A Claustrophobic Corridor Grows Up

Presenters:
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Jeff Griffin, PE | Burgess & Niple, Inc.
Brian Moore, PE | Burgess & Niple, Inc.
PROJECT OVERVIEW

Sawmill Parkway

- Identified in first County Thoroughfare Plan (1987)
- Southern Terminus
  - Franklin County line at Sawmill Road
- Northern Terminus
  - City of Delaware near U.S. 42
- Total length = 9.5 miles
- Southern half built with development from 1999 to 2004
  - Privately designed, constructed, and funded (mostly)
- Northern 4.5 miles publicly funded
- Opens November 2016
PROJECT OVERVIEW

New 4.5 mile section
• Four lane divided parkway
• Limited access
• Four roundabouts in existing intersections
• Construction July 2015 to November 2016
• 100% locally funded
  • Bonds backed by road and sales tax
  • City of Delaware reimbursement (through TIF)
PROJECT OVERVIEW

Why build Sawmill Parkway?

• Heavy development pressure in region
• Extension of trunk sewer and new treatment plant serving the corridor
• Inadequate capacity of existing road system
• Need to acquire right of way to protect corridor from impending large lot development
• Economic development analysis
PROJECT INITIATION

Project Team

- Delaware County Engineer’s Office
- Burgess & Niple, Inc. (B&N) – planning and engineering
- MSi (now MKSK) – planning, landscaping
- Cochran Group Inc. – communications
- Hardlines Design Company (now Commonwealth Heritage Group) – archaeological and historic architecture studies
- M.A.N. Mapping Services – aerial mapping
- CTL Engineering, Inc. – geotechnical engineering
PROJECT INITIATION

Feasibility study begins | Early 2004

- Delaware County Thoroughfare Plan
- Why the plan was done
- Why Sawmill Parkway was initiated
- Managing public involvement...biggest challenge
PROJECT INITIATION

Support and Advisory Groups

1. *Steering Committee (the project team)*
2. *Advisory Council*
   - Steering committee
   - Local government officials representing County, City of Delaware, Concord and Liberty Townships
3. *Stakeholder Group*
   - Advisory Council
   - Area residents
   - Business representatives
   - School representatives
   - ODOT
PROJECT INITIATION

Opinion Leader Interviews (August 2003 to May 2004)

• Seeking input:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages/disadvantages of project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall transportation problems in area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• 32 elected and appointed officials, regional planners, residents

• What was heard
  • Government officials supported project to relieve traffic congestion and manage future growth
  • Residents were skeptical of the need for a new road
PROJECT INITIATION

Initial Open House | June 29, 2004

- 1600 mailings to property owners, news release, posters
- 120 people attended
- What was presented
  - The study area
  - Aerial mapping showing changes in the study area from 1999 to 2004
  - Natural and environmental constraints within study area
  - Subdivisions and rezoned plats within study area
  - Survey
PROJECT INITIATION

Initial Open House | June 29, 2004

• What was heard
  • 75 surveys completed
  • Majority of people say traffic is moderate to heavy in study area
  • Truck traffic and overall congestion are the biggest transportation issues
  • Mailings were the preferred way of receiving project info
    o Social media did not exist!
  • Preferred parkway with landscaped or tree lined medians, plus a multi-use path
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Second Open House | September 29, 2004

- Mailings to property owners, news release
- 221 people attended
- What was presented
  - Four preliminary study corridors
  - Why not Liberty or South Section Line Road?
  - Survey
Why not Liberty Road or S. Section Line Road?

Disadvantages to Upgrading Liberty or S. Section Line Roads
- No alignment flexibility (cannot avoid homes and other structures)
- Requires frontage roads on both sides of parkway to allow local residential access
- Large number of impacted structures
- Lengthened disruption to local traffic during construction
- Not compatible with Liberty Township, Concord Township, or City of Delaware Comprehensive Plans

Minimum Potentially Impacted Houses & Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corridor</th>
<th>Number of Structures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>61</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>03</td>
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</table>

Minimum Estimated Token Houses & Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Number of Structures</th>
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<tr>
<td>S. Section Line</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Road</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S. Section Line Road Minimum Limits of Construction
Liberty Road Minimum Limits of Construction
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Second Open House | September 29, 2004

- What was heard
  - Corridors were ranked
  - The majority of respondents (89%) resided in the study area
  - Corridors that impact the least amount of existing homes or structures were favored
  - Fears of reduced property values
  - Many wanted the opportunity to have a question and answer session, in addition to the open house format
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Corridor Workshop #1 | November 1, 2004

- Attended by steering committee, some advisory council members, some stakeholders
- Based on expertise they could bring to the process and/or the interest of whom they represented
- Goal - develop corridor evaluation criteria that have no bias towards any specific corridor
- By consensus of the workshop participants, the criteria were....
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Corridor Evaluation Criteria (no order of preference or importance)

- Maximize compatibility with comprehensive plans
- Minimize impact on existing homes and businesses
- Minimize environmental impacts
- Avoid structures representing major capital investments
- Minimize public cost
- Recognize public input from surveys

- Criteria were then compared with each other and rated from 1 (slight or no preference) to 4 (major preference)

- Raw scores were then tallied and weighted
### EXHIBIT 3 - CRITERIA WEIGHTING

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>RAW SCORE</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Maximize Compatibility with Comprehensive Plans</td>
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<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Minimize impact on homes &amp; businesses</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Minimize environmental impacts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Avoid structures representing major capital investments</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Minimize public costs</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Public input (survey)</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### CRITERIA SCORING MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
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<td>E-3</td>
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</table>

#### IMPORTANCE:
- 4 - Major Preference
- 3 - Medium Preference
- 2 - Minor Preference
- 1 - Slight, No Preference

One Point Each (letter/letter)
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Corridor Workshop #2 | November 5, 2004

- Attended by steering committee
- Goal – Evaluate each corridor using the criteria from Workshop #1
- Where corridors crossed one another offered different corridor possibilities
- In all, 13 potential corridor routes were established
- Three highest scoring routes were determined

*Results of Corridor Workshops #1 and #2 were then shared with Advisory Council for input and discussion.*
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Advisory Council Meeting | November 10, 2004

- Comments from Advisory Council
  - *Recommended Hybrid Corridor 4*
    - Maximizes available area west of the corridor for single family homes on lot sizes no less than 1 acre
    - Minimizes available area east of the corridor where higher densities might be considered
    - Maximizes available area for development within future limits of City of Delaware

*Preferred corridor was announced on November 29, 2004*
PREFERRED CORRIDOR SELECTION PROCESS

Third Open House | January 19, 2005
• Mailings to property owners adjacent to or within the preferred corridor, news release
• 135 people attended
• Presentation, followed by questions, and then one on one conversations at exhibit stations
PREFERRED ALIGNMENT SELECTION PROCESS

Fourth Open House | March 22, 2005

- Mailings to property owners within or adjacent to the feasible alignments, news release
- 117 people attended
- What was presented
  - Four feasible alignments within the preferred corridor
  - Survey
PREFERRED ALIGNMENT SELECTION PROCESS

Alignment #1

Alignment #2

Alignment #3

Alignment #4
PREFERRED ALIGNMENT SELECTION PROCESS

Fourth Open House | March 22, 2005

• What was heard
  • Alignment #4 was the most preferred
  • Lighting only at intersections
  • Bike path should be built on both sides of parkway
  • Earth mounds and trees for screening homes from parkway
PREFERRED ALIGNMENT SELECTION PROCESS

Feasible alignment selection

- *May 9, 2005* – B&N staff recommends criteria and weighting for later consideration by the steering committee
  - Preferred corridor selection criteria used as a starting point
  - No additional criteria was recommended
  - Minimizing impacts to homes and businesses, environmental impacts, public cost, and Open House #4 survey results were scored and weighted
- *May 18, 2005* – Steering committee meets to evaluate and score the four alternative alignments
  - Alignment #4 received the highest scoring
  - Alignment #4 was then “fine-tuned” to impact fewer parcels of land and to take better advantage of natural drainage patterns

*Modified alignment #4 was then presented at the June 28, 2005 Open House as the Preferred Alignment*
PREFERRED ALIGNMENT SELECTION PROCESS

Fifth Open House | June 28, 2005

- Mailings to property owners within or adjacent to the feasible alignments, news release
- 134 people attended
- What was presented
  - Preferred alignment graphic on aerial photography with parcel ownership
  - Scorecard for alignments
  - Potential aesthetic enhancements
### A Scorecard for Sawmill Parkway Extension Alignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alignment 1</th>
<th>Alignment 2</th>
<th>Alignment 3</th>
<th>Alignment 4</th>
<th>Modified Alignment 4 (Preferred Alignment)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minimize Impact on</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Homes &amp;</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Input/Survey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize Public Cost</td>
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<td>Remaining</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Environmental</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Scorecard Key
- **Very Good**
- **Good**
- **Fair**
- **Poor**

[Scorecard Website](https://www.sawmillparkway.org)
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT SUMMARY

• Support and advisory group role
• Opinion leader interviews
• Stakeholder involvement (planning and design)
• Public meetings (five during planning and one during design phase)
• Stop Sawmill Parkway!
  • Opposition group that surfaced at Open House #2
  • County made the decision to meet with them and hear their concerns after the meeting
  • Opposition was much reduced by the time the Feasible Alignment was announced
• Website (www.sawmillparkway.org)
SCALABLE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT APPROACH

- Process can be used on smaller projects
- Get public involved before alternatives are developed
- Meet one-on-one with property / business owners
- Have public meetings at decision points and get input for next steps
- Most people will support a project if they feel they’ve been heard
CONSTRUCTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Environmental studies and permitting

• No Federal funds so no ODOT involvement
• 1 Perennial Stream and 2 Head Water Ephemeral Streams impacted
• Water impacts approved by USACE with a 404 Nationwide Permit 14, OhioEPA 401 Water Quality Certification
• No wetland impacts
• 629 LF (0.26 acres) of stream impacts – Mitigation for 830 LF of Streams
• Conservation Easement for the stream mitigation site will be held by Preservation Parks of Delaware County
CONSTRUCTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Access management

• All properties along the corridor had access to the cross roads.

• County wanted to limit access to these corridors...no direct access to Sawmill Parkway
  o Resulted in some driveway reconfigurations
  o Care taken to avoid inaccessible land
CONSTRUCTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

• Signals versus Roundabout
  • Public request to investigate
  • Only a few existed in Central Ohio at the time
  • Road trip to Carmel, IN
    o Similar corridor and worked great
• Stop controlled warranted at 4 of the 7 intersections opening day
• Roundabout recommended
  o Safety benefit
  o Similar costs
CONSTRUCTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Sixth Open House | December 6, 2006

- What was presented
  - Proposed landscaping treatments along length of project
  - Roundabout informational exhibits
  - Information on right of way acquisition process
- What was heard
  - Overall support for roundabouts and landscaping treatments
  - Design guidance going forward
CONSTRUCTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

• Design challenges
  • Individual property owner issues
    o Farm equipment through roundabout
    o Driveway reconfigurations
    o Existing ponds
    o Trees (oldest tree in Delaware County)
  • Electrical towers
  • Drainage design
  • Landscaping
RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION

R/W Acquisition Overview

• 142 R/W parcels acquired, approximately 135 acres
• Early acquisition of three total-take parcels
• Took 4 years to complete land acquisition
• Proximity damage to structures and damage to residue parcels was a big issue
• 24 appropriation cases filed (1 tried)
• Total R/W acquisition cost: $9.1M
BIDDING AND CONSTRUCTION

• Sales tax bonds issued in May 2015
• Engineer's estimate of $37 million
• Advertised for bids in June 2015
• 4 bids received ranging from $30.4 to $37.3 million
• $30.4 million contract awarded to Trucco Construction
• Groundbreaking ceremony July 23, 2015
CONSTRUCTION

• Utility delays in 2016 delayed roundabout construction by two months and U.S. 42 work by four months
• Great cooperation with Trucco to get through delays and minimize downtime
• Opening scheduled for November 10, 2016
• Short term closure in Spring 2017 to complete widening at U.S. 42 intersection
CONSTRUCTION OF SAWMILL PARKWAY
COMPLETION OF SAWMILL PARKWAY
POLITICAL OBSTACLES

• Organized opposition
  • “Friends of Delaware County”
  • “Community Oversight Foundation”
• Project became a campaign issue for County Commissioner candidates
• Opposition to the use of Imminent Domain
• Funding challenges
• City and County cost sharing negotiations
LESSONS LEARNED

• Don’t underestimate political obstacles
• Engage project opponents early in the process
• Engage project champions early in process (and keep them engaged)
• Control the message – be consistent!
CONTACT US

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