



## SPRINGFIELD RAILROAD CORRIDOR STUDY PUBLIC OFFICIALS ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY NOVEMBER 12, 9:30 – 11:30 AM

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### **Overview**

The third meeting of the Springfield Railroad Corridor Study's Public Officials Advisory Group (POAG) was held at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, November 12, 2010 at Hanson Professional Services, Inc. There were eight committee members and guest Shelley Heideman of the Faith Coalition for the Common Good. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Present the alternatives that have been developed to address Springfield's increasing rail traffic;
- Review the alternative selection process and criteria;
- Provide an update on the study's environmental analysis, corridor redevelopment, and public engagement; and
- Discuss the upcoming public open house.

### Advisory Group Members:

J. Richard Alsop III (Architect of the Capitol)  
Matt Dickett (on behalf of Rep. John Shimkus, Illinois State Representative, District 19)  
Tim Moore (Sangamon County Board)  
Paul O'Shea (Office of Planning & Economic Dev.)  
Honorable Raymond Poe (Illinois State Representative, District 99)  
Gail Simpson (Springfield City Council)  
Norman Sims (Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission)  
Ernie Slotag (City of Springfield, Communications Director)

### Study Team Members:

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

### **Review of Study/Public Engagement Synopsis**

Jimmie Austin welcomed everyone and went over the meeting agenda. Due to the volume of information the study team had to share with advisory group members, ***participants were asked to hold their questions until the end of the presentation.*** Kevin Seals then provided a brief review of the study, its purpose and time line. Atia Thurman followed with a synopsis of the study's public engagement and outreach activities to date, including a summary of public input from the first open house held in April.

### ***Alternative Selection Criteria/Alternative Descriptions***

Before presenting the alternatives for addressing Springfield's increasing rail traffic, Kevin Seals went over the factors being considered in the alternative selection process: purpose and need, resource agency input, public input, environmental impacts, displacements, safety, traffic delays and cost. Afterward, Jimmie Austin presented descriptions of the non-viable and viable alternatives. Non-viable alternatives were those not being carried forward for further study. These include elevating or depressing tracks through Springfield, relocating freight outside of the city either east of I-55 or west of Veteran's Parkway; and the I&M alternatives. The proposed viable alternatives include variations of the following possibilities:

- Double track Third Street;
- Shift Third Street traffic to Tenth Street; and
- Shift Third and Nineteenth Streets' traffic to Tenth Street.

### ***Alternative Technical Comparisons***

Julie Rutledge explored the viable alternatives in considerable detail, explaining the preliminary technical analysis, which assessed the alternatives in terms of their associated traffic delays, expected crash frequency, horn blowing, residential/commercial displacements, and costs. Seven alternatives were critically examined and then compared to one another. They were also compared to a baseline, a standard established by the Federal Railroad Administration to aid in the assessment of alternatives. The study's baseline includes an increase in freight trains with no change in passenger trains; improved crossing protection along the Third Street corridor; no grade separations or additional tracks; and no changes to the Tenth or Nineteenth Street corridors.

Julie Rutledge also provided more detail on the non-viable alternatives and the factors that made them non-viable.

### ***Environmental Analysis***

Kevin Seals compared the viable alternatives in terms of their potential environmental impacts: socio-economic factors, historic sites, noise and vibration, special waste sites, special lands, endangered and threatened species, and water quality.

### ***Corridor Redevelopment***

After the alternatives' analysis, Jonathan Martin addressed the redevelopment opportunities researched and developed by RDG. His first set of slides explored potential opportunities if the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street tracks were abandoned. These included more single-family homes, pedestrian and bike trails, a rebuilt overpass at the Capital building, a market and garden zone, and mixed-use residential and commercial development. Possible redevelopment of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street corridor considered the addition of tracks and highlighted opportunities for mixed-use development, a 50-foot greenbelt adjacent to the corridor, and medium-density residential development along the corridor. Redevelopment concepts for the 19<sup>th</sup> Street corridor focused on single-family in-fill development, a trail, and the creation of a "great street" or "super boulevard."

### ***Upcoming Open House***

Advisory group members were reminded of the upcoming open house, scheduled for November 16, 2011. All were encouraged to attend and asked to remind their constituents of the meeting.

### ***Announcement from the Faith Coalition for the Common Good***

In addition to the formal meeting agenda, there was an announcement from a representative of the Faith Coalition for the Common Good (FCCG). Shelly Heideman, the organization's executive director, provided a brief summary of the FCCG's rail task force and their current efforts to create a community benefits agreement around rail.

### ***Conclusion***

The presentation concluded with a review of the study's next steps. The study team then opened the meeting for questions and answers.

<b>POAG Member Question/Comment</b>	<b>Study Team Response</b>
1. Another non-viable alternative is moving rail to the 19 <sup>th</sup> Street corridor.	Comment noted.
2. If you address train/vehicle accident risk, you should also look at train/pedestrian accident risk.	Comment noted.
3. When you define displacements, does it include loss of road access?	No, it does not include degradation of road access and there is no compensation for it.
4. Just the absence of a corridor, on 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> Streets, generates development opportunities.	Comment noted.
5. Rail traffic on 3 <sup>rd</sup> Street presents health and safety problems.	Comment noted.
6. Looking at the Enos Park plan, the Enos Park plan could become the redevelopment plan for this area.	Comment noted.
7. Look at redevelopment opportunities for single-family housing. These are preferable to those that emphasize high-density residential.	Comment noted.