

Meeting Summary

To: *All Meeting Participants*

From: *Ronald B. Bray, P.E.*
Project Manager, WSB

Date: *May 28, 2002*

Re: *Meeting Minutes*
CSAH 71 Project Management Team Meeting
Cass County, Minnesota
Wednesday, May 1, 2002, 1:00 PM
WSB Project No. 1326-00

An agenda package was passed around to all persons in attendance.

I. Introductions

The following project management team members were in attendance at the meeting:

David Enblom	Cass Co. Hwy Dept.
Jonathon Large	Cass County Hwy Dept.
Don Hoppe	Hiram Township
Robert L. Crom	Ten Mile Lake Assoc., Delegate
John Alden	Ten Mile Lake Assoc., Water Resources
Kirk English	Mn/DNR Waters
Gail Becher	Resident
James Tande	US Forest Service
Ed Mergens	Portage Lake Assoc.
Ron Bray	WSB & Assocs.
Becky Hauschild	WSB & Assocs.

The following public persons were in attendance:

Bob Nelson
Ellie Nelson
Larry Urbanski
Steve Schoen
Lorraine Stromquist
Joe Blowers
Bob & Jean Rydell

The following project management team members were not in attendance:

Kelvin Howieson	Mn/DOT State Aid
Michele Hanson	United States Army Corps of Engineers
Jim Dowson	Cass County Commissioner
John Sumption	Cass County Environmental Services
Dan Steward	Board of Water and Soil Resources
John Freetley	Chippewa Nat'l Forest
Tom Somrak	US Forest Service
Steve Frick	Forest Service Cass Lake
Don Willis	Ten Mile Lake Association President
Rob Naplin	Mn/DNR Wildlife
Harlan Fierstine	Mn/DNR Fisheries
Mitch Bouchonville	Forest Service Walker

A. PMT Addition

- Gail Becher has been added to the PMT to represent the residents along CSAH 71.

II. Public Comments

A. General

- John Alden mentioned that there was a local neighborhood meeting where some people expressed some very strong opinions against the project;
- Gail Becher had received phone calls from CSAH 71 property owners with some questions:
 - Could year round weight restrictions be posted on CSAH 71 to prohibit logging and gravel trucks from the road, but not school buses and garbage trucks?
 - Ron explained that the road would be designed to a 9-ton per axle standard, which is required by State Aid. The only time that weight restrictions would be imposed is during the springtime.
 - The worst violators of weight restrictions are school buses and garbage trucks because they only have 2 axles. School buses are exempt from the springtime weight restrictions.

- Why can't the calcium-chloride (CaCl) be maintained on CSAH 71? Gail explained that some property owners along CSAH 71 would be willing to pay a special assessment to fund the CaCl.
 - The county budget is the reason that the CaCl cannot be continued in the same manner that it has been. The county is willing to proceed with this high level of maintenance for an interim time period until the proposed improvements are constructed.
 - David Enblom also noted that the support might be here now for a special assessment, but 10-years from now things may be different.
 - In addition, a resident who is not pleased with their assessment may also voice their objections to the county board as to why the county maintains other gravel roads, but not theirs.
- Why is the road being designed as a by-pass route?
 - Ron Bray explained that the road is not being designed as a by-pass route. He believes that trucks will continue on TH 371 and CSAH 6 or Trunk Highway 34 for the following reasons:
 - The design speed for this project is 30 mph;
 - CSAH 71 will be stopping at Bachelor Road;
 - The intersection of CSAH 71/CSAH 50 is being designed to pull the pavement in and slow speeds down.
- Will the trees and tree roots be protected during the construction?
 - Ron explained that yes, the roots of the trees that are identified to remain will be protected and protection of these roots will be detailed in the construction plans and construction specifications that the contractor utilizes to bid on the project.
- Who will paint/flag the trees that will be removed for construction?
 - Cass County will be working with the Forest Service to flag the limited life span trees. Cass County will also be marking construction limits and flagging the trees, which will be removed during construction in a few selected sensitive areas.

- A notice will be sent to the adjoining property owners notifying them of the colors and their meaning.
 - This is anticipated to occur in late June or July.
 - John Alden mentioned that it would be nice to have an impartial review of the proposed construction and the impacts.
- Gail questioned what the current funding for the project is and what the federal versus local share is.
 - Detailed cost estimates cannot be calculated until the road alignment and profiles are set. The programmed project cost is \$2.4 million. The proposed funding is at 80% Federal/20% Local and is programmed in the Cass County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) in the year 2005. It may be possible to advance to 2003 or 2004 if plans are done sooner.
- Gail questioned if there was a date that this federal money had to be used by and if the local funding had changed due to the budget shortfalls.
 - David explained that the improvements are scheduled for 2005, but the funding could be slid 1-2 years.
 - David also explained where the local funds are generated. These state aid funds are gas tax monies. This gas tax money goes directly into a constitutionally dedicated highway user fund, not the general fund.
 - 62% of this money goes to Trunk Highways;
 - 29% of this money goes to counties;
 - 9% of this money goes to municipalities.
 - The budget item which did affect moneys distributed to the counties through State Aid was when the state revised the license tab fees. The money that is distributed to the counties for their state aid money was lessened and was to be replaced with state surplus money (which is obviously depleted now). The license tab reduction was approximately \$126 million.
 - The additional money needed to close the gap between prior money and new money is approximately \$0.20/gallon;

- It is highly unlikely that any steps will be taken to increase the gas tax by that amount;
- Cass County has tightened their internal straps (5 less full-time positions since 1990) and this money has gone into the roads; however, there is only so much money that can be cut
- Mr. Rydell asked why CSAH 71 was selected to be paved?
 - David Enblom explained that any gravel road with more than 100 vehicles per day is a maintenance problem, such as CSAH 71. He explained that he would like to pave all roads with 100 or more vehicles per day on them.
 - There are 532 miles of County State Aid Highway (CSAH) miles in Cass County and 272 miles of County Roads (CR) in Cass County.
 - (CSAH): 379 miles are paved/153 miles are gravel;
 - (CR): 42 miles are paved/230 miles are gravel;
 - The 235 miles of gravel use up the majority of the maintenance money, which is a cost that never goes away and is always increasing with decreasing revenues.
 - The State Aid gas tax maintenance funds have not been keeping up with the increasing costs.
 - David Enblom sees the federal money as outside revenue to construct CSAH 71 and thus help decrease local costs.
 - Mr. Rydell believes that there should be a better way to spend taxpayer dollars.
 - Mr. Rydell asked if there were no federal money, would there still be a proposed construction project on CSAH 71?
 - David Enblom explained that the project was previously programmed with all local dollars (State Aid funds). It was then removed from the Capital Improvement Plan. The county board would determine whether or not the project would proceed without federal money.

- Mr. Rydell believes that there has been no consideration for the majority and no analysis to show the maintenance costs versus construction costs.
 - Ron Bray noted that he would like to set up a meeting to discuss these issues with Mr. Rydell, but this PMT meeting needs to revert back to the agenda.
 - Mr. Rydell would like a copy of the comments received to date. He should provide Becky Hauschild with his name and address.
 - Gail noted that the public comment summary had been revised to show that sixteen comments had been received to leave CSAH 71 as is.

B. Fred Martin (Dec. 12, 2001)

- Ron Bray and Becky Hauschild met with Mr. Martin at his residence on December 12, 2001. He requested that the county look at the realignment of CSAH 71 westerly on the west side of Lundstum Bay. WSB has some preliminary drawings and will be doing a more detailed study with the mapping information received.
 - It was also noted that there are two potential archaeological sites along CSAH 71 in the realignment area.

C. George/Johnson (Feb. 5, 2002) - Rother: Phone Call

- Mark Rother was unable to attend the property owner meeting, so he expressed his concerns to Becky Hauschild over the phone. His major concerns included:
 - The slope of CSAH 71 near his property. CSAH 71 used to be graded away from the lake, it is now graded with a crown and washes out his driveway.
- Ron Bray and Becky Hauschild met with the George's and the Johnson's at their office in Minneapolis. Their major concerns included:
 - Excessive speed, the distance between their homes and CSAH 71, and keeping trees.

D. Don & Margaret Brown (Letter)

- Mr. and Mrs. Brown sent a letter to follow-up on a property owner meeting. The letter requested that an alternative be studied which eliminates the sharp horizontal curves north and south of Howe Drive.
 - This alternative has been illustrated in the maps; however, it appears that the contours in the area of the north curve will not allow for this realignment.

E. Schoen/Blowers (Phone Calls)

- The Schoen's and Blowers' were in attendance at the PMT meeting. They just wanted to be kept up to speed with the schedule of the project and the alignment in the area of their properties.
 - They are in favor of the realignment of CSAH 71 around the DNR Protected Water.

F. Hoover (May 1, 2002)

- David Enblom, Ron Bray and Becky Hauschild met with Mr. & Mrs. Hoover on May 1, 2002. The Hoover's had concerns with the ease of access and maintenance of the access to CSAH 71 with a new alignment of CSAH 71.
 - They would prefer that the ownership and maintenance of that road remain public.
 - David Enblom explained this process. Cass County would turn the road over to the township. The township must accept this roadway, as long as it is up to their standards. Cass County would then maintain for two years, after which the township would maintain. If the township wanted to vacate the road after this time period, they would have to hold a public hearing.
 - They would also prefer to keep their mailbox as is currently located, not on a new alignment of CSAH 71.

G. Bowman (To be Scheduled)

- A meeting was scheduled to meet with Mr. And Mrs. Bowman on the morning of May 1st; however, they had to call. WSB will contact them to re-schedule.

H. McGill (May 1, 2002)

- David Enblom, Ron Bray and Becky Hauschild met with Mr. and Mrs. McGill on May 1, 2002. Their concerns included the following:

- Design of CSAH 71 at 11-ft lanes (see discussion below);
- Preservation of trees;
- Seeding, re-forestation;
- Stone pillars at his father's driveway entrance;
- Existing intersection to his law office;
- Drainage to his property at 4174 (water currently runs down driveway);
- They took a drive along CSAH 71 to look at unique features and sensitive areas that Mr. McGill wanted noted.

I. Stromquist (Letter)

- Ms. Stromquist sent a letter to WSB. Her concerns are primarily associated with detailed design questions. These questions will be answered once a more detailed design is reviewed.
 - She also had concerns with a potential county easement on her property. This comment will be forwarded to the Cass County survey department.

III. Typical Section

A. NPR Standards

Through Lane Width

NPR Standards require an 11-ft through lane with 2-ft shoulders; 4-ft if pedestrians and bicyclists are anticipated in the corridor;

- Public comments favor reducing the through lane width to 11-ft versus the proposed 12-ft.
 - Ron Bray noted that the county is most likely looking at a combined lane width from centerline, i.e. 15-ft. Whether that 15-ft is 12-ft lane and 3-ft shoulder, or 11-ft lane and 4-ft shoulder is up for discussion.
 - A snowplow has a width of 14-ft; the 15-ft lane width from centerline gives the plow a 1-ft cushion.

Shoulder Width (Excerpt from 12-12-01 meeting)

- A 2-ft shoulder is the required minimum; if pedestrians and bicyclists are to be accommodated, a 4-ft shoulder is the required minimum;
 - Ron explained that the shoulder width should not become a factor with the impacts to trees;

- A ditch section would only be utilized where there is space to do so: fields, logged areas, burned areas; sensitive areas in the corridor will be designed for a minimal cross-section without ditches;
- David Enblom explained that the shoulders are not just to accommodate the pedestrians and/or bicyclists (although they have a right to be there). They are to accommodate a vehicle that goes over the shoulder line and give that vehicle the best chance to recover before hitting any fixed objects;
- The increased use of the road by bicyclists was discussed since it will be paved;
- Don Hoppe noted that the county has to look at risk management as well; this road is a public resource.

B. Maintenance

- As discussed above, the maintenance money allotted for state aid and county roads has not kept up with the increasing costs.

IV. Alignments & Potential Impacts

A. State Aid Standards

- Gail questioned how the new alignments affect funding with regard to Natural Preservation Route Standards.
 - The State Aid Office has determined that new alignment areas would be considered for approval with sufficient documentation.

B. CSAH 50

- Two alternatives have been proposed for the intersection of CSAH 50 with CSAH 71.
 - Tee CSAH 71 into CSAH 50 at its existing location with mountable curb and gutter to better define the intersection;
 - Tee CSAH 71 into CSAH 50 along a new alignment approximately 100-ft westerly of its present location;
 - Both alternatives currently include parking for two vehicles with trailers.
 - The necessity of parking was discussed and will be further discussed at the next meeting with a detailed blow-up of the area in question and impacts to the surrounding area.
 - Don Hoppe noted that Shingobee Township should be contacted with regard to their intentions for the public easement.

- The public access to Portage Lake was discussed for availability of parking. It was noted that it is a busy launch and there is not usually an abundance of parking available.

C. Ten Mile Wildlife Reserve

- The new alignment alternatives were sketched by WSB showing the potential new alignments of CSAH 71;
- Ron Bray noted that this area of new alignment was not illustrated at the public meeting. The new alignment was created through public comment to minimize social concerns and environmental review to minimize environmental impacts to the DNR Protected Water.

D. Lundstrum Bay

- The new alignment alternative was illustrated by WSB showing the potential new alignment of CSAH 71 westerly in the Lundstrum Bay area;
- Ron Bray noted that this area of new alignment was also not illustrated at the public meeting. The new alignment was created through public comment to minimize social concerns and environmental review to minimize environmental impacts to potential archaeological sites.

V. Public Involvement

A. Property Owner Meetings

- Meetings to be scheduled:
 - Bowman
 - Elinor Chase

B. Stake Construction Limits

- Construction limits will be staked in selected areas by Cass County and is anticipated to occur in late June or July.

C. Public Meeting

- A public meeting will be scheduled for a Friday evening in late July or August.
- This date will be made available for inclusion in the Ten Mile Lakes June Newsletter.

VI. Environmental Issues

A. Cultural Resources Investigation (Leech Lake Heritage Society)

1. 16 Potential Prehistoric Archaeological Sites

- The preliminary investigation has identified 16 potential sites.
 - A more detailed investigation will be made of these potential sites to determine the course of elimination, preservation or mitigation.
- It was questioned whether these reports could be made public.
 - Ron explained that they would not be since people then tend to investigate on their own.

2. No Architectural sites were identified.

VII. Other

Schedule

- It is anticipated that the concepts will be revised after the public meeting and brought before the county board for their review and comments or approval.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting for **CSAH 71** was SCHEDULED for *Wednesday, June 19, 2002, at 1:00 P.M.*

NOTE: The above constitutes WSB's understanding of the items discussed at this meeting. If there are any questions, comments or changes, please notify me immediately at (763) 541-4800 or (888)-541-4800.

c: Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe
Morgan Dawley, WSB & Associates, Inc.
Jeff Stewart, WSB & Associates, Inc.