



MEETING NOTES – NORTH GROUP

Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021 | 4:30 p.m.

Attendees

Jenny Corken – Lakeside Park resident
Scott Daughterty – Lakeside Park resident
Rob Haney – Kenton County
Dan Jansing – City of Lakeside Park, Mayor
John Kramer, Lakeside Park resident
Arlene Luebbe – Crestview Hills, City Councilmember
T. Alex Mattingly – Crestview Hills, City Administrator
Christopher Schutte – City of Lakeside Park/City of Crestview Hills, Chief of Police
Jeff Thelen – Northern Kentucky Area Development, Transportation Planning
Phone Number – 18** *** **84
Mike Bezold – KYTC, Project Manager
Ellen Gregory – KYTC, Design Section Manager
Sharon James – KYTC, Environmental Officer
Maggie Enzweiler – KYTC
Stacee Hans, KYTC. Executive Staff Advisor
Jim Brannon – Gresham Smith, project team
Nikki Boden – Gresham Smith, project team
John Eckler – Gresham Smith, Project Manager
Alison Gwynn – Gresham Smith, project team
Anne Warnick – WSP, project team
Haley Taylor – Rasor, project team
Laura Whitman – Rasor, project team

MEETING INTRODUCTION

Mr. Eckler welcomed the Working Group and said that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to get as much feedback from group members as possible. Feedback will be reviewed by the project team as we continue to develop designs for improvements. Goals for the project are to improve safety, reduce congestion, and provide safe travel options for bicycles and pedestrians between Dudley and Dixie.

Mr. Eckler then reviewed the status of the project, noting that progress has been slightly delayed due to COVID, but planning is still moving forward. Feedback received this week will be used to fine-tune designs. From there, the team will proceed to a preliminary Line and Grade meeting, which will likely be held near the end of April or in early May.

This in an internal working meeting with KYTC where the project team will discuss the input received, discuss the options, benefits, and other aspects of each of the alternatives, and ultimately develop a recommended alternative. Noise and air quality analyses will be completed once a recommended alternative has been identified. From there, the project team will bring the recommended alternative back to the Working Group for review prior to the public meeting, which is currently anticipated in late June or July.

Any questions after the meeting should be directed to Mike Bezold or John Eckler.

PROJECT CONCEPT REVIEW

Mr. Eckler began the discussion by reviewing the improvement options being considered for the north side of the project area, from I-275 to Dixie:

- Alternative 1: Includes widening the road to three lanes and adding a 10-ft shared use path on the east/north side. All existing street connections would be maintained in their current configuration. Driveway access to all the properties along both sides of the road would be maintained. The I-275/Turkeyfoot interchange would be the same conventional interchange as it is today, with the exception of widening the ramp to allow for a dual right turn, instead of the single right turn that currently exists.
- Alternative 2: Maintains a two-lane configuration between Dixie and I-275, aligns Holaday and Applewood and installs a roundabout at Farmington. Includes a 10-ft shared-use path on the east/north side of the road. The road would be curb and gutter on both sides. The deep ditches that exist along the side of Turkeyfoot would be filled in and the drainage system would be enclosed. Widening between Dixie and Farmington would be minimal.
 - The roundabout could also work with the three-lane configuration, if it's a feature people want.
 - The project team developed the concept of creating alley access behind eight properties fronting Turkeyfoot, between Elizabeth Ct. and Van Deren Dr. This option came from a suggestion from the last meeting for improving traffic flow on Turkeyfoot without having to add a third lane. The alley concept would eliminate driveway access to Turkeyfoot, thus eliminating cars turning into and out of Turkeyfoot from these driveways. The alley would be 18 ft wide and its entrance would be off Elizabeth.
 - The I-275 interchange option illustrated in this alternate shows a Diverging Diamond Intersection (DDI), also known as a Double-Crossover Diamond (DCD) interchange. This is similar to the Graves Road Interchange that is now open in Boone County. The advantage of this intersection type is better flow for high volumes of traffic. For example, left turns from Turkeyfoot north heading on to I-275 west, and left turns heading to Turkeyfoot south from I-275 east can be accommodated at the same time. Signal operation at each of the crossover areas is simplified because it's a two-phase operation. A greater volume of cars can get through this intersection using the same width as it is currently than can get through a conventional intersection.

The DDI would include dual rights coming from I-275 east to southbound Turkeyfoot. The right turn to eastbound I-275 is a free-low style move, so only one lane is needed. This configuration would help alleviate evening backups.

DISCUSSION

Mayor Jansing led off the discussion by making a number of comments regarding multiple project elements. He noted he's having a hard time justifying the need to do much with the section of Turkeyfoot between Dixie Highway and Yancey Drive. Talking to Chief Schutte, two or three of the recent accidents in the area were either alcohol or heroin related; they had nothing to do with road construction, road layouts, or anything like that. Additional comments made include:

- He expects that the alley concept will die once general public sees it at the public meeting. Accidents that require re-routing traffic through local streets happen only periodically and are typically cleaned up within 30 minutes. The impact to residents on those streets is temporary. Therefore, the alley isn't needed.
- Kids play and cars park on the streets in Lakeside Park. He's lived in the area a long time and travels the streets day in and day out. He doesn't know that there's a true need for a roundabout at the top of Farmington. Some residents on Farmington are asking why a roundabout is needed.
- It took 10 years to get the sidewalk constructed on the north side of Turkeyfoot between Farmington and I-275. It's used by walkers and some older children on bicycles. Parents won't let younger children ride that close to Turkeyfoot Road on a bicycle, but they use it for pushing baby strollers, jogging, and walking. He's only seen one or two on a bicycle. Why is a bicycle lane needed on a street that's narrow to start with? Why disrupt the homes alongside Turkeyfoot Road?
- The problems exist around I-275 and Turkeyfoot. It's the timing of those lights. You can sit there on a Sunday morning, or at 3:00 AM, for as long as three minutes. You're the only car on the road but you still can't go anywhere.
- Wouldn't it make more sense to widen the streets by eliminating the decorative islands? They are attractive, but if it comes down to eliminating those islands in order to widen the street and improve traffic flow versus uprooting somebody's home, or their front yards, he thinks it would be more appropriate to eliminate the islands.
- The problem is not between Dixie Highway and I-275. It's between Yancey Drive and I-275. The problem is the hundreds of cars that turn down Thomas More Parkway on a daily basis, either going to the hospital or the doctor's offices. There's not a lot of congestion at Turkeyfoot and Farmington.

Mr. Eckler agreed that the more serious problem is south of Yancey due to the congestion in that area. He noted that the project, as it was conceived and put into the highway plan, extended improvements to Dixie Hwy. Its purpose and need is to improve safety, improve congestion, and provide bicycle and pedestrian connections for the entire length of the project area.

- He understands the comments about front yards and playing in the streets. That's why the project team is here, to listen to the community and their concerns. The goal is to balance the needs of the project with the needs of the community.

Roundabout Discussion

Mr. Eckler reviewed the crash maps with the group noting that there weren't a lot of crashes in the area. Crashes tend to be concentrated at the Dixie intersection. There's also a cluster of crashes at Farmington. Most are property damage only; there are four injury crashes. The roundabout was envisioned as a mitigation for the small cluster of crashes at this location. A warrant cannot be met for a traffic signal here, but a roundabout can be installed. Studies have shown roundabouts can reduce serious injury or fatal crashes by 80 to 90%. If there is a strong desire not to install a roundabout, that's okay. It's just an option for the community to consider.

- Major Jansing noted that safety is an issue. He said, however, that residents on Farmington aren't sure about the benefits of a roundabout and then asked which properties would be affected by its installation.
- Mr. Eckler showed the impact area on a map and said that the driveway of one property (located along Turkeyfoot, between Farmington and Della Way) would need to be relocated to Della Way? He also said that the corners of several properties would be clipped, but not significantly. There are also a couple of utility poles that would need to be relocated. He noted several benefits of a roundabout:
 - Easier access into and out of Farmington with very little waiting.
 - Roundabouts slow down traffic moving through the area.
- Mr. Eckler also noted that streetlights would be installed to ensure that the roundabout is highly visible at night.
 - Mayor Jansing asked who would pay for the streetlights. Mr. Bezold said that KYTC would pay for the standard cobra-head or basic-style lights. If the city wants more decorative lights, they would need to pay for the difference in costs. The costs of running the lights would go to the city.
- Mayor Jansing asked who would pay the cost of relocating the driveway. Mr. Eckler said that any driveway that would be adjusted or relocated as part of the project would be part of the project cost. In this particular case, the driveway relocation might be included in the right-of-way negotiation that would need to take place. If that is the case, the property could use the settlement agreement to put in the new driveway any way they want it.
- Mr. Yeager noted that he liked the idea of the roundabout, but can live without one at the Farmington location. Again, it's for the convenience of the people coming out of that street. The driveway issue can be addressed – if someone backs out from there into a roundabout, it can be dangerous.
- Chief Schutte noted that most of the accidents are at Dixie and Turkeyfoot, but there are little ones right around Farmington. He can't recall any accidents from someone turning into a driveway; most are because someone's getting ready to turn left on to Farmington and they're rear-ended. Data doesn't distinguish between severity of accidents. If somebody

says they were injured, it's considered an injury accident. It doesn't mean there is an ambulance and transport to the hospital.

- Mr. Eckler noted the comment and said that as one of the States' safety contractors, his team gets to review crash reports. There's not a great distinction between one where someone's back hurts and one where someone is very seriously injured and requires an ambulance to get to the hospital. He indicated the team recognizes that the crash data is imperfect.
- Mr. Eckler noted that he was a roundabout skeptic at first, but now he likes them because they let him choose when to go. Although you may have to wait a moment if there is a car already in the roundabout, you generally can carry on when you are ready. You will not be delayed as if by a red light for long periods of time when there is no opposing traffic. Even so, others may have differing opinions, which is why the team wanted to present the idea and get feedback from everyone.
- Mr. Daugherty said he thinks some of those accidents at the bend near Farmington are because people are speeding. The speed limit changes at the curb from 45 mph to 25 mph. Speeding happens all day long.
 - Mr. Yeager noted that roundabouts are a traffic-calming technique. People have to take roundabouts at a reasonable speed which serves to slow their speed down.
 - Mr. Eckler mentioned that the speed in the roundabout would be in the 12 to 16 mph range.
- In response to Mr. Daugherty's question asking if a roundabout would create even a larger traffic backup during those busy times, Mr. Eckler said that there may be times when a handful of cars back up, maybe three or four deep, but roundabouts are good at cycling cars through. He doesn't anticipate that there would be much of a backup at this location.
- Multiple members of the group noted that they will be interested to see what the public thinks about the roundabout. Mr. Bezold noted that the input received on these types of ideas will influence what goes into the final recommendations.

Alley Discussion

Mayor Jansing asked if the affected neighbors agree to the alley concept, would maintaining the alley fall to the city to manage? What would it be made of? Would it be a private lane? The city has a couple private lanes that they don't maintain off of Dixie Highway.

- Mr. Bezold said that the alley would not be a state-maintained road. KYTC could deed it over to the city as a city street, if that's what the city wanted. Another alternative is for KYTC to purchase the right-of-way as an access easement for all those people to share. The city has to decide how they would want to handle it.
- Mr. Yeager also noted that regarding the alley concept, it should be the property owner's decision whether or not to put that in. Maintenance of the alley would be an issue to be resolved.
- Ms. Corken noted that she was the person who had brought up the alley concept. She clarified there is not as much space in her front yard as there is in the back, so adding a

third lane on Turkeyfoot would have a larger impact on her yard and bring the road closer to the house. Adding an alley might make getting in and out a little easier. She then asked how close the road would come to her house if a third lane was added.

- Mr. Eckler replied that if the road were widened with a three lane, curb and gutter configuration, the road would come in eight to 10 feet from where it is now. The impact will be a little bit greater on the other side of the road with the addition of the shared-use lane.
 - While the idea makes sense operationally (stopping and starting on Turkeyfoot would be dramatically reduced and a third lane wouldn't be needed if the alley is constructed), the team wants to know the community's preference - that will drive the recommendations to be made
- Ms. Corken mentioned that she hasn't had the chance yet to discuss the idea with her neighbors, but hopes to do so soon.
 - Mayor Jansing noted that it should made be clear to the affected neighbors that no parking would be allowed on either side of the alley.
 - Mr. Eckler mentioned that if the alley idea advances, he would like to have a meeting (whether it be in person or by Zoom with the affected property owners to discuss design aspects in more detail.

Other Topics

- Mr. Daugherty asked if there were such things as smart traffic lights that are able to react in real-time to traffic flow needs. Mr. Eckler noted that there are more active control systems that have various detection capabilities, but they require a bit of human intervention. Kentucky has very few of those in the state. Most of what's actively used are either pre-timed lights or some that are programmed in a loop that changes depending on the time of day.
 - When Mr. Daugherty asked if this type of light would be cheaper to install at Farmington instead of a roundabout, Mr. Eckler said that traffic lights can be put in only if warranted. He has already confirmed that the volume of traffic at this location does not meet the threshold to qualify for a signal, neither now nor later, based on future traffic projections.
- Mr. Daugherty asked how wide the shared-use path would be and if it would be in addition to the existing sidewalk. Mr. Eckler said it would be 10 ft wide (which is KYTC's minimum width for a shared-use path) and it would replace the current sidewalk. A little bit of right-of-way may be needed to construct the shared-use path.
- Mr. Daugherty mentioned that run-off tends to pool on his property. Because of this, trees have died, ice forms in winter and he's put in more than 30 yards of dirt over the past 10 years to address the problem. Would the situation be improved as part of the project? If so, how?
 - Mr. Eckler said that the project team envisions a completely enclosed drainage system on both sides of the road. There would be curb and gutter on both sides

and an underground drainage system would be installed. The project team will have to look into the options, but it would get rid of the water in a managed way and eliminate the ponding issue.

- Mr. Daugherty said he doesn't have a problem with running a drain underneath his driveway and down his side yard, though he doesn't know how his neighbor would feel about it.
- Mr. Daugherty asked how the alignment with Applewood and Holaday would be done.
 - Mr. Eckler explained that Applewood has a wide median. The team has looked at removing part of that median and shifting Applewood to the south as much as possible while maintaining the south edge. This way, the realignment with Holaday doesn't have to be too dramatic. Doing this would encroach on the corner of the property located on the northwest corner of the intersection between Turkeyfoot and their driveway.
 - Mayor Jansing asked if the brick walls at the entrance of Applewood would be affected by the realignment. Mr. Eckler said that they might be and Mr. Bezold noted that part of the purpose of this group is to explore what would be done if the wall is affected. Mayor Jansing said that the city currently maintains the entrance area to Applewood, including the walls. Mr. Eckler noted that similar walls have been reconstructed on some projects, so that may be an option if the city so chooses. In other cases, the project compensates property owners or homeowners associations for the removal of such walls and which allows them to be rebuilt at the property owner's/association's specifications. One of the issues that will have to be worked out is whether or not the walls are on private or public property. That will determine who receives compensation. The mayor noted that at this time, nobody knows who owns the walls, though the city has been maintaining them for many years.
- Mayor Jansing asked who decides what will be done on this project?
 - Mr. Bezold explained that KYTC will make a recommendation on the alternatives selected and these will be shared at the public meeting. After the public meeting, the recommendations and comments received will be shared with the state for concurrence. The state legislature will then make the decision as to whether they will fund the project or not. All comments received are part of the public record, as are all of the engineering decisions.
- Mr. Kramer asked how much is the intersection of Turkeyfoot Road and Dixie Highway is going to be impacted, changed, or redirected? Traffic on this section of Turkeyfoot is generally a result of issues with I-275. He speculated that the problems in this area would be addressed if the problems with I-275 and the Turkeyfoot/Dixie intersection are addressed.
 - Mr. Eckler said that the team is in the process of determining if a dual right from Turkeyfoot to Dixie would be of any benefit. Right now, they aren't sure if that would be a recommendation that they would make. KYTC also has another project going on that's running in parallel with this one to improve the I-275 interchange

and make it more efficient and safer. The team will consider improvements here in conjunction with the other improvements being planned. He noted that day-to-day traffic doesn't seem to be a problem here and Mr. Kramer agreed that issues arise more as a result of traffic events that occur in other areas of the system.

- Mr. Eckler noted that the improvements being discussed as part of this project would allow cars to get in and out of their driveways a little more easily.
 - Mr. Yeager noted that another key benefit of the project in this area is addressing the drainage issues and controlling surface water flow. He also noted that the ditches along Turkeyfoot are extremely deep and people have driven into them. These would be addressed as well. He agreed that traffic isn't the primary concern except for times when the interstate is closed.
- Mayor Jansing asked Mr. Yeager if it would be possible to try to do anything in the short term with the timing of the traffic lights along Turkeyfoot, particularly around I-275, and see if that helps at all?
 - Mr. Yeager said that KYTC has looked at the timing in the past and made some adjustments, they would be willing to look at the timing again to see if there's some short-term improvements that can be made to those lights.
 - Mr. Eckler said that Gresham Smith would be happy to their share traffic count data with KYTC if needed.
- Mr. Kramer asked who would make the final decision about what will actually be completed on this project? Mr. Bezold confirmed that the Transportation Cabinet will make the final decisions.
 - After this round of Working Group meetings, KYTC will have a preliminary Line and Grade inspection to discuss the project and make the recommendations for moving forward.
 - A follow-up meeting will be held with the Working Group prior to presenting the recommendations in a public meeting for public review. Feedback gained from the public will be considered and any adjustments needed will be made prior to finalizing the environmental documentation and submitting it to FHWA for their final approval as well.
 - Mr. Yeager reiterated that public input is very important and helps shape the project and what's presented to the state. Non-critical elements – like the roundabout or big sidewalks – can be removed if that's the community's preference. More consideration will be given if the community is against a critical part of the project; something would have to be done to compensate in that kind of situation. We need to make the best decisions with the information that's available to us.
- Mr. Kramer asked about the timing for this project. Mr. Bezold said that construction is probably still five to six years away.
- In response to a question asked about public meeting notification, Mr. Bezold said notice would be put in local newspapers, on KYTC's webpage, and promoted through social

media. KYTC will also encourage the local communities and the county to share information about the meeting through their webpages and other communications channels.

- Mayor Jansing noted that the city would also send letters to residents and property owners in the immediate area - along Turkeyfoot, maybe from Van Deren all the way to I-275, and all the folks on Farmington, Williams Avenue, and in the Van Darren subdivision - as well.
- Mr. Eckler noted that the team may also use Facebooks ads to help get the word out.

CLOSING

Mr. Eckler thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting and reminded everyone that the drawings reviewed in the meeting would be posted on the Public Input page of the ImprovingTurkeyfoot.com website. Working Group members can share the drawings with their neighbors for review and feedback.

The next Working Group meeting will likely be scheduled sometime in June.