



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 11, 2005
To: Fidalgo Island Subarea Plan CAC and TAC
From: Aubin Phillips, Berryman & Henigar
Re: CAC meeting 3/10/05

Attendance:

CAC: Ed Goodman, Bill Dinsmoor, Chuck Manning, Tom Stowe, Terry McNeil

TAC: Ross Barnes, Konrad Kurp, Tony Kubena, Bob Bell, David Pearson, Jim Mecca

Consultants: Roger Wagoner, Aubin Phillips

County: Jeroldine Hallberg

Other: Mary Goodman, Mike Goodman, Lori Sherman, Paul Sherman, Lance Gibbon (principal of Fidalgo School), Joe Sanders (school bus representative), Carol Ehlers

Guest Speakers: Todd Harrison, Dawn Yankauskas, Forest Jones

Upcoming meeting and Updates

Roger started with an overview of what we will be covering at this meeting. This meeting will focus on transportation issues – there are two representatives from WSDOT here, and they have been provided with a list of questions that committee members submitted. There is also a representative from Skagit County Public Works here to answer questions you may have about other roads.

The next CAC meeting will be held on April 14. At this meeting we will get out maps and work to identify areas of interest on the island, we will also further discuss the survey results which have been passed out tonight. We are scheduled to have another open house in late April, it will most likely be held here at the school.

Jeroldine had a update on the Evergreen/Inter Island Trail which is mentioned in the Anacortes Parks Plan. Brian Adams from Skagit Parks has been working on this with Pacific Northwest Trails. They have asked the County about making shoulder improvements on Sharpe Rd for trail usage. Deception Pass State Park is working on making the trail a little more user friendly in the park, they will be starting this Monday, let Jeroldine know if you would be interested in helping and she can put you in contact with the right people.

Public Comment

Carol made a note that her comments on lot certification were not included in the January notes. She had made an announcement that we should all keep an eye on lot certification issues, this could have a big impact on Fidalgo Island, the west side of the Island is ok, but the east side is having septic and drainage issues.

Carol made a comment to WSDOT at this meeting regarding the accident on Gibraltar Road and HWY 20 last week. This is a high accident area, the person trying to turn south onto HWY 20 was cited for the

accident, but there is a dip in the road to the south and it is difficult to see. Carol also commented that that we are already halfway through our time with this plan and nothing has been done yet about the drainage and geology of the island. If the DOE is to cut off access during low flow there are going to be some big problems on Fidalgo. There is an article in tonight's newspaper about this.

Bob is concerned about the Seattle Times article about "Anacortes Discovered", he is concerned that this will lead to higher population and more traffic on the island. Bill Dietrich who wrote the article lives in Anacortes, maybe it would be good to invite him to a meeting to talk. There was also a recent article in Washington CEO magazine recently about Anacortes.

Konrad gave the consultants and the county copies of Salmon Beach slide to put in the record.

Transportation

Todd Harrison and Dawn Yankauskas are here to answer some of the committee's questions about the SR 20 construction. Todd is the assistant regional manager for WSDOT, and he lives in the Anacortes area. Dawn is the project manager for the HWY 20 project from Sharpe's Corner to Quiet Cove. They have been busy lately and there have been some changes in the project. They have just recently updated their website and posted the quarterly report, the December report was passed around.

Todd started off with some background on the project. He wanted to emphasize that this is a safety project to reduce accidents; they are working on risk reduction and risk prevention on HWY 20. This stretch of SR 20 has been identified as a high accident corridor based on police data and monitoring. Information gathering on this project began back in 1999/2000, and this project was prioritized for funding based on need. This is currently one of six safety projects being conducted; these are not intended as congestion relief. This project starts at Sharpe's Corner, but does not include Sharpe's Corner because of funding; this project ends before Quiet Cove. There are several points along the route that are being worked on. The area around the Shrimp Shack is being worked on, the intersection of SR 20 and S. Lake Campbell Rd., some of the curves are being fixed for sight distance, and turning lanes are being added. There was a question of whether or not the accident data that was used to prioritize this project is available to the public, yes it is, and it is also available for Sharpe's Corner although that is not a part of this project.

The cost of the project has gone up significantly since the original proposal due to environmental conditions and ground work. The original cost of the project was \$5 million, this was based on using Engineering National Standards, but once the project was actually started they realized that there were a lot more constraints such as needing structures to avoid the lakes and slopes. Property acquisition is also going to be much more expensive than originally thought since property values on Fidalgo are increasing more rapidly. In Fall 2002 they realized that cost had gone up significantly because of these factors, so they tried to scale back the project and focus on the areas that really needed attention such as the Shrimp Shack area. Then there was Referendum 51 to raise the gas tax but it failed. In Fall 2003 this passed and they had some congestion projects earmarked for this funding, but this project was left at the bottom of the pile. In the end, this project was able to get another \$10 million, which brought the total up to \$15 million. This allowed them to design the whole project, buy the right-of-way and construct improvements from Campbell Lake Rd. South. In Fall 2006 they will begin advertising for bids, and construction will actually be started in Spring 2007.

Tom had a question about the information on the website. The December summary is not up yet, and the dates are wrong, they are all about a year off. He wanted to know how the cost of the project has gone up so much from \$3.2 million three years ago, to almost \$19 million now. Konrad had a question about the big picture, what do they plan to do with Whidbey? The cause of a lot of this traffic is from people going south across Deception Pass Bridge.

Dawn did a walk through of the project on the map. The project starts just south of Meadow Creek. Lunz Road ranks second for accidents and vehicle delays along this corridor. They will be putting in a left turn lane, working on sight distance issues, fixing the sag in the road, moving the road for alignment, and putting in a bridge because of the alignment shifts. Deception Road on the other side of this intersection is also going to be worked on. S. Campbell Lake Rd. will be getting a left turn lane; there was a question about using Lunz Road for side access while intersections are closed. There was also a comment about school bus access to these streets; they need to be able to turn around once they get onto these streets. They will be taking out dips in the road south of Almeda Vista for better sight distance. There will also be a left turn lane put in at Almeda Vista, the Samish Nation is paying for this improvement, they will also be widening lanes and shoulders to the east to avoid Lake Campbell. There will be more widening of lanes and shoulders north of Campbell Lake Rd. Near Miller Rd. they will be doing some profiling and working on sight distance, and constructing walls to protect wetlands. At Gibraltar Rd. they will work on removing fixed objects that can block sight distance.

Carol had a question about the 1,100 acres along this corridor that have the potential to be developed in the future, and many of these lands have private access off of SR 20 and these people want to go south too, but it is not safe. Additional growth and the traffic it will bring have been taken into account for this project. As for Gibraltar Rd., there were questions about why there is not a median lane for people to pull into and wait to go south. This has been considered, but can not be done since there is still the problem of short sight distance to the bend in the road to the north, and this gives people a false sense of security and they pull out but could be hit by oncoming southbound traffic. This area also has a lot of speeding problems. This is a concern since a lot of busses go out this way from the elementary school.

Bill wanted to know if there is a possibility of a signal being put in at this intersection, the intersection does not warrant a signal because there is not enough delay at peak periods, it would be a liability for WSDOT to do a signal without a warrant. There will also not be a signal put in at Almeda Vista for the Samish property.

Tony wanted to know if counters have been used in doing the analysis for this area to determine how many cars are using SR 20. The project has been designed for 20 years out; they have looked at land use, historical growth, and current use of the roads to get the 20 year volumes. It was pointed out that a lot of people use Gibraltar as a short cut instead of going all the way up to Sharpe's Corner.

There was a question about the bridge that is to be built at Meadow Creek. Mike Goodman is on the advisory committee for the Lake and believes this bridge will have big impacts on the water quality of Lake Campbell. Their committee received a letter from Kate Nichols of WSDOT about the bridge and how it is being financed by the BIA. This bridge is not going to be restricting the lake or the fish.

Bob asked about a bridge to Fir and Camano Islands since this is where most of the traffic on 20 is going. A feasibility study was done about 5 years ago looking at possibly putting in a toll bridge or adding additional ferry service. It was concluded that the market would not support a toll bridge based on land use, the cost of the additional ferry service was too much, and there would be too many environmental impacts from a bridge. It was recommended that this be looked at again in 5 years or so. There is a law to protect park lands, and to not increase traffic through Deception Pass. There is a question of how long this bridge can be maintained and how long two lanes will be adequate.

There was a question for Forest about the level of service (LOS) for Deception Road. It gets about 700 cars per day, and about 70 cars during peak hours. It is probably about a level A or B. This will probably need to be looked at in our plan, as well as Lunz Road and the other end of Deception Road at the top of the hill farther south.

For the timing of the project – Right-of-Way acquisition will begin soon and will probably not take as long as though depending on cooperation. They will start taking bids for construction in 2006, and will begin construction in 2007; the project should be open by 2009.

There are conflicting reports from the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife and DNR about the bridge that is to be built over Meadow Creek. Fish and Wildlife says the fish are downstream and are being blocked from the lake, and DNR says this is a class 4 stream – non fish bearing. The bridge is not about the fish, it is about widening the road. There is a dip in the road and in order to raise the elevation they will have to build a bridge. This is much less expensive than going into the culvert, and it just happens to take care of the fish too. The Samish have access to BIA bridge funds to reduce the funding gap. It would be good if WSDOT could attend a Lake Management District meeting to explain this and that property is not going to be taken away.

Jeroldine pointed out that the committee will be helping to develop long range policy for the Fidalgo Island Subarea Plan, so maybe the committee can think about some things they would like to add in. Roger suggested that the committee make a list of improvements they would like to county to look at that are not being addressed right now, they could take a look at the regional transportation improvement plan (TIP) for the current list. Todd said that maybe he could come back later in a few months to give an update on their progress, and discuss Sharpe's Corner. Carol suggested to Todd that he make sure that the bicycle maps be updated to reflect road conditions and problem areas.

Survey Results

Everyone received a packet of survey results. The big packet is the raw results. There are columns for each answer to each question with the number of people that responded, then a column for the percent of total people that responded, and then a column for the percent based on only the people that responded to that question. We also have 190 pages of statistically significant cross tabs that show how people answered questions based on how they answered other questions. For example, if the longer people have lived on Fidalgo Island, the more strongly opposed they are to a gas station on the Island. The other piece of paper is a list of what the majority of the respondents said for every question, which ever question had the highest percentage, then there are also notes for significant cross tabs. Please read over these results so we can discuss them next time.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on April 14, we will discuss survey results, work on mapping problem areas, and talk about the next open house.