

?INDOT hears negative reactions to proposed turning lane on US 150 in Greenville corridor

Written by Administrator

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? Officials representing the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) heard 100 percent negative reactions to the proposed turning lane being considered for US 150 between where the road splits into a four lane road near Mt Saint Francis on the eastern side of the project, and the Harrison County/Floyd County line on the western side of the project.

The gymnasium at Greenville Elementary School held dozens of residents living within the town limits, the Greenville Town Board, and INDOT officials Monday night (Sept. 9).

Greenville Town Board President Talbotte Richardson opened the proceedings with the statement, "If they (INDOT) did what they wanted to do, it would be the death knell of this town."

Brett Walls, an engineer with the firm drawing up the plans, emphasized that the plans are only half done at present, and that INDOT and the engineers on the project are trying to get input from the residents at the time.

"Public input is always a part of the design process," Walls said.

Walls said that the proposed project, at least within the confines of Greenville and Galena, will have two 11 foot lanes, with a 12 foot wide turning lane between the two 11 foot lanes.

In a three year study period for the project, 232 crashes in the project area were recorded, with 58 (25 percent) of them in Greenville alone.

Runoff a problem

Butch Richardson, a brother of board president Talbotte Richardson, has studied the problem of storm water run off, and said that with the proposed drainage system, the water will flood area houses in Greenville that are on side streets.

"I think that these issues are things that the state should take into account," Butch Richardson said.

US 150 a lifeline of Greenville

Greenville Police Commissioner Bob Wright said he thought that US 150 simply was too important to Greenville to be shut down for any length of time.

"It's the best and fastest access in any emergency," he said. "Any extra minutes taken are not acceptable. It's the lifeline of Greenville. They cannot shut it down for any reason. We can't shut it down for one day. I say, leave it alone, its fine the way it is."

Board President Richardson echoed the sentiments of Wright: "How will people know where to go?" with regards to detour routes.

Under the proposed detour, traffic would be routed off of Interstate 64 onto State Road 64, through Georgetown, to New Salisbury and then north on State Road 135 and into Palmyra. Traffic would then have to backtrack on SR 150 to their destination.

Richardson didn't think that the proposed detour of SR 64 from Georgetown to New Salisbury and then SR 135 to Palmyra would work, because of the extra length.

"We're trying to convince the state not to do this," Richardson said.

Richardson asked for the people in the crowd that run businesses in the town limits to stand. Then, he asked the people whose businesses could survive a year with US 150 being worked on to raise their hand. None raised their hand. Then, he lowered the stretch of time to six months, three months, and then one month. Again, no person raised their hand.

Why not lower posted speed limits?

The topic of posted speed limits came up. It was suggested that the state lower the highest posted speed limit, which is presently 55 miles per hour.

Greenville Town Board Vice President Randy Johns said, "Currently, we have three speed zones in this town, 40 mph, 50 mph, and 55 mph. Most motorists exceed the speed limit in this

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town. Tractor trailers go at 55 mph.”

Johns continued, “I realize this is a law enforcement problem.” He added that a lowered speed limit would help, since excessive speeds was the problem.

Johns had several other concerns about the project.

“The building’s closeness to the new highway will make it dangerous. If any accidents occur, the accident might happen in people’s houses, not in front of them. Some business owners are concerned about losing business income. This might (also) cut away available land for further development. And with the turning lane, any drivers will have to cross two lanes coming from the side roads,” Johns continued.

State Rep. Paul

Robertson (D-Depauw) speaks

Indiana State Rep. Paul Robertson spoke briefly at the end of the meeting. He thanked all parties present for being there.

He stressed that the number of people being affected by the project is much larger than just residents of Greenville and Galena, “but people west of here.”

“I hope that when you speak to INDOT, you remember that they are here doing their job.”

Robertson stressed the need to remember that the final project will have to be a compromise somewhere between the present proposal and nothing at all.

Facts about the

US 150 Road Rehabilitation

- Ends in the west at the existing Floyd/Harrison County line, and ends in the east approximately four miles west of I-64. Its lanes will be two 12-foot wide travel lanes, and the shoulders will vary in width according to the location. In rural areas, there will be one foot of aggregate, with four to 11 feet of bituminous matter.
- The stated proposal is to help improve intersection sight distances, and improve stopping sight distances.
- Urban areas will have a 12-foot center turn lane, curbing and guttering, and passing lanes at Everett Avenue and Barry Lane.
- The project schedule shows that the project is in its 3rd stage: Public Hearing/Involvement. The Final Environmental Document will appear in fall 2008, with final design and right of way clearances to be the remainder of 2008 to 2010. Utility coordination will take place in 2011, and construction will start in 2013.
- Construction and detours would start in the spring and summer of 2013, and will be phased to maintain local access to homes and businesses. Some short term local detours will be possible, and coordination with emergency services and first responders will take place.
- Approximately 160 parcels of land will be affected by either permanent or temporary right of way changes, with approximately 20 acres of property permanently affected by right of way changes. No structures will be acquired by the IDOT for demolition.
- Any questions? Contact Rickie Clark, INDOT Public Hearings Manager, at 317-232-6601. He can be e-mailed at rclark@indot.in.gov. Or, contact John McCrary, INDOT Project Manager, Seymour District Office, at 812-524-3719.