

MEMORANDUM

TO: SCOTT SMITH

FROM: DREW DRAPER, PTP
 BILL WUENSCH, P.E., PTOE

ORGANIZATION: VIRGINIA'S REGION 2000 LOCAL
 GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

DATE: JANUARY 4, 2018

PHONE NUMBER: 434-845-3491

SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:

Re: MEETING SUMMARY – GRAVES MILL ROAD
 COMMUNITY MEETING #1

YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER:

URGENT FOR YOUR USE PLEASE COMMENT PLEASE REPLY PLEASE RECYCLE

A public meeting for the Graves Mill Road Corridor Study was held on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at the Lynchburg Humane Society in Lynchburg, Virginia. The meeting was organized as an open-house format and was open to the general public from 4:00 – 6:30 pm. Advertisement for the meeting included:

- Mail-outs to residents and businesses near the study area approximately two weeks in advance of the meeting
- Deployment of variable message signs on Graves Mill Road approximately one week in advance of the meeting
- Press release
- Advertisement via social media
- Advertisement via local news agencies
- Notice included on the project website (www.gravesmillplan.com)

The goal of this meeting was for the public to 1) learn about the study, 2) review information about the corridor, and 3) share comments regarding concerns, opportunities, and improvement ideas. Attendees were encouraged to provide feedback and offer suggestions that would help to inform the project development process. Representatives from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), City of Lynchburg, Virginia's Region 2000 Local Government Council, and project consultants were available to explain materials, answer questions, and record feedback. Information boards were set up in the meeting space that presented the following subjects:

- Welcome and purpose of the meeting
- Information about the study
- Summary of existing and future traffic conditions
- Crash data (six years)
- Summary of multimodal conditions (sidewalks, transit stops, etc.)



- General information on innovative intersection ideas applicable to the corridor

In addition to the information boards, large table-top maps of the corridor were available for attendees to gather around and mark-up. Comment sheets were also made available for participants. The meeting was attended by approximately 50 people (that signed in), including business owners/representatives along the corridor. There were also several local news organizations that covered the meeting (WDBJ7, NewsAdvance, WSLS, and WLNI).

A consistent flow of attendees began right at 4:00 PM and continued through approximately 6:00 PM. Representatives were provided sufficient time to walk attendees through the study and answer questions, as needed. Several news organization interviews were provided by the public and agency representatives. Overall, attendees were very pleased City officials were attempting to stay in front of potential growth that could exceed 50% over the next 20 years. In addition to managing traffic congestion, attendees were also pleased attention was being paid to transit, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along the corridor.



It was further suggested by multiple attendees the City (or other agencies) undergo a study along Old Graves Mill Road between Graves Mill Road and Timberlake Road.

Specific Public Comments

The following public comments were **written on comment sheets** that were provided at the meeting, or **emailed via the project website** (specific identifying information has been removed, and at times, comments are paraphrased):

I was not able to attend the meeting. One suggestion (and it might be a long shot) is to have Graves Mill Road 3 lanes each way. However, a more feasible suggestion would be signage. An issue with accidents in Lynchburg is the lack of signs. People from out of town that use Graves Mill to go to the expressway merge over at the very end and back end or swipe other cars. Every street that intersects with the expressway should have a sign like the one on Timberlake Rd. I have heard from transportation officials that "signs are expensive" but this is one of the key reasons for congestion from 3-6pm weekdays.

I have lived in this area since 1976. There used to be little traffic even though it was a cut thru. Now, I can hardly get out of my street. The traffic from Timberlake Road is awful. From McConville Rd to 221 there are too many lights & way too much traffic. Traffic isn't flowing, a light needs to be at Nationwide Dr., that "annex" is a nightmare, it's like crossing 3 lanes & you take your life in your hands using it. People block that light at Bella Rosa. Lots of times it

turns green but you can't go because of cars blocking it. People fly from 221 to just get to the exit for the expressway. There are lots of things that can be done to help traffic.

I was not able to attend the meeting, and I don't know if a stop light at Lillian Ln or Millside Center is part of the discussion, but there are currently a lot of senior citizens that are trying to access this area of Graves Mill with no safe and/or easy way to do it. I'm not sure if a turn lane in this stretch or a stop light is a good solution, but if there is a master plan being developed, I think something like this would be quite helpful.

Has any thought been given to a roundabout at the intersection of Graves Mill Rd. and McConville Rd.? With Lynchburg's consideration of roundabouts throughout the City, this seems to me to be one place that one would work well. The four-way stop is confusing at best and dangerous at worst, especially during times of heavy traffic.

Sync lights so the thru traffic doesn't have to stop at every light.

Plan a stop light for the Bella Rose community development.

Do not add sidewalks directly beside the road. Needs separation by 3' – 5' from road. The same goes for bike lanes.

Road milling contributes to uneven lanes and vehicles crashing.

Add lights so they are on both sides of the road.

Keep speed limit at 45 mph.

Access to highway is currently acceptable.

Roundabout absolutely needed at McConville Rd.

My concerns relate to Old Graves Mill Road. As the area has grown, there has been a tremendous increase in traffic on Old Graves Mill Road between Timberlake Road and Graves Mill Road. Old Graves Mill needs traffic control to better manage cars and commercial truck traffic. Sidewalks throughout the section should also be installed. Old Graves Mill Road is also too narrow and has not been updated since it was originally designed as a rural road.

I attended the recent public meeting at the Lynchburg Humane Society which presented the Graves Mill Road Plan. I was disappointed that the Plan did not include a study of Old Graves Mill Road between Timberlake Road and Graves Mill Road. As a homeowner off Old Graves Mill road, I have no choice but the travel this section of road daily and am increasingly concerned whether this section of road can safely handle traffic. Recent years have seen a marked increase in traffic along Old Graves Mill Road as more drivers use it as a short cut to and from the Graves Mill Road and Timberlake Road areas. Recent development of the Old Graves Mill Road and Graves Mill Road areas has also dramatically added to this traffic. The planned development of this corridor in the near future will surely further increase traffic on Old Graves Mill Road. As you know, the section of Old Graves Mill Road north of Timberlake Road still has a narrow section without shoulders or sidewalks that dates back to an earlier and rural age. In addition, there is considerable commercial truck traffic to and from the Tomahawk Industrial Park not to speak of the number of school buses that pick up children throughout this neighborhood. All this makes for periods of heavy, unregulated traffic that result in the neighbors having difficulty turning onto Old Graves Mill Road from side streets and driveways. Also, please note that the speed limit of 35 MPH is routinely and grossly exceeded. I personally have had cars pass me on Old Graves Mill Road while I am driving the speed limit! I hope that you, VDOT and Lynchburg engineers find my concern warrant further interest. Specifically, I hope that consideration will be given to regulating traffic flow with a

stoplight at the intersection of Tomahawk Industrial Park and Old Graves Mill Road. I believe that a traffic light at that intersection would greatly add to the safety along this stretch of road.

The following public comments were **written on table top maps** that were provided at the meeting, or **on blank note boards** located between the informational boards. The comments are typically more specific and relate to intersection level improvements.

The memorandum ENDS after these comments and a summary of the news coverage.