

2006-R-29

**A RESOLUTION
OPPOSING THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF ROUTE IL 53 (FAP 342) &
AMENDING THE VILLAGE BUDGET FOR THE OPPOSITION THEREOF**

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Long Grove, Lake County, Illinois, as follows:

WHEREAS, The Village of Long Grove recognizes the compelling need for solutions that address traffic congestion throughout Lake County and strongly supports solving existing severe congestion problems on arterial roadways through repair, modernization, reconstruction, and widening which would offer effective congestion relief at a much lower cost than constructing the extension,

WHEREAS, The Village of Long Grove recognizes the compelling need for solutions that address traffic congestion throughout Lake County and strongly supports solving existing severe congestion problems through public transportation such as: expanding the E, J & E rail line to establish a Metra commuter service; eliminating at-grade crossings for the North Central commuter line to maximize the efficiency of existing roadways; promoting and implementing park-and-ride bus connections to local commercial and office park centers; Intermodal infrastructure improvements, such as bicycle and walking paths; and,

WHEREAS, There are limited funds available for road construction, maintenance, and repair. The funds that are available should be used to upgrade and maintain existing roadways, such as Route 22 and Route 45, instead of constructing a new road which would be tremendously more expensive since much more right-of-way would be required for a new road than the expansion of the existing right-of-way; and,

WHEREAS, Extending FAP 342 (Illinois Route 53 Extension) will increase traffic on the existing arterial roads and intersections throughout Lake County that have been identified as being greatly congested and in need of expansion/improvements without the additional traffic generated by Illinois Route 53; and,

WHEREAS, The construction of Illinois Route 53 Extension, as designated, would focus economic pressure on development rural areas where development is not desired and divert economic pressure for development in existing cities within Lake County which desire such growth, such as the Cities of Waukegan, North Chicago, and Zion; and,

WHEREAS, The Illinois Route 53 Extension would attract unwanted and unnecessary suburban sprawl, remove jobs from central urban areas, add to an already accelerating rate of development throughout Lake County promoting new suburban type development along this new corridor and self-defeating the avowed purpose for the extension in the first place, traffic control and amelioration of the existing heavy traffic problems in Lake County; and,

WHEREAS, The proposed Illinois Route 53 Extension would traverse and irretrievably damage a number of environmentally sensitive areas including: the flood plain and marsh wetlands off of Indian Creek in Hawthorn Woods; wetlands and flood plain between Diamond Lake and Sylvan Lake, which is a main drainage pattern; wetlands and flood plain east of Countryside Lake; major wetland area at or near the intersection of Midlothian and Route 83, west of Mundelein; major wetland areas immediately south of Grayslake; major marsh area in the southern portion of Long Grove northerly of Lake Cook Road; the large marsh complex immediately north of the property commonly known as the Brickman Farm in Long Grove, which is used by wild fowl and other wild game; A portion of the natural area in Deerwood Estates Subdivision within Long Grove. It would cutoff a substantial portion of the lots from the balance of the development. It would disrupt and destroy the wetland and sensitive upland conservancy soils; the Long Grove/Kildeer marsh (#72) in Long Grove; and,

WHEREAS, the construction of the northern extension of Illinois Route 53 through Lake County would have numerous negative environmental consequences such as irreparable damage to wetlands, wildlife and native species, increased risk of flooding; increased noise pollution, ground water contamination, lower air quality within Long Grove and Lake County; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Long Grove opposes the northern extension of Illinois Route 53 through Lake County due to its limited access, negative environmental consequences, damage to the rural character of communities within its path, and the acceleration of improper development and suburban sprawl that the proposed alternative would bring to Lake County; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Long Grove challenges the State of Illinois and the County of Lake to put forth new alternatives reflecting immediately attainable and viable solutions to the traffic congestion adversely impacting the quality of life of Lake County residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Long Grove, Lake County, Illinois as follows:

SECTION 1. For all of the foregoing reasons, the Village of Long Grove hereby strenuously objects to the currently designated extension of Illinois Route 53 north of Lake Cook Road. The Village of Long Grove will take all lawful steps available to prevent the construction of this improvement. Long Grove submits that the Illinois Department of Transportation should give great consideration to this resolution since Long Grove would be one of the communities most directly and adversely affected by this extension.

SECTION 2. The Village Clerk is authorized and directed to forward a certified copy of this Resolution to the Governor, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the County of Lake, and all other interested persons who request a copy thereof.

SECTION 3. The Village Manager is authorized and directed to prepare an ordinance amending the Village Budget FY 06-07 increasing the "Route 53" line item to \$50,000 in opposition of the proposed Illinois Route 53 Extension.

SECTION 4. This Resolution shall be in effect from and after its passage and approval in the manner provided by law.

PASSED THIS 26th DAY OF September, 2006.

AYES: (6) Barry, Borawski, Hannon, Klein, Lazakis, and Schmitt

NAYS: (0)

ABSENT: (0)

APPROVED THIS 26th DAY OF September, 2006.

Village President, Maria Rodriguez

ATTEST:

Village Clerk, Karen Schultheis

TRIB local

JULY 19-25, 2012 | NORTH



INSIDE

Stacey Wescott/Tribune photo

Road projects reshape suburbs

Highway 53 plan is one of three big proposals under heated debate **PAGES 8-9**

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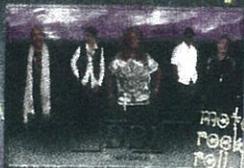
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sounds of summer 2012
BBI • Thursday
July 26 • 7:00-8:30pm

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COVER STORY THREE BIG ROAD PROPOSALS

Testy Highway 53 extension advance

Proposal that has split Lake Co. for 5 decades goes to Tollway board

By Richard Wronski
TRIBUNE REPORTER



Buffalo Grove Village President Jeffrey Braiman admitted recently that his town once considered Long Grove the "evil empire" for its staunch opposition to extending Illinois Highway 53 north into Lake County.

If so, "then I'm the evil empress," joked Long Grove Village President Maria Rodriguez.

Braiman and Rodriguez were making light of a bitter dispute over Highway 53 that has divided Lake County since the 1960s. But now the two sides — pro-extension as well as environmentalists and "quality of life" stalwarts — have reached an accord on the future of the project.

Rodriguez told the Illinois Tollway board last month that she "wholeheartedly" endorses the extension.

The project's fate now rests with members of the Illinois Tollway board, which named the special advisory council that worked nine months to reach a consensus.

The recommendations call for a 12.5-mile extension of Highway 53 running north from Lake-Cook Road and forming a "T" with a 14-mile corridor along east-west Highway 120 (Belvidere Road) near Grayslake.

While tollway officials said they will study the council's proposal, they have not indicated they will endorse it or whether the tollway will agree to fund the potentially multibillion-dollar project.

According to the leaders of the advisory council, the breakthrough came after intense negotiations among dozens of representatives from local governments, civic groups, environmentalists and others.

The meetings, guided by independent outside consultants on land use, the environment and transportation, brought together "all the disparate groups who had pushed one way or another and opposed progress in the past," said council co-chairman George Ranney.



An early morning driver exits northbound Illinois Highway 53 at Lake Cook Road on Monday.

Stacey Wescott/Tribune photo

Added co-chairman David Stollman, the Lake County board chairman: "This shows the collaborative process can work and should be the basis of any highway planning."

Twenty-three of the 25 participating organizations have signed off on an in-depth report recommending the project. The report is available at tinyurl.com/cswzcg4.

The key to the breakthrough, the co-chairmen said, was agreement on some non-negotiable design standards. The plans call for a "parkway" four lanes wide to minimize its footprint, with a top speed of 45 mph. Much of it would be built below grade level, with landscaped earthen berms 5 to 7 feet high on either side.

The next big question is how the project would be paid for. Estimates range from \$1.9 billion to \$2.5 billion.

The advisory council's report recommends that the extension

be part of the tollway system, because little or no state and federal funding would be available. And tolls might be significantly higher, 20 cents per mile, than are charged on other parts of the system.

The parkway would not pay for itself, the report concluded. Charging tolls for cars and trucks at current rates over the next 15 years would produce only \$40 million to \$105 million, depending on which alignment through environmentally sensitive areas along the Highway 120 portion is chosen.

That results in a significant shortfall — as much as \$2 billion.

One strategy that would help is "congestion pricing." That is, tolls would vary depending on the level of traffic — the more traffic, the higher the toll. Tolls also would be indexed to rise with inflation.

Another option calls for levying tolls on existing Highway 53 from

Lake-Cook Road south to the Jane Addams Tollway (Interstate Highway 90), a suggestion that already sparked controversy.

Opponents of that idea gave Illinois Tollway board members an earful at the June 28 meeting at which the council's report was presented.

Even tollway directors showed hesitancy about the recommendations.

Board member Tom Weisner, the mayor of Aurora, called the report "admirable" but questioned the rationale for a 45 mph speed limit. Director Jeffrey Reddick, also a member of the DuPage County Board, said the speed limit "sounds counterintuitive to me."

The massive \$12.1 billion capital program that the tollway launched with this year's 87.5 percent toll hike does not include any construction money for the Highway 53/120 project.

Tollway board Chairwoman

Paula Wolff acknowledged the agency had some "difficult decisions" coming in the several months.

The report proposes several options that could raise revenue but could also spur controversy.

These include creation of special taxing districts along the route. The idea is that new property will rise in value and benefits from construction of new highway. Other options include raising Lake County's sales tax and imposing a county gas tax.

Another longtime foe, veteran State Sen. Terry Link, acknowledged he had a change of heart.

"I want to see this (project) done in my lifetime because that's a necessity," the Waukegan Democrat said.

Braiman of Buffalo Grove said he was concerned at first that the two sides wouldn't be able to come together on a solution.

"The whole process," he said, "showed me the two groups could work together, that you can build roads and be environmentally sensitive."

The road will bring economic development not only to the corridor in Buffalo Grove but elsewhere in Lake and Cook counties, he said.

"It's going to make people lives much better," he said. "Right now, there's gridlock."

Long Grove's Rodriguez said the new proposal isn't so much compromise as a coming together of both sides to find a new solution.

The new plan addresses environmental issues, including noise mitigation and wetlands preservation. "Lake County is a unique place in Illinois, and that has to be preserved," she said.

Rodriguez agreed with Braiman that the road would spur economic development and help retain existing businesses that might otherwise move to a more convenient location across the border in Wisconsin.

"What's good for Lake County is good for the state of Illinois," she said.

Tribune reporter Jeff Danna contributed.

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Eisenhower Expressway

IDOT's Ike plans spur outcries anew

Some Oak Park residents seek expansion alternative

By Dawn Rhodes
TRIBUNE REPORTER

A proposal to widen a seven-mile stretch of the Eisenhower Expressway faces more pushback from Oak Park residents who contend that the Illinois Department of Transportation is overlooking alternatives to relieve congestion, according to records obtained by the Tribune.

The majority of the 80 comments residents submitted to IDOT after its June presentation to the Oak Park Village Board on widening the highway criticized the agency for proposing 10 scenarios that all involve adding a lane in either direction.

"The Village is deeply concerned that analysis completed to date remains highly biased in favor of highway solutions," Oak

Park Village President David Pope wrote in a letter accompanying the public comments. Pope went on to say the agency's apparent failure to evaluate other options "all cultivate public perception that the IDOT is mishandling its responsibilities to the citizens of Illinois."

IDOT's study to evaluate methods to improve traffic flow on the oft-clogged expressway began in 2009. The Eisenhower narrows from four lanes to three in both directions from Austin Boulevard to just west of Mannheim Road, causing relentless jams in the area. Some of the ideas proposed by IDOT involve widening of those lanes, shifting the left-lane exits at Austin and Harlem Avenue to the right and adding toll carpool lanes.

But many residents of Oak Park, one of the suburbs in the middle of the bottleneck area, have frequently said they would rather see an expansion of public transportation options.

Nearly half of the comments favored lengthening the CTA Blue Line to Oak Brook, about 10 miles west of its current terminus in Forest Park. One-fourth of the comments contended that any kind of expressway expansion would attract more commuters, thereby creating more issues for nearby neighborhoods.

"Several park and tor lots dot the Harrison and Garfield streets and they would be affected by the proposed plans, including increased noise level, pollution, and even being torn down," wrote Ana Constantinescu, a resident who lives near the expressway.

Pete Harmet, IDOT's bureau chief of programming, countered that the plans the agency has presented do indeed incorporate expansion of public transit services. However, early research showed that Blue Line expansion alone was not a viable solution to easing congestion on the roadway. "The Ike was built in 1962 and



E. Jason Wambegans, Tribune photo

The Illinois Department of Transportation is overlooking alternatives to relieve congestion, some Oak Park residents say.

it's at the end of its 50-year design life," Harmet said. "We need to reconstruct that roadway, we need to rebuild it. Something like the Blue Line serves a compact market. It wasn't going to replace the Eisenhower."

Harmet said the current plan is more conceptual than concrete, adding that IDOT still plans to

work with each of the affected communities.

A third round of advisory and public informational meetings is tentatively scheduled for late summer or early fall. A public hearing is planned for next spring.

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Illiana Expressway

Report: Minimal impact from routes

I-55 I-65 connectors would spur development, jobs

By Richard Wronski
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Three possible routes for the proposed Illiana Expressway would improve transportation throughout far southern Cook and Will counties, spur development and create jobs, while causing minimal impact on homes and businesses, a new report says.

The voluminous draft environmental impact statement provides the first comprehensive look at the routes being considered for the long-proposed highway connecting Interstate 55 in Illinois with I-65 in Indiana.

It outlines social, economic and environmental effects these "corridors" would have on homes, businesses, farms and communities in a 950-square-mile area.

Depending on which alterna-

tive is chosen, the project would displace between 12 and 83 homes, up to 2,800 acres of farmland and as much as 76 acres of wetlands. The project would not affect any threatened or endangered species, the report said.

The 600-page document concludes that each of the routes would reduce travel time for cars and trucks, particularly in booming Will County, where intermodal freight facilities are rapidly overtaking the fertile farmland.

Public hearings are set for July 31 at Peotone High School and Aug. 1 at Lowell Middle School in Lowell, Ind. The report is posted at illianacorridor.org.

Illinois and Indiana officials will issue a final version of the document and use it as the basis for selecting the preferred route, probably in September or October, said Steve Schille, the project manager for the Illinois Department of Transportation.

There is no guarantee the

Illiana will become a reality. And it would almost certainly have to be built as a tollway under a public-private partnership, as little state and federal funding is available.

Gov. Pat Quinn and his Indiana counterpart, Mitch Daniels, are pushing hard for the Illiana as a job creator and economic engine.

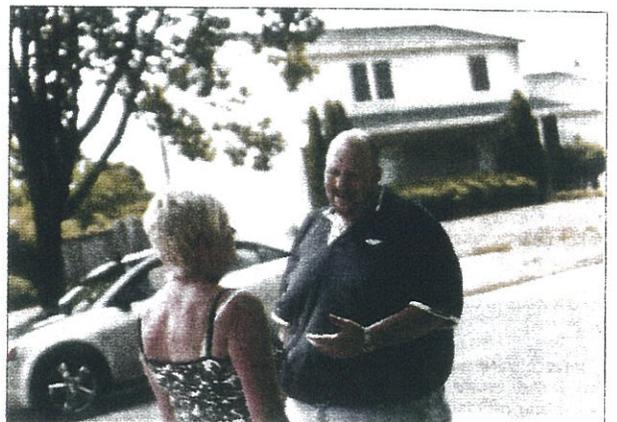
The report says that by 2040, the Illiana would improve access to 17,000-18,000 jobs.

The northernmost corridor, known officially as A3S2 and the longest at 51.1 miles, generally connects I-55 at Channahon with I-65 north of Lowell.

The route known as corridor B3 runs 46.8 miles through central Will County, connecting I-55 north of Wilmington with I-65 north of Lowell.

Corridor B4 is identical to B3 from I-55 until just west of the Illinois-Indiana state line, where it cuts southeast, lengthening its route to 48.8 miles.

The A3S2 corridor would result



Zbigniew Bzdak, Tribune photo

Channahon resident Bonnie Etienne talks with President Joe Cook, who opposes an Illiana Expressway terminus at the village.

in 31 to 33 residential relocations and six commercial displacements, the report said.

Corridor B3 would result in 28 to 29 residential relocations and three commercial displacements, while Corridor B4 would result in 12 or 13 residential relocations and two commercial displacements.

Officials in Channahon are op-

posed to the community being the western terminus of the Illiana. "The socioeconomic impact that the route would have on our community would far outweigh any benefits," said Village President Joe Cook.

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