

Truck Route Plan Public Meeting
October 20, 2004, 6:30 PM
Westchase Elementary School

Staff introductions were made. (Bob Campbell, Bill McCall, and Rich Reidy - Commissioner Hagan's aide)

Opening remarks were made by Ned Baier. Rich Reidy with Commissioner Hagan's office spoke briefly. He stated that Commissioner Hagan does not support the current staff recommendation creating a loop truck route in Westchase. The presentation was made by Bill McCall.

Public Comments:

- A question was asked of Rich Reidy how Commissioner Hagan felt about Race Track Road being added to the Truck Route Plan update?

Mr. Reidy responded that the Commissioner's office had not had time to review the material associated with this but that they would do so shortly.

- Concerns about safety issues and the fact that five schools send school buses down Linebaugh and Countryway. There is also a preschool that sends buses out to pick up and drop off children. Sidewalks are approximately three feet from where the truck route would be. There are fifty-eight potholes along Linebaugh – this needs to be addressed. Curb cuts have been authorized along Countryway. Also the new library will be opening – need to be concerned about the safety issue involved. Consider the safety of this community.

No staff comment was made.

- Countryway is a residential area – lots of small children and school buses in the area. Problem with getting out of residential areas. Cars have problem handling S curves, how can trucks handle it. Also, the speed limit is not followed in this area. Truck traffic noise was also mentioned.

No staff comment was made.

- There is a ½ mile line to get through intersections at traffic lights now. Put the Race Track issue off for three years until it is widened and see what happens.

No staff comment was made.

- A request was made that the Committee retract current recommendation of adding Linebaugh and Countryway to the County's Truck Route Plan. The Westchase community opposes any changes to the current Truck Route Plan. As posted on the County's website under citizen comments – the community opposes changes to the truck route and requests that the Committee officially withdraws the loop recommendation and leaves the current truck route as is. Trucking companies are bringing pressure to bear for routes to be changed. Neighboring communities have kept trucks out of residential areas. Understand that staff is struggling with these decisions to balance growth and development and asks that staff find alternative methods to resolve these issues.

Staff emphasized that the November 10 workshop has been rescheduled to December/January. Staff also indicated that there will be another technical Committee meeting and the current proposed recommendations can change before the BOCC workshop.

- There was a brief presentation by Pinellas County staff on their truck route update process.

No staff comment was made.

- Through trucks and delivery trucks can go wherever they want to make deliveries – the northwest area is dealing with through trucks. If you get rid of the loop to make Linebaugh to Hillsborough a truck route then trucks have to go south on Race Track that would keep trucks out of your area. No sidewalks around library just a bike lane, you do not want trucks to loop back that is dangerous.

No staff comment was made.

- Hope Committee reconsiders recommendation. Linebaugh and Countryway is the hub for our area. Asking us to fight and navigate with 18 wheelers is putting our residents in harms way. Common sense would say trucks and residential areas do not go together. If you make routes shorter, trucks would use them more.

No staff comment was made.

- Astor Gardens is a new retirement center. Population, land use and traffic has changed since Linebaugh was scored. The Committee would get a different result if they rescored Linebaugh today. We are concerned about safety, noise, traffic issues along Linebaugh. This recommendation would force every truck to go in front of Astor Gardens to make a delivery in this area.

No staff comment was made.

- Dissimilar traffic patterns are an issue. If you make any part of Countryway a truck route they will stay on it. Growth patterns are changing and it is a residential area. This plan is not going to work. Cars have a hard time getting out, imagine big trucks.

No staff comment was made.

- The commercial area is in the middle of a residential area. Only four ways to get into this area. It would be better to direct truck traffic the best route to get there. Right now they are coming all four ways. Countryway is a two lane parkway road with a playground. If you create the plan the way it stands they cannot go Countryway by the playground. The plan proposes a safer route – it keeps them on four lane roads. It will keep them from going past the school.

No staff comment was made.

- Concerned about children and pedestrians that use Linebaugh – making Linebaugh and truck route. There is no good truck route except Race Track Road to Hillsborough Avenue. There are no pedestrians, horseback riders, and children along this road. Trucks come into the county on Linebaugh from Pinellas County. Need to get rid of the loop. Need to bring this issue up after Race Track is widened. Is the county trying to find an inroad to widen Linebaugh to six lanes?

No staff comment was made.

- We do not need truck routes – need an ordinance that can be enforced. Do not need a loop – trucks can turn around and go back the way they came. There are other dead end truck routes on the plan in Plant City.

No staff comment was made.

- Noise issue from trucks as well as a safety issue. I have a Petition of two hundred residents against the proposed plan. No turn lanes for residents getting in and out of Astor Gardens. Would like to see the truck route go another way.

Ned Baier responded that this is a good idea and there is the need for a turn lane and he talked to Public Works Department. Although there is currently a long list of unfunded projects, Public Works will add this project to the list and prioritize it with others to see where it falls. One advantage is that right of way already exists in this area.

- Intersection of Waters and Sheldon – no through truck signs along route. The signs are unenforceable the way it is written. Trucks can come in any way as long as they do not cross another truck route. Need to focus on the wording of the way the ordinance is written. Trucks will not go the same route after they leave a particular destination.

No staff comment was made.

- Concern about the loop. I understand about the dead end issues but there are other dead ends in the plan. The continuation of Linebaugh in the future to become a truck route – it is logical for this to happen. We need to stop this from happening now. Had you gone with roundabouts this would not be an issue now. Truck crashes – volume should not be on Linebaugh now so there is not a history of crashes. Deterioration of road surface on Linebaugh. On the issue of trucks entering and leaving the county on a truck route – if the development is right over the county line but not on a truck route the cops should be able to use good judgment to let them cross if the development is that close to the county line. No through truck route sign is down on Sheldon – needs to be put back. Cannot support making Linebaugh a truck route.

Ned Baier asked the public if they would support Race Track Road from Hillsborough to Linebaugh as a truck route. A majority of citizens supported it. He then asked if it should happen now or after widening – most citizens responded after Race Track Road is widened.

- Picked up regulations off the internet. Seems to be a solution without a problem. Problem was the police not being able to enforce the no through truck routes. The way I read it is that once a truck makes a delivery they have to take the shortest route out. We do not want trucks through our residential area but they are proposing putting through trucks in the area. No presentation that there is a problem today. Unusual that Pinellas would come make a presentation about Hillsborough truck routes. Totally against this plan. Do not open up the gates to through trucks from Pinellas. Race Track Road will not work – senior citizens trying to cross this road. Race Track Road was never developed to be a truck route. Need explanation of why we need a through truck route plan – if it is an enforcement issue let the police read the law. These roads were not designed for trucks.

No staff comment was made.

- All trucks in the area would now be forced into one area that would divide several communities. They can go back the same way they come in – there is something driving this loop idea. Getting out of shopping areas is hard enough already without adding in truck traffic. The loop does not make sense.

No staff comment was made.

- Is the resolution proposed? With the new language it would force trucks onto Linebaugh. One of the recommendations it would make trucks use the shortest truck route to get to their destination. They would have to use Sheldon/Linebaugh instead of Hillsborough.

Bill McCall answered that the resolution is already on the books. Ned Baier also responded that it needs to be enforced better.

- We are disabled citizens crossing Linebaugh and it is already a disaster – there are no turn lanes in this area. This is already a bad situation, we do not need to add trucks to this area. Since I am warning you about this I am sure someone is going to be seriously liable if someone gets hurt. There is an enforcement issue with the current ordinance and no through truck routes. We do not need the turn around. Consider pedestrian traffic in this area.

No staff comment was made.

- I looked at your matrix, two columns are missing. School buses that use Countryway and also a count of dirt haulers that would use Countryway to get to development. School buses and dirt haulers should not be using the same road.

No staff comment was made.

- I am waiting for a disaster to happen if no turn lanes or traffic light is installed at Aston Gardens. As far as trucks are concerned, I am in favor of trucks using roads as long as they have a real destination to deliver to – not just using our roads for their own purposes. Trucks are speeding in this area. We need no passing zones on Linebaugh and no passing signs put up. I agree with no trucks on Race Track Road.

Staff responded that it has received two petition drives about the loop and one about no passing zones. The no passing zones petition will be given to public works to look into.

- This plan is a backdoor attempt to make Linebaugh a six lane truck route. The county wants to foster growth and commercial development and make things easier for the trucks hauling to these area. Spend time and money looking into light cycles – use existing phone/electric lines to make light cycles more efficient.

No staff comment was made.

- We need to invite the sheriff to come to one of our meetings – would like to stress to the Sheriff's Department about enforcement of this truck route.

Ned Baier said that Captain John Marsicano is the Chairman of the Truck Route Technical Committee. Mr. Baier stressed that the public is welcome to speak at these meetings.

- Explain how the new language will affect us. Could this come to a referendum. Will this force trucks to use Linebaugh to Sheldon, if we wait three years for Race Track to be widened. Is this a possibility? Diverting us with a loop when the language will make Linebaugh a truck route.

Staff responded that the Committee recommend to the BOCC to take the language out. This will be brought to the attention of the Committee. We will ask the County Attorney to review and respond. We will report back that there is public concern about the language and we need to keep impact off Linebaugh. We will report back to the Committee and this will be revisited. I cannot say if the Committee will stick with this recommendation. The reason that is in there is that this language will solve another problem in another area. The nature of the truck route plan is if you solve a problem in one area it creates a problem in another.

- Election is coming up in a couple weeks. Call your local candidates and see where they stand on this issue and the issue of the language.

No staff comment was made.

- Not sure what the shortest route is in this area. All trucks will be required to use the shortest route – not sure which road that will affect.

No staff comment was made.

- Students will be using sidewalks and crossing streets – if this becomes a truck route children will be put at risk. Race Track is a safer route.

The language change assumed the loop would go forward, if the loop does not go forward the language will need to be reviewed. This needs to be reviewed and applied to the entire truck route. We will look at making the language specific to the problem areas. We are working to keep through trucks off Linebaugh.

- If you redirect truck traffic, how would this affect different communities? Has there been a study done on how many trucks will go past the subdivision with the new route.

Staff offered to speak with her off to the side so the meeting could wrap up.

Summary:

<u>142</u>	Attending/signed in
<u>29</u>	Spoken comments
<u>51</u>	Turned in comments
<u>2 hours, 10 minutes</u>	Length of Meeting