

## SUMMARY

Illinois Route 31 Phase I Study:  
Illinois Route 176 to Illinois Route 120  
McHenry County

McHenry County College Shah Center  
4100 W. Shamrock Lane  
McHenry, Illinois 60050  
Thursday, November 20, 2014  
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



### Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #5

The purpose of the CAG meeting was to provide an update on the various meetings / coordination and studies that took place since CAG Meeting #4 in May 2012; present the developed Preferred Alternative for the project; and review the next steps to complete the Phase I Study. 1"=50' scale aerial exhibits and environmental resource maps were presented in a workshop session after the presentation.

Invited participants included stakeholders who signed up for the CAG, have attended previous CAG Meetings, or the Environmental Interest Group Meeting.

This meeting was attended by **12** invited CAG members or other interested project stakeholders; and **10** members of the project study group were present to facilitate the meeting and answer any questions (See attached sign-in sheet).

The meeting began with a PowerPoint presentation, conducted by John Clark from STV Incorporated and Jim Novak from Huff and Huff Incorporated that included topics as noted below:

- **Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda**
  - Mr. Clark introduced the project team including IDOT, STV Incorporated, and Huff and Huff engineering and briefly explained their role on the project.
  - CAG and project team members introduced themselves – name, whom they represent (group and/or government agency), and/or which community they lived in.
  - All members were given a copy of the meeting agenda and a handout packet including a copy of the presentation and CAG Meeting #4 summary.
  - Mr. Clark gave an overview of the Agenda for CAG Meeting #5.
- **Phase I Study Schedule and Alternative Development Process**
  - The updated project schedule was presented showing the two public involvement meetings, four CAG meetings, four NEPA meetings, and Environmental Interest Group that have taken place for the project. A public hearing is expected to be held in Spring 2015 with design approval by Summer 2015.
  - The project development process was presented in a flow chart format to demonstrate how the project developed through the Problem Statement, the Purpose and Need, the Range of Alternatives, and Alternatives to be Carried Forward. The chart was highlighted to show that since CAG Meeting #4 a detailed evaluation was completed to come up with a Preferred Alternative for the project.

- **Project Update and Summary of Meetings / Studies completed since CAG Meeting #4**
  - Mr. Clark reviewed in detail the various public meetings, coordination with local agencies, and environmental review / interest groups from CAG Meeting #4 until now. These included CAG Meeting #4, Public Meeting #2, Village of Prairie Grove support letter, three meetings with City of McHenry, two NEPA/404 Merger meetings, and Environmental Interest Group meeting. Comments / concerns expressed at these various meetings were summarized as well as actions that were taken to resolve some of the major concerns was presented.
  - The various draft technical and environmental studies completed for the project was reviewed. These include Intersection Design Studies, Drainage / Hydraulic Studies, Traffic Noise Analysis, Tree Evaluation, and several Environmental Surveys (Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid, Blanding's Turtle, Northern Long Eared Bat, and Avian survey).
  
- **Preferred Alternative**
  - Through a detailed evaluation process the Project Study Group has determined a Preferred Alternative for the project that includes a different roadway typical section along various portions of the study limits. From South to North, the IL 31 Preferred Alternative would include: A 30' Raised Median design from IL 176 to River Birch; a 28' Raised Median (with 11' lanes) from River Birch to Medical Center Drive (south of Bull Valley); a 18' Raised Median from Bank Drive (north of Bull Valley) to High Street; a five-lane road with flush median from High Street to John Street; and the IL Route 120 intersection improvement will have the design of Build Alternative A (the minimum impact alternative).
  - Mr. Clark presented graphics showing the proposed typical section for each section of the project and summarized key features and benefits of the selected alternative.
  - While developing the Preferred Alternative the design team has implemented various measures to either avoid or minimize impacts, especially to sensitive resources. A summary of these measures was presented.
  - Additionally, Drainage and Best Management Practices that are planned for the project were reviewed.
  - Mr. Novak, from Huff & Huff (the Environmental sub-consultant), presented a table summarizing several environmental impacts for the Preferred Alternative. The potential residential / business acquisitions, wetland impacts, oak tree impacts, and traffic noise impacts were discussed in detail.
  
- **Workshop on Alternatives to be carried further**
  - What will be accomplished during this workshop? Mr. Clark explained that an aerial exhibit showing the Preferred Alternative was prepared and printed for the CAG members to review and provide comments and feedback. In addition, the CAG members would have an opportunity to review another aerial exhibit showing the various environmental resources for the project as well as the location of planned BMPs.
  - Projected noise levels for undeveloped lands were reviewed with the municipalities.
  - A summary of the workshop's feedback is provided at the end of this summary
  
- **Summary and Next Steps**
  - After the Workshop session, CAG members reconvened. Mr. Clark summarized that the Preferred Alternative was developed through extensive coordination with Local Agencies and Environmental Groups. Public concerns have been addressed and environmental and property impacts have been minimized, as feasible. Mr. Clark reiterated that concurrence

has been provided by NEPA / 404 agencies and the selected alternative meets the Project Purpose and Need.

- Next Steps for the project was presented. These include: Local Agency Meetings, completion of the draft Environmental Assessment, a Public Hearing in Spring 2015, and completion of the Phase I Study by Summer 2015. Contract plan preparation (Phase II Engineering) will begin after completion of Phase I, but it was noted that Land Acquisition and Construction (Phase III) are not in the Department's FY 2015-2020 MYP.

### **Comments expressed during the presentation:**

Below is a summary of comments by CAG participants and responses by the design team that were made during the presentation portion of the meeting:

- Jeannine Smith from Prairie Grove noted that Prairie Grove's recommended preferred alternative is a 30' Raised "Green" median, not a raised concrete median.
  - Mr. Clark displayed the typical section for the raised median, showing that is proposed to be a grass median, not paved. Details regarding the median will be determined during the Phase II for the project, a grass median would be maintained by IDOT but a landscaped median would have to be maintained by the Village, if desired.
- Jeannine Smith from Prairie Grove asked why no bicycle facilities were included in the IL 120 intersection area of the project, since the project is supposed to follow the Complete Streets Policy?
  - The project study team responded that there is limited right-of-way in the intersection area and if a 10' shared-use path is included in the design buildings would need to be removed. It was noted that the study must create a balance between Context Sensitive Solutions policy and Complete Streets Policy. It was also noted that a 7' wide sidewalk would be provided on both sides of the roadway, in a majority of the area near the intersection. This sidewalk would likely be wide enough for one-way cyclist use, if needed.
- Eberhart Veit asked if the shared-use path would require a local match to construct.
  - The project study team stated that the IL Route 31 project would provide a shelf for the shared-use path and sidewalk and a local match needs to be provided in order to construct the path. It was noted that existing sidewalks that are impacted would be replaced at 100% IDOT cost. New facilities would be constructed at 80% IDOT cost, 20% local match. IDOT is currently in coordination with the local agencies regarding the proposed facilities for the project; after the public hearing, the local agencies may provide concurrence on the facilities. If the local agencies elect not to participate in the local match, they would be responsible for 100% of the construction costs if these facilities were desired in the future.
- Randy Schietzelt asked if the proposed detention basins would be designed as "dry" or "wet" basins and if wetland vegetation was planned for them.
  - Mr. Clark noted that currently the two proposed basins are planned to be grass bottom. He noted that one of the locations shown on the exhibits may be modified due to recent wetland survey results showing a high quality wetland in the area. During the Phase II for the project, the design team would consider both dry and wet basin options, as well as the

inclusion of wetland vegetation. Randy stated that the wetland plants may be good to use to filter runoff.

- Nancy Schietzelt asked if displaced oak trees would be replaced with oaks.
  - Mr. Novak responded yes they will be. Additionally, potential reuse/recycling of the displaced oak trees may occur per Prairie Grove's request. A special design consideration will be included in the project report. Landscaping plans will be prepared during Phase II contract plan preparation.
- William Busse asked what the timeframe for project construction would be.
  - The project study team responded that since construction and land acquisition are not funded at this time, there is no planned implementation date. If a future capital bill is passed by the State this project could be included in that bill.
- Kathy Martinez asked when the Phase II for the project would begin.
  - Phase II contract plan preparation would likely begin after Phase I is complete and design approval is granted. The Department will need to advertise and select a consultant to prepare the contract plans.
- Jeannine Smith asked if the project would be constructed in segments.
  - The project would potentially be split into 2 to 3 construction sections.
- Nancy Schietzelt asked if stakeholders want to submit written comments, how and when comments should be submitted.
  - Written should be submitted as soon as possible via the project website, email, or post mail.
- Mr. Jim Hicks asked how CAG members would get resolution on questions brought up during the CAG.
  - Resolution of comments will be reflected either in the CAG summary, via email response, or at the public hearing
- Mr. Jim Hicks expressed concern with impacts to oak trees on the southwest corner of Edgewood and IL 31.
  - Post meeting, Mr. Novak accompanied Mr. Hicks to look at the trees in question and it was determined that the impacted trees were not oaks, but are ash trees.

**Workshop Comments on Preferred Alternative Aerial Exhibit:**

Attached to this summary document are pictures showing the written comments posted on the aerial exhibit roll plot. *(See next page for start of pictures.)*

## South Section



Picture 1

Comment 1: Property name mislabeled. Property on west side of IL 31 should be called out as "TC Industries"

**Response: This will be revised for the public hearing exhibits.**

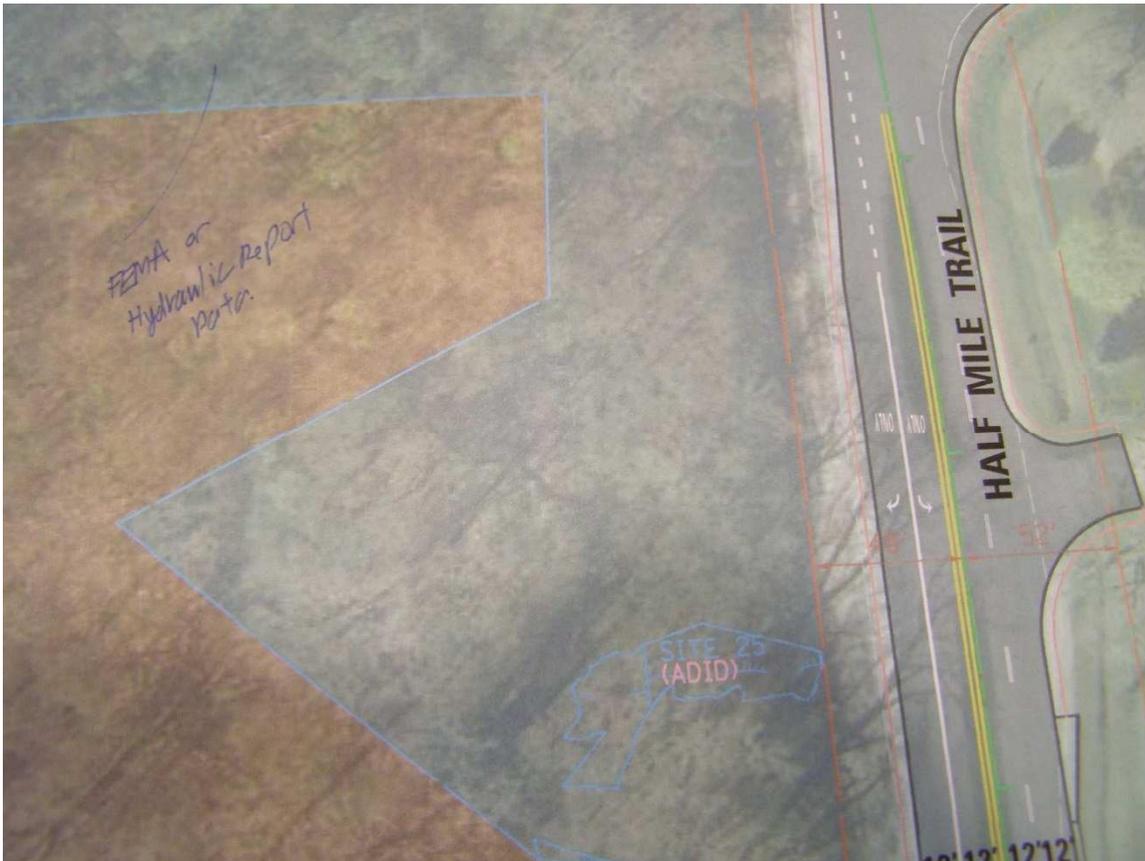
Comment 2: Note to minimize ROW or TE on west side of IL 31 from Sleepy Hollow Creek to the north entrance of TC Industries.

**Response: We will work with TCI on minimizing impacts to the existing landscaping.**

Comment 3: High pressure gas line on west side of IL 31.

**Response: Noted. Utilities are shown in the Location Drainage Study.**

South Section

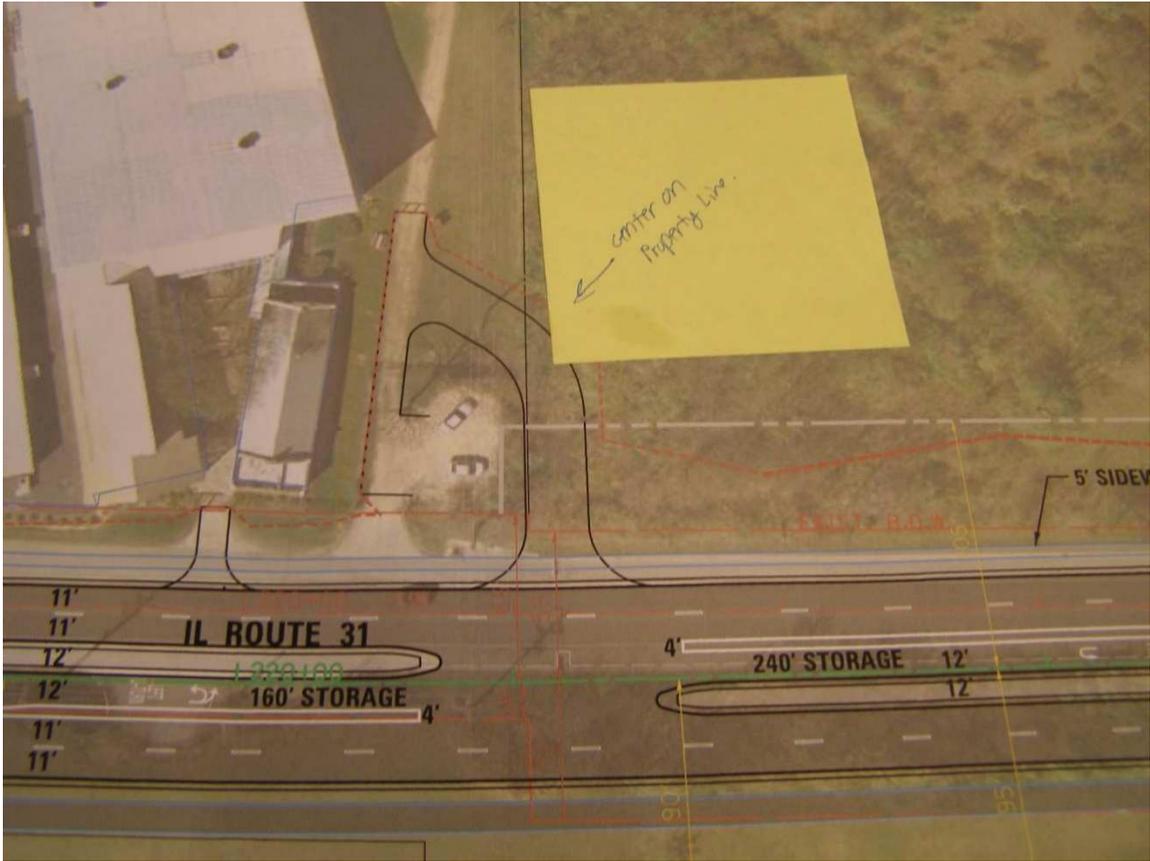


Picture 2

Comment 1: Is Floodplain boundary shown on exhibit based on FEMA or Hydraulic Report Data.

**Response: The floodplain boundary shown is based on the 100-yr flood elevation from the Sleepy Hollow Hydraulic report.**

South Section

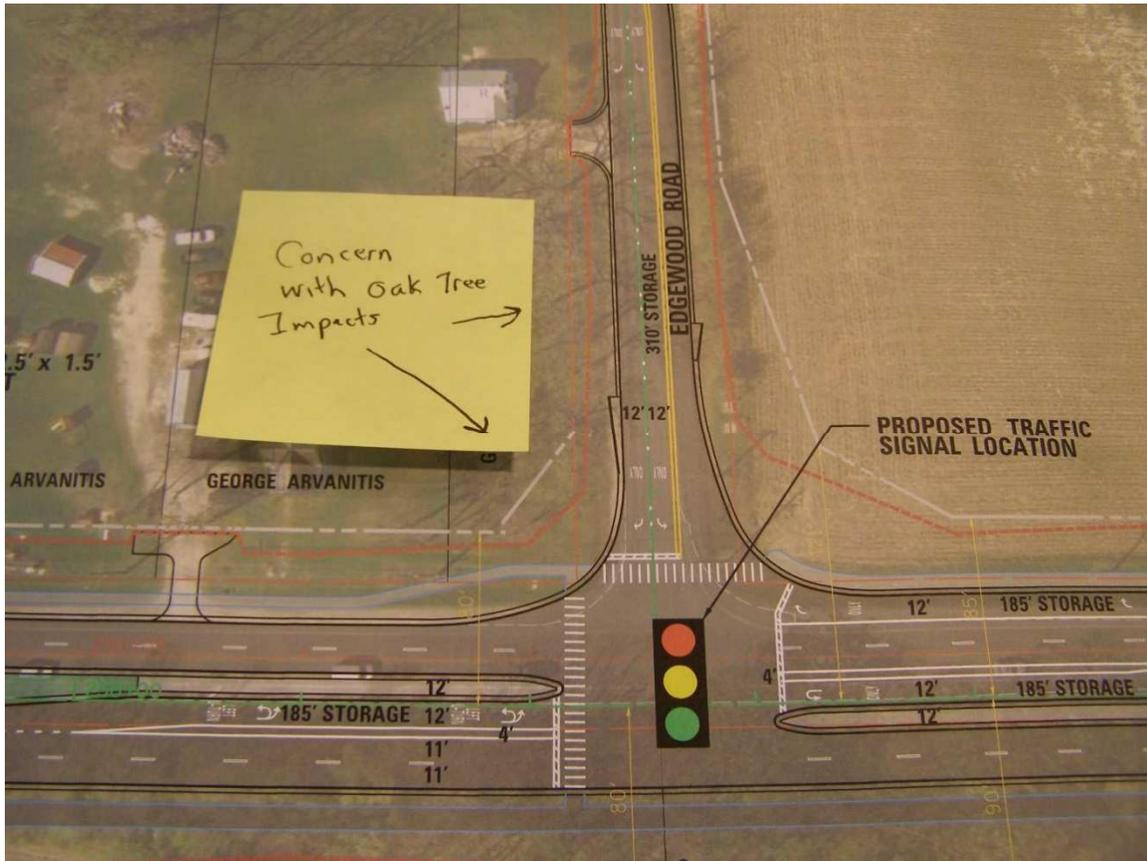


Picture 3

Comment 1: Center new driveway north of TC Industries on property line with vacant parcel on west side of IL 31.

**Response: The median opening and shared entrance will be centered on the property line so both parcels benefit.**

## South Section

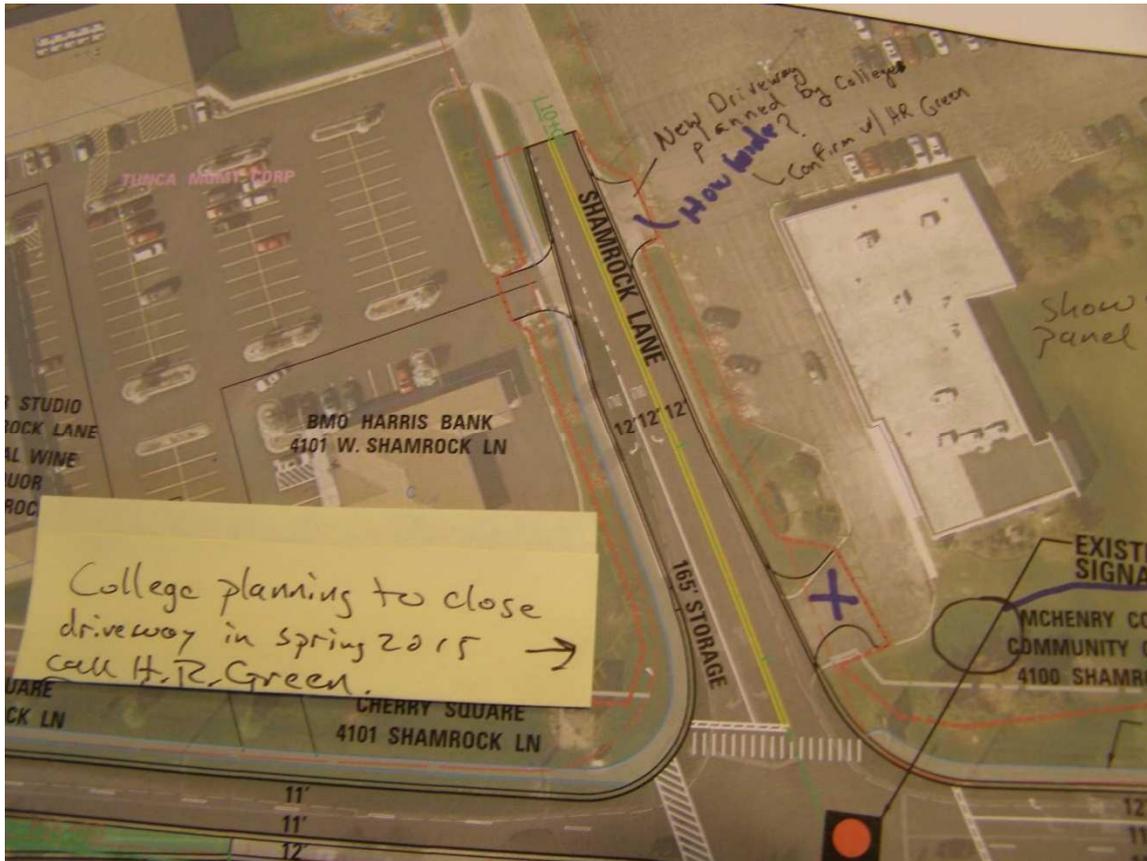


Picture 4

Comment 1: Concern with Oak Tree impacts on SW corner of IL 31 and Edgewood Road, as well as Oak trees on south side of Edgewood Road.

**Response:** This area was field checked with the property owner after the CAG meeting and it was determined that the impacted trees in concern, on the SW corner of the intersection, are not oak trees but they are ash trees. The oak trees along the south side of Edgewood Road outside of the existing right-of-way will be avoided. The two oak trees within the existing right-of-way may be impacted due to required profile adjustments and ditch grading along Edgewood Road. Efforts to avoid impacts to these trees are currently being investigated. Further coordination with the adjacent property owner will be conducted. If the oak trees are impacted, new trees will be planted according to the IDOT tree policy and the removed trees will be recycled / reused in coordination with the Village of Prairie Grove.

South Section



Picture 5

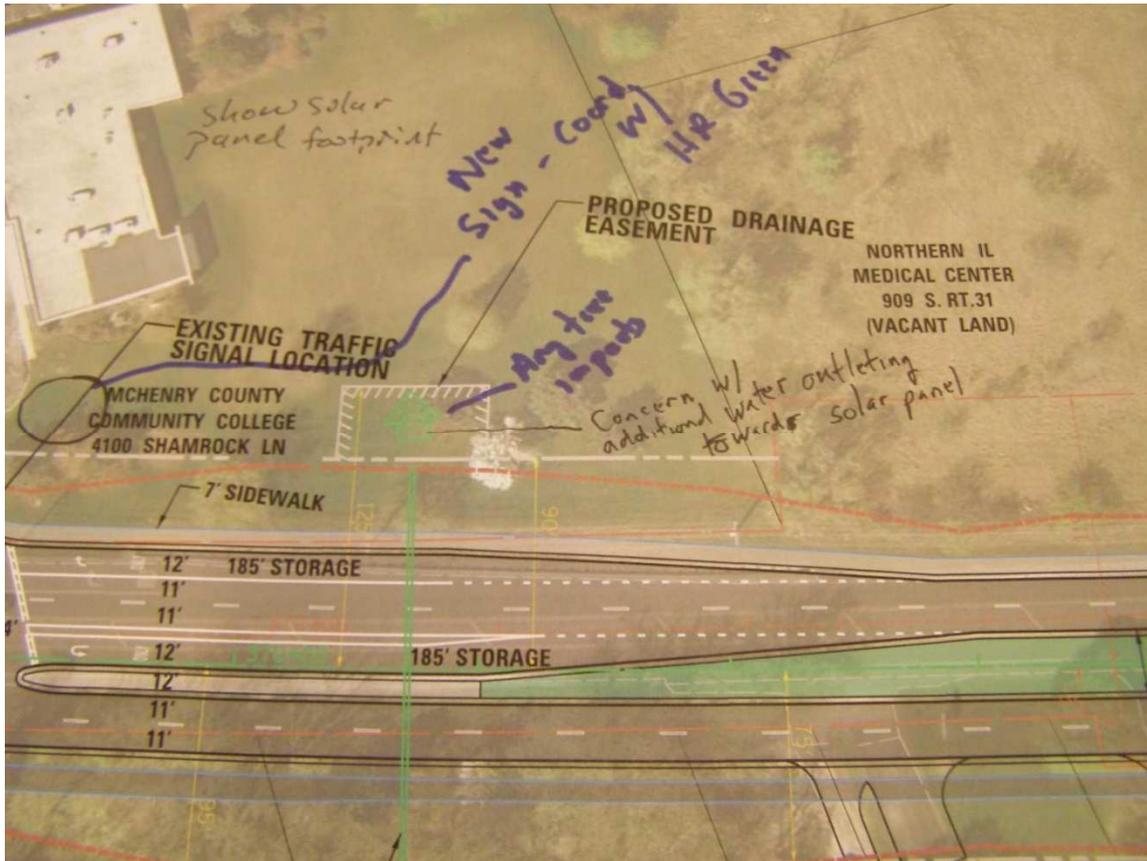
Comment 1: McHenry County College planning to close 1<sup>st</sup> (eastern) driveway entrance to Shah Center in Spring 2015. Design team should contact HR Green for proposed design plans.

**Response:** The plans will be revised to reflect this.

Comment 2: McHenry County College planning to reconstruct 2<sup>nd</sup> (western) driveway entrance to Shah Center in Spring 2015. Design team should contact HR Green for proposed design plans.

**Response:** The plans will be revised to reflect this, once information is received from HR Green.

## South Section



Picture 6

Comment 1: McHenry County College planning to construct new sign for Shah Center in Spring 2015. Design team should contact HR Green for proposed design plans and provide them with limits of improvement / proposed ROW requirements for IL 31 project.

**Response: Coordination will be completed with HR Green regarding the new sign location.**

Comment 2: McHenry County College has recently constructed new solar panels for the Shah Center building. Show approximate footprint and label on plan.

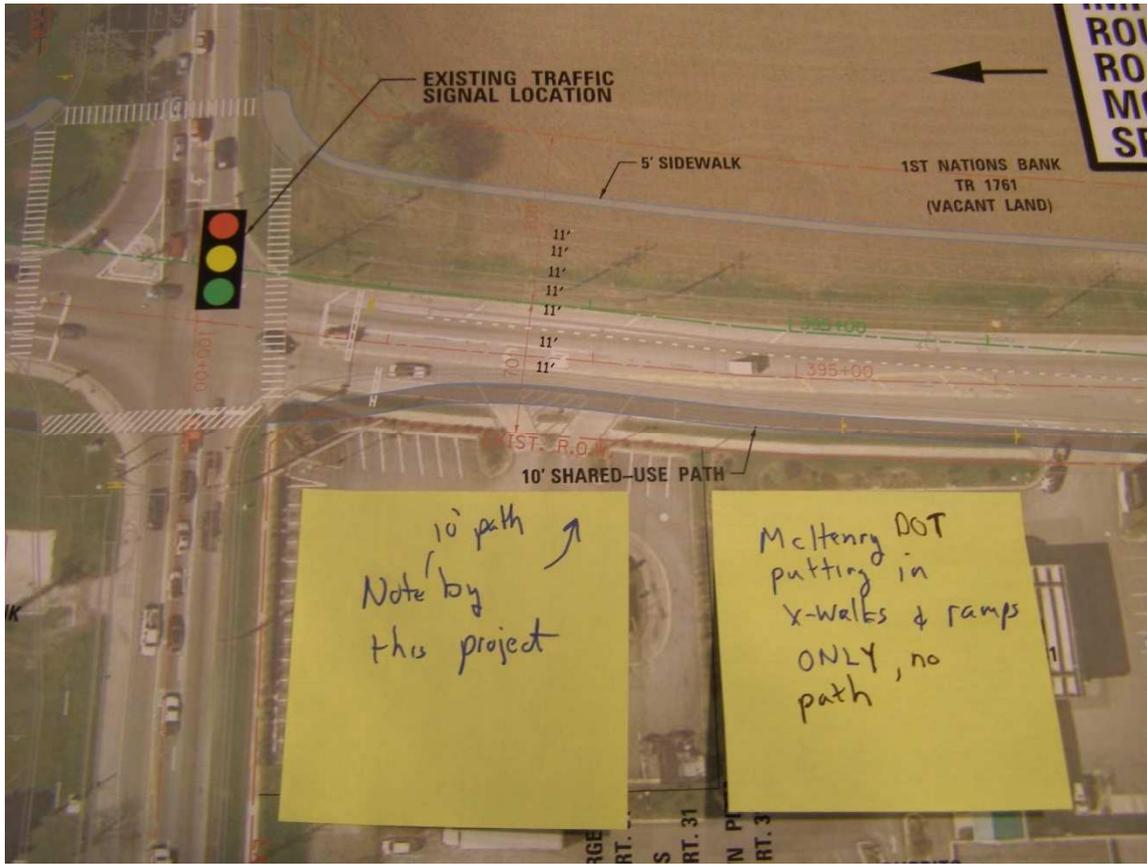
**Response: IL 31 proposed improvements will not impact the solar panels. Approximate footprint will be shown and a note will be added to aerial exhibit for public hearing indicating "New Solar Panels (by others)."**

Comment 3: Concerned with tree impacts due to culvert outfall re-grading at outlet 20, as well as additional water outletting towards solar panels.

**Response: The proposed improvements will impact two trees within the Shah Center proposed right-of-way; there are no trees within the temporary easement area. Both of the impacted trees are silver**

maples in poor health; one is multi-stemmed with 17.5" and 17.0" trunks and the other has a 14.0" trunk. Any impacted trees will be replaced per IDOT tree policy. The proposed improvements will not increase the amount of water outletting to the property and current conditions will be maintained, in accordance with IDOT stormwater management policy.

South & North Section

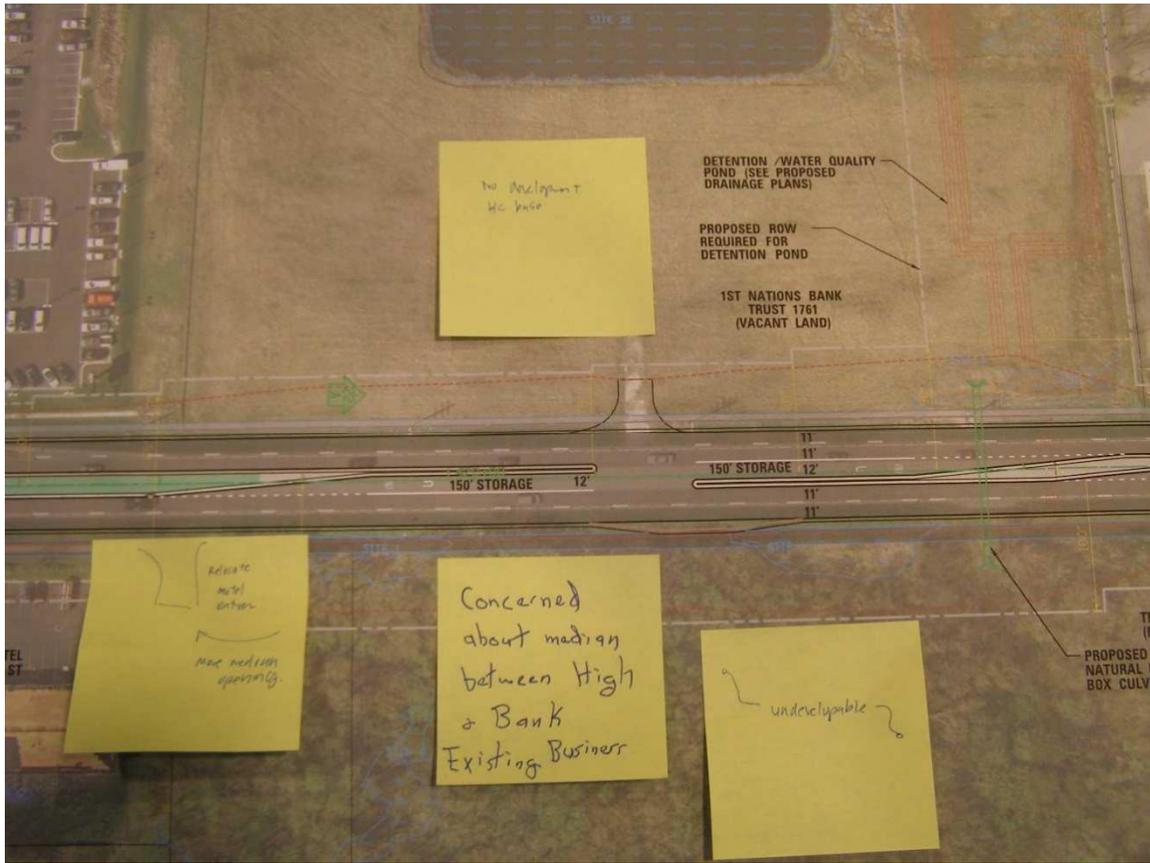


Picture 7

Comment 1: Add note on exhibit that 10' wide path is part of this project. McHenry County DOT is not putting in path or sidewalk as part of their Bull Valley Road improvement project, only x-walks and ramps at the intersection.

**Response: The exhibits and plans will be revised.**

## North Section



Picture 8

Comment 1: CAG member noted that no development is currently planned for empty parcel on west side of IL 31, north of Buss Ford.

**Response: Noted.**

Comment 2: Concerned about proposed barrier median between High Street and Bank Drive restricting access to existing businesses.

**Response: A key element of the project is to improve safety. The amount of undeveloped land adjacent to IL Route 31 and limited number of side streets and driveways between Park Place and High Street provides an opportunity to utilize countermeasures that have shown great effectiveness in improving safety. A barrier median improves safety by implementing access management measures that reduce the potential for head-on and other types of vehicle crashes. For this reason, a barrier median is also proposed from south of Park Place to IL Route 176. Bi-directional access to the residences and businesses along this section of IL Route 31 will be maintained via the use of median openings with combined left / u-turn lanes at Park Place and High Street. Vehicles wishing to enter or exit a property can do so by performing a u-turn at the closest median opening.**

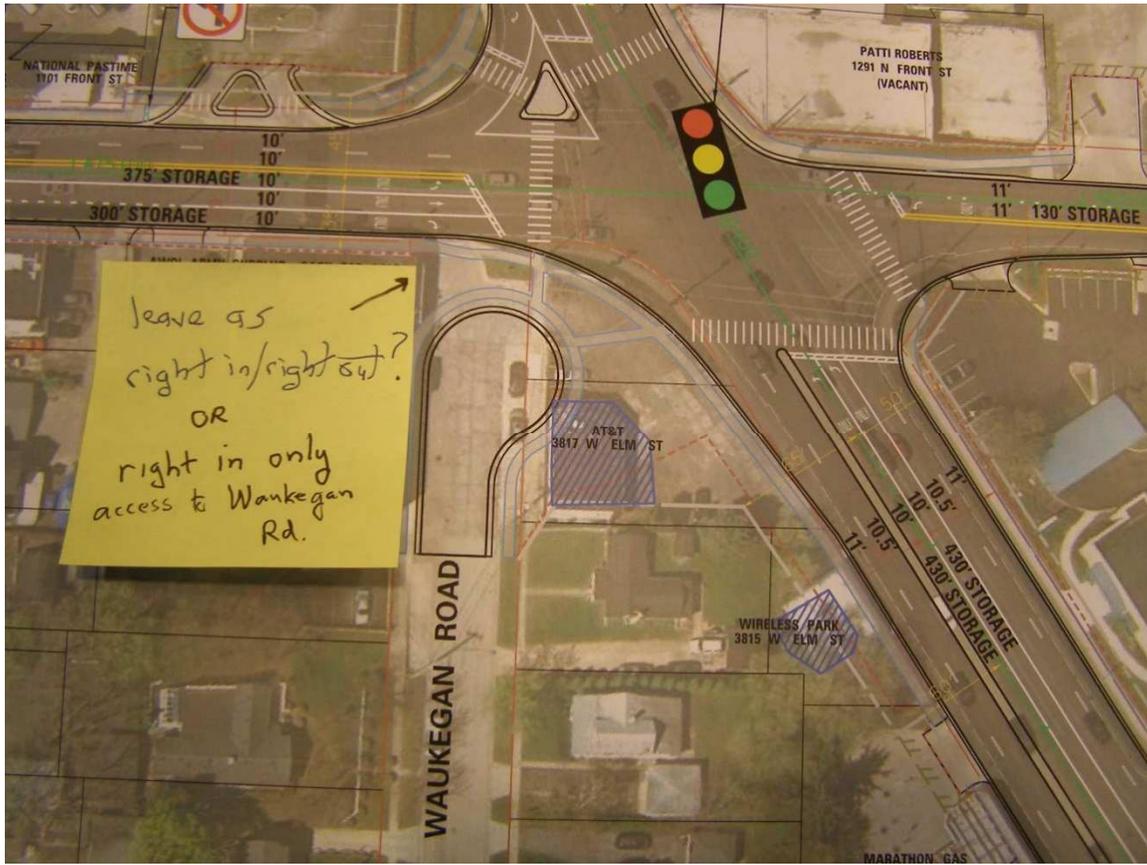
Comment 3: Suggestion to relocate entrance to motel and move median opening to new entrance location. New entrance should be along property line between motel and vacant parcel to the north.

**Response: This will be discussed further with the City of McHenry. The spacing of median opening at this location would be approximately 900 feet, which is less than the ¼ mile spacing recommended for Strategic Regional Arterials (SRA) routes.**

Comment 4: CAG member noted that empty parcel on east side of IL 31 is undevelopable.

**Response: Noted.**

## North Section

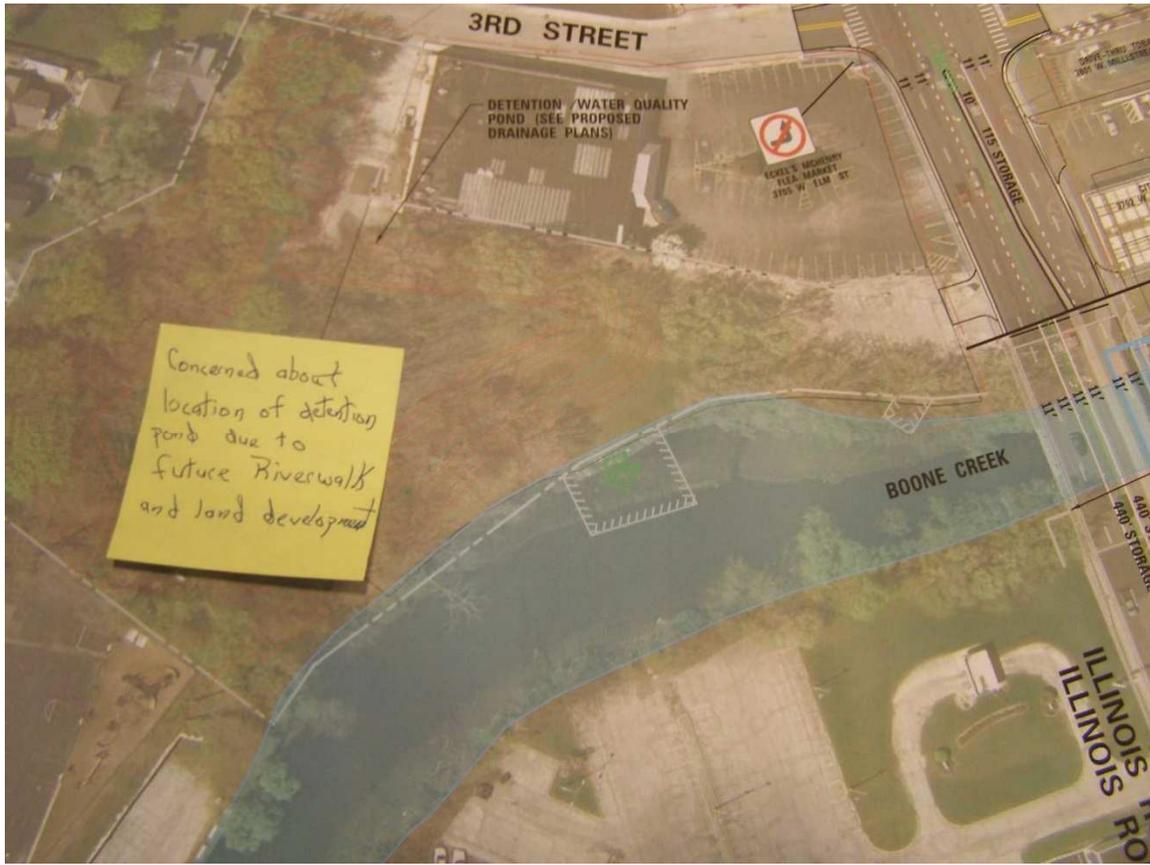


Picture 9

Comment 1: Leave access to Waukegan Road as right-in / right-out or right-in only.

**Response:** Both IL 31 and IL 120 are high volume SRA routes with heavy northbound right turn volumes. Providing access to a local roadway within the NB right turn lane and in close proximity to the intersection radius return possess safety and operational concerns. Vehicles stopping or slowing down to make a turn onto Waukegan Road during a green light at the intersection could lead to increases in rear end collisions for vehicles attempting to turn onto IL 120, as well as impact operations for the intersection. In addition, providing a right-in or right-in / right-out would not physically restrict a vehicle from attempting a left-out from the intersection, which would adversely affect operations and safety.

## North Section



Picture 10

Comment 1: Concerned about location of detention pond due to future Riverwalk and land development.

**Response:** A detention basin is required at a location adjacent to Boone Creek in order to discharge water into the creek. Other locations adjacent to the creek would require removal of buildings. This location was selected based on past conversations with City of McHenry staff and the location was selected to avoid impacts to existing buildings as well as preserve the vacant flea market building and frontage along IL 120, for future development. The basin will be designed to allow for construction of a future "Riverwalk" or sidewalk along Boone Creek. This will be discussed further with the City of McHenry.