



MONMOUTH COUNTY
Local Preliminary Engineering Phase for
Monmouth County Route 537, West Main Street, Corridor
Roadway Improvements between Sentinel Road and U.S. Route 9 Interchange
Township of Freehold, NJ

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER
MEETING REPORT

DATE: Tuesday, September 19, 2017
TIME: 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. (Brief Presentation 5:30 p.m.)
LOCATION: Freehold Township Municipal Building
1 Municipal Plaza, Freehold, NJ
ATTENDEES: Sign-In Sheets (*available upon request*)

PURPOSE OF MEETING

The purpose of this meeting is to introduce the project team, present the project status of the Local Preliminary Engineering phase which covers the work performed since the completion of the Local Concept Development Study phase, provide an update of the proposed Route 537 corridor roadway improvements consisting of refinements to the proposed improvements shown in the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) selected at the end of the Local Concept Development Study phase, update of cultural resources studies, and to obtain local community input on the preliminary engineering design improvements refinements. (See attached Agenda).

MEETING SUMMARY

1. A total of 38 individuals attended the public meeting as indicated on Sign-In Sheets. A total of 16 project team members were in attendance to present project information and assist with soliciting questions from the general public and addressing raised concerns/inquires.
2. The meeting was designed as an open house format with display boards providing CR 537 corridor preliminary engineering plans for the proposed improvements along the corridor and approach roadways at the intersections. The County and project team members were available to answer questions at the display boards. A Project Information Handout and PIC Comment Form were distributed to the general public upon sign-in to the meeting. The PIC Comment Form could be completed and handed in at the meeting or could be faxed, emailed or mailed to Monmouth County (*Project Information Handout and blank PIC Comment Form attached*).

3. The brief presentation began with Martine Culbertson, Community Involvement Facilitator, welcoming the public on behalf of Monmouth County, and the cooperating agencies of North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). Project Team members then introduced themselves and the agency they represent.
4. Joe Ettore, Monmouth County Engineer, provided the project overview and update. He noted that the County had been working on roadway improvements to the Route 537 corridor including upgrades to five traffic signals in coordination with Freehold Township Local Officials. The County had also been working with the cooperating agencies to secure Federal funding necessary to assist in the extensive corridor improvements needed for this project. The project had been approved with funding to move forward with the Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) to the Local Preliminary Engineering (LPE) phase after the Local Concept Development (LCD) Study was completed. The Project Engineers from Hardesty & Hanover would follow up with the update on the preliminary engineering design plans developed to date.
5. Michael Swietanski, Hardesty & Hanover (H&H) Project Manager, discussed the project area corridor location, the goals and process using Power Point presentation slides. Mike provided information through design plan drawings that depicted the roadway corridor improvements beginning at Sentinel Road and ending at the Route 9 Interchange. He noted that the LPE design improvements were based upon updated traffic volumes and the Phase I development of the Belle Meade track. He also discussed the slight modifications or adjustments to the geometry of the corridor during the LPE phase from the concept developed in the LCD phase.
6. Paul McEachen, RGA, Inc. Senior Archeologist, Archeologist noted that documentation and cultural resources studies were an important part of this phase. There were several properties within the corridor that may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
 - (a) There are seven archeological sites, six of which are on the lots located on the north side of CR 537 and one site on the south side of CR 537. Ground survey and metal detectors were used to search for artifacts from revolutionary times but none were discovered. Found artifacts included primarily household artifacts of mid-19th century/20th century, including plates as well as some animal remains. Coordination with State and Federal regulatory agencies has been on-going during this phase and would continue through the future design and construction phases.
7. The presentation concluded with the project schedule, and where to obtain comment forms and submit written comments.
 - (a) The Local Preliminary Engineering Phase is to be completed by Spring 2018. Final Design Phase and Right-of-Way Acquisitions anticipated to begin Fall 2018 - Spring 2021 and Construction estimated from Fall 2021 - Spring 2023.

- (b) To access Monmouth County Website: use www.visitmonmouth.com., select the right margin box titled County Bridge & Road Projects, then select Freehold –West Main Street (CR537).
 - (c) Written comments would be received until Friday, October 20, 2017 as part of the public outreach documentation for the project. Comments could be submitted on the PIC Comment Form or in a letter or email to the attention of the County Project Manager, Daria Jakimowska, P.E. (daria.jakimowska@co.monmouth.nj.us).
8. At the close of the presentation, Joe Ettore, Monmouth County Engineer, thanked everyone for their attendance and encouraged the public to meet the Project Team members at the display boards placed around the room, ask questions and/or share their concerns.
9. Attendees were encouraged to take copies of the handouts to share information with others. The 30-day comment period for this public meeting ends on Friday, October 20, 2017. No PIC Comments Forms were received at the meeting. The PIC open house which began at 4:00 p.m. adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Additional Notes:

10. One individual during the public comment period inquired via email how to access the PIC meeting information posted online. The County responded with the web site address and directions to access and view the information presented at the PIC meeting.
11. During the 30-day public comment period through Friday, October 20, 2017, a total of 12 individuals submitted to the County via e-mail and postal service mail written comments utilizing PIC Comment Forms, emails and written letters. The PIC comments would be posted on the project web site in a separate file with personal contact information marked out (redacted), titled: RT537-LPE PIC Comments Received.pdf