

Meeting Notes

PROJECT: SH 34 Corridor Study **Proj #:** 0173-04-026
ATTENDEES: Refer to Sign-in Sheet **LOCATION OF MEETING:** Kaufman, Texas
DATE/TIME OF MEETING: December 22, 2005 2:00 PM

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.

Stephen Endres, Project Manager for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), welcomed the SH 34 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) attendees and asked if there were any questions/comments regarding the October 27, 2005 Minutes. Following Stephen Endres, the attendees introduced themselves and briefly explained their interest in the project.

Public Meetings - Matthew Craig, with Half Associates, provided a brief summary of the November 8 and 10, 2005, Public Meetings and distributed a summary of comments from the meeting. Approximately 150 persons attended each meeting and there were 20 written comments received. The majority of comments were against the alternative for widening the existing SH 34 with only one in favor of it. There were also numerous comments on various sensitive areas, but most comments preferred the middle alternatives.

Alternatives Analysis - Matthew Craig referred to the SH 34 Alternatives and Constraints Map (hand out) and introduced a 'new' alternative alignment (Alternative K) as a result of the public meeting and Community Advisory Group (CAG) review/comments: Combination of Alternatives "E" and "G". Refer to the SH 34 Alternatives and Constraints Map for the location of Alternative K. He also referred to the *Draft Analysis of Conceptual Alternatives* (DACA) and briefly discussed Alternative "K". This new alternative has the lowest impacts of the other alternatives and is currently the lowest cost option. Final numbers should be available for the next meeting, following additional field verification regarding floodplain, wetland, and woodland impacts.

A request was made to look at the floodplain issue more intensely; the numbers on the DACA did not look correct. Matthew Craig indicated that they will look at the FEMA maps and compare with the topographic maps, etc. to accurately refine the numbers for the February meeting. He indicated that he will be making recommendations to the TAC on the preferred alignment to be presented at the next Public Meeting in March/April 2006.

Schedule - Matthew Craig briefly reviewed the 'project approval' process. He indicated that the schematics show information that will be used as a tool for ROW acquisition. When the schematics are about 30-60% complete, the Environmental Assessment (EA) can be prepared which will evaluate 27 environmental items. Once completed, the EA will be reviewed by the TxDOT Dallas District, and the TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division (ENV) in Austin. Once ENV is satisfied with the EA, it is sent to FHWA and other agencies for review. All comments will be addressed, and the EA will be revised accordingly. The project can then advance to the Public Hearing. The Public Hearing will be the final opportunity to get comments and results. When the FHWA is satisfied with this process, they will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact, probably in Spring/Summer of 2007. The final approval of the schematics establishes the ROW need, and TxDOT can proceed with ROW acquisition, subject to

availability of funding.

A question was asked when funding would be available. Stan Hall, P.E. of TxDOT indicated that no funds would be available until after this planning stage. In a perfect world, 2010 would be the earliest start-up date.

Trans Texas Corridor update – The public hearing and release of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be in the spring of 2006. The EIS is still going through the environmental review process. Hopefully, some dates will be available by the February TAC meeting.

Public Involvement – Matthew Craig reiterated that the Project Website was accessible online and provided the web address [www.34corridor.org]. He mentioned that the Community Advisory Group met on October 27, 2005 in the evening and he thanked those for their time; their input was helpful in alignment determination. He mentioned that the next 34 CAG meeting would be January 26.

Following the presentation, Stephen Endres of TxDOT asked for additional questions, input, thanked everyone for coming, and wished everyone a Merry Christmas. The next TAC meeting was scheduled for 2:00 pm, February 23, 2006, at the Kaufman Fire Station.

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

REPORTED BY: Jonathan Stewart – Civil Associates, Inc.

Copy to:

File 2396

G:\2396-HALFF_SH34\MEETING MINUTES\CAI_MTG_NOTES_12_22_05.DOC