



PEORIA NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING SUMMARY

Date/Time: February 27, 2008/6:00 p.m.
Location: Park Lane Elementary School (Aurora)

Attendees:

Al Broch	Mary Mueller	Naomi Bennett	Judy Pat
Jeff Thompson	John Hudgens	Norma Authier	Lyle Artz
Keith Peterson	Shirley Greene	Renie Peterson	Wilma Succa
Chris Nast	Loretta Daniel	Suzy Cress	Paul Butts
Dick Havercamp	Barbara Yamrick	Diana Jordan	Norman Fisher
Alice Morgan	Marianne Pierce	Robert Richardson	Jule Schema
Carol Barber	Lorene Reposa	Derrick Brown	Ryan Frazier
Kathy Devore	Margee Cannon	Carmen Burnett	Darold Burnett
Lindsey Royce	Brad Pierce	Bill Williamson	Mike Kesinger
Dick Pelz	Lois Roddick	John Webb	Kevin Hougen
Tom Ashburn	Deborah Wallace	Melissa Hunter	Robbie Hunter
Mike Savone	Brice McConnell	Sally LaVelle	Ben Beasley
Henaelory Borry	Dan Gutierrez	Bill Reddick	Kim
Pam Fischhaber	Barbra Ball	Marlyn Geonalske	Janice Finch
Mac Callison	Tracy Halinski	Jessica Cress	Ken Neeper
Zuva Pachas	Melissa Stirdivant	Larry O'Neal	

The Regional Transportation District (RTD) East Corridor Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) project team conducted a neighborhood meeting on February 27, 2008 as part of the on-going community outreach process. The meeting included an open house and presentation with information focused on the following topics:

1. East Corridor and I-225 Corridor Updates

The project team presented an update on the East Corridor and I-225 Corridor and the location options for the shared East Corridor and I-225 Corridor station at Peoria Street and Smith Road.

2. Peoria Grade Crossing Overview

The project team reviewed the analysis that was completed to determine the most feasible alternative for Peoria, which is to keep the crossing at grade with intersection improvements made to Smith Road and Peoria Street.

3. Peoria Station Options

The project team reviewed the multiple options that have been evaluated for the location of the Peoria Station. There are currently two potential station locations. The location west of Peoria includes the realignment of Smith Road. The location east of Peoria includes two design options: one realigning Smith Road and one leaving Smith Road in its current location. Either site will provide a connection to the I-225 Corridor.

4. Next Steps

The project team anticipates the release of the DEIS in early 2009.

I. SUMMARY OF COMMENT SHEETS

The following section details the comments received to date from the comment sheets distributed at the meeting. These comments are recorded verbatim.

1. What comments do you have regarding the overall status of the RTD FasTracks Program?

- I don't think we should have a station at Peoria and Smith Road. It is a far too congested area already.
- You will be making a current train problem at Smith and Peoria even worse. You will also create more traffic through a neighborhood that doesn't need more traffic.
- We appreciate the opportunity to voice our concerns. Thank you for taking our opinions seriously.
- I don't think the FasTrack should run into Morris Heights.
- Please reassess your thought. Do not go through Baranmor.
- I am very concerned about bringing traffic through the neighborhood. Move the stations to the west side for sure or totally out of this area.
- Do not relocate traffic from Smith Road to Morris Heights.
- I believe that the east side of Peoria Street are the wrong options because of the traffic in the neighborhoods. I feel this is a positive addition to the area. It just needs to be routed away from the neighborhoods.
- Don't think a parking garage at Colfax and I-225 is feasible. Prefer a pick-up and drop-off site only. Also with a pick-up – drop-off on Fitzsimons.
- At Peoria station the exchange needs to be customer friendly, easy transfer for business travelers as well as commuter riders.
- Seems to be slower.
- I feel the route being planned via Montview down Peoria is almost impossible due to traffic and noise and safety.
- Make a decision! All these delays affect property owners' ability to market the property. I own 5 acres on Smith at Scranton and a 370,000 sf building on Brighton. All these delays are costing me tons of money.
- Build it. The congestion won't get any worse.

2. What comments do you have regarding the location options for the shared East Corridor and I-225 Corridor station at Peoria Street and Smith Road?

- It should be east of 225 where there is much more open space. It will definitely decrease our property value which has already dropped about \$30,000 in the past few years.
- Do not route traffic down Scranton or Baranmor Parkway. It will lower our property value. We're being treated like the people in the Northwest Corridor, i.e. no choice.
- This station should be on the west side. Absolutely not east!
- I think the station should be on the west side of Peoria on Smith Road.
- The Baranmor proposal is out of the question. The west option is preferable.

- The east side location will negatively impact the neighborhood and its residents, plus the new fire station. The west side of Peoria and Smith would be preferred. It would not impact the area as much. The use of Baranmor Drive is really a bad and stupid alternative.
- I don't want it.
- I think if you took the light rail down Montview to Moline to Havana, would be a better option than Peoria. Or keep the light rail going down I-225 to I-70 and out to the airport having a station at Fitzsimon Medical Center.
- The west option is the only feasible site with the new fire station and the medical center. It would be a good idea.
- Peoria Station East Option 2 is definitely a no-no.
- Do not want traffic into neighborhood! Put rail on west side of Peoria.
- The west option appears to be the least disruptive to both business and residential owners. The direct passenger transfer is very important!
- I recommend the station on the west side of Peoria.
- This should go directly via 225 to Smith Road, considering the noise and safety problems.
- West side only. Silly to consider the east side with church, fire, and residential areas.
- Havana Station
- This absolutely must be on the west side of Peoria. Rerouting through Baranmor is totally unacceptable. This would impact the new fire station, the Conoco station, and the new medical center currently being constructed.
- Put station on SW corner.

3. Any other comments or questions?

- We don't need a station at site and another just a couple of miles down Peoria. Such a waste of money and property.
- Please keep us informed all the way through this development.
- Keep trucks out of Morris Heights.
- Impending this seems some what a disaster unless better understanding is assured with the general public.
- Please finish the decision and let my east side land go so I can finish decision with users on my 5 acres.

II. SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Following the presentation, the meeting was opened up for comments and questions. The following section provides a summary of the verbal comments and questions provided.

1. For the East Option, Scenario 1, will you provide an overpass to cross over Smith Road?

Answer: No, the pedestrian crossing would most likely be at grade and protected with a traffic signal.

2. There are several trucks that go down Smith Road, are you going to reroute those trucks through the Baranmor neighborhood?

Answer: Yes, for the East Realignment Option, traffic along Smith Road would reroute to Baranmor Parkway.

3. Why couldn't you build an overpass to get pedestrians across Smith Road? By diverting traffic into Morris Heights you are creating more problems for our neighborhood. Access for fire trucks?
4. The problem with the East Peoria Option is that it would create access problems to get to the new fire station and medical facility.
5. In Europe, they use underground passages, you can put an underground passage under Smith Road and not have to reroute to Baranmor. Or put an underground passage for pedestrians to cross Smith Road. Leave Baranmor alone.
6. Why does the I-225 Corridor have to come over to Peoria to connect to the East Corridor? Why not loop at Fitzsimons and go back to I-225 to connect to Smith Road? We have enough problems at the Peoria and Smith Road intersection.
Answer: This would create an extra 2-mile loop taking additional time to get to the East Corridor.
7. Keep the rail separate from UP and away from Smith Road and the prison. I'm concerned about the close proximity to the prison.
8. If you were to realign Smith Road along Baranmor, how many residential property impacts would there be?
Answer: New lanes would be added along Baranmor, but we believe it will be in existing ROW.
9. Six lanes of traffic along Baranmor are unacceptable.
10. Can a traffic study be conducted in that area (Peoria and Smith)? There is heavy truck traffic and trains that go by at least twice a day that cause heavy grid-lock.
Answer: As part of our traffic and grade separation analysis, we will be looking at the traffic conditions in this area.
11. Why can't you stay on Montview and go up Havana instead? You could make the station at Havana.
12. What do these station options mean for our property values? Noise and Air Quality impacts? I live a block away from all this and I don't want traffic diverted to Baranmor.
13. (I-225) How much ROW will be needed from Montview along Peoria?
Answer: We are in the process of looking into that. We are currently in the initial phases of the 30 percent design.

14. (I-225)What about the safety of the children in our neighborhood? How will this affect Montview Middle School? The bus stops for Hinkley and North Middle School? How will this affect access to our fire station?

Answer: Safety is definitely a concern in our analysis. The light rail system would follow existing traffic signals so all pedestrians (school kids and adults) would cross at lights. We are working closely with the City of Aurora to address these issues safety issues.

15. Who owns Smith Road, UP?

Answer: This is an ongoing discussion.

16. (I-225)What impacts would this have to Sand Creek?

Answer? As part of the environmental process, we will be looking at impacts to parklands and wetlands. Impacts to Sand Creek will be minimized or mitigated through the design process.

17. It is very clear that the West Option is the preferred option tonight. Why wasn't a scenario 1 and 2 looked at for the west side as well as the east? An option to not realign Smith Road?

Answer: Several options for the west side were analyzed and this option proved to have the best traffic operation results especially at the Smith and Peoria intersection.

18. How often will the trains run?

Answer: The commuter rail trains will run every 15 minutes in each direction, so approximately every 7 minutes. I-225 will likely cross Peoria Street farther south (between Fitzsimons Parkway and 30th Avenue) and might be grade separated.

19. (I-225) Why couldn't you build this east of I-225 where there is more open space?

Answer: Prior to the start of this project, we conducted an environmental process called a Major Investment Study. We have also met with several stakeholders to help determine the best alignment option to serve the Aurora community and provide access to the Fitzimons complex.

20. (I-225) Will the Peoria station require the high voltage aluminum poles in the air?

Answer: Yes, the light rail system will require catenary poles to power the trains.

21. I own a business on the other side of Smith Road on Peoria and 37th Avenue and it's difficult to drive their due to congestion. Are they going to cut 37th Avenue off?

Answer: No, 37th Avenue access will be unaffected.

22. Will Smith Road be widened?

Answer: There are no plans to widen Smith Road.

23. (I-225) Why can't you go to the west side of Peoria and go to 33rd and Havana? There is nothing there but tree farms and the Stapleton property which is available. You are going to loop to Fitzimons and then loop back to Peoria? Why can't you go down the new Fitzimons Parkway instead?

24. Doesn't RTD own the property to connect through old Stapleton and along Martin Luther King Boulevard?

Answer: RTD does not own that property. The alignment you are referring to was looked at and for many reasons including community concerns, it was ruled out.

25. The realignment of Smith Road to Baranmor is not going to work for our community. We already have enough problems with people driving into fences and homes. We don't want more problems introduced into our neighborhood.

26. Why not move LRT closer to apartments instead of homes? Do the trains to the airport accept luggage? If so, would there be an additional charge? Will there be future trains on E-470? What about the stockholders, will it be RTD or private?

Answer: Yes, the trains to the airport will accept luggage and there would be no extra cost associated with that.

27. When the warehouses were built on Smith Road, the city promised that there would be no truck traffic on Baranmor. Is the city now changing its mind?

Answer: We are still in the planning stages and we are working with the city to address these issues. It's an on-going process.

28. In regards to rerouting Smith Road, neither the east nor west option is viable. The concern is the train traffic and how that's going to impact our access.

29. On the other side of Peoria (west) there are more businesses and rerouting Smith won't affect them as much as it would impact us.

30. Don't consider putting this in Morris Heights. The west side is least invasive to our communities.

31. Have you done a cost comparison of each of these station options?

Answer: The project team is currently analyzing the cost implications for these options.

32. Is anyone in the audience in favor of the East Options?

Answer: Unanimous no.

33. From a user perspective, some of you may want to travel downtown or to the airport and not have to drive, is it important to have a station in your neighborhood?

Answer: Yes, we would like a station but we wouldn't mind walking to the station if it was located on the west side of Peoria.

34. Who is the boss: RTD or the railroad?

Answer: The project is being run by RTD, but it is a federal project and RTD is working with the federal agency on this effort.

35. Is there a reason why you can't raise (grade separate) Smith Road?

Answer: The primary reason is cost, it would cost \$50 to \$60 million to raise Smith Road and it would also acquire several ROW without really solving the regional and local congestion issues at this intersection.

36. (I-225) Why not change the station to Peoria and Montview?

Answer: From the East Corridor standpoint, we have a station at Stapleton. For I-225, it would take the alignment 2-3 miles west and defeats the purpose of streamlining the transit system.

37. Smith Road is on UP ROW and hasn't UP threatened to close Smith Road?

38. If you are going to have a station at Fitzsimons, why do we need another one so close by? Why not built it farther east?

39. Why not use diesel instead of electric to save money?

Answer: Diesel was screened out due to several reasons including cost-effectiveness, community preferences, and noise and air quality impacts.

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