

# Meeting Notes

**PROJECT:** SH 34 Corridor Study  
**ATTENDEES:** SH 34 CAG  
Refer to Sign-in Sheet

**Proj #:** 0173-04-026

**LOCATION OF MEETING:** Kaufman, Texas

**DATE/TIME OF MEETING:** October 27, 2005  
6:30 PM

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The following is our understanding of the subject matter covered in this meeting. If this differs from your understanding, please notify us within five working days.

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Stephen Endres, Project Manager for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), welcomed the SH 34 Community Advisory Group (CAG) attendees and asked if there were any questions/comments regarding the September 22, 2005 Minutes. Following Stephen Endres, the attendees introduced themselves and briefly explained their interest in the project.

Matthew Craig, with Halff Associates, provided a brief history/summary of the project to date. He referred to the SH 34 Alternatives and Constraints Map (hand out) and introduced two 'new' alternative alignments developed as a result of the CAG review/comments made during the last meeting : 1996 LPA South Offset and 1996 LPA Offset. He then introduced the *Draft Analysis of Conceptual Alternatives* (DACA) and briefly discussed each of the constraints per conceptual alternative alignment. The DACA will be used as a tool to help make the preferred alignment decision.

A question/concern from an attendee representing a development company was offered to the committee. He stated that a unique, high quality wildlife area (large trees, rich in flora and fauna species diversity) exists near the new alignments. He emphasized that the area is valuable in its natural state and expressed his (and his constituents) concern regarding the potential impacts to that unique area from the proposed alignments. Matthew Craig asked the gentlemen for a planning location map and if he would point the area out on the large poster map after the meeting. He thanked the gentlemen for bringing the issue to the committee's attention and said that those are the kinds of areas they would try to avoid impacting.

Social and Economic Effects – Constraints were quantified such as number of displaced homes and number of nearby structures. [The DACA lists all of the constraint parameters.] Although the number of nearby structures is not a true impact, it does provide a measure of the number of structures or density of the corridor the particular alignment. The Study Team arbitrarily selected 500 feet on each side of the proposed alignments to determine the number standing structures.

Environmental Effects – Constraints per alternative alignment were briefly discussed. Regarding the evaluation of the woodland areas, aerial photographs were used to identify/quantify dense woodlands. A few archeological sites were identified; however, they were not mapped to safeguard against unauthorized visits, etc.

Other Effects – Difficulty/disruption in construction per alternative alignment was briefly discussed. The “-” designation on the DACA indicates the worst possible score/scenario per alignment. [Refer to Draft October 27, 2005, DACA.]

Costs – 2005 dollars were used to estimate the costs associated with each alternative alignment and

these costs will inflate. Utility relocation costs are also included. The Kaufman County Central Appraisal District property values were used at the square foot level and then a factor of 3.0 was applied to the total costs.

It was determined that improving the existing SH 34 would not be cost effective. It would take approximately six times the cost to improve an existing roadway as opposed to building a new alignment.

Another point to consider is that the cost of building a road on the ground is much less than building the same amount of road on a bridge.

Phasing the construction of a new alignment based on the traffic might be considered. A four-lane roadway could be constructed first with the space to expand to a future six-lane roadway when the need arises.

Trans Texas Corridor update – The public hearing and release of the Environmental Impact Statement should be in the spring of 2006. It is still going through the environmental process.

Questions asked during the CAG meeting were:

- Is the Railroad alignment in the floodplain?
- Do the construction costs include mitigation for wetland (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and woodland (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department) impacts?
- It appears that the 1996 LPA Offset alignment has more curves than SH 34. Is it just as dangerous to have more curves?

Public Involvement – The selection process would screen the proposed alignments by cost, displacements, and environmental effects. Every effort will be made to avoid or reduce impacts. The decision on the alignments should be reached by the end of this year or at the first of next year. Matthew Craig reiterated that the Project Website was accessible online and provided the web address [www.34corridor.org]. He mentioned that he has a presentation at the Post Oak Bend Council Meeting on November 1, 2005. He informed the attendees of the forthcoming public meetings scheduled for November 8 & 10, 2005, and briefly discussed the procedures/process for the meetings.

Following the presentation, Stephen Endres of TxDOT asked for additional questions, input, etc. The next meeting was scheduled for 6:30 pm, January 26, 2006, at the Kaufman Fire Station.

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These notes are only summaries of key points of the meeting and are not meant to be used as a transcript of the meeting.

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**REPORTED BY:** Jonathan Stewart – Civil Associates, Inc.

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