



MONMOUTH COUNTY
Local Concept Development Study for Monmouth County Route 537
West of Iron Bridge Road to West of NJ Route 9 Interchange
Township of Freehold, NJ

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER NO. 3 SUMMARY
MEETING REPORT

DATE: Wednesday, October 30, 2013
TIME: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. (*brief presentation 4:30 p.m.*)
LOCATION: Township of Freehold, Municipal Building, Room 114
One Municipal Plaza, Freehold, NJ
ATTENDEES: Sign-In Sheets available upon request.

PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of this Public Information Center meeting was to inform the public of the reduced project study limits. (See attached Meeting Notice).

MEETING SUMMARY

1. A total of sixteen (16) individuals attended the meeting as indicated on the Sign-In Sheets. A total of eleven (11) Project Team members, including representatives from the County, NJTPA, NJDOT Local Aid, NJDOT Environmental Bureau, and Khalid Shaikh from NJDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Program, were in attendance to present information and assist with questions from the public.
2. The meeting was designed as an open house format with display boards providing aerials maps of the CR537 project study area with proposed improvements, and the Alternatives Comparison Matrix indicating the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA).
3. A Project Information Update handout and blank Monmouth County Comment Form were distributed to the general public upon sign-in to the meeting. The Comment Form could be completed to hand in at the meeting or could be faxed, emailed or mailed to Monmouth County within the next 30 day comment period (Project Information Handout attached).
4. At 4:30 p.m. Martine Culbertson, Community Involvement Facilitator, opened the brief presentation by welcoming attendees on behalf of Monmouth County, and the cooperating agencies of North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

5. After introductions by the project team members, Daria Jakimowska, Monmouth Project Manager, provided information on the project status and schedule. Due to a change in the project study limits, this public meeting is being held to complete the Concept Development phase and move forward with a Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) to the design phase. The presentation will be posted to the Monmouth County web site.
6. Bruce Riegel, H&H Project Manager, presented an overview of the project study efforts: the existing deficiencies in the corridor, the approved Purpose and Need Statement, and the proposed Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) with the modified project study limits to the municipal border of Freehold Township. Proposed improvements within Freehold Borough were not supported by Freehold Borough Council, due to concern for the right-of-way impacts.
 - (a) The proposed improvements of the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) within Freehold Township have remained the same as presented at the last public meeting held in the spring.
 - (b) Given the modified study limits, the Alternatives Comparison Matrix has been updated to reflect the change.
 - (c) A revised Resolution of Support for the PPA will be requested by the Township of Freehold to complete the Concept Development phase documentation.
7. The meeting was opened for any questions or comments from attendees. The following questions and comments were noted:

Question #1: Is there sufficient room for the sidewalk at the bridge over Route 9?

Response: Yes, the bridge will have a cantilever on the north side of the bridge over Route 9 to accommodate the sidewalk.

Question #2: Could a bike lane be added rather than just the shoulder?

Response: The outside lanes will be fifteen feet (15'), which is twelve feet (12') for vehicles and three foot (3') wide shoulders provided for bicyclists. Extensive improvements and right-of-way would be required with greater engineering and cost, which is not available in the capital program funds at present.

Comment/ Question #3: Visibility on the Route 33 ramp to westbound CR 537 is limited without a dedicated lane. No one yields now. Can it be improved?

Response: The proposed project at this time will not widen the Route 33 bridge, which would provide an optimal long-term solution. In the interim, the proposed project would provide a stop control on the ramp merge with westbound CR 537, and allow two continuous through lanes from the mainline roadway along westbound CR 537 across the bridge. This would eliminate the substandard westbound merge of mainline vehicles just east of the bridge.

Question #4: How will complete streets apply to this project?

Response: The project includes the addition of 4 bus stops along the corridor, the addition of missing sidewalks and widening of the outside lanes in providing bicycle compatibility. The determination for striping of a designated bicycle lane would be discussed and developed during the design phase.

Question #5: How to protect pedestrians walking? And those who are walking across the Route 33 ramps?

Response: The project will improve pedestrian access and safety by providing sidewalks where they do not exist and create ADA-compliant crosswalks at the intersections and other locations where pedestrians cross the roadway. The crosswalks will be designated with striping and signage, both at the crosswalks, and in advance of them.

Question #6: What are the chances that NJDOT may prioritize Route 9 and Route 33 interchanges for improvements?

Response: Both structures are under the jurisdiction of NJDOT and therefore subject to funding availability for study. They are inspected and given ratings. Neither structure's current condition ratings indicate the need for replacement, however safety concerns and substandard features have been identified with the LCD study. Potential improvements could provide upgrades to the current performance of County Route 537 at the bridges, however the Route 33 and Route 9 intersection improvements must be submitted as problem statements to the New Jersey Department of Transportation in order for the improvements to be considered for inclusion in the NJDOT's Capital Program for funding and implementation.

Comment/Question #7: There is trouble to get on Wal-Mart Drive with the triangle; it causes problems with access and turning issues. Can you eliminate it?

Response: The Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) addresses this issue, so it would no longer be a problem.

Comment/Question #8: Need to get better levels of service. Does the level of service D mean all the time or when?

Response: The level of service is rated for the operation of the signal during the peak traffic period of the day. So at 4:00 a.m. with little or no traffic, most intersections in the corridor would be level of service A. On the Alternatives Comparison Matrix, level of service D, is the peak period based on future condition (Year 2032) traffic volumes and analyses. The traffic analysis is projected 20 years out in the future. The Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) will provide better levels of service than the current conditions.

Comment/Question #9: At all intersections with multiple lanes, the dashed lines are worn off and cars get cut off, with eastbound turning and could have head on (accidents). Can something be done?

Response: The County has scheduled striping of the corridor intersections currently, all weather permitting, it should be done before the holiday shopping season.

Comment/Question #10: Coming out of the hospital, the left turn is difficult. Can the stop sign be moved?

Response: Yes, the County will look in to moving the stop sign for safety and better visibility.

Question #11: What is the probability of the project going ahead?

Response: Once resolutions of support are received by Freehold Township and the County, the interagency review committee will review the completed CD documentation and make a recommendation to move the project forward. Upon agency concurrence, the project would move forward to the design phase as funding is available.

8. In summary of the brief presentation, Martine Culbertson encouraged attendees to submit their comments in writing on the blank Comment Form or via email with any additional questions, which may occur after the PIC meeting within the 30-day comment period, which ends November 29, 2013.
9. In closing, Daria Jakimowska, thanked attendees for providing comments and taking time to attend the public meeting. She noted that Project Team members would continue to be available near the display boards should anyone have additional questions in looking at the information provided.
10. The PIC meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m. No completed PIC Comment Forms or letters were given to the project team at the PIC meeting.

Additional Note

11. A total of two PIC Comment Forms were received by the County after the PIC meeting was held, during the 30-day public comment period (PIC Comments received are attached with personal information redacted).

We believe the foregoing to be an accurate summary of discussions and related decisions. We would appreciate notification of exceptions or corrections to the minutes within three (3) working days of receipt. Without notification, these minutes will be considered to be record of fact.
RT537 LCD Study Project Team



Public Information Center Meeting Notice

Local Concept Development Study: Project Limits Modification

Monmouth County Route 537

West of Iron Bridge Road to West of NJ Route 9 Interchange (to municipal border)

Township of Freehold

Monmouth County, in cooperation with the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration, will be hosting a Public Information Center meeting to inform local residents, officials, businesses and the general public of the Local Concept Development Study for the Monmouth County Route 537 Corridor from a point west of Iron Bridge Road (MP 48.85) in Freehold Township to a point just west of the New Jersey Route 9 Interchange (MP 51.30) to the municipal border with Freehold Borough. The former project limits for this study were from just west of Gravel Hill Road in Freehold Township to just east of Business Route 33 in Freehold Borough.

The purpose of the Public Information Center meeting is to inform the public of the reduced project study limits. The proposed Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) presented at the February 26, 2013 Public Information Center meeting remains as presented for the reduced project limits. This meeting is being conducted in conformance with Federal and State regulations. The public is invited and encouraged to comment on the Study and attend the open house format meeting.

Date: October 30, 2013, Wednesday

Time: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
(Brief Presentation at 4:30 p.m. and at 6:00 p.m.)

Place: Township of Freehold
Municipal Building, Room 114
1 Municipal Plaza, Freehold, NJ

Written comments will be accepted through Friday, November 29, 2013. Comments may be mailed or faxed to:

Inkyung Englehart
Project Coordinator
Monmouth County Div. of Engineering & Traffic Safety
Hall of Records Annex
1 East Main Street, 3rd Floor
Freehold, NJ 07728
Fax 732-431-7765
engineer@co.monmouth.nj.us

This meeting is open to all members of the public.



MONMOUTH COUNTY

Local Concept Development Study: Project Limits Modification Monmouth County Route 537, West of Iron Bridge Road to West of NJ Route 9 Interchange Township of Freehold, Monmouth County, NJ

PROJECT INFORMATION UPDATE

Monmouth County has conducted a study for operational and safety improvements to Monmouth County Route 537. The project study area has been modified to be from a point west of Iron Bridge Road (MP 48.85) in Freehold Township to a point west of New Jersey Route 9 Interchange (MP 51.30) at the municipal border.

CR 537 is a major east-west transportation corridor serving regional travel needs between Burlington, Ocean, and Monmouth Counties. The roadway serves as a connector between several regional routes, namely U.S. Route 9, 33 Freeway, 33 Business, and Routes 34, 79, and I-195. The corridor has several substandard design elements, traffic congestion issues, and traffic movement capacity issues for which conceptual solutions will be developed to improve safety and reduce congestion while still taking into account practical measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts to the built and natural environment.

The Project Background

The Monmouth County Route 537 corridor has traffic operational deficiencies, safety deficiencies, and contains numerous substandard design elements based on the roadway classification and required design speed as per AASHTO and MUTCD design guidelines including:

- Lack of shoulders along the entire length;
- Substandard auxiliary lane widths along exterior lanes;
- Substandard vertical geometry at two locations;
- Few auxiliary lanes, deceleration lanes or shoulders for turning movements at intersections as well as into various business/shopping complexes;
- Substandard roadway and lane widths over the Route 33 Freeway; and
- Substandard lane drops along the westbound approach to the Route 33 Freeway.

Additionally, much of the corridor is not bicycle or pedestrian compatible. There are also numerous substandard design elements at the CR 537 interchange with US Route 9 located within the project study limits.

The Completed Study:

The current phase of this project is Concept Development (CD). During this phase, a defined and justified Purpose and Need Statement was developed focusing on the need to improve safety and operational improvements to CR 537. CD Phase also included data collection; coordination with the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, local stakeholders, and permitting agencies; an investigation of various aspects of the project such as environmental, right of way, access, utilities, design, community involvement, constructability, and cost; the development and analysis of a reasonable number of sensible and practical conceptual alternatives; and the development of a Preliminary Preferred Alternative.

The primary tasks of stakeholders were to assist in the development of the Project Purpose and Need Statement, assist in the development of conceptual alternatives, identify possible fatal flaws, and assist in the selection of the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) based on the Project Purpose and Need.

Concept Development Project Schedule (Major Milestones)

Develop Project Purpose and Need Statement	June 2012
Development of Conceptual Alternatives	August 2012
Selection of Preliminary Preferred Alternative	February 2013
Submission of Draft Concept Development Report	March 2013
Completion of Concept Development Phase	December 2013

Community Involvement Schedule

Local Officials Meetings	January 20, 2011
Community Stakeholders Mtg No. 1 for Purpose and Need Statement (P&N) and Public Information Center for P&N	March 20, 2012 April 24, 2012
Obtain Input for Developed Alternatives - Community Stakeholders Mtg No. 2	December 17, 2012
Local Officials Meeting	February 22, 2013
Public Information Center for PPA	February 26, 2013
Public Information Center for Project Limits Modification	October 30, 2013

Resolutions of Support for the Preliminary Preferred Alternative were requested from both the Borough of Freehold and the Township of Freehold prior to the completion of the Concept Development Report. A Resolution of Support was received from the Township of Freehold on April 9, 2013.

Contact Information

Daria Jakimowska, P.E. Chief Engineer, Traffic Design
Monmouth County Division of Engineering
Hall of Records Annex, 1 East Main Street, 3rd Floor
Freehold, NJ 07728
732-431-7760
Daria.jakimowska@co.monmouth.nj.us



Local Concept Development Study: Project Limits Modification
Monmouth County Route 537
West of Iron Bridge Road to West of NJ Route 9 Interchange (to municipal border)
Township of Freehold

Public Comments & Suggestions

Please use the space below to provide comments or suggestions
(Please print legibly):

Name:

[Redacted Name]

Address:

Freehold, NJ

Phone/Email:

[Redacted Phone/Email]

Comments/Suggestions:

County, state and municipality need to fully implement "Complete Streets" along this corridor. Speeds are much too high and clearly marked bike lanes with a connected sidewalk network is vital. Traffic signals need to give more time to side streets and left turn arrow at 537 eastbound to NJ 33B. Substandard geometrics need immediate attention. Alternate streets need to be improved to provide "better bones" and network gri

Kindly submit the comments by Friday, November 29, 2013 to:

Inkyung Englehart
Project Coordinator
Monmouth County Div. of Engineering & Traffic Safety
Hall of Records Annex
1 East Main Street, 3rd Floor
Freehold, NJ 07728
Fax 732-431-7765
engineer@co.monmouth.nj.us

For more information
please keep me
informed on this
project.





Local Concept Development Study: Project Limits Modification
Monmouth County Route 537
West of Iron Bridge Road to West of NJ Route 9 Interchange (to municipal border)
Township of Freehold

Public Comments & Suggestions

RECEIVED

Please use the space below to provide comments or suggestions
(Please print legibly):

Name:

[REDACTED]

Address:

[REDACTED]

Phone/Email:

[REDACTED]

NOV - 1 2013
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ENGINEERING DEPT.
CC: INK
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JOE
DARIA
Freehold tw,
CR 537

Comments/Suggestions:

- ① TO REMAIN ON PUBLIC STAKEHOLDER "INVITE LIST" FOR FUTURE PICS AS A PROPERTY OWNER IN RAINTREE
- ② I PURCHASED A "COMMUTER SPECIAL" WITH A CURRENT NJ TRANSIT NYC BUS STOP AT THE ENTRANCE TO RAINTREE AT HUTCHINSON + WENRACK. I WANT TO MAINTAIN THE MARKETABILITY OF MY HOME BY IMPROVING THE "PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLINESS" OF MY COMMUNITY. MISSING SIDEWALKS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DURING THE PROCESS OF THIS PROJECT.

Kindly submit the comments by Friday, November 29, 2013 to:

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