
PALMER WASILLA HIGHWAY EASTERN TERMINUS

Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

November 19, 2009

Red Beet Café and Bakery

4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Next meeting date is Thursday, December 10, 2009 – 4:30 to **7:30** p.m.

Introduction

- Reminder: Alternatives must solve the congestion at the Palmer Wasilla Highway/Glenn Highway intersection.
- Tonight's meeting is to review the alternatives from last week, and talk about the "Goods, Bads, and Ugliers." The goal is to whittle the alternatives down to about 6 for the engineers to begin modeling and screening.
- The engineers will provide feedback on each one - what works, what doesn't, and why. They will also provide a list of key assumptions that were used in the traffic model. For example the model assumed that "programmed" roads were built (Trunk, Bogard, etc).

CAC Alternative Presentations

Group 1

- Goal to solve two traffic problems: Old Hospital (Courthouse) traffic and Industrial traffic (to the south)
- Would like to see new roads modeled after 15th Avenue (Fairview section) in Anchorage. The feel of the road slows traffic down.

Dogwood/Cottonwood

- Dogwood or Cottonwood – Need to see which would be better. Many variations for alignments.
 - Extend Dogwood straight to Felton
 - Curve Dogwood to the north to intersect with Felton closer to school (Cottonwood extended).
 - Extend Cottonwood straight to Felton
 - Curve Cottonwood to the south and then follow Dogwood alignment to Felton (no Dogwood intersection with Glenn)

Goods	Bads	Ugliers
Uses existing intersection with Dogwood		
Could buy right-of-way to accommodate 4 lanes in the future but only build 2 now		
Catches Fred Meyer users		
Dogwood is more commercial in nature than Cottonwood	Cottonwood is more residential, takes apartments	
Dogwood railroad crossing may be easier than Cottonwood if extends to the east	Dogwood ends in the middle of the Courthouse	Dogwood impacts grandmother's historic house
Trooper ingress/egress improved	Dogwood does not line up across tracks	Dogwood impacts Valley Hotel parking. Loss of parking would be detrimental to hotel business.
Cottonwood opens up to the east	Stop light on Dogwood would impact pedestrians	
If Dogwood selected, the existing intersection at Cottonwood/Glenn could be relocated		

South

- Take industrial traffic down Commercial Road to Hemmer. Seismic station, rock, and topography may not make it feasible. Engineers will have to answer that question.
 - If the southern alternative is pushed too far south, will people still use it?
 - Will it still work with the Glenn Highway going to 4 lanes?
 - Will grade work for an overpass?
- Where to cross Glenn Highway? Move the substation.
- Extend Commercial Drive straight to Hemmer

Goods	Bads	Uglies
Corresponds with 4 lane Glenn if frontage road ends at Commercial	Least best routes go through residential neighborhoods	Goes through subdivision if not extended to Hemmer
Moves industrial traffic west without going through town		
Address on-going growth of Industrial/Springer Loop area		
Use existing grade changes for overpass		
Can avoid rock and subdivision by swinging south to airstrip		

Group 2

- Tried to limit new roads, save money, and use traffic control
- Right in and right out only onto Evergreen from Fred Meyer
- 5 lane PWH/Evergreen from Glenn to Cobb
- One way concept
 - Evergreen from Cobb to the east would remain a two-way
 - Dogwood from Cobb to the east would remain two-way
 - Dogwood would be one way west of Glenn Highway. Alignment would veer south across Felton and merge with PWH
 - PWH would be one way from Felton to Glenn Highway
 - Light at Felton and PWH
 - Maybe Dogwood/PWH starts with a two way design but right-of-way is acquired for future one-way.
- Extend Industrial to Inner Springer
- Eliminate Colony access (east/west leg) to Glenn Highway and add signal at Glacier View
- Make Commercial Drive right in/right out only.
- Does one-way work to the west of downtown work for flow? Bring one-way traffic analysis for area west of Glenn.

Goods	Bads	Uglies
PWH – 2 lanes going west	May take Chevron	Strong public resistance to anything “one way.”
Provides another route across the tracks	Can Dogwood handle all the traffic if only one lane east of one-way section	
Downtown stays two way. The one way is in heavy volume area west of CBD	How to move Dogwood Traffic to Valley Road if one way	
Provides Carrs opportunity for an access drive to back of store	How to transition from two way road to one way road	
One way merges to PWH without light	Is one-way good for business? Hard to get in and out of businesses	
Phasing opportunity – start as two-way but design for future one-way	Light at Felton	
Businesses were not hurting because of the Northern Lights/Benson couplet.	One way can ruin character – example Northern Lights/Benson in Anchorage.	
Think of the districts identified early in this process. Room for both one way and two concepts.	Needs to be planned well.	

Group 3

Match the road to the people!

- Extend Colony Road south as a frontage road along railroad right-of-way
 - Frontage road merges with Industrial Way across railroad tracks continues east to South Airport Road (Gulkana option is too close to town and can't achieve speeds to make a good bypass). This provides a bypass for Butte/Lazy Mountain traffic – an area of growth.
- Build east/west connector from Glenn Highway to Hemmer (alignment is generally Industrial extended)
 - Roundabout at Hemmer and new east/west connector
- Interchange at planned intersection at Moore Road and Inner Springer Road
- No interchange at Glacier View – Destroys high speed/high flow goal of Glenn 4-lane project. Only helps business owners wanting to capture traffic.
- Roundabout at Hemmer/PWH
- Bridge over Glenn but no access to Glenn at substation
- Maintain existing speed and flow of Glenn Highway
- Don't build new roads in Dogwood/Cottonwood area (west of Glenn). No people, too close to town to achieve speed. Seems only to help real estate development interests.
- Don't build bypass west of Ellen. Too close to Palmer to achieve speed and flow.

Goods	Bads	Uglies
Frontage roads limit signals and access to Glenn	Glenn Highway plus a frontage road divides Palmer in half. Lose walkability. Area becomes "old town" and "new town"	Gulkana extension falls within a runway protection zone
Glenn Highway already includes frontage road from the Vet Clinic to DMV (but plan is 20 years old and being updated)	Railroad is keeping track behind Spenard Builders. Glenn would have to move west and new frontage road would be at existing Glenn.	

Group 4

- Extend Moore Road from Glenn to Hemmer
- Extend Industrial Way from Glenn to Hemmer
- Extend Felton south to Moore Road – straight or curve to west
- Extend Dogwood to Felton
 - Road from subdivision between Arctic and PWH to Dogwood Extension to improve access
- Signal at Felton/PWH
- Signals on Glenn at
 - Inner Springer /Moore
 - Colony
 - Industrial Way
 - Glacier
 - Intersection north of Glacier (Ellen Street subdivision has difficult access)
 - Evergreen
 - Dogwood
 - Arctic
- Signal at Valley Way or Denali – which one is better

Goods	Bads	Uglies
Use existing grid to distribute traffic. Enhance what is there		
Old Glenn and Denali signal – give those heading out a right turn onto Glenn		

General Alternative Discussion

- Build on idea of using Kerttula's field
- Bridge or cloverleaf over Glenn at Commercial
- There was not a discussion to go west of Felton. This was included in earlier alternatives.
 - Intent of stopping at Felton was to avoid subdivisions
 - Southern alternatives don't avoid subdivisions
- Vision to have Evergreen with less traffic than today. It becomes a historic entrance to Palmer. Commuters have a different route.
- Give a "unique feeling" to the road from Felton to Evergreen. Make it comfortable. A gateway concept.
- Traffic from west PWH has a difficult time getting into Carrs because of the median. A one-way going east would be good for access to the property.
- A "beltway" concept that loops around Palmer – Industrial Way, to South Airport Road, to Arctic, to Hemmer.

Alternative Summary

- Determine best route between Dogwood and Cottonwood (one way versus two way)
- PWH/Evergreen improvements included in all cases
- Determine best southern route
- Bypass to east (South Airport Road)
- Signal at Valley way or Denali

Open House

- Is January 12th too soon? There are only two CAC meetings before that. Decision will be made at next meeting whether to hold Open House on Jan. 12th or postpone.

Next Meeting is Thursday, December 10, 4:30 to 7:30 at the Red Beet.

- Presentations on Bogard Road and Glenn Highway are planned.
- Kinney Engineering will report the findings of the initial screening and ask for clarification from the CAC where necessary.

Action Items

- Is seismic station and rock a deal breaker for the southern route?
- Commercial zoning on PWH between Felton and Hemmer - do the special limitations restrict access?
- Has the subdivision development between Felton and Hemmer extended south towards the airstrip?
- Confirm with Airport about future land uses and runway protection zones.
- Order of magnitude cost estimates

TENTATIVE FUTURE MEETING DATES

- January 7th
- January 12th - Open House

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?
- Walkway from Palmer to Fairgrounds
- Frontage Road with limited access along west side of Palmer Wasilla Highway (will discuss during alternatives)