



## Meeting Minutes

**Re:** Caton Farm Road-Bruce Road  
Transportation Corridor Committee Meeting

**Date:** February 13, 2006

**Location:** Will County Department of Highways  
16841 West Laraway Road

**Time:** 10:00 A.M.

**Attending:** See attached sign in sheet

The meeting was held to give an update on the project, review the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)/Section 404 of the Clean Water Act process, present alternatives investigated, review anticipated project schedule, and discuss preservation of right-of-way.

Mr. Sheldon Latz opened the meeting by introducing the project and had everyone introduce themselves. Mr. Latz then turned the meeting over to Mr. Bob Andres.

Mr. Andres gave a brief introduction of the project and began to explain the Concurrent NEPA/404 Merger Process. In order to avoid unnecessary delays or implementation problems, the NEPA and Section 404 processes were merged together. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the United States Army Core of Engineers (USACOE), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), state highway agencies and state resource and regulatory agencies reached concurrence on an interagency coordination process to be followed on projects with potential environmental impacts. Details of the Concurrent NEPA/404 Merger Process are contained in the attached handout.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared for this project. As part of this environmental document, Chapter 3 of the EA details the alternatives to be analyzed on a macroscopic level of detail. Currently, Chapter 3 of the EA has been reviewed by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the FHWA and is currently being reviewed by the resource and regulatory agencies. Once the review is complete, a meeting will be held to present Concurrence Point Number 2.

Mr. Andres gave some background on the project and summarized the alternatives that were analyzed for Chapter 3. As part of the NEPA/404 Merger Process, all feasible alternatives must be analyzed against the purpose and need for the project. Some concerns were brought up by the regulatory and resource agencies regarding the Caton Farm/Bruce Road corridor. Specifically, the possibility of threatened and endangered species such as the Hine's Emerald Dragonfly, the leafy prairie clover and the potential habitat for the Indiana bat. The U.S. Coast Guard indicated security concerns regarding the proximity of the Lockport Lock and Dam to

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the Caton Farm/Bruce Road Bridge. The river crossings from 135<sup>th</sup> Street south to Theodore Street were analyzed against the purpose and need and more information can be found in the attached handout. Also, Dellwood Park West would be impacted by this corridor and could involve further environmental processing.

Because of the concerns brought up by IDOT, FHWA, and the regulatory and resource agencies, it was suggested that another river crossing to the south be investigated. It was decided that a Caton Farm Road/Oak Avenue corridor be investigated. A summary of this corridor is detailed in the attached handout.

After a macroscopic analysis of the alternates, which is contained in Chapter 3 of the EA, the Caton Farm/Bruce Road and the Caton Farm/Oak Avenue corridors are proposed for more detailed engineering and environmental studies. This recommendation is contained in Chapter 3 of the EA that is currently being reviewed by the regulatory and resource agencies.

Mr. Andres then summarized the alignments for each corridor. All alignments for both corridors begin at the U.S. Route 30 and Caton Farm Road intersection and proceed to the east. The Caton Farm/Bruce Road corridor consists of three distinct alignments. The alignment continues along Caton Farm Road from the intersection with U.S. Route 30 and crosses the Des Plaines River just south of the Caton Farm Road and IL Route 53 intersection where it passes through the south end of Dellwood Park. The alignment then continues north to meet with Bruce Road near Green Garden Place and continues to the east. The first alternate turns to the north at the Bruce Road and Gougar Road intersection and then continues east along IL Route 7 and ends at the IL Route 7 and Cedar Road intersection. The second continues along Bruce Road and turns north just east of Interstate 355. This alignment continues to the north and connects with IL Route 7, just west of the IL Route 7 and Cedar Road intersection. The final alignment continues along Bruce Road and turns to the north just east of the Bruce Road and Cedar Road intersection. This alignment ends at the IL Route 7 and Cedar Road intersection.

The Caton Farm/Oak Avenue alignment continues along Caton Farm Road from the intersection with U.S. Route 30 and crosses the Des Plaines River at a similar location to the Caton Farm/Bruce Road alignment. It continues south of Dellwood Park West and then continues east along Oak Avenue. The Caton Farm Road/Oak Avenue corridor also has three distinct alignments similar to the Caton Farm/Bruce Road alignments. The first alternate turns to the north at the Oak Avenue and Gougar Road intersection and then continues east along IL Route 7 and ends at the intersection with Cedar Road. The second alternate continues along Oak Avenue and turns north between Gougar Road and Cedar Road. This alignment continues to the north and connects with IL Route 7, just west of the intersection with Cedar Road. The final alignment continues along Oak Avenue and turns to the north just west of Cedar Road. This alignment ends at the IL Route 7 and Cedar Road intersection.

A variation of the Caton Farm Road/Oak Avenue alternate will be investigated as part of the alignment alternatives. The variation consists of the Caton Farm Road/Oak Avenue river crossing, but will connect back to Bruce Road once east of the river.

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After formal comments have been received by the regulatory and resource agencies involved in the project, a meeting to present Concurrence Point number 2 will be held. At this meeting, it is recommended to proceed with detailed engineering of the six alternates explained in the above paragraphs. It is expected that this meeting will be held in mid April. After the meeting a Public Information Meeting will be held to present the alternates carried forward for public comment. Once public input is gathered, all the information gathered will be compiled to select a preferred alternate. The County ultimately will decide upon this decision.

Mr. Andres then discussed the need for right-of-way dedication. Costs to build highways have increased dramatically in the last ten years. The percentage of the total cost used for right-of-way acquisition has also increased. Right-of-way costs can be as much as a third of the total project cost. A way to decrease right-of-way costs is to plan for future roadway improvements by requiring a donation of right-of-way by developers when planning developments. This is critical not only for this project, but for the County for future roadway improvements.

Mr. Andres then opened the meeting to the audience for questions.

Mr. Walsh asked if an interchange was planned for I-355 and Bruce Road. Mr. Latz stated that the Tollway Authority has purchased the right-of-way for the interchange, but it is not in the Region's 2030 plan. The preferred alignment will be designed for a future Bruce Road interchange, but no interchange is planned.

Mr. Walsh asked how much the improvement will cost. Mr. Andres stated that until a preferred alignment is chosen, a cost can't be calculated. A preliminary cost for the bridge is estimated to be around \$100 million.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 A.M.

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Joel E. Christell, P.E.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
March 22, 2006