



**SPRINGFIELD RAILROAD CORRIDOR STUDY  
PUBLIC OFFICIALS ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY  
APRIL 16, 2010, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM**

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***Overview***

The second meeting of the Springfield Railroad Corridor Study Public Officials Advisory Group (POAG) was held at 9:30 am on Friday, April 16, 2010 at Hanson Professional Services, Inc. There were six POAG members present, along with seven members of the study team. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Review traffic study findings to date;
- Explore corridor redevelopment concepts;
- Provide an update on the study's environmental activities; and
- Discuss the public involvement program and upcoming public open house.

**Advisory Group Members Present:**

J. Richard Alsop III	Architect of the Capitol
Judy Hinds	Hon. Aaron Shock, Congressman, 18 <sup>th</sup> District – IL
Paul O'Shea	Office of Planning & Economic Development
Gail Simpson	Springfield City Council
Norman Sims	Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission
Ernie Slotag	City of Springfield

**Study Team Members Present:**

Jimmie Austin (Hanson)	Jonathan Martin (RDG)	Leann Smart (Vector)
Rebecca Bennett (Vector)	Julie Rutledge (Hanson)	Atia Thurman (Vector)
Gary Lozano (RDG)	Kevin Seals (Hanson)	

***Traffic Delay Studies***

Julie Rutledge, of Hanson's engineering team, gave a 15-minute presentation on the study's traffic delay studies. Her presentation provided information on the following topics:

- Vehicle traffic per railroad;
- Current and projected traffic delays at rail crossings;
- Three traffic delay scenarios; and
- Potential safety impacts, including expected crash frequency.

In response to this portion of the presentation, POAG members asked questions. Their questions and the study team's responses are summarized in the table on the following page.

<b>POAG Member Question/Comment</b>	<b>Study Team Response</b>
1. If you consolidate all the rail traffic to 10 <sup>th</sup> Street, why would there be a decrease in the number of crashes?	There are fewer at-grade crossings along 10 <sup>th</sup> Street. Drivers are more perceptive to the fact that there are more trains, so they may not be so tempted to cross at times when they shouldn't.
2. So, your assessment doesn't account for any improvements?	You are correct.
3. Does the model that you used only estimate vehicle to train crashes?	Yes.
4. Opponents of consolidation along the 10 <sup>th</sup> Street corridor argue that pedestrian accidents will increase if consolidation happens. Did you do any studies on this?	No, we've only studied vehicle to train crashes at this point.
5. You may want to do the comparison of pedestrian to train crashes in order to address the concerns that have arisen among some individuals.	Yes, this will be included in our study.
6. Some of the quandaries you'll have to address are how to deal with traffic closing time and how to measure stacking. You want to know if the intersection is clear by actually watching traffic. You have the potential for fender benders as traffic comes into the congested area at crossings, especially at arterials that cross 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street. These create safety issues.	For our assessment of traffic delays, we took queuing into consideration.

### ***Corridor Redevelopment Concepts***

Jonathan Martin introduced himself and Gary Lozano, both of RDG. RDG is the member of the study team that is responsible for preparing corridor redevelopment analyses. Key points of their presentation included:

- RDG's role in identifying potential redevelopment opportunities;
- A comprehensive review of recent planning initiatives and documents being used in their study; and
- A general overview of corridor reuse opportunities.

Following the presentation, POAG members put forth comments and questions, which Mr. Lozano addressed. The exchanges are summarized in the tables on the following page. Also,

several times throughout the question and answer period, Mr. Lozano posed questions to committee members. These are also noted in the table below.

POAG Member Question/Comment	Study Team Response
<i>Gary Lozano asked about the relevancy of several planning documents, including the City of Springfield's Office of Planning &amp; Economic Development's Annual Report. The responses he received are as follows:</i>	
1. I don't think it's being used. I don't believe that document represents the current direction in which the city needs to go.	Team members listened.
2. It was more of a visioning plan than a strategic plan. There were subsets and some of those plans are being implemented.	Team members listened.
3. There is a 2009 annual report. You may want to look at this instead of the 2008 report.	We'll take a look at that report.
<i>Gary Lozano asking about the relevancy of the East Side Neighborhood Development Plan. The responses he received are as follows:</i>	
4. There hasn't been a lot of progress, but there has been some refocus. Residents have concerns about the lack of action.	To what extent are the plans moving forward?
5. Unfortunately, a lot of the opposition that 10 <sup>th</sup> Street consolidation is receiving is due to the false promises that residents were given in the past. They hear that consolidation will bring about redevelopment, but many of them don't believe it because of a history of disappointment. I'm trying to reassure residents that this study will be different, but it's hard to convince them. The city has been shortsighted with regard to following through on its plans and this has left a bitter taste in the mouths of many.	Team members listened.
<i>Below are questions and comments from committee members in response to RDG's presentation.</i>	
6. You don't have the greenbelt and bike trail plan.	We thought it didn't link into the city and dealt mostly with unincorporated areas. We will take a look at it again.
7. The city didn't adopt their portion of the trail plan, but the county did.	Team members listened.

POAG Member Question/Comment	Study Team Response
8. The older R/UDAT study, done in 1974, was a historic preservation plan.	Team members listened.
9. I don't know what the medical district's total interest is, but due to certain laws they are restricted as to what they may do in certain residential areas in terms of redevelopment.	Team members listened.
<i>Gary Lozano asked if there had been any catalyst projects completed. The responses he received are as follows:</i>	
10. Not that I am aware of.	Team members listened.
11. There have been some efforts to bring in some combined facilities on Carpenter.	Team members listened.
12. There is a project underway with Monsoor (?) Real Estate, funded through Enos Park for redevelopment in Enos Park.	Team members listened.
13. I don't think you can down play the importance of greenways and pedestrian linkages through the medical district.	Team members listened.
<i>Gary Lozano asked, "Why aren't the linkages shown to the central part of the city?" The responses he received are as follows:</i>	
14. The city never adopted a bike trail/pedestrian plan. It addresses the issue of trails in its long-range plan and deals with what areas are available as well as fiscal restrictions. Third Street is important to trails and linkages. There were some concerns raised about on-street bike lanes.	Team members listened.
15. We will do a new bike trail plan. It came out of public engagement for the long-range plan.	Team members listened.
<i>Gary Lozano asked about the Springfield 2020 plan. The responses he received are as follows:</i>	
16. Our plan was to review it every five years and update it every 10 years, but I don't believe it's been updated since 2000. There hasn't been a review or an update. What has happened is that the maps became more important than the principles.	How relevant are the recommendations? I summarized all the recommendations on this map so that we could look at them and see how they relate, overlap or reinforce each other.
17. I think the recommendations are still relevant. Whether they get put to use is a different matter.	Team members listened.

POAG Member Question/Comment	Study Team Response
18. The application of the recommendations will be determined, in part, by how they got included into the plan in the first place.	Team members listened.
19. In the current plan, a lot of emphasis is placed on access to downtown and historic sites.	Team members listened.
20. If we did a trail downtown, like the Hi-line trail in New York, it could give us a great view of the capitol.	Our suggestion is to look at linear parks, like what Indianapolis did with its canal project.
21. You did something that was really useful. When you looked at the options you looked at adjacent properties. Whatever option ends up being selected will likely be the home of the new multimodal facility, which would encourage transit-oriented development. You looked at sites within a quarter mile of walking distance to see where there are opportunities for mixed-use development.	Team members listened.
<i>Gary Lozano asked if there had been any plans for making 19<sup>th</sup> Street a roadway since it had been suggested by one of the Community Advisory Group members. The responses he received are as follows:</i>	
22. I haven't heard any discussion of that recently and I'm not sure that would be a good use of the land, but it could be looked at.	Team members listened.
23. I think you did an excellent job of syncing all the plans and looking at their interconnectivity. I think it will behoove the city to look at this plan when it comes to updating its planning processes.	Team members listened.

### ***Environmental Activities Update***

Kevin Seals, the study's environmental and public engagement lead, presented an update of the team's environmental studies. Kevin's presentation highlighted the following:

- Status of the team's coordination with the FRA (Federal Railroad Administration);
- Noise and vibration monitoring that has taken place thus far;
- Historic structure survey activities; and
- Endangered and threatened species surveys.

A question and answer period followed Kevin's presentation. The results are included in the table on the following page.

POAG Member Question/Comment	Study Team Response
1. Is there a relationship between quiet zones and safety?	Yes. Anything we do will require safety updates – double crossing guards, traffic signalization etc. With that being said, we have Campbell Technology out of Chicago as one of the sub-consultants on the project. They will look at all the different safety features when we get to that point in the study.
2. Will safety information be available on Tuesday?	Some basic information will be available on Tuesday. The safety consultants will be there to share their considerations.
3. A lot of individuals who are opposed to 10 <sup>th</sup> Street consolidation believe that if there are vibration issues on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street with respect to the hospital, why wouldn't this be in issue for St. John's near 10 <sup>th</sup> Street?	The extent to which there are noise and vibration problems for the hospitals has to do with their proximity to the tracks.
4. I understand what you're saying, but John Q. Citizen may not get your point. Residents just know that each corridor has a hospital, so how can you determine which is more affected with respect to vibration issues? They also don't know that there are medical facilities, other than hospitals, that use the equipment that is affected by the vibrations.	Once we get the data from the medical district, we will be able to better explain the different impacts of vibration to the public.
5. Why didn't you do the noise and vibration monitoring along 10 <sup>th</sup> Street?	We did. Noise and vibration was measured along all three corridors. Specific measurements were even taken at sensitive locations like Memorial and St. John's Hospitals. There are a number of sites we are assessing.
6. Historic structures are important, but the individuals who live along these corridors are concerned about their personal property and the effects on them. We must let them know we are taking their issues into consideration.	The models we are using will help us learn the impact of vibrations on not only historic structures, but also residential properties along the corridors.

### ***Public Involvement Program Update & Open House Overview***

Atia Thurman, of Vector Communications, facilitated the portion of the presentation on the study's public engagement program. Her presentation covered the following topics:

- Outreach and engagement activities conducted to date;
- Communication and outreach vehicles; and
- A review of the open house process and content.

<b>POAG Member Question/Comment</b>	<b>Study Team Response</b>
1. The radio advertisement is out because I've heard it three times this morning.	Team members listened.
2. Will this be the only open house?	No. The next open house will probably be sometime in the fall. All summer long we will develop alternatives. We will then present the alternatives that we're considering to the community so that members can review them before we make eliminations.

### ***Conclusion***

At the conclusion of the presentation, the study team thanked the POAG members for their time and reminded them of the open house planned for April 20, 2010.