

## **Summary of Comments from Open House Session**

### **Rt. 9W Study Open House: March 11, 2008**

#### **Route 9W Corridor Linkage Study**

5/08

On March 11, 2008 the Town of Bethlehem and the Route 9W Study Advisory Committee held an Open House to present and discuss Study proposals for improvements to the Route 9W corridor and for alignment of the proposed Selkirk Bypass. The open house consisted of three sessions: an open house, a public presentation and a public comment period following the presentation. As part of the open house session, four stations were set up – each devoted to a different section of the 9W corridor (or Bypass alignment) and manned by a facilitator. Residents were invited to ask questions about the corridor section and discuss the proposal with the facilitator.

Summarized below are the public comments and questions that were received at the open house session. The comments were compiled from memory of the facilitators at each of the four breakout groups. Since, notes were not taken during the open house session, it is likely that there were comments made during the session that are not reflected in the summary below.

#### **A) Route 32 to Feura Bush Road**

#### **B) Feura Bush Road to Wemple Road**

1. There were a number of complaints concerning people not knowing about the meeting
2. Several persons expressed displeasure for a Selkirk Bypass central alignment and said they want the Town to leave them and their neighborhood alone.
3. One person asked why the study is proposing boulevards that will take people's front yards and move the road closer to people's houses?
4. One person commented that on the east side of 9W between Beacon Rd and Wemple Rd there are wetlands and no sewers. They asked whether water and sewer and other utilities/infrastructure were considered as part of this study?
5. Some said they liked the sidewalks in this section and they should be on the east side of the road.
6. In relation to that, one resident was concerned that by putting the sidewalks in, along with the shoulder widening, that would move the road closer to his house which is on the east side of 9W. He was concerned about the curve in the road as well and asked if we would consider flattening the curve/moving the road westward there and then adding the sidewalks/shoulders for biking/planting strip. He said people on the west side of the road have more frontage and could absorb those things better than his property could. However, he said he likes the sidewalks, etc. and they should be done.
7. Many asked when improvements would be done.

8. Several persons expressed that they don't like roundabouts and that they think roundabouts are unsafe; they said they avoid Slingerlands now.

### **C) Wemple Road to Maple Avenue**

1. The question was asked whether there has been any consideration of sewer line extensions in this area along Rt. 9W? Related to this, the comment was made that if sewers are going to be extended, make sure not to construct the sidewalks then rip them up for sewers a few years later and pay to put in sidewalks a second time.
2. Relating to sidewalks, the question was asked whether there is enough room to put in the sidewalks on the west side of Rt. 9W just north of Maple Ave? There was concern that some of the homes and structures are very close to 9W just north of Maple.
3. One person commented that street trees are desperately needed along Rt. 9W from Maple Ave. north. With all the truck traffic and high speeds, it is noisy and dirty (implication was that traffic kicks up dirt/dust constantly) – the proposed trees would be a very nice/needed addition to mitigate some of the negative traffic aspects.
4. The plans show a road parallel to Rt. 9W being built between Wemple and Clapper with future development, but it doesn't extend all the way to the bypass on the maps. Shouldn't it connect, especially if economic development is going to be tied to the bypass. Attendees seemed to generally understand that access should be minimized to retain bypass functionality, but if a parallel road is built, it was felt that this connection should be one of few that connects to the bypass to get into the new areas. Related to this, the bypass plan map should somehow show that a road connection will be provided to access the land proposed for economic development west of the NYS Thruway.
5. There was one comment regarding concern for promoting the use of bicycles along Rt. 9W by widening the shoulder in this section and providing a dedicated bike lane along 9W to the north.

### **D) Selkirk Bypass**

1. There were a number of comments indicating that environmental impacts of the so-called preferred alignment for the Selkirk Bypass would be significant and that an open space plan is needed first.
2. There were a number of questions on what the line on the map meant and why it was changed from the last map. The reference was to the line showing the alignment of the Selkirk Bypass.
3. A number of comments were made that the Thruway would never approve the interchange so close to the Selkirk interchange.
4. One person commented that an Easy Pass only interchange would not work because truckers (particularly independent truckers) don't have Easy Pass.

5. Questions on what did the Thruway Authority think of the proposal?
6. A number of questions were asked on what would happen to the Selkirk interchange. Would it remain or be eliminated?
7. Questions/comments were received on how the interchange was going to fit in the area given the water plant/existing Weisheit Road and the Clapper Road bridge over the Thruway.
8. With the interchange, one person wanted to know what would happen to Weisheit Road? Would it be eliminated? Realigned?
9. A number of persons asked about the cost of the road and how much funding was currently available.
10. A question was received on whether the Town could ban trucks from Maple Avenue.
11. There was a question or two on how much the Bypass was going to increase taxes? A number of people wanted to know if the Town was going to force a transportation improvement district on them? They indicated that they don't want the road so why should they pay for it?
12. Questions were asked about process and what happens next. If the Committee approves the alignment is it a done deal? When would it be built?
13. A number of persons indicated they do not want the truck traffic or road. One person indicated she just bought her house. A number indicated they don't want the rural/historic setting destroyed.
14. One person indicated that the recommendations were preventing him from selling his land. The study caused his family to lose a lot of money when a developer pulled out because of the bypass proposal.
15. There were a few comments indicating the bypass would go right by the persons house and "how would you like to live next to it"?
16. A few people suggested the Town was just moving the truck problem from one area of Town to another.
17. Another person asked how the Planning Board could be reviewing the current proposal for single-family housing (Brookside Meadows) adjacent to the preferred bypass alignment. How could the Town pursue both?
18. A question was asked on where the north-south road connecting Wemple and Clapper would be located. Questions were asked why this is not shown on the map and who was going to pay for it.
19. One person asked whether the house at the southwest corner of 9W and Creble would have to be taken as a result of bypass construction.

20. One person from Selkirk indicated she was in favor of the bypass proposal.