
PALMER WASILLA HIGHWAY

EASTERN TERMINUS

Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting Summary November 17, 2010 Palmer City Hall 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Next CAC – December 2, 2010

Summary of Design Elements from October 7, 2010 Meeting

Dogwood & Felton (west of Glenn)

- Acquire enough ROW for 4 lanes
- 2 travel lanes, center vegetated median/access to existing businesses
- Center median can become center turn lane in the future
- Drainage swales
- Separated pathway on the south side
- Leave existing vegetation to the extent possible. Consider planting some trees in groupings

Palmer Wasilla Highway (west of the Glenn)

- Sidewalk south side from Glenn to Felton, then cross to bike path on the north.
- Can pedestrian facilities be added?
- There needs to be a safe crossing of Felton for schools. A light?
- No on-street bike lanes, users should be directed to the path.
- Need safe, convenient crossings of the PWH.
- LED street lights/black Palmer lights

Cobb Street

- Narrow the roadway at Cobb.
- A raised intersection with colored concrete
- Keep small town flashing red at Cobb and Evergreen. No traffic signal.

Evergreen (east of Glenn)

- A beautiful gateway
- Neat black street lamps.
- Match Glenn Highway landscaping concept
- Add colored, textured concrete

- Ask adjacent property owners to allow plantings on private property and then be responsible for maintaining it.
- Hanging baskets
- Overhead power lines are ugly. Burying those would go a long ways to improve the look of Evergreen.
- Has to be pedestrian friendly
- Narrow lanes to get wider sidewalks.
- Narrow as possible
- 5-lanes
- 3-lanes
- Show 2 lanes in and 2 lanes out.
- Maintain business access (no medians)
- Medians may be necessary for safety
- Keep 4 way flashing red light
- Suicide lane (center turn lane)
- Fix Fred Meyer entrance
- Restrict access to Fred Meyer driveway as right turn in and right turn out only using pork chops.
- Slow traffic
- Keep it like it is today

Springer

- Traffic signal at Springer.
- Shoulder and guardrail or curb and gutter and guard rail
- No parking on the street
- Path and sidewalk – anticipate that pedestrians will walk /ride bikes to the Fair and frontage road
- This is all new ROW.

Industrial

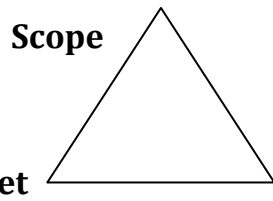
- This is a truck route and pedestrian activity should be minimized.
- Just extend the existing road and match City of Palmer standards for an industrial roadway.
- Junior High students walk to Hidden Hills subdivision through the industrial zone.

Draft Alternatives

- These draft alternatives were developed for the Palmer Wasilla Highway Citizen’s Advisory Committee review.
- All alternatives are viable engineering options but the Design Team did not pre-screen alternatives based on community values.
- It is the CAC’s role is to advise the Design team on which alternatives best meet the community values.
- The draft alternatives are not an exhaustive list of all possible options; individual features of each alternative may be combined to form additional viable options.

DESIGN IS ABOUT

- Juggling
- Trade-offs
- Compromise



- Right-of-way
- Cost
- Safety
- Capacity
- Budget
- Pedestrians
- Community
- Private property
- Palmer values

Alternatives

Overview of Evergreen Discussion – (complete discussion follows)

	Goods	So So	Ugly
Striped Median	Allows maneuvering room for emergency vehicles	Drivers just drive across it to get to turn lane or make left turns	RV's going to Chevron will use it
	Easier for snow removal	Lines will be covered up in winter	Left turns into Diamond and businesses will be "illegal"
	Helps driver know where to be in congested area		
	Directs traffic		
Raised Median	Directs traffic		Blocks access to Jeff's property
	Blocks turning movements		Blocks turning movements
	Protects traffic from turning cars		
	Prevents accident signal activation when cars cut the turn short and go over loop detectors in road		
	Short raised median with striped extension		
	Breaks in median to allow turns		
Cobb & Evergreen			
	Signal at Cobb		Signal at Cobb
	Flashing 4-way stop		
			Multiple lane intersection at Cobb and Evergreen
Fred Meyers/ Chevron			
	No median blocking Fred Meyer access		Removing access may impact other businesses like DQ
	Makes Fred Meyer right in, right out only		Fred Meyer's current access
	Block access to Fred Meyers		Right in, right out for Fred Meyers
	Need center median to stop left turns into Fred Meyers and Chevron.		Center median to block Fred Meyer impact turns into south side businesses
General			
	Stop median at west edge of Diamond and balance length of left turn lane. Gives access to businesses on both sides		

- Why a median? Who makes the decision? *The decision on whether or not to install a median is safety issue governed by National Standards and the professional engineers responsible for the design.*
- Why a yellow line, instead of a raised median?
- Could lanes be reduced to 11 feet instead of 12? *This will be evaluated.*
- What is the queue length? *There is a 1 in 20 chance that during peak hours, traffic will queue past D.Q. This will prevent cars from being able to get into the left turn lane.*

Evergreen 2 - Adds a Bike Lane

- If sidewalk is 8 feet, can't bikes just ride on that.
- Why no slip lane? *It is not necessary.*
- Shift Glenn Highway to the west. There is enough ROW, then you would have more room.
- What are the assumptions being used for property "takes?" When is it considered a "full-take?" *There is an entire Department at ADOT&PF that addresses ROW acquisition. It is governed by strict regulations and confidential negotiations between the Department and private property owners.*

Evergreen 3 – Longer left turn lane

- Like that there is no light at Cobb and Evergreen
- Like that there is no median blocking Fred Meyers
- Like that improvements stop before the Bank.
- Fred Meyers should be a right in, right out
- Makes the turn into Diamond, illegal – Have to cross the striped median
- The shorter raised median combined with the striped median like on 1 and 2 is better.
- The trade off is cars may not be able to get into left turn lane if through lanes are backed up with 1 and 2 but this one allows for legal left turns into businesses on the south.
- The left turn is a problem today. Like the longer queue length. Make it even longer. Put breaks in painted median to allow turns.
- Disagree that it should be a right in, right out at Fred Meyers.

Evergreen 4 – Take ROW from north

- The multiple lanes in each direction 4-way stop at Cobb and Evergreen will be very confusing? How do you know when to go? Is there safety data for this type of configuration? *It is safer than a 2-way stop but not as safe as a signal.*
- Need cost data for acquiring right-of-way? Which side is the least expensive? *ROW acquisition decisions will be made by ADOT.*
- Will ROW from the north require ADOT to buy the Chevron tanks? Is their contamination? *ADOT would negotiate with Chevron if ROW is necessary. The property would have to be investigated to determine if contamination is present.*
- There are some grade challenges associated with the Chevron property as well. It sits higher than Evergreen.
- How does a 4-way stop function? *It is ok until 2024. In 2034 traffic would back up into the Glenn Highway.*
- What about a roundabout at Cobb and Evergreen? It would slow traffic. *The traffic heading west would likely back up into the roundabout because it is too close the Glenn intersection. Roundabouts are not always very pedestrian friendly. They also work best when you have balanced traffic from each direction. This is not the case here as the east/west volumes are much higher than the north/south.*

Evergreen 5 – Longer turn lane on north side

- Dead on Arrival – Takes a portion of a historic building.

Evergreen 6 – Shares ROW impacts between North and South

- Don't want to see a signal at Cobb and Evergreen.
- With the Pioneer Mall losing tenants and a general loss of business in Palmer, do we need to plan so aggressively for future growth?
- Keep flashing red light!
- Put in a signal?

Evergreen 7

- Suggest compromise between 6 and 7. Stop median at the west edge of Diamond and balance the length of the left turn lane. Gives access to the businesses on both sides.

Evergreen 8 – 3 lane option

- The block isn't long enough to safely drop a lane. Need more merging room. Made outside "merge" lane, a right turn only lane to get the length to narrow road down.
- Why is the pedestrian pork chop bigger on the northwest corner? *May just be a graphics mistake. Will take a look at it and report back.*
- Fred Meyer needs to be a right in, right out only.
- What is the current accident rate at the Fred Meyer access drive? What is it projected to be when traffic increases? *Data not available at meeting.*
- Need to simplify traffic flow. Isn't that part of this project? Get rid of the Fred Meyer access. They have access from Dogwood and the Glenn. They don't need it. Just because they are big business they get privileges other small Palmer businesses don't. It's a double standard. The city wouldn't allow any other business to have this arrangement. The Fred Meyer access is different because Fred Meyer does not even front Evergreen like the other businesses.
- Removing the access may impact other businesses like D.Q.
- The Fred Meyer access is a city permitted driveway and it will have to be resolved with the City.
- As a compromise to Fred Meyer, make it a right in, right out only.

Palmer One Lane Series

2.1 1 left turn lane from Glenn

- 1 left turn lane from Glenn Highway with a Protective Permissive Arrow (left turns allowed on green arrow, and green light – yield to on-coming traffic)
- Put in a longer median and block left turns into the Chevron. Chevron is a huge problem.
- The longer median will also change access to businesses on the south side.
- Provide directional signage for drivers on how to access Chevron and Fred Meyers from the Glenn. Keep them off Evergreen.
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2.2 Back to Back Left turn lanes on Evergreen

- Not so good.
- Should we declare this Dead on Arrival? *No consensus that this one should be omitted at this time.*

2.3 Center Turn Lane Option

- More favorable

2.4 North

- Don't like the half pork chops. Stop left turns into Fred Meyers
- Need center median to stop left turns into Fred Meyers and Chevron. Access control. They already have reasonable access so it should be possible.
- Just buy Chevron. *It may be 1/3 of the budget to acquire this property. Is that how the CAC wants to spend the money?* Chevron is the problem, it can't just be ignored.
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2.5 Bulb Outs

- Bulb outs at Cobb except at the northwest corner. Truck traffic needs a bigger turn radius here.

2.6

- Will this with a 4-way stop? *Yes, probably ok in the near term.*
- Don't like the intersection narrowed. It is good for pedestrians but not bikes.
- Could have 8 foot sidewalks and bikes could ride on the sidewalks.
- Do we want bikes and pedestrians on the same sidewalk?

2.7 2 lanes from Bailey to Glenn

- Combines 4 driveways into one on south side for access control. Requires conversion of alley and reconfiguration of business access
- 1 lane into downtown keeps the road small
- The Purple Moose would not have enough queuing room on-site. Don't like this option.
- South side businesses don't want to lose their driveways. It's different than Fred Meyer because they have frontage on Evergreen.

Dogwood 1

- Removed raised median. Easier for emergency vehicles and truck traffic to maneuver
- All of the alternatives include traffic signals at Dogwood and Cobb. Would like to see some without.
- Signals could be planned for but added later.
- Needs some traffic control now. This intersection doesn't function well.
- Put a 4 way blinking light in for now.
- City owns this intersection. Let them put the light in when needed.
- State may not put one in as part of this project unless it is warranted (necessary now for traffic).
- State should put it in now. Make them pay.
- Bigger turning radius needed on Cobb to Dogwood to accommodate mail trucks.

Dogwood 2

- Left turn lanes added but results in loss of parking
- Businesses don't have enough parking now. Losing parking will be a problem

Dogwood 3

- Widens ROW to the south to maintain parking

Dogwood 4

- Widens ROW to the north
- Doesn't most traffic go right or straight? Not many left turns. yes

Dogwood 5

- Widened Cobb to west (Fred Meyer) to keep parking
- When is the Cobb/Dogwood light warranted?
- This intersection is already challenging and with the connection to the west to Felton, it may get worse.

Dogwood 6

- This takes a small parcel to improve truck traffic turning radii.
- Who owns the parcel? *May be Fred Meyer.*

West of the Glenn

- With the new Safeway, a frontage road between Ellen and Felton should be considered. The signals at Ellen and Felton will be too close together. Just keep the signal at Ellen. *The new signal will be at a new access point called Rowland Memorial Drive to improve spacing. There will be no signal at Ellen. A signal at Felton would take priority over Rowland, as Felton is a collector road.*
- Pioneer square will need right in right out and left in left out access from Dogwood.
- Was the topography taken into consideration when the take boundaries were established on the north side of Pioneer Square or is the drawing just a first shot?
- It does not appear that the new Felton road on the north side of PWH lines up with the existing Felton road. (Just an observation)

General

- As much ROW as possible be secured for future improvements but that any actual construction should meet real needs and that the roads should not be overbuilt. For example on the Dogwood Felton views, #4 seems more appropriate. I would also like to see green space and bike paths where there is an ability to include them as this helps maintain the small town feel that the group noted as a key value.
- Lastly, I still have not seen any numbers indicating what the Felton extension does for traffic flow if:
 - 1) Felton is not extended to Arctic
 - 2) Bogard Rd extension is not completed

Action Item Summary

- Need more discussion on the appropriate length of the median on Evergreen at the Glenn
- Bike lanes or no bike lanes
- Cost data for right-of-way acquisition
- Construction costs for the alternatives
- Verify size of pedestrian islands on Glenn
- Accident rate at Fred Meyers. Existing and projected with increased volumes
- When is the Cobb/Dogwood light warranted?
- Who owns parcel on northwest corner of Dogwood and Cobb?

Homework

- Top 3 Alternatives. Choose or combine to make a new one.
- Worst 3 Alternatives

E-mail to Wende by December 1.

PARKING LOT (SUMMARY OF ALL MEETINGS)

The parking lot is for items that are likely outside the scope of discussion. They will be addressed as time permits.

- ~~Future of Glenn Highway through Palmer. What are ADOT's plans? Addressed Dec 10, 2009~~
- Walkway from Palmer to Fairgrounds
- ~~Frontage Road with limited access along west side of Palmer Wasilla Highway (Discussed during alternative development)~~
- *Noisy Goose ROW impacts*
- *Medians*