



**WisDOT ID 5845-06-03**  
**US 51 Environmental Assessment**  
**Stoughton-McFarland**  
**I-39/90 to US 12/18**  
**Dane County**

**VILLAGE OF MCFARLAND MINUTES**

December 12, 2019  
9 to 10:30 A.M.  
McFarland Municipal Center

Attendees:

Jeff Berens, Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)–Southwest (SW) Region  
Brandon Lamers, WisDOT–SW Region  
Michael Hoelker, WisDOT–SW Region  
Brian Berquist, Town and Country Engineering  
Matt Schuenke, Village of McFarland (Village)  
Brad Czebotar, Village of McFarland  
Andrew Bremer, Village of McFarland  
William Schaefer, Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (MPO)  
Jenny Kobryn, Strand Associates, Inc.® (Strand)

Action items: **Bulleted and bold.**

Exhibits: Village of McFarland roll plots.

**1. Introduction**

Jeff Berens provided a project overview. He explained that the project will identify a preferred alternative and impacts. The project is anticipated to go to the Transportation Projects Commission (TPC) for funding in fall 2020. If approved for funding at that time, the earliest construction is anticipated to begin on the corridor in 2025. The corridor will likely be split into numerous sections for construction, but when US 51 through the Village is constructed, it is anticipated to occur at one time.

William Schaefer asked if the project would be in the Majors program and what would happen if it did not receive funding. Michael Hoelker stated that if the project was not approved then it would not occur. The SW Region would continue with maintenance projects and monitor safety issues until the project was approved for funding.

**2. Exchange Street and Siggelkow Road Roundabout**

Matt Schuenke asked for an overview of the Exchange Street Roundabout. Jeff explained that a roundabout was chosen for safety reasons and access for Babcock Park. Matt asked what the speeds at the roundabout would be. Jeff explained that south of the roundabout the speed limit is 55 miles per hour (mph) and north of the roundabout the speed limit is 40 mph. Roundabouts are typically designed for 15 mph. Matt asked if right of way would be required. Jeff stated that right of way would be required here and throughout the Village. Matt asked if there were any examples that could be referenced for the size of the roundabout. Michael mentioned the County MM and County M roundabouts are similar.

- **WisDOT will look into other roundabouts that would be a similar size to the proposed roundabout at Exchange Street.**

Jeff then gave an overview of the potential roundabouts at the Siggelkow Road ramp terminals. He mentioned that there was no preferred alternative at this location. Roundabouts are shown on project maps because they have the most impact in the area compared with stop control or signals. Jeff also mentioned that the intersection control could be different at each terminal. Matt mentioned that there is a lot of truck traffic and asked if the roundabouts were drawn to accommodate these movements. Michael noted that the roundabouts would accommodate the design vehicle (truck). Roundabouts also have additional accommodations for trucks like mountable curbs that would be used. Matt asked if the roundabouts would physically fit in this area. Jeff stated that WisDOT believes through preliminary design that roundabouts would fit through this area. Matt asked if drainage was considered. Brian Berquist stated that there are storm sewer facilities in this area that would need to be relocated or adjusted, and there are also bike lanes



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along Siggelkow Road. Matt mentioned a large number of pedestrians travel through this interchange. The Village expanded some parking lots for the additional commuters. Andrew Bremer mentioned that there is a hill to the east on Siggelkow Road. He was wondering if there would be backups on the hill because the roadway would go from four to two lanes at the ramp terminal. Michael stated that the proposed improvement would be designed to accommodate the traffic. Matt asked what the cost differences are for the options. Jeff stated that the cost of a single lane roundabout and signal would be very similar.

- **WisDOT will send background information about the Siggelkow Road roundabout alternatives to the Village.**
- **The Village will discuss the options and provide recommendations to WisDOT.**

**3. Stoughton Road Study**

Matt asked how the Stoughton Road study was going. Jeff stated that there was no official word yet and Michael said that they anticipate it will move forward.

**4. Taylor Road and Railroad**

Jeff discussed the bridge replacement over Taylor Road and the railroad. He asked the Village if it would assist with pedestrian detour routes during final design. Matt mentioned that a possible route would be down Terminal Drive to the path that connects to Larson Beach Road or through Siggelkow Road.

**5. Pedestrian Access**

Matt mentioned the pedestrian issues along the corridor. They have a form that residents can fill out to point out specific issues on the corridor. Forms come in numerous times a year with issues about US 51. Residents generally have issues getting from the west side to the east side of US 51. Jeff asked if there were specific locations mentioned. Matt stated that Bremer Road/Burma Road is often mentioned as well as Larson Beach Road. Brad Czebotar mentioned that it is very difficult and hazardous for vehicles leaving the restaurant at Bremer Road/Burma Road to make a left turn onto US 51. Jeff mentioned that the intersection does not qualify for intersection improvements (signal or roundabout). It is possible to install a rapid rectangular flashing beacon (RRFB) that would be paid for by the Village. The Village could try to obtain funding through Safe Routes to School.

**6. Yahara River Bridge**

Jeff discussed the Yahara River bridge crossing and noted that the bridge is currently 63 feet long. The project will extend the bridge to 80 feet long to match the existing dam structure width as requested by Dane County. The bridge could be lengthened to 95 feet to also provide for a pedestrian underpass. The current profile would not accommodate a pedestrian underpass. The bridge would need to be raised approximately 1.5 to 2 feet. This would result in larger retaining walls, an additional retaining wall, and more fill material. The preliminary opinion of construction costs for the pedestrian underpass is between \$400,000 and \$500,000. Matt mentioned how the land in the northeast quadrant will probably be donated to the Village. Matt believes that this would create a good connection to the park and would like to leave it as an option.



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Matt asked if the bridge would accommodate any future bridge widening. There are water flow issues in the area and a longer dam could be needed. Jeff stated that there has been communication with Dane County and WisDOT can check back on any possible changes to the dam opening. Brandon stated that no plans to change the dam have been mentioned.

- **WisDOT will communicate with Dane County to see if there is the potential that dam would be widened in the future.**

**7. Sidewalk and Bicycle Accommodations**

Jeff explained the policy change for sidewalk. Because this project is a reconstruction all sidewalk costs would be shared with the Village at 80 percent state/federal and 20 percent local match. Matt said that was acceptable. Matt also asked if a State Municipal Agreement (SMA) would be needed. Jeff responded that it would be needed during final design.

Jeff gave an Act 59 overview. Act 59 does not allow WisDOT to put in bicycle lanes if right of way would be needed through condemnation. WisDOT is also not allowed to look into the purchase of right of way until after the environmental document to see if the right of way could be purchased without condemnation; therefore, the preliminary design and environmental document cannot include bicycle lanes through the Village as part of the proposed project. Matt is not against the removal of bike lanes on US 51, but did not understand why they could not be included because land is already being taken for the roadway lanes. Jeff stated that more land would be needed for the accommodations. William asked if there was a bill in the legislature to remove Act 59. Brandon stated that there was a bill in the house, but it did not pass the senate. Michael stated that it could possibly be appealed at some point. Matt asked if a path could go on one side of the roadway and Jenny stated that right of way would be needed for any new bicycle improvement. Jeff mentioned that the Village could potentially allow bicycles on sidewalks to provide an opportunity for bike accommodations.

**8. Stormwater**

Matt mentioned that there is a large 5- by 7-foot pipe outlet at the Farwell Street intersection that backs up the channel. Jeff stated that during final design all stormwater improvements will meet state requirements. Matt stated that conveyance and treatment is important to the Village and it would like to continue to stay involved during final design.

**9. US 51 Speed Limit**

Jeff explained that speed limits would not change as part of the project. A speed study could occur after the project to see if the speed limit could be lowered. Matt expressed his disappointment that the traffic would be allowed to decide how fast they would travel through the area. Jeff stated that it is important to review the vehicle speeds through the area because if the speed is lowered then high speed differentials can cause more safety issues. Michael talked about how the urban cross section could slow down traffic. Brian asked if we could reduce the lanes to 11 feet wide. Jenny stated that one 12-foot lane would be needed since US 51 is a truck route. William asked if the signal timings could be changed to regulate the speeds. Michael stated that changing the signal timings would cause more traffic issues and backups. William mentioned how the city of Madison is looking at changing the speeds through the city for safety. He agrees that 40 mph seems high. Brad mentioned that this is a high density business area. Matt asked if WisDOT would ever raise the roadway speed to more than 40 mph. Jeff stated that the project would not change the speed limits on the roadway so the speed limit would not be raised.



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**10. Access**

Jeff explained the reasons that Yahara Drive was originally closed to left turning vehicles. He then stated that because the Village requested full access at this intersection in previous correspondence, the preliminary design was changed to allow full access.

Matt is against the Farwell Street access changes. Jeff explained the need for the second left-turn lane at Farwell Street and the unsafe condition it causes with the median opening. Matt explained that all access will occur at Farwell Street now and cause added stress on the local roadway. Matt was also unsure if the improvements would fit in this area. Matt would like data on the need for the additional turn lane.

- **WisDOT will send the Village information on the US 51 southbound left-turning traffic onto Farwell Street.**

**11. Retaining Wall and Babcock Park**

Matt asked who owned the existing retaining wall on the east side of US 51 north of the Yahara River. Andrew also asked what the impacts to Babcock Park would be.

- **WisDOT will look into the owner and maintainer of the retaining wall on the east side of US 51.**
- **WisDOT will provide the Village with the impacts to Babcock Park.**

Prepared by the Strand team and respectfully submitted.