and the preferred alignment in this project will be heavily traveled roadways, it may be difficult to get from one to the other through such a narrow route. Mr. Blain requested traffic projections be presented at the next meeting. One suggestion Mr. Blain had was to build the new roadway west of Kings Creek. He suggested that this would aid economic development. He argued that State Highway 34 is already developed. Also, the zoning in Oak Ridge is practically all residential. He would like to see some development in the surrounding area, which would be an advantage of a new roadway.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community Advisory Group will be scheduled for early October.

Materials Distributed at the Meeting:

- Summary Prints of Slide Presentation
- SH 34 Corridor Study Public Involvement & Agency Coordination Plan

Other Materials Distributed with these Minutes:

- Meeting sign-in sheet

This concludes the Meeting Minutes. Our goal is to provide a complete and accurate summary of the proceedings of the subject meeting in these minutes. If you feel that any of the items listed above are not correct, or that any information is missing or incomplete, please contact Half Associates so that the matter can be resolved, and a correction issued if necessary. These minutes will be assumed to be correct and accepted if we do not hear from you within ten (10) calendar days from your receipt.