407 East Individual Environmental Assessment Community Advisory Group (CAG)

MEETING NOTES

CAG Member Attendees:
Jim Bate
Phil Brown
Linda Gasser
Kim Murray
Adrian Lambert
Ralph McKay
Doug McKay
Libby Racansky
Michael Baker
Bradford Soles
Georg Krohn
Shannon Okeefe-Circelli
Jeanette Wiles

CAG Meeting #14

Project Team Attendees:

Dan Remollino	MTO
Darlene Proudfoot	MTO
Dean Kemper	MTO
Ian Dobrindt	GLL
Brenda Jamieson	TSH
Doug Allingham	TSH
Emma Docherty	TSH

Date: June 18, 2008
Location: TSH Whitby Cafeteria
Time: 7:00 – 9:00 PM

The presentation made by the Project Team is available for download at www.407eastea.com

Handouts

- CAG Meeting #12 Summary
- CAG Meeting #13 Presentation Slides

Slide 2: Agenda and Status Update

- B. Jamieson reviewed the meeting agenda and provided a quick overview of the major tasks undertaken by the Project Team since the presentation of the Technically Recommended Route (TRR) at PIC #3. These tasks included:
  - Presentation of the Technically Recommended Route (June/July 2007)
  - November 2007 mailing to directly impacted property owners and initiation of Preliminary Design
  - December 2007 initiation of field work to support Preliminary Design
  - Identification, assessment and evaluation of Preliminary Design refinements and alternatives (February through June 2008)

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- What is the deadline for comments?
  a. August 19th.

Slides 4: PIC #4 & Preliminary Design Activities

- B. Jamieson highlighted the dates and venues for the fourth round of PICs.
- Brenda also highlighted the Preliminary Design work that had been done to determine a Technically Preferred Route and the material to be presented at PIC #4 including:
  - Horizontal and vertical alignment of the highway and crossing roads
  - Right-of-Way (ROW) width and cross section
  - Interchange locations and configurations
  - Crossing road treatments (grade separations, closures)
  - Transitway corridor and transitway station locations
  - Local road realignments associated with the 407 transportation corridor (working with Regional & Municipal Staff)
  - Support facilities such as maintenance yards, stormwater management ponds, etc.
  - Potential mitigation measures (e.g. landscaping, noise attenuation, etc)

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slides 7: Route Refinements

- Brenda provided a quick overview of the seven (7) locations where refinements were evaluated based on stakeholder and agency comments and have been carried forward as part of the Technically Preferred Route as they were environmentally beneficial or neutral and technically advantageous.

Slide 8: Simcoe Street Interchange

- Mainline shifted approximately 50 m to the north of the TRR to increase the separation distance between the 407 interchange ramp terminals at Simcoe Street and the Winchester Road / Simcoe Street intersection.
- Refinement preferred because:
  - Improves spacing between Winchester Road intersection and the Simcoe Street Interchange ramp terminal intersections
  - Avoids need to relocate high voltage transmission towers within hydro corridor
  - One (1) less property impact
  - Indirect impacts to a cultural heritage building reduced
  - Comparable impacts to natural environment

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Is the spacing adequate for traffic lights and traffic progression on the local roads?
  a. Yes, spacing is approximately 250-300 metres which is reasonable.

Slide 9: Harmony Road

- 407 corridor alignment shifted to the south between Harmony Road and Enfield Road.
- Refinement preferred because:
  - Significant reduction in grading requirements; cut requirements reduced from approximately 25 m to 8 m
  - Avoids need to relocate high voltage transmission towers within hydro corridor
  - Three (3) fewer residential displacements
  - Eliminates encroachment into Oak Ridges Moraine
  - Reduced impacts to watercourse and wetland area
  - No impacts to species of conservation concern
  - Comparable impacts to economic and cultural environments.

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Is the mainline design speed maintained at this location – the curve looks severe?
  a. Yes, the curve is about R-1400 at this location which is well above the minimum.

Slide 10: Enfield Road / Solina Bog

- 407 corridor alignment shifted to the north approximately 70 m in the vicinity of Solina Bog.
- Refinement preferred because:
  - Eliminates direct footprint impacts on Solina Bog, a unique groundwater feature
  - No impacts to species of conservation concern
  - Reduces impacts to wetland area
  - Comparable impacts to social, land use/economic and cultural environments.

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 11: West Link – Taunton Road

- West Durham Link (WDL) shifted approximately 50 m to the east in the vicinity of Taunton Road
- Refinement preferred because:
  - Improves spacing between Lake Ridge Road intersection and WDL interchange ramp terminal intersections
  - Better accommodates Taunton Road profile revisions associated with grade separation at WDL
  - Avoids need to relocate high voltage transmission towers within hydro corridor
  - Two (2) less property impacts and two (2) less residential displacements
  - Reduces impacts to existing business
  - Comparable impacts to natural and cultural environments

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 12: East Link – Highway 2

- East Durham Link (EDL) shifted approximately 50 m to the west in the vicinity of Highway 2
- Refinement preferred because:
  - Improves spacing between the local road intersections and the EDL interchange ramp terminal intersections
  - Less impact to areas of upland vegetation
  - Impacts less wetland area (evaluated and unevaluated)
  - Less impact to areas of specialized and/or sensitive wildlife habitat
  - Seven (7) fewer property impacts and three (3) fewer residential displacements
  - Comparable impacts to economic and cultural environments

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 13: East Link – Taunton Road

- East Durham Link shifted approximately 70 m to the east in the vicinity of Taunton Road
- Refinement preferred because:
  - Improved freeway to freeway interchange configuration
  - No impacts to high quality vegetation units
  - Impacts less wetland area (evaluated and unevaluated)
  - Less impact to areas of upland vegetation and areas of specialized or sensitive wildlife habitat
  - Fewer crossings of Environmentally Sensitive Areas
  - Reduced impacts to agricultural operations
  - Comparable impacts to cultural environment and property

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Metrolinx mapping does not show the transitway on this portion of the 407.
  a. Comment noted. We are in discussion with Metrolinx (i.e. long term planning).
- How is the transitway going to be justified when it may not be used for 30 years?

a. The transitway has been identified for protection to address long-term transportation needs in the area. Exact timing for implementation will be determined at a later date. Without protection today for the transitway, it is likely to be very difficult to protect for in the future.

Slide 14: Preliminary Design Alternatives

- Brenda provided a brief overview of the eight (8) locations where Preliminary Design alternatives were generated and evaluated, again based on stakeholder and agency comments. The alternatives and recommendations will be presented at PIC #4 as part of the Technically Preferred Route.

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 15: Brock Road / Highway 7

- Two alternatives were developed for the future realigned Brock Road and Highway 7 connection:
  - Alternative 1: Highway 7 grade separated at Brock Road; connecting road provided
  - Alternative 2: At-grade intersection at Brock Road and Highway 7
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 2 preferred because:
  - Improved connectivity between Highway 7 and realigned Brock Road
  - Reduced impacts to natural, social, agricultural and cultural environments
  - Reduced property impacts

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 16: Lake Ridge / Cochrane Street Interchanges

- Two alternatives were developed for the interchanges in the vicinity of the West Durham Link freeway-to-freeway interchange:
  - Alternative 1: Partial interchanges at Lake Ridge Road and at Cochrane Street
  - Alternative 2: Full interchange at Lake Ridge Road; no interchange at Cochrane Street
- Alternative 2 is preferred because:
  - Improved system connectivity
  - Reduced impacts to natural, economic and cultural environments
  - Comparable property impacts

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 17: Coronation Road realignment at 407 corridor

- Two alternatives were developed for the Coronation Road realignment at 407:
  - Alternative 1: Larger realignment footprint for Coronation Road
  - Alternative 2: Smaller realignment footprint for Coronation Road
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 2 is preferred because:
  - Reduced crossing length of West Lynde Creek tributary
  - Less riparian meadow marsh community removed along tributary
  - Comparable impacts to social, economic and cultural environments

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 18: Ashburn Road Realignment

- Two alternatives were developed for the realignment of Ashburn Road:
  - Alternative 1: Realign Ashburn Road to the west; connect to Highway 7 east of Cochrane Street
  - Alternative 2: Realign Ashburn Road to the west; connect to Cochrane Street
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 2 preferred because:
  - Improved system connectivity and traffic operations
  - Perpendicular crossing of tributary valley
  - No residential buildings displaced
  - Comparable impacts to economic and cultural environments

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 19: Rail Crossing on West Durham Link

- Two alternatives were developed for West Durham Link crossing of the existing CPR rail line north of Rossland Road:
  - Alternative 1: 407 corridor over CPR rail line
  - Alternative 2: 407 corridor under CPR rail line
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 2 preferred because:
  - Slightly smaller encroachment into Lynde Creek tributary valley system
  - Removes a smaller area of vegetation
  - Reduced visibility of West Link from West Whitby community
  - Comparable impacts to social, economic and cultural environments

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Will crossing accommodate pedestrian and wildlife movement?
  a. We will be looking at that during the next part of the Preliminary Design work and will consider it as we finalise the plans.

Slide 20: Lake Ridge Road Realignment at Highway 401

- Two alternatives were developed for the realignment of Lake Ridge Road at Highway 401:
  - Alternative 1: Existing Lake Ridge Road alignment retained
  - Alternative 2: Lake Ridge Road realigned approximately 30 m to the west
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 2 preferred because:
  - Improved access to Almond Village
  - Improved constructability – Lake Ridge Road can remain open during construction
  - Insignificant change in impacts to natural, social, economic and cultural environments

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 21: Regional Road 57 Interchange

- Two alternatives were developed for the Regional Road 57 Interchange:

- Alternative 1: Larger interchange footprint; based on 90 m radius inner loop ramps
- Alternative 2: Smaller interchange footprint; based on 55 m radius inner loop ramps

- Evaluation Results in Alternative 2 preferred because:
  - Reduced impacts to natural, social, economic and cultural environments
  - Improved geometrics for transitway corridor

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Will Old Scugog Road be closed?
  a. No, Old Scugog Road will remain open and will pass under the 407 corridor.

Slide 22: Bethesda Road vs. Darlington-Clarke Townline Road Interchange

- Four alternatives were evaluated for the provision of an interchange on 407 between RR57 and Hwy 35/115:
  - Alternative 1: Interchange at Bethesda Road; grade separation at Browns Road
  - Alternative 2: Interchange at Bethesda Road; grade separation at Darlington-Clarke Townline
  - Alternative 3: Interchange at Darlington-Clarke Townline; grade separation at Bethesda Road
  - Alternative 4: Interchange at Bethesda Road; grade separation for Concession Roads 6 and 7
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 3 preferred because:
  - Reduced impacts to social, economic and cultural environments
  - Comparable impacts to natural environment
  - Results in better interchange spacing between Regional Road 57 and Highway 35/11

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 23: Highway 35/115 Connection

- Two alternatives were evaluated for the connection of the 407 corridor to Highway 35/115:
  - Alternative 1: Freeway-to-freeway connection; Hwy 35/115 upgraded to freeway to Hwy 35/Hwy 115 split
  - Alternative 2: Trumpet interchange; no upgrades to Hwy 35/115 corridor
- Evaluation Results - Alternative 2 preferred because:
  - Reduced impacts to natural, economic and cultural environments
  - Fewer business and residential displacements
  - Improved constructability and maintenance of traffic during construction

- It was noted that the desire was to upgrade the 35/115 corridor but through this process the team is unable to do this. The plans have been developed to ensure that the driver is aware of and makes a conscience decision when moving from one corridor to the other.

- Also, Ministry staff that MTO is purchasing properties in this area on a willing seller/willing buyer basis to improve the traffic operations and safety characteristics in this area. In the future, the entire 35/115 corridor will likely be reviewed through an EA to determine what improvements are needed.

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Property was purchased in this area. Were those property owners informed of this change before they chose to sell?
    a. Yes, those property owners were given a choice.

Slide 24: Crossing Road Treatment Strategy

- Brenda gave an overview of the crossing roads through the Study Area noting that:
    - 3 roads are under MTO jurisdiction
    - 17 are under Regional jurisdiction
    - 40 are under local (Municipal) jurisdiction.
- Of the total of 60 crossing roads, Brenda noted that crossings were:
    - Interchanges are recommended at 18 locations
    - Grade separations are recommended at 23 locations
    - Closures are recommended at 19 locations

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 25: Highway / Transitway Support Facilities

- Brenda highlighted the support facilities being protected along the corridor for both the transitway corridor and the highway corridor including:
    - Transitway stations at most interchange locations
    - Two transitway maintenance yards, one in the vicinity of Salem Road and one east of Simcoe Street
    - Commercial vehicle inspection facilities (CVIFs) on the 407 Mainline, one eastbound and one westbound
    - Smaller CVIF lay-bys are proposed on both links
    - Two highway maintenance yards

No questions/issues were raised during this portion of the presentation.

Slide 26: Preliminary Design Plan, Cross Sections, Potential Mitigation Measures and CVP

- Brenda provided an example of the Preliminary Design plans that would be displayed at the PICs and detailed the cross sections for 407 highway corridor as:
    - 10 lane closed median with protection for HOV lanes from Brock Road to Harmony Road
    - 8 lane closed median with protection for HOV lanes from Harmony Road to the East Durham Link
    - 6 lane open median with protection for HOV lanes from the East Durham Link to the Highway 35/115 connection
    - 6 lane closed median with protection for HOV lanes for the West Durham Link
    - 6 lane open median with protection for HOV lanes for the East Durham Link

- Brenda noted that the right-of-way (ROW) does fluctuate in some areas because of the topography of an area and that the HOV lanes are likely protected for within the ultimate conditions only.
- Brenda then quickly highlighted some potential mitigation strategies that could be implemented and provided an overview of the Community Value Plan and the recent introductory session and how the comments received through the CVP process would be incorporated into the Preliminary Design work and the EA.

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- When looking at wildlife crossings in the East area, it is important to note that wildlife moves from east to west in that area not north to south.
    a. Agreed. We are looking at a number of crossings in the Study Area and realize the importance of structures and locations that will allow that movement.
- Is additional land going to be acquired to implement mitigation measures?
    a. No, mitigation will be undertaken within the 407 corridor (right of way). Where the Ministry has purchased whole parcels and there is surplus land, there will be consideration given to using those lands as areas to provide enhancements above and beyond the mitigation measures.
- How will you mitigate wells? How will impacts be measured? Does the Province have a well interference policy?
    a. Well monitoring will be done before and after construction. If a well is impacted then we must mitigate that effect.
    b. The hydrogeology team is very involved and effects will be looked at quantitatively and qualitatively.
    c. We know the region has an interference policy, we'll have to check and see if the Province has one.

Slide 27: CEAA Process, Study Schedule and Next Steps

- Brenda touched on the CEAA process noting that it is likely the 407 would be undertaken as a Comprehensive Study and that the Responsible Authorities had been identified.
- Through the next steps (after PIC #4) Brenda indicated that the Project Team would be undertaking a number of consultation activities and furthering the finalising of the Preliminary Design plans. Included in tasks to be undertaken during the next phase are:
    - Review and respond to comments
    - Proceed with the preliminary design activities for the Technically Preferred Route (TPR)
    - Finalize the Technically Preferred Route based on comments received
    - Finalize the location of support facilities, including transitway stations, maintenance/patrol yards and commercial vehicle inspection facilities
    - Conduct the impact assessment for the Recommended Design
    - Identify mitigation and compensation measures for the Recommended Design
    - Prepare for Community Value Plan workshop(s)
    - Meet with Advisory Groups, communities, other stakeholders, etc
    - Contact all directly impacted property owners

- Prepare for the next round of PICs

Questions/Issues are as follows:

- Who are the RA's for the Federal process?
    a. Transport Canada and DFO.
- What kind of response did you get to your last round of property owner meetings?
    a. Approximately 50%. 200 maps were distributed and approximately 100 people came out to the meetings.
- If the CEAA process is a Comprehensive Study, will that result in a delay to the process overall?
    a. We hope not but we cannot influence things outside of our EA process.

Adjourn – 9:00 PM