

Village of



290 Evergreen Drive · Vernon Hills, IL 60061-2999 · 847-367-3700

July 8, 2009

Mir Mustafa
Illinois Department of Transportation
Bureau of Programming
201 West Center Court
Schaumburg, IL 60196-1096

RE: Route 45 Phase One Study – Vernon Hills Comments

Dear Mr. Mustafa,

Please find below the comments from the Village of Vernon Hills in regard to the proposed planning for the add lanes project on Route 45 within the Village of Vernon Hills. It is our interest to be a partner in the process of design and construction. The Village will work with you to provide all information that we have available and to assemble local information to assist in the Phase I design and ultimate construction of this improvement.

Below are a number of comments on various subjects that the Village has discussed in regard to the Phase I.

1. Location of roadway within right of way – Centennial Crossing/Stone Fence Farms
It is the Village's desire to have the actual paved area of the road the furthest south possible. If possible, we urge the State to acquire any of the right of way from the cemeteries, Arrowhead and Willow Lawn, that would allow for a shift in the road further south. The State indicated that initial review with the cemetery owners indicated some information on location of graves. We request that IDOT shares the specific information on location of graves to enable a determination of exactly where the road could be placed in the right of way, again to locate as far south as possible. By this request, we are not suggesting or recommending moving any graves from the area immediately adjacent to the right of way.

To facilitate the south location of the paved road surface, the Village would be willing to dedicate further right of way along property that is owned by the Village south and north of the Canadian National Railroad on the south side of Route 45. In the area discussed above, the Village would work with the State to provide property not only for the right of way, but also floodplain mitigation and stormwater retention. Again, our goal is to bring the road surface as far away from Stone Fence Farms and Centennial Crossing as possible.

To facilitate the reduction in the amount of right of way use for the road widening and to maintain and enhance aesthetics along the Route 45 corridor, we would request the following:

A. Barrier median

The Village is proposing landscaped barrier medians in the area from Fairway/Buffalo Grove Road to Route 21.

For the areas west of Fairway/Buffalo Grove Road, the Village is requesting a 12 foot striped turn lane in lieu of the aforementioned landscaped barrier median. This would allow for paved areas to be further from adjacent residential areas.

B. Retaining wall

To minimize the amount of right of way in some areas, a retaining wall should be constructed that provides for the paved surface to be as close to the right of way as possible. Again, this might be useful in locations noted above. When constructing these retaining walls, we are requesting that the walls be constructed with decorative formliner with tubular railing.

C. Tree removal/landscaping

Again in the context of preserving the existing mature trees when possible, the paved areas need to be reduced as much as possible to allow for preservation of existing landscaping.

D. Use of existing pedestrian walkway

Particularly in the right of way adjacent to Centennial Crossing, Stone Fence Farms, and several other areas, we request that IDOT utilize the existing pedestrian walkway to be expanded to ten feet wide for a pedestrian path. In conjunction with this, eliminate the planned path on the south side of the street, again, allowing for the paved roadway to be relocated as far south as possible. In addition, an asphalt maintenance strip should be constructed to the back of curb from Oakwood to Fairway/Buffalo Grove Road.

2. Barrier Median – Balance of Corridor

In the area of Fairway/Buffalo Grove Road to Route 21, we want the planned barrier to remain.

3. Grosse Pointe Circle Townhomes

The Village is concerned with the right of way request that will substantially impact the residents' buffer from the highway. During the Village Board approval, the developer dedicated the IDOT requested right of way and residents are concerned why more land is needed. Also as part of design, we want to discuss further with you pedestrian access in this area.

4. Reduce right of way request at Faucet Queen to save trees

The initial plan indicated a substantial removal of trees in an area that we feel is not needed for construction. We ask that as much landscaping be maintained as possible in this area and within the entire right of way.

5. Noise mitigation

We understand that IDOT will be conducting a noise survey as part of this project. In relationship to any noise mitigation, we are requesting the consideration of a combination of retaining walls, berms, and landscaping that would provide a buffer in a number of areas along the right of way. The Village is expressly opposed to a sound wall in most areas along the right of way because of the aesthetics.

6. Railroad gate/Metra Station operations

When the double track improvements were constructed several years ago, the Village requested that Metra and the Canadian National consider the possibility of the location of the trains stopping far enough south that it would not activate the gate at Route 45 until trains were prepared to cross Route 45. It was indicated that the lead times for the gate actuation and the location had been adjusted to make the train activate the gate sooner when approaching from the south. This was noted for a number of safety reasons. We ask the State and railroad to again take a look at this situation to see if there are any adjustments that could be made in either operations or technically to alleviate the circumstance where the train enters a certain number of feet from the Route 45 gate; actuates the gate; stops at the station; the gate opens allowing traffic to move for a short period of time; and when the train leaves the station (northbound), the gate again closes. Although the time is not long, it is inconvenient and confusing to motorists and would improve traffic flow. Also any improvements to this crossing must meet or exceed FRA Quiet Zone standards.

7. Average daily traffic count of Route 45

It was noted that because of a number of improvements in the area, traffic on Route 45 has possibly decreased from previous counts earlier this decade. While the Village does not feel that this is the case, it is important to investigate this comment. Please provide up to date AADT counts along the corridor.

8. Traffic signal – Grosse Pointe Boulevard and Route 45

The Village has requested as part of the study that traffic warrants be reviewed for a potential traffic signal at Grosse Pointe Boulevard and Route 45. Please forward the traffic signal warrant analysis.

9. Metra lot and Route 45

The Village is requesting that IDOT coordinate with the Village improvements at the intersection of the Metra lot and Route 45. With the five lane cross section improvement, the plans are to provide for dual lefts from the Metra lot onto Route 45 to facilitate exiting onto Route 45 during peak times.

10. Street lights

At this time, the Village does not want to pay for the cost of street lights along Route 45.

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11. Path connection – Indian Creek

Although not within the Village of Vernon Hills, a critical section of pedestrian path needs to be constructed. This would allow pedestrians to connect from certain portions of our Village to the southern areas along Route 45. Therefore, we are asking you to work with the Villages of Indian Creek and Mundelein to construct a continuous path along Route 45.

12. Martin & Associates and Beit Haverim access

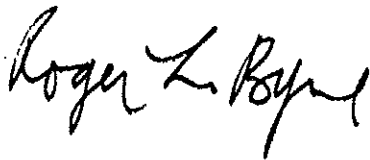
We are requesting that IDOT review alternatives for providing frontage road access for Martin & Associates Landscaping and Beit Haverim Congregation to the traffic signal at Route 45 and Ranney/Metra lot intersection and also explore north to the intersection of Stone Fence Road and Route 45. This will address full and safe access to these uses from Route 45.

13. Former Kelly's Day Camp access (The Oaks of Vernon Hills)

The Village is planning access from Corporate Woods Office Park through the property formerly known as Kelly's Day Camp to Route 45. We are requesting your review of the potential right of way needed when a signal is warranted.

Again, we are in full support of the widening of Route 45 within the corporate limits of the Village of Vernon Hills. However, we feel there are certain adjustments to the planned improvements that would greatly enhance the benefits for residents immediately adjacent to Route 45. We look forward to working with the Illinois Department of Transportation on this project and offer our staff assistance in various elements of the Phase I design work.

Sincerely yours,



Roger L. Byrne
Village President

RLB/ld

cc: Senator Terry Link
Representative Kathy Ryg
Village Board
Brett Blomberg, Mayor, Village of Lincolnshire
Kenneth Kessler, Mayor, Village of Mundelein
John Baczek, PE, Project and Environmental Studies Section Chief,
Illinois Department of Transportation
Robert Irvin, Village Manager, Village of Lincolnshire
John Lobaito, Village Administrator, Village of Mundelein
Michael S. Allison, Village Manager, Village of Vernon Hills
David Brown, Village Engineer, Village of Vernon Hills