
APPENDIX G
CAG MEETING #7 SUMMARY NOTES



G. L. Pothier Enterprises Inc.
2197 Galloway Drive
Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6H 5M1

tel: (905) 844-5174
fax: (905) 844-7368
em: glenn@gypi.com

Summary of:

**GTA West Corridor
Environmental Assessment Study
*Community Advisory Group Meeting #7***

Meeting Date/Location:

September 21, 2010
Four Points at Sheraton, Meadowvale Room
Mississauga, Ontario

Summary of Meeting Highlights

Opening Remarks

Glenn Pothier, the independent meeting facilitator, called the group to order, welcomed and thanked all participants for taking time out of their schedules to attend the session, and encouraged the group to take the opportunity to participate fully in the meeting. He then provided an overview of the meeting's purpose/agenda, noting that the meeting had three main objectives:

1. Update the Community Advisory Group (CAG) on the project's status;
2. Present and get valued feedback on the draft Transportation Development Strategy and the principles developed for generating a draft Route Planning Preliminary Study Area; and
3. Outline the study's next steps.

The group was asked if there were any errors or omissions concerning the May 4, 2010 meeting summary. None were raised, thus the May 4th summary will be considered final. J. Bray indicated that he was unsure if he received the last meeting minutes. The Project Team will confirm he was sent a copy. *[Upon review, it was confirmed that J. Bray was sent an email copy of the minutes on August 16, 2010.]*

Observer Comments

G. Pothier reminded the group that in the interest of openness, transparency and accountability, any member of the public can attend a CAG meeting as an observer. He then provided the opportunity for observer comments/questions — as there were no observers present at this point in the meeting, this agenda item was skipped.

Overview Presentation: Status Update

M. Bricks, BPE Inc, provided a brief overview of the events held since the last CAG meeting — including a series of meetings with different groups and municipalities — and reviewed the feedback that was received from the public at Public Information Centre #4, held in June 2010.

The following questions/comments were shared during and after the presentation:

Question: At the last CAG Meeting the group expressed strong concerns about growth projections and related transportation corridor planning being limited to the 2031 planning horizon. Were similar concerns echoed by others who attended the Public Information Centres and municipalities/agencies?

Response: Yes, concerns about the limitation of the 2031 planning horizon were made by members of the public and by municipalities and agencies. Though we heard this comment quite a bit, we reminded everyone that our

project has to strike a balance between having a long-term vision and being able to use reliable information such as growth estimates, which are only available to the year 2031.

Follow-up Comment: If comments about this issue were plentiful, then the presentation slide should be revised to reflect the importance of this point. Currently, the comment is shown only as a sub-bullet when it should be its own bulleted point, in bold text.

Response: Agreed. The presentation slide will be revised. Similar changes will also be made in the draft TDS Report.

Question/Comment: How much traffic is anticipated to leave Highway 401 and use Alternative 4-3 as a by-pass? If needs aren't met by Alternative 4-3, a new corridor north around Highway 9 may be required. You need to have a 50-year vision.

Response: With the introduction of Alternative 4-3 to the network, the number of lanes needed on Highway 401 has been projected to be 10.

Comment: If you focus on just using the Growth Plan as the basis for your planning, the Project Team is going to fall behind on their projections. The planning horizon of 2031 in the Growth Plan is too short. A 50 year vision is needed. When the GTA West Study is complete, planning will need to immediately begin for the next 20 years due to the intense growth in the area and high demand for facilities.

Response: Comment noted. The Project Team recognizes the challenge to balance the need for planning for the longer term and the need to have reliable forecast information regarding growth patterns. It is particularly important to strike the right balance in order to make informed decisions when planning for major infrastructure. The planning horizon and the growth level in the GTA West Corridor Study are consistent with the *Growth Plan* which provides the growth targets and the associated growth management policies for the year 2031. The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO), and Project Team, are bound by current provincial policy and cannot make land use projections without the appropriate data.

Comment: A lot of the discussions occurring during the current municipal elections in Halton Hills are about this study. Some residents are very concerned about the outcome of the study. The Project Team should be aware that the Town of Halton Hills is opposed to Alternative 4-3.

Response: Comments noted. The Project Team is aware of the Town of Halton Hills' concerns.

Comment: Simply relying on the Growth Plan is a cop-out. You're going to have the same transportation problems you have today twenty years from now. MTO needs to break the cycle and do things differently. Before anything ever gets built, you will already have to plan for even greater growth.

Response: Comment noted.

Question: Are there equivalent studies underway to the north, south, east and west of the Preliminary Study Area?

Response: To the south of the Preliminary Study Area is the Niagara to GTA (NGTA) Corridor EA Study. The NGTA and GTA West EA studies share a common boundary in Highway 401 — and the two studies have been closely integrated. To the west is the Cambridge to Brantford EA Study. MTO is currently considering initiating a review of the Simcoe transportation network to the north. There are no current studies to the east of the Preliminary Study Area, primarily due to the fact that east of Highway 400 is fully developed. All of the Project Team's modeling was done on a network level and incorporated the areas north, south, east and west of the study area, and wasn't exclusive just to the study area.

Question: Would a new transportation corridor incorporate a transitway and/or hydro/utilities corridor?

Response: Likely yes. Any new transportation corridor would likely include a transitway and could be coordinated with hydro elements.

Overview Presentation: The Draft Transportation Development Strategy

N. Ahmed, MRC, provided a brief overview of the draft Transportation Development Strategy. [Note: Presentation slides are posted on the project website.]

The following questions/comments were shared during and after the presentation:

Question: With Alternative 4-4, how many lanes would be needed along Highway 401?

Response: Between Highway 407 and Milton, 10 lanes would likely be required on Highway 401. East of Milton to Guelph, 8 lanes would likely be required. Work is already underway to widen the 401 further to the West.

Comment/Question: The Bram-West Parkway isn't yet final, but it does not seem to factor strongly into the study's material. Its presence could have a huge effect on the transportation network. Why isn't the Bram-West Parkway being shown more clearly and assumed more as a certainty?

Response: The Halton-Peel Boundary Area Transportation Study (HP-BATS), sometimes referred to as the Bram-West Parkway, is a joint study being conducted by the Region of Peel, Halton Region, City of Brampton, Town of Caledon, and the Town of Halton Hills in order to identify the long-term (2021 and 2031) transportation network required to support provincial and inter-municipal planning goals, and to serve future transportation demands within the study area. The study is being conducted outside of the EA process, and a facility has not yet been approved. MTO and the participating municipalities have been coordinating and are currently in discussions to determine the potential propensity of the facility should it proceed.

Question: Alternative 4-2 will impact Maple Lodge Farms. Has the Project Team consulted with them?

Response: The representative transportation corridor alternatives shown are up to 4 kilometres in width and are intended to illustrate possible end points and potential connections to the transportation network. Specific route locations/alignments of these illustrative alternatives will be examined in more detail in subsequent steps of the EA Process. The HP-BATS study area is shown in hatching on the map and, as a result of consultation with Maple Lodge Farms, avoids those lands. The GTA West Project Team would do the same.

Comment: A new hydro generation station is to be located at Sixth Line and Steeles Avenue. Any new hydro facilities that are part of a future transportation corridor should connect to this new hydro generation station.

Response: Comment noted. The Project Team is working with Hydro One and will be meeting with them on September 24, 2010 to further discuss coordination.

Question: Regional Councillor Jane Fogal [Halton Hills representative for Halton Region] is quoted in an email as saying: 'From a trucking point of view, Alternative 4-2 makes sense, while 4-3 does not.' Has the Project Team consulted with trucking associations throughout the course of the study?

Response: Yes, as a part of the study's consultation program Transportation Service Providers, and Business and Commercial Stakeholders have been consulted, including the Ontario Trucking Association.

Follow-up Comment: Alternative 4-3 and the connection to the HP-BATS corridor would provide two reliable options for the trucking industry.

Response: [Comment noted.]

Following the presentation, CAG members were asked if they had any additional thoughts about the advantages and disadvantages of Alternatives 4-2 and 4-3. The following were shared:

- The mapping of the alternatives is inconsistent when it comes to their representation of the Highway 410 Extension corridor.
- Alternative 4-2 is needed no matter what and should be built as soon as possible as the first phase of work. The Project Team should then monitor connections from Alternative 4-2 to Alternatives 4-3 and 4-4, and then decide which to build based on land use information as the second phase of work. This project needs a phase 1 and phase 2 of planning and construction. The project team should not be inflexible and unwilling to change as new information comes to light.
- If you build Alternatives 4-2 or 4-3 now, there's the potential to build 4-4 in the future as an 'offshoot' given that they share the same early routing.
- Alternative 4-3 is located close to the new hydro generation station at Sixth Line and Steeles Avenue, so a connection to the facility would be easier.
- Prefer Alternative 4-3 due to its length and connection to the HP-BATS facility. By building this alternative, the transportation network gets the benefits of both Alternatives 4-2 and 4-3.
- In considering existing and new electricity plants, the team should look into whether it would take much effort to integrate these with Alternative 4-2.

Overview Presentation: Review of the Rationale and Principles for Developing the Draft Preliminary Route Planning Study Area

M. Bricks provided a brief overview of the rationale for and principles used while developing the draft Preliminary Route Planning Study Area. He made clear that the draft Preliminary Route Planning Study Area and principles are a work in progress, and that the Project Team has just begun the process of refinements.

Following the presentation, CAG members were asked if they had any additions or refinements to the list of principles generated. The following additions to the list of principles were shared/suggested:

- Maximize the ability to integrate with utilities.
- Minimize impacts to the Greenbelt.
- When having to cross large and significant natural features, do so in a way that minimizes the amount of overall crossings — and maximizes the potential for 'right angle' river/watercourse crossings.
- Maximize opportunities to utilize abandoned gravel pits in route design.
- Minimize impacts to agriculture.
- Minimize impacts to approved municipal expansion areas and likely future development areas. The Project Team should look beyond the area Official Plans and be visionary.

The following question was shared as part of the discussion:

Question: Will a detailed analysis of agricultural lands — that is, what’s actually on the ground — be undertaken?

Response: Yes. During the next stage of the EA (EA Stage 2 – Route Location) additional studies on agricultural operations and linkages will be conducted. A number of principles and evaluation factors will be considered.

What’s Next

N. Ahmed reviewed the next steps in the study and the timeline for release of the draft Transportation Development Strategy (TDS) Report. This Report will be made available for public and stakeholder review in late 2010.

G. Pothier indicated that while this is likely the last CAG meeting, another may be proposed after the release of the TDS Report in order to discuss the report and comments submitted. If there is another CAG meeting, all CAG members will be notified. In addition, while it is not guaranteed, there will likely be a CAG formed in the second stage of the EA Study, which all current members would likely be invited to attend.

G. Pothier and J. Wang, MTO, thanked CAG Members for their time and participation on the CAG. Both noted that the input received from the group has been invaluable to the Study. The Project Team acknowledged member contributions by presenting each with a personalized letter from the Director of the MTO Transportation Planning Branch. A copy of each letter is also being sent to each member’s local municipal clerk, in order to recognize their participation to the broader community.

Open Forum and Observer Comments

G. Pothier asked whether the Project Team or CAG members had any further business to add to the meeting agenda. The following questions/comments were shared by the CAG:

Question: How long will the next stage of the EA (EA Stage 2 – Route Location) and Detailed Design take?

Response: EA Stage 2 – Route Location and Preliminary Design will take 3 to 5 years to complete. After that is finished, Detailed Design can commence and could take up to 2 years. The Detailed Design for 7 km of Highway 404 took 2 years to complete, which included design and property acquisition. Implementation/construction is dependant on available funding.

Question: How large will the new transportation corridor right-of-way (ROW) be?

Response: A typical highway ROW is 110 metres + 60 metres for a transitway allowance, equaling a total ROW width of 170 metres. If a hydro component were to be added to the ROW, the total width required would be 210 metres.

Comment: The Project Team has heard a lot of input from the CAG over the last 3 years and should challenge themselves to go beyond the ordinary and learn from the comments given.

Response: [Comment noted.]

Comment: I understand that the Greenbelt is a ‘floating greenbelt’ — and that while it allows for infrastructure to be built within greenbelt boundaries, there is also a provision for swapping lands in one area of the greenbelt for lands in another area as long as the total acreage remains at the same minimum size.

Response: We disagree with this interpretation of the Greenbelt Plan, and don’t believe the legislation is written as described. I don’t think you can swap existing portions of the Greenbelt with other lands. We will review the Greenbelt Plan and Bill 135 to clarify the intent with regards to land designation.

Observers were then invited to share any additional questions/comments. The following was discussed:

Comment: As a resident of Vaughan, I am disappointed that the corridor crosses the Greenbelt lands through Vaughan. In addition, with the corridor terminating at Highway 400 and not continuing easterly, there are concerns that the traffic wanting to continue east will spill over into the local community.

Response: The City of Vaughan is almost entirely built-up, so the only available area for a corridor connection is through the Greenbelt lands in northern Vaughan. In the evaluation of alternatives, the Project Team applied premium costing to any facilities located on Greenbelt lands (such as, long span bridge structures across the Humber River) in order to incorporate the costs of mitigating environmental effects through design. MTO will also use their *Environmental Reference for Highway Design Guide for Designated Areas* when planning any new corridor facilities through Greenbelt lands. The guide outlines the technical requirements for environmental protection / mitigation for highway design.

East of the study area (that is east of Highway 400) is almost entirely built-up, due to the presence of the Yonge Street corridor. Although the study limits end at Highway 400, the study modelling considered the whole transportation network, including areas north, south, east and west of the Preliminary Study Area.

Follow-up Question: Could a copy of the MTO Design Guide be sent to me?

Response: Yes. [Note: M. Bricks subsequently sent a digital copy of the MTO Environmental Reference for Highway Design Guide for Designated Areas to D. Brand via email on September 23, 2010].

Question: Will development be permitted next to the new corridor through Greenbelt lands?

Response: If a new corridor is located within the Greenbelt, limited highway access and proper land use policies can discourage development pressure for lands adjacent to the new corridor. The Greenbelt Plan contains policies that prevent development from happening through the Greenbelt.

Closing Remarks

Glenn Pothier thanked the group for their attendance and valued input.

The meeting was formally adjourned (having run from approximately 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm).

Attendance (names listed in no particular order)

CAG Members:

Lynne Moore
Stephen Townsend
David Lyons
Fred Jessop
Jim Bray
Margaret Coburn

Public/Observers:

Alexandra Hatfield
David Brand

Ontario Ministry of Transportation:

Heide Garbot
Jin Wang

Consultant Team:

Neil Ahmed (McCormick Rankin Corporation)
Mike Bricks (BPE Inc.)
Catherine Christiani (Ecoplans Limited)

Independent Facilitator:

Glenn Pothier (GLPi)