

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
AUGUST 16, 2006
MINUTES

The Transportation Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, August 16, 2006 at 8:00 a.m. at the Wendell Community Center, 601 W. 3rd Street, Wendell, NC. Members present included:

Members

Chairman Bryan, presiding
Bob Ahlert
Dan Andrews
Lynwood Buffaloe
Tony Braswell
John Byrne
Bill Connolly
Frank Eagles
Jenny Edwards
R.H. Ellington
Jan Faulkner
Ann Franklin
Vivian Jones
Buck Kennedy
Ernie McAlister
Charles Meeker
Perry Safran
Dick Sears
Keith Weatherly
Ronnie Williams
Kaye Yadusky

Representing

Wake County
Clayton
Harnett Co.
Franklin Co.
Johnston Co.
Fuquay-Varina
Wendell
Rolesville
Franklinton
Angier
Morrisville
TTA
Wake Forest
Garner
Cary
Raleigh
N.C. Turnpike Authority
Holly Springs
Apex
Garner
Youngsville

Staff

John Burris
Ed Johnson
Jake Petrosky
Diane Wilson
Kenneth Withrow

Representing

CAMPO Staff
CAMPO Director
CAMPO Staff
CAMPO Staff
CAMPO Staff

Chairman Bryan called the meeting to order and welcomed those present, on behalf of himself and Mayor Connelly, to eastern Wake County. The following items were discussed with actions taken as shown:

AGENDA – APPROVED AS PRESENTED

No adjustments to the agenda were requested; therefore, without objection the agenda was approved as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE RECEIVED

Chairman Bryan indicated this was an opportunity for comments by those in attendance on items not included on the agenda. No one present asked to be heard.

MINUTES – JUNE 21, 2006 – APPROVED AS PRESENTED

Members had received copies of the June 21, 2006 minutes prior to the meeting. Mayor McAllister moved approval of the minutes as presented. His motion, seconded by Mayor Byrne, unanimously passed. Chairman Bryan ruled the motion adopted.

NC TURNPIKE AUTHORITY STUDY REPORT – RECEIVED

Chairman Bryan indicated this is a critical item for this area. In December, 2005, mayors of five western Wake County towns requested that the NC Turnpike Authority conduct a financial feasibility study for construction of the Western and Southern Wake sections of I-540 as a toll road. At their regularly scheduled meeting on June 13, 2006, the Turnpike Authority received the Preliminary Financial Feasibility Study for the Triangle Parkway and the Western and Southern Wake Parkways. Components included in the report were a traffic and revenue study, project cost estimates and a financial analysis. The TAC had received the Executive Summary portion of the report for review at the June 21, 2006 meeting. At that time and during the following two weeks, the TAC posed several questions that were subsequently forwarded to the NC Turnpike Authority for their response. Members received a copy of the questions and responses and included them in the agenda packets. The agenda noted the Turnpike Authority's adopted policy and recent pending changes in state law requires MPO support in order to proceed further with more detailed analyses on these turnpike projects. A proposed letter expressing support was also provided.

David Joyner, Chair of the NC Turnpike Authority, introduced Authority staff members present including Perry Safran and Ron Tier. Mr. Joyner indicated their objective is to help everyone make informed decisions about the future of this project. He stated he was present to address any concerns. He felt strongly the support of local officials and citizens is important. Mr. Joyner reported their Board voluntarily adopted a project approval policy in March that was included in the agenda backup requiring that every study the Authority undertakes begin with a request to do so by a group of local elected officials. Five Western Wake Mayors made a request for this particular study last year and Mr. Joyner reported that the stud, and financial analysis that goes with it, are now complete. Copies of this information were included in the agenda packets. Once the preliminary study is completed, the MPO must decide if the process should proceed. The policy states should either the MPO or NCTA Board determine the project is not viable it must be returned to the NCDOT to await funding from NCDOT sources. He indicated this is a very viable project but is not an easy decision. Mr. Joyner noted no one is crazy about toll roads; however, benefits would be reviewed that may make the decision more palatable. He noted the Board has made a policy decision that revenues raised from any

project should remain in the region in which they are raised. That policy has an exception that if another project is in distress, funds could be loaned to be sure it doesn't go into default. He indicated Mr. Safran and Mr. Tier plan to introduce a motion that would strike that exception. This motion is a result of a number of conversations with CAMPO, other mayors as well as members of RTA, Chamber of Commerce and other local officials. He noted this is a joint venture and promised they would listen to all concerns.

Mr. Joyner then provided an overview of the questions presented by TAC members and NCTA responses to those questions. Questions and responses had been included in the agenda packets. He explained toll roads would help local communities and cities provide relief from congestion through alternative sources of funding. He noted the Research Triangle Area has the nation's largest commute time. Corridor population numbers encompassed three miles on either side of the proposed highway and would increase from 154,000 in 2002 to 447,000 in 2030 (a 191% increase). Corridor employment would increase from 58,000 in 2002 to 266,000 in 2030 (a 360% increase over the next 25 years). Mr. Joyner referred to the dwindling financial resources referring to the gasoline tax which was \$.07 per gallon in 1963 and was down by 33% in 2003 due to inflation. Federal gas tax is \$.18 per gallon. He discussed the Highway Reauthorization Act that refused to consider any new revenues. North Carolina's gas tax is \$.30 per gallon and was frozen by the General Assembly this year. He referred to the shortfall in available roads funding and why this has occurred. Mr. Joyner indicated the NCDOT budget would only allow 25 miles of new construction using the Federal match. Costs are also skyrocketing with a 45% increase in construction costs over the past three years.

In summary, Mr. Joyner indicated funds are dwindling, costs are soaring and growth is exploding. He stated toll roads could help noting 33 states operate more than 5,000 miles of toll roads nationally. He explained these are well-maintained facilities and generate continuous revenues for upkeep for smoother and safer roads. Electronic toll collection is now used involving no stopping to pay tolls. In the beginning there would be cash lanes for people who do not purchase transponders. He indicated there would be three-week timesavings for full commute over one year. Chairman Bryan referred to the timesavings involved with the US 64 Bypass. Mr. Joyner stated in 2020, the timesavings on a full run would provide 20 minutes of timesavings; 10,000 minutes per year and 7 full days of commute timesavings. He noted time is a finite commodity and reducing time in travel is one of the only ways to add time back into your life. The completion date would be 2035 if left up to the state's budget; however, with a toll road there would be accelerated project delivery. Construction on this project could begin in two years or less and could be opened to traffic in five or six years. Mr. Joyner reviewed responses as a result of the NCGo! survey that involved 600 voters/drivers reporting that a majority are willing to consider toll roads.

In summary, Mr. Joyner indicated toll collections would be electronic with no stopping required, the road would be constructed 20-30 years sooner, would free up \$800 million for other projects, would save 7 full days per year commuting time and Wake County drivers have stated they are willing to consider tolls.

Grady Rankin indicated the objective of this report was to provide information needed on two decisions: requesting the Turnpike Authority to proceed with studies for this road and begin the Long-Range Transportation Plan amendment process and air quality conformity process for necessary approval by next February. The LRTP must be amended to include this Western Wake Project as a toll road.

The Triangle and Western Wake Process & Timeline were reviewed through the next 15 months with it being noted the financing schedule; the MPO, DOT, FHWA approvals and project schedules would have to take place almost simultaneously. A meeting will take place in the next ten days to discuss air quality details and the air quality impact must be modeled and approved results need to be approved by region. CAMPO will need to modify the TIP showing this project being funded with other funds than DOT funds. Mr. Rankin indicated the NCTA would also look at developing agreements between the Turnpike Authority and NCDOT and would begin working with NCDOT on FHWA 129 approval process. The I-540 Parkway time schedule is the most critical and could be opened as early as December between 54 and 55 and if that is the case the application needs to go in and approved. Thirty days would be required for approval of the 129 agreement at FHWA and this would need to be presented to the Board of Transportation on November 2 for their approval and this must be submitted thirty days prior to that date (October 5). This would provide from that day or when CAMPO approves this approximately 30-40 days to negotiate the agreement and prepare the FHWA documentation. Mr. Rankin reviewed the financing schedule noting while studies are underway, the investment banker must be selected, initial meetings must be held with investors and rating agencies, financing structure must be developed, etc. He stated the current financial plan projects a 35-year debt structure. He reviewed the single gap payment versus annual revenue supplement noting the supplement would be the more likely scenario. Financing alternatives were reviewed as well as project development activities that would be occurring at the same time. After the road is in service the focus would be on customer service including fast and accurate toll collection, clean and well-maintained roadway and timesavings. After the bonds are paid, they would be required to remove the toll equipment and turn the road over to the NCDOT.

David Danforth spoke to Going Forward noting CAMPO's support is needed to move this project forward and some type of resolution of approval indicating CAMPO would like the Turnpike Authority to continue to study the project. He explained this is not a motion to construct the facility since there is more information needed. He indicated a lot of work to determine if this really is what they believe it is and that will take one year plus 4 months to do if the proposed schedule is maintained. Mr. Danforth indicated there is a clean air agreement and fiscal constraints that have to come back for CAMPO approval. He spoke to the need to proceed with studies right now for the I-540 Parkway and need to begin the LRTP. He indicated the Western Wake Freeway is top priority for CAMPO and in this way the region gets an \$800 million for \$.25 on the dollar. He stressed the need to let the Legislature know this is important and must work together to find gap funds. Each month of delay creates \$2.5 million in inflation costs. He noted 69% of drivers feel tolls should be considered in general or in special situations. He

stated tolling will not occur everywhere as there must be real need to be able to meet the demands required to take to bond markets. Using TIP funding will take 25 years or longer to deliver this project. Mr. Danforth indicated the real question is not a toll road or pay road, it is a toll road or no road for the next 25 years.

Ed Willingham, RTA, introduced other members present representing the RTA including Ed White, Rick Wettle and Joe Melazzo. He reported they been very close to this project and felt it is the right thing for our region. They have had benefit of some great economic news and many companies are coming here because of where we are trying to be in the future. This project will allow this region to continue to grow and attract economic growth and encouraged CAMPO's support.

Mayor Jones, Wake County Mayors Association, reported this group discussed this item and are interested. She noted they realize the Turnpike Authority has answered all questions favorable. She stated the Association is interested in recommending that a Memorandum of Understanding be prepared between CAMPO and the Turnpike Authority to address some issues of concern, i.e., sunset clause, funds remaining in Wake County and other items. She explained this would involve a formal Memorandum of Understanding that would be beneficial to citizens so they would know they have been diligent in formalizing this process as much as possible. She questioned if the Turnpike Authority would be willing to do the Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Joyner indicated the Turnpike Authority would be willing to do the MOU and that is a decision for their board and approval of the MOU must go to the board. He felt there would be some things included in the MOU that would be negotiable. Mr. Danforth indicated there is a deadline of December and any kind of MOU would have to be reviewed by the bond counsel but would be glad to work with it. He requested that the MOU be accomplished as soon as possible in order to move forward with traffic and revenue studies. Ms. Jones indicated it is not the intent of the Mayors Association to hold anything up. Mr. Danforth again stated he could see no problem with the MOU.

Mayor Meeker indicated the issue of funds staying in the project and tolls ending with the pay back have been dealt with and NCDOT should be requested to participate. He stated he would like to request that NCDOT be involved in this project noting the road would be built to NCDOT standards and not changing due to financial pressure. Mayor Meeker emphasized he wanted to be clear on these matters.

Mayor Weatherly referred to the gap funding noting the most recent concern about tolling is where that gap funding will be. He referred to Question 4: "Where will the current estimated \$215 million gap in construction funding for the Western Wake/Triangle Parkway turnpike come from and will it be subject to the state highway funding distribution formula?" He stated when you go to the Legislature for additional funding, you are talking about additional tax revenues dedicated to this. The Legislature would provide additional funds that would be taken from some other place in the budget. Mr. Danforth indicated there is still \$80 million in trust fund money, gas tax money, that goes back to the general fund noting that is a viable target. He indicated NCGo! Has made it a priority as well as other groups have said that all trust fund money should go to the trust fund. Mayor Weatherly indicated he wanted to clarify if that is part of the strategy to ask

the Legislature for our Wake County citizens to bear dedicating tax funds for this gap funding. He wanted to be sure we know that is a significant factor. Mr. Danforth stated that is a decision for all of us. Citizens need to decide what is the best place to go get these funds. If the Legislature says no, this remains unfunded and must look to the private sector to fund this. He stated they have not devised a strategy and there is nothing in writing to suggest the Turnpike Authority is looking for a tax increase for these gap fund. Mayor Weatherly stated he was prepared to say his support would be predicated on including a condition on any motion for approval that it not include a new tax borne by Wake County or Triangle residents to pick up the gap funding. He stated these citizens have paid for this twice with gas taxes and tolling but to ask them to pick up the remainder would not be responsible. He wanted that clear from the beginning and not when we get down the road and CAMPO has been forced into a timeframe we have to vote on this. He noted the legislator representing Apex will not support a tax on its citizens to pick up the gap funding. Mr. Danforth indicated with the problem of funding schools today, he did not see a local tax for this project happening and the Turnpike Authority does not have plans to make that request.

Mayor Weatherly indicated the Turnpike Authority is going to come up with a gap funding policy and if the Legislature says no, he would question where the tax would be placed. Mayor Byrne stated he is not for toll roads at all but is for roads and this area has to have more roads. He did not think this will be anything in particular against Wake County citizens and we will have choices of roads we drive on and the roads we have today will be given back to our local citizens. He noted currently, most of our roads are clogged and as we continue to grow, they will become more clogged. He stated he looked at this as a way of giving back roads to our Wake County citizens. Mayor Weatherly stated we are talking about if this should be a toll road and not if it should be built. He stated he is an advocate for the completion of the Western Wake Freeway but this is talking about whether this is good policy to do it as a toll road and if we do it with additional taxes. He questioned if there has to be an additional source of revenue raised by taxes, who would they be placed on.

Chairman Bryan indicated there are a lot of unanswered questions but this body would have at least two additional shots during the LRTP and amending the TIP. As that moves forward, this can be studied further. He did not want additional taxes and have Wake County citizens pay a third time for this road. He did not think Mr. Joyner could tell this body where the funds would come from today. Mayor Weatherly supported obtaining additional information and remained supportive of the concept as long as he was aware of all details. Mr. Danforth indicated there is no plan or no discussion to suggest a Wake County tax increase for this purpose. Mr. Safran indicated discussion related to local sales tax dedication to this project and that had never been discussed by the Turnpike Authority as one of the options for the gap funding. If it were to be discussed, they would have to come to CAMPO first. Mr. Danforth indicated this is one of only six projects and there are other places in the state where they have the same problem. When the project is finished it becomes a statewide thoroughfare relieving congestion on I-40 through RTP. Mr. Tier indicated the Turnpike Authority had never talked about a tax.

He indicated the road is needed and there is a real problem with air pollution and citizens are interested in timesavings.

Mayor Sears stated he agreed with Mayors Meeker, Weatherly and Jones and moved approval of the letter to proceed with the financial studies and including all things discussed up to this point. His motion was seconded by Mayor Byrne.

Mayor Byrne expressed appreciation to the NCTPA for recognizing the importance of working closely on this with the MPO and looked forward to a continued close working relationship with upcoming projects. He thanked those present for enlightening members about this opportunity to move these roads forward at least by 25 years. He stated everyone in Wake County knows how important roads have been to our growth and potential of this region of North Carolina.

Mayor McAlister expressed appreciation for the hard work done to get to this point and noted the presentation was excellent and a number of his initial questions had been answered. He had continuing concern on the Western Wake Mayors to be able to respond to their constituents regarding a MOU laying all these items out clearly. He appreciated the RTA further underscoring the need to get this road built sooner rather than later. He indicated the motion on the table was to continue the process and moving this forward. He felt that is appropriate. He indicated one thing that has caused concern is timing and recognizing the compressed time frame and the need to do things simultaneously. He wanted to be sure things occur in the proper order. He noted a number of questions had been answered and some continue to be addressed. He felt a MOU outlining these points is essential. He asked Mayor Sears if he would accept a friendly amendment that the MOU be a part of this motion and that it be jointly developed by the Mayors group, CAMPO and the Turnpike Authority. Mayor Sears and Mayor Byrne agreed to the friendly amendment with Mayor Sears noting that was his intent when making the motion.

Mayor Meeker reviewed items to be a part of the Memorandum of Understanding including funds remaining on this project, the toll would sunset when project is paid for, including NCDOT in discussions about the shortfall, project would be built to NCDOT standards and discussion of gap funding.

Ms. Franklin stated she was glad to hear the mayors are clear on the shortfall noting the Turnpike Authority had communicated with the Triangle Transit Authority about accommodating ridership and transit options and that should be in the language in the work ahead of us. The ability to use the roads efficiently will be an important test. She asked that if any other forms of financial support that are not in hand are anticipated, those be approached in a comprehensive way and address the entire CAMPO region's ability to move people around. She indicated she was encouraged by this item.

In response to a question relating to the extension of Southwest Parkway, Mr. Joyner indicated studies on the environmental process would be stepped up as soon as possible. He stated that means getting help from NCDOT and preliminary engineering work. He

explained the environmental NEPA work is going on right now and anticipated the EIS study would be completed in 5-6 years. That coincides with the target dates with opening of the Western Wake facility in 5-6 years. Mr. Joyner spoke to the desire to have a decision and permit on Southern Wake at the same time as the Western Wake Facility in 2011 or 2012. It was noted by the Johnston County representative if this project was to move forward and funded by tolling, it would free up a considerable amount of funds by NCDOT. Discussion followed regarding the fact \$800 million is not in the TIP as a lump sum and all projects are funded in increments. Mark Foster, NCDOT, indicated if a project is not on the TIP, there is no budget money for it. He noted we are in a situation where mega projects are going to absorb the entire TIP for the region and did not agree \$800 million would be freed up to do other projects emphasizing there is not \$800 million available to be spent. He noted DOT is going to be hard pressed to find \$800 million under the pay as you go scenario.

Councillor Stephenson questioned if toll funding was available, to what extent can we be sure that DOT funding will not be displaced to other regions of the state noting the region could end up losing funds we would have gotten if we did not go to tolling. Mr. Joyner indicated he could not answer the question noting that is a TIP decision. Mayor Jones stated that is not the Turnpike Authority's decision but is an NCDOT decision noting that could be included in the MOU if NCDOT wanted to include it. Tom Betts, Board of Transportation, emphasized he could hear what everyone was saying and felt this inclusion would cloud the waters noting there are things to be considered, i.e., equity formula, LU funds, etc. and suggested taking that up with local DOT board members who are CAMPO's connection to the board. He stated if this were to be included in the MOU, CAMPO would be asking Mr. Joyner to do something he has no control over. He reiterated the mayors and Mr. Jones cannot deal with that and would create a roadblock.

Mayor McAlister stated it appears we are moving rapidly toward a vote on this item and requested clarification of the motion. Mayor McAlister indicated as he understood the motion, it essentially incorporates the letter from the chairman to Mr. Joyner and the points included. One of those points is that we authorize further study of the feasibility of this project but it doesn't transfer that road by virtue of the motion from a TIP project to a tolling facility and wanted that to be clear. Mr. Joyner responded that language is acceptable to the Turnpike Authority as an expression of the MPO's sentiment and would keep their schedule moving forward. Mr. Joyner indicated I-540 Parkway would not be converted if the project is not built noting that would not make sense.

Mr. Johnson indicated there are a couple of agreements between NCDOT and the Turnpike Authority and an agreement between FHWA and the Turnpike Authority regarding 129 conversion noting it would be good if members could have already read those agreements and felt having the recommended level of reassurance would be good.

A vote on the motion was taken and unanimously passed. Chairman Bryan ruled the motion adopted.

CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE 2030 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AMENDMENT – SOUTHERN WENDELL BYPASS – PUBLIC HEARING HELD

At the October 6, 2005 TCC meeting information was provided regarding a proposed development in the Wendell area. Mercury Development and Pulte Homes have proposed a large-scale development, currently in the planning and design phase, expected to include 450,000 square feet of commercial space and 4,000 new homes. The proposed development located east of Lake Myra and north of Poole Road in western Wendell, lies in the path of the proposed Southern Wendell Bypass, a future roadway shown on the LRTP. An alternate alignment was proposed by Mercury Development and would require an amendment to the MPO's current LRTP and would require an air quality conformity analysis and determination prior to the final approval. Meetings had been held between the MPO staff, representatives of Mercury Development, the Town of Wendell and NCDOT. A public information meeting was held on June 6, 2006 to advise landowners who may be affected in order to obtain feedback from them. Members received in their agenda packets information relating to this item. The developer is required to submit a letter of MPO concurrence with the roadway's proposed revised alignment. This may constitute a change to CAMPO's adopted LRTP and it is therefore necessary to bring this item before the TCC and TAC. At the June 21, 2006 TAC meeting, a 45-day public comment period was authorized and a public hearing scheduled for this meeting. The public comment period closed August 25, 2006. The agenda outlined options available for consideration.

Chairman Bryan declared the hearing open

Greg Ferguson, representing Mercury Development, provided comments relating to the proposal. He reviewed agencies and people in agreement or not opposed to this proposal including Wendell Planning Commission; Wendell Town Board; Wake County Long Range Planning Department (letter from Tim Clark provided); US Army Corps of Engineers; Wendell Economic Development Committee (letter provided); Wendell Chamber of Commerce (letter provided); former CAMPO Chief Scott Lane (responsible for CAMPO when original lines were drawn); DOT will comply with CAMPO decision; landowner with 35 parcels and 1,300 acres (Wendell Falls). He knew of no agencies opposed to this proposal. Mr. Ferguson reviewed, using a map available at the meeting, the current and proposed locations. He provided a list of items that were not known when the original lines was drawn that included a 180' power line easement, Wake County open space tract, Town of Wendell's current strong position, Poole Road residents' resistance, that there would be someone else coming forward to pay for the project and the extent of environmental obstacles were not known

Mr. Ferguson indicated he had not known about the resistance from Poole Road residents until very recently. He stated the expected cost for the project is \$25 million that could go to other future projects and this is being done at the expense of Mercury Development. A lot of field research had been done relating to any environmental obstacles.

Dean Hatfield, Chief Engineer of the project, pointed out the location of the Mercury Development proposal. He explained the proposal includes paving Richardson Road and improving the intersection of Richardson Road and Martin Pond Road which is a dangerous intersection. This will be taken from a "T" intersection to a 4-legged intersection with a 4 lane divided median with curbs and gutters and pedestrian/bicycle areas. In regard to the intersection, he explained part of the design work has included a number of enhancements and upgrades. He noted, regarding the displacements, if property fell 1' from the right-of-way it was not counted. He stated from a design perspective, when they begin a project, they try to avoid and minimize impact. With this parkway as proposed, those values and goals had been accomplished. Mr. Hatfield indicated this road would serve as a relief valve for overcrowded Wendell Boulevard and provides connectivity to Wendell. Route continuity was discussed. He stated from a professional standpoint he supported approval of Richardson Road Parkway alternative to the Southern Bypass.

John Welch, 1004 Moat Court, Knightdale, NC, spoke as President-elect of the Wendell Chamber of Commerce and a Wendell business owner. He reported the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce support the Richardson Road alignment of the Southern Bypass. He stated this is in the business interest of the Wendell Community and as a business person in the community, he is in Wendell 5-6 days per week and felt something is needed to alleviate the overcrowding on Wendell Boulevard. He had seen over the years traffic get worse on Wendell Boulevard and was in favor of this proposal.

Eula Light, Director of the Wendell Chamber of Commerce and member of Economic Development Committee, spoke on behalf of the Economic Development Committee I support of the Richardson Road alignment.

Boyd Cathy, 2116 Jordan Cabin Road, indicated he had lived in this location since 1993 and spoke in opposition to the proposed Wendell Falls Parkway intersection with Poole Road and supported the alternate plan to connect with Richardson Road. He lives in a community of 40 families and as residents of this community along Poole Road, widening of Richardson Road into a 4 lane divided highway would drastically affect their neighborhood. He stated some materials made available to those who would be affected in the Poole Road area appear to be misleading. He referred to figure 2A of Attachment 6C in the agenda packets and the included map which he felt do not provide the full story. The map and attachment indicate only one home along Poole Road and three houses within 20' of the right-of-way would be directly impacted by the LRTP alignment. He referred to an email from Diane Wilson stating 40 additional feet of right-of-way and possibly more would be needed for the Poole Road alignment. Residents in the area made measurements and would involved 100' in one case and 85-90' in another case. He felt an additional 3-4 houses would be taken and 2 or 3 owners have septic systems in their front yards. If right-of-way is expanded, the septic has no where to go. Lots on Poole Road are smaller than Richardson Road lots and many would lose their homes. Some residents on Poole Road would have a road 10' from the front of their front steps and the information provided doesn't count for those kinds of ramifications if the Poole Road plan is approved. Mr. Cathy indicated SR 1003 and 1004 are state maintained

roads and families and landowners will be directly affected if the Pole Road alignment is affirmed. He expressed concern with the environmental impact. He felt the Poole Road alignment would mean the death of downtown Wendell and the businesses that make Wendell a delight to visit. Utilizing Richardson Road would enhance downtown Wendell and the businesses and would funnel traffic towards this area. He stated families in his subdivision only found out about this proposal one month ago. He stated he represented over 100 people affected by this decision and looked to CAMPO members for leadership as they face the future. He urged rejection of the Poole Road alignment and support another alternative, perhaps Richardson Road.

Mark Richardson, 105 N. Salem Road, Wendell, spoke in opposition to the Richardson Road alignment. He was representing families in Richardson Farm and noted they have many of the same concerns expressed by previous speakers. Mr. Richardson stated Poole Road has been on the LRTP to be widened for a number of years and that will happen anyway regardless of which way members vote. He referred to an email sent from Chris Haire, NCDOT, to Diane Wilson that indicated the plan submitted for Richardson Road by Mercury Development is unacceptable since it was designed to accommodate a 35 mph speed limit. NCDOT is saying that road will need to be designed for 50 mph speeds requiring shifting the road south and taking all five tracts of land. He noted when you look at impact analysis and homes taken, during phase I there were 2 homes taken and now there are 4 or more to be taken which is a big impact. He urged consideration of any benefits noting Mercury Development lists environmental benefits and less stream crossings with Richardson Road. Mr. Richardson indicated there would only be 1 less stream crossing and they don't indicate there would be 2 streams crossed by secondary roads and questioned how concerned are they with stream crossings. He spoke to the 4,000 proposed new homes noting there would be no open space in this area in ten years. In regard to economic benefit, he stated business people feel this is important to Wendell's economy and this could be huge for the Town of Wendell but the problem is the distance between Richardson Road and the southerly alignment is ½ mile which is ½ mile further for them to drive and accomplish the same thing. He suggested before voting that CAMPO members answer does the ultimate benefit justify the cost and has this route been shown to be so superior that it would justify taking 4 homes. He did not feel it is worth it.

Jerry Richardson, 6621 Richardson Road, was present representing he and his wife, Page Richardson and grandparents Clarence & Martin Richardson, 1801 Martin Pond Road. He stated there are homes, farmland, family land and other important things in this area. He noted one of the main points made by the developer is they feel Richardson Road is more environmentally friendly for the road location and indicated there is nothing environmentally friendly about this development. Part of this proposal is to negate the environmental impacts on stream crossings, etc. but felt that is absurd. The town and Mercury Development are planning to cross creeks with secondary roads. He then spoke to the location of his grandparents' home that is 70 yards from the intersection of Richardson Road and Martin Pond Road. An existing hill will have to be lowered and had concerns about the impact on their house. He indicated it was not sure how the house would withstand any of this disturbance, particularly is blasting is needed. He questioned

if the benefits of this proposal equal the cost and if the justifications presented by Mercury Development and the Town of Wendell stand up. Mr. Richardson indicated information presented to the public, if you look at the facts, many things are ambiguous and all routes would satisfy things that are being claimed.

Cliff Richardson, 6608 Richardson Road, spoke in opposition to Mercury Development's proposal. He stated his home would be taken and did not feel Richardson Road is the best route. He referred to a statement made by Mr. Ferguson that cost is not an issue, no matter which direction and questioned why would Mr. Ferguson not look at another route. He understood the road will have to be redesigned to accommodate 50 mph speed limit and that Mr. Haire, NCDOT, indicated Wendell should step forward and annex the property. The General Assembly just approved a bill stating N.C. government agencies cannot condemn private property solely for economic development purposes. He noted Mr. Ferguson has property directly across the road and Town of Wendell business would reap the economic benefit. These facts prove taking private property in this case is tied to economic development. He noted if someone is going to have to take his property, someone higher than the Town of Wendell will have to make that decision. In regard to the third route proposed, Mr. Ferguson had indicated that would be a worse route. He urged the decision makers to consider all facts before making a decision and questioned if they would want neighbors and citizens in their community be treated this way.

Rhonda Richardson, 6608 Richardson Road, stated Mercury Development could build their 4000 homes and build the Wendell Bypass without affecting homeowners. As proposed, there will be citizens in the Wendell Community that will pay the ultimate price in the name of economic development. She stated people do not give a second thought to driving to Wendell, Rocky Mount, Zebulon, Knightdale or Raleigh to spend their money and .5 mile is the developer's excuse for this route. She felt money is behind every decision on this item and questioned who is making these decisions. She spoke to the fact family land is a stake and her parents' last legacy is the family farm. She stated this property is a family heritage and her 80-year-old parents have already given far more than the average citizen and this proposal had taken a toll on their health. She indicated a 4-lane road, economic development nor any amount of growth is worth what the Richardson family has endured.

Gail Frye, 2113 Jordan Cabin Road, indicated she has lived in this location for 32 years. Her home would not be directly impacted by the alignment but Richardson Road will get paved. When they paved Jordan Cabin Road in 1988 they were happy. She stated if Richardson Road is chosen as the alignment, less land will be taken where there is no existing road in order to connect. The speed limit on Poole Road is 45 mph now in front of here house and could not imagine that speed limit could be increased and felt the speed limit should be reduced. She stated with either alignment, Poole Road will die a slow death and will not need widening in 20 years and questioned why add 4-5 lanes on Poole Road now. She hoped serious consideration is given for the Richardson Road alignment.

Mirada Allen, 10905 Poole Road, expressed opposition to the Poole Road alignment and supported comments made by his neighbors. She stated his house would be taken and

was not aware of this proposal until two days before the last meeting held in Wendell. This is adversely affecting their neighborhood. She explained lots are smaller on Poole Road and people with septic tanks in front of their homes would be affected. She indicated if this had been known, people in this area would not have built their homes here and she would not have spent \$20,000 improving her home.

Billie Poole, 7428 Eagle Rock Farm, indicated the land and homes on Eagle Road from Poole Road to Richardson is a family farm consisting of 30 acres. She noted her family has owned this farm for many years and is being used to grow agricultural products. She referred to two subdivisions, Tanners Creek and Arbor Trace, noting the proposed alignment goes from Poole Road and continues through their farm and through her nephew's land. She stated this is devastating to their family. She stated the Johnson family has been a part of this community and they worked hard so they could have this farm and also enjoyed growing up and living there. Her parents, aunts and uncles want the family to live there together and noted it is very comforting to be together. The bypass will separate them and destroy everything they have. She urged everyone to think about what her family has contributed to this area noting her family has contributed to Wake County and Wendell for years. She had heard nothing convincing her this alignment should be adopted and if the new alignment is adopted and goes through Poole Road where her family lives and through the farm, the family would be devastated. She indicated this family farm had been passed down through the years.

The resident of 11124 Branding Iron Place in Tanners Creek, noted the Eagle Rock connection would go behind his house and would impact a great number of families in that area, all of who are opposed. He stated he was very much opposed to the Eagle Rock connection and the way this entire situation had been handled. He indicated he was aware this would be a hard decision. He noted those living in Tanners Creek purchased their homes because of the location. He felt after the road is built on Eagle Rock, there would be nothing but truck and traffic noise and this would lower the value of their property. He indicated there are 15-20 homes in those cul-de-sacs.

Millie Alford, 6800 Richardson Road, owns 2 acres in front of Wiley Oaks Subdivision. The church is located behind her property. She stated they attended their first meeting on this July 10 and looked at the maps. She indicated Mr. Ferguson indicated the road would go from 4 lanes to 3 lanes to 2 lanes in front of her house and this would increase property values. She did not agree that adding 30,000 cars are going to increase their property values. She referred to the email from Mr. Haire of NCDOT indicated he did not think it has been properly conveyed to property owners along Richardson Road that the existing Richardson Road alignment is unacceptable to DOT and would have to be redesigned to meet 50 mph speed. To get Richardson Road to meet this speed limit, the alignment would have to be shifted slightly to the south and would take all 5 parcels which would include her house. The existing Poole Road will need to be realigned to tie across from Wiley Oaks Drive and making these improvements to Richardson Road will require additional right-of-way. She felt this sounds like one massive intersection at the entrance of two established developments, Wiley Oaks and Tanners Creek and would take a lot of the church's land. The church has planned on making a school in this

location. She stated she would like to see a true diagram on what DOT wants from the developer since no one had given a straight answer. She moved to this location in April, 2002 and owns 3 acres in Johnston County and moved to this location to be close to her husband's parents, sister and nephew. She emphasized their family lives here and their church is in their back yard. The church has always wanted their land but they never wanted to sell it since it would mean they would have to leave the family. She stated this is their home and hoped the original route is approved.

Donnie Richardson, 2217 Lake Dam Road, indicated there had been shady dealings going on behind closed doors. He stated there are a lot of people with a vested interest that will make money off this road one way or the other. Others will loose depending on how the road is built. He indicated NCDOT Roadway Design does not have a vested interest in this road and they will not make money and he trusts them. He hoped those making the decision on this realize they are representing more than just one person and if this can happen in their community, it can happen in theirs.

Jerry West, representing residents of Wiley Oaks Drive, stated we are talking about material and earthly things and referred to property that a family has passed along to their ancestors. He noted he had taken it upon himself to speak for Wiley Oaks residents since this proposal would not affect his house but it would directly affect his community family. He has lived here 18 years and expressed concern about schools, roads and what his granddaughter would have to live with. He urged those making the decision to do what is in their heart and what they feel is right.

Gene Richardson owns property at the corner of Martin Pond and Richardson Roads, which is his family's home, place built in 1870 by his great grandfather. He has applied this dwelling for consideration for inclusion on the National Preservation Society as a historic site but had not heard from them.

Mary Spivey, 11320 Poole Road, indicated she did not know how their homes would be affected. She stated her family lives in this area with the family farm located on Eagle Rock Road and the Richardson Road alignment would affect their property. Ms. Spivey owns 1/3 of the family farm. Other owners are Billie Johnson Poole and Ivan Edward Johnson, her brother and sister. They grew up on this farm and it has been in their family for generations. She stated she would not sell any part of the farm for a right-of-way for this road. Her home is not in the direct path of the Richardson Road route but is beside it. She referred to resulting noise, traffic, sentimental concerns and the water drainage resulting from a 4-lane highway. She indicated she would be retiring in a few years and planned to live in her current home the rest of her life but this road would disrupt her life. She did not want to move but this road would destroy the rural character of the neighborhood and you cannot buy peace of mind. She spoke to the resolution adopted by the Town of Wendell supporting the Richardson Road route without giving the community affected an opportunity to be heard. Only at the request of the TAC did the town hold a hearing on the issue. The mayor of Wendell indicated at the end of the hearing he felt the town should rescind the resolution and remain neutral; however, the commissioners took no action. She felt the town had no right endorsing one route over

another since all possible routes are outside the Wendell city limits and outside its planning territory. There is only a half-mile between any of the options and this distance is negligible as to how it affects the town. She stated Mercury Development has not purchased the property at the intersection of US 64 Bypass where the intended Wendell Falls Parkway would begin and if the property is not purchased, the Wendell Falls Parkway alignment may have to change thus affecting their proposed Southern Wendell realignment request. She indicated the Richardson Road alignment would affect at least 18 homes by loss of property due to the right-of-way. Some of the homes affected are not within 20' of the right of way but are very close and may be affected based on where their well and septic systems are located. All homes in their area are on wells and septic systems and no study has taken this into consideration. She spoke to the dangerous intersection of Poole and Richardson Roads and using Richardson Road would make this intersection even more dangerous.

Teresa Gurganus, 216 Wiley Oaks, stated she had listened to people saying they are directly affected, wells might be affected and noted they had other land where a well could be dug. They are going to be paid for the land that will provide for another well to be dug but they would not be displaced. She urged when a decision is made that the facts be considered and hoped the decision would be based on what would have less impact on taking people's homes. She requested that residents from Tanners and Wiley Oaks to stand – 16 people stood. She indicated she had lived here 18 years. This proposal is calling for taking a little graveled tobacco path and turning it into a 4-lane 50 mph road. This is a drastic change.

Eugene Mease, 2224 Jordan Cabin Road, spoke in opposition to the Poole Road alignment and indicated his septic tank is in the front yard. He noted whatever route is taken, families would be displaced.

Coleen Apri, Taylor Road, stated she has lived here since 1981 and lived there because it is peaceful and now she would have massive rooftops, drainage problems and traffic that would be right across the street.

Regina Harmon, 10913 Poole Road, stated she was not for Richardson Road. When Mercury Development came here to build their subdivision, they knew the road was going down Poole Road. They started buying up land and putting a plan together and then all of a sudden water and sewer became an issue. Everything she had heard had indicated water and sewer is an issue for Wendell in this area and would require annexation. Wendell will get tax dollars for this. She stated she has a business in Wendell and is trying to keep the area alive. She was aware there are people that thing going down Richardson Road is a good access but it will not bring business downtown. It will bring tax dollars. If Mercury Development uses Richardson Road it will save millions but they get water and sewer quicker. She discussed the added traffic to the area. She urged the TAC to think about what everyone has said and indicated she knew they would do what they think is best.

Jimmy Faison, 10825 Poole Road and 10820 Poole Road, stated these homes are built on the family farm. He stated he has emotional ties as well and asked that the TAC consider what has been stated and must choose which is the better route. He indicated the TAC had already heard the Town of Wendell endorsed Richardson Road. He indicated their fathers and grandfathers farmed this land and hoped everyone would still get along after the decision is made. He felt it would be naïve to think this area will stay the way it is and at the end of the day he hoped a wise decision would be made.

The resident of 6616 Latago Lane, Tanners Creek Subdivision, referred to the email from NCDOT noting it is starting to sound like someone wants something from Wendell and they are telling everyone what they want to hear to get what they want. She indicated the plan for Richardson Road doesn't have all the support it is being promoted to have and hoped that would be considered.

Phillip Kirk, 10908 Poole Road, indicated those present at the meeting were great citizens and if he could say something that would cause this road not to happen in either direction he would but that is not going to happen. He spoke in favor of the Richardson Road alignment and in opposition to the Poole Road proposal. There is already right-of-way there and less right-of-way would be obtained. He noted currently there is a dangerous intersection at Richardson Road and Martin Pond Road and with increased homes and traffic, this would be more dangerous. He indicated Mercury Development has a plan to fix that and felt Richardson Road is the right alignment.

Paul White, a citizen of the Wendell area, indicated the road will get built and would be necessary to build. He indicated something should be done and was in favor of connection on Poole Road. Wendell needs an east/west road connection and Wendell Boulevard is in an overload situation. There is traffic coming from Johnston County. He stated the road would be built by private money if anything gets built. Richardson Road currently exists versus developing a new road and would be the quickest to build. There is private money to develop the road and would be done 18-20 years earlier. He spoke to a planned hospital that may be constructed in that proposed intersection. This would relieve congestion on Wendell Boulevard and felt it would affect less people.

Mike Jones, Mercury Development, indicated a lot of information had been heard from many people and some of this they feel is not as concrete as it should be. He wanted everyone to be aware that the design from US 64 to Martin Pond is at a 50 mph design speed and was not sure if Mr. Haire looked at something earlier. The project engineer indicated Richardson Road indicated the current plan does meet the 50 mph design speed but would be posted at 45 mph.

Nora Campier, 3851 Wendell Boulevard, indicated the traffic is heavy on Wendell Boulevard and is in terrible condition and is way down in the line for getting it fixed. Another east/west connector to bring people from Johnston County to the new Bypass is needed.

Wally Bowman, NCDOT, referred to the email from Mr. Haire who is with the design services unit. A preliminary plan was submitted to DOT for the section between Martin Pond and Poole Roads. Based on Mr. Haire's review it was not a 50 mph design and that is the information he had. DOT will require that if CAMPO decides on the LRTP being moved from the southern route to Richardson Road. He indicated DOT has not had a single dollar in this project and noted it is a good project. NCDOT wants to be good partners so this gets built. As far as selection of the 3 alternatives, DOT does not have issue that will not meet future requirements for the rest of Wendell Bypass. He did not want DOT set up to fail and there would be criteria that DOT will require the developer to do so they don't fail with the rest of the route. He referred to the historic preservation area, design speed and the feasible termini and did not want it to end on Martin Pond Road and that is why DO is requiring the developer to go on to Poole Road. In regard to where the road ties into Poole Road, there will be a traffic impact analysis the developer will have to do depending on where the heaviest movement of traffic needs to be. Mr. Bowman referred to the historic property registration noting it is not just a house, it is a farm. He explained if the Richardson Road alignment is used, the developer needs to 4 lanes the road past the historic area and then he may go to 2 lanes if the traffic impact analysis warrants that over to Poole Road. When the state gets funds, if they use state and federal dollars, if the developer extends the road past the historic area, they can extend the rest of the bypass when the funds are available.

Chairman Bryan thanked everyone for their input and noted the public comment period will go through August 25. He indicated this item would be placed on the September 20, 2006 TAC agenda. The meeting will be held at the Wake County Commons at 4:00 p.m.

In response to questioning, Mr. Ferguson indicated the development will go in whether the choice is to go to the north or south.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Hunt

