



March 12, 2009

Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E.
State Environmental/Location Engineer, Georgia Department of Transportation, 3993
Aviation Circle
Atlanta, Georgia 30336-1593

Dear Mr. Bowman,

Lindridge Martin Manor Neighborhood Association respectfully submits the following letter to the Georgia Department of Transportation after attending the Public Information Open House (PIOH) for NH000-0085-02(153), P.I. no. 762380, the proposed addition of connector ramps between State Route (SR) 400 and I-85 in the City of Atlanta. As the immediately adjacent neighborhood for this project, our comments, questions and concerns are many and outlined below. This document is not meant to serve as an exhaustive list particularly given the expected additional data to emerge should the project progress.

Communication Concerns

First, it is only by accidental word of mouth that LMMNA was initially informed of the plans for the PIOH. GDOT did subsequently place signs informing the public in various places around the City of Atlanta. Unfortunately, none were placed in our neighborhood which is immediately adjacent to the proposed project and, therefore, arguably the most impacted. This is despite repeated efforts to engage GDOT directly and having provided contact information for our neighborhood leadership on multiple occasions. Why is this so? What steps will GDOT take in the future to insure direct communication with our organization regarding the scheduling of additional PIOHs and progression of this project?

Second, in reviewing the Project Concept Report, it is disturbing to note that a position paper submitted July 14, 2008 in response to the Early Coordination Request for this project does not appear in the record; it is thus attached herewith. This position paper outlines the collective concerns of the following organizations that fall within the project study area, the Lindbergh LaVista Corridor Coalition, LaVista Park Civic Association, Woodland Hills Neighborhood Association, Lindridge Martin Manor Neighborhood Association, Piedmont Heights Civic Association, Morningside Lenox Park Association and NPU-F. Some of these same concerns will be restated here along with new considerations given the additional information received at the PIOH held in February 2009.

Furthermore, LMMNA understands and expects that GDOT will hold additional PIOHs within the boundaries of the study area. Indeed, might I suggest a meeting location for this purpose: Westminster Presbyterian Church located at 1438 Sheridan Road, Atlanta, GA 30324.

Environmental Concerns

The proposed alignments for the connector ramps place the ramps at or near the confluence of the North and South Forks of Peachtree Creek. We are concerned about the potential negative environmental impact of this alignment.



Flooding

The area of potential impact directly affects the flow of Peachtree Creek through the neighborhood. This leads to two concerns. First, the project could negatively impact creek flow, increasing the probability of flooding and extending the local floodplain boundaries. Second, the introduction of more impervious surface will direct more water into an overburdened creek system. The project will need to either eliminate the release into Peachtree Creek or install a detention facility with channel protection per the Georgia Stormwater Manual to insure the runoff rates into the creek are not increased.

GDOT indicated that they can enhance the flow rate no more than 10% per NEPA guidelines. This area already has flooding issues that have impacted numerous homes prompting FEMA to purchase one lot due to continued issues. This lot must remain as greenspace because of the existing flood potential. **ANY** enhancement of the flow rate into Peachtree Creek will adversely affect our creek banks, flood plain and neighborhood. What measures will GDOT take to protect the immediate Lindridge Martin Manor neighborhood, and its surrounding habitat from flooding? To what extent would such an alignment encroach upon required stream bank buffers?

Noise

What is the expected additional noise burden on surrounding residents and what possible options exist to mitigate this? LMMNA requests that the required Environmental Impact Study measure the current baseline decibel level of all homes adjacent to I-85 and SR 400. Second, the association requests that sound mitigation measures are put in place to eliminate both the existing unacceptable noise levels and any additional increase in decibel level created by this project. Finally, after project completion, LMMNA requests that an additional noise study be conducted to document the effectiveness of these measures. If corrective measures proved ineffective how would GDOT address this problem?

Finally, LMMNA requests that a complete copy of the Environmental Impact Study be made available to our neighborhood which would include the above referenced measurements and explain in detail the findings as they relate to the above mentioned concerns.

Neighborhood Property Impacts

The projected vertical height of the connector ramps will not only create aesthetic blight but reduce property values for adjacent homeowners. How does GDOT plan to compensate these property owners? In addition, LMMNA requests that GDOT utilize anti-graffiti coatings to protect the structure from unwanted graffiti.

After a cursory review of the alternatives analysis in the Project Concept Report, it appears that Alternative Configuration 1 would have significantly less impact to our neighborhood. Per the document, GDOT dismisses this option; LMMNA would like to revisit this dismissal. The only significant difference between the preferred alternative and Configuration 1 is the requirement for the Buford Highway NB ramp to I-85 to merge down to one lane. Has a traffic study been completed which validates the conclusion drawn that this merge pattern creates significant negative impact on Buford Highway?



Economic Concerns

LMMNA supports the position taken by the City of Atlanta to not prioritize this project. We believe that the significant projected cost requirements of \$37,946,400.00, will not provide a sustained long term solution to mitigating automobile traffic congestion, both in our direct neighborhood, or for the region as a whole.

The Lindbergh LaVista Corridor Coalition (LLCC) comprised of the neighborhoods of Lindridge Martin Manor, LaVista Park and Woodland Hills has proactively sought to engage the planning expertise of the Georgia Conservancy and the Georgia Institute of Technology through a recent Blueprints exercise. We expect publication of this study in Spring 2009. In two days, LLCC will unveil some of the first preliminary findings. Furthermore, LMMNA intends to engage outside expertise to assist us in examining some possible alignment alternatives which would utilize slower design, speeds, involve lower vertical heights, and keep the ramps inside of the confluence of SR 400 and I-85. All of these measures would lessen impact on our neighborhood. Once data from these processes becomes available, LMMNA requests that GDOT make accommodations for these as the planning process progresses.

Respectfully,

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