

## BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. E(1)

### AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: April 21, 2009

**TITLE: A Public Hearing on the Preliminary Design for Smith Level Road STIP Project U-2803**

<b>DEPARTMENT: PLANNING</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING: YES <u>X</u> NO <u>  </u></b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b> <b>A. Resolution</b> <b>B. TIP Project U-2803 Chronology</b> <b>C. June 2007 Board of Aldermen comments to NCDOT on revised design and NCDOT response</b> <b>D. Summary of Public Comments from November 2007 workshop and NCDOT memo in response to workshop comments</b> <b>E. Information provided at the March 9 NCDOT public Hearing</b> <b>F. Public comments received via email</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</b> Adena Messinger, Transportation Planner – 918-7329

#### **PURPOSE**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has prepared a design of the State Transportation Improvement Plan project U-2803: Smith Level Road. A public hearing has been set so that the Board of Aldermen may receive public comment on the design and provide comments to NCDOT.

#### **INFORMATION**

Additional materials regarding this project, but too large for reprinting, can be found at:

**The NCDOT State Environmental Assessment** - [http://www.townofcarrboro.org/PZI/PDFs/U-2803\\_SEA\\_FONSI\\_Electronic\\_Copy\\_Final.pdf](http://www.townofcarrboro.org/PZI/PDFs/U-2803_SEA_FONSI_Electronic_Copy_Final.pdf)

**The design -**

[http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/highway/roadway/hearingmaps\\_by\\_county/resource/u2803\\_rdy\\_phm\\_FULL.pdf](http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/highway/roadway/hearingmaps_by_county/resource/u2803_rdy_phm_FULL.pdf).

Copies of these documents are also available for viewing at Town Hall, Planning Department.

For many years the Town of Carrboro and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) have been working on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) project U-2803: Smith Level Road (see Attachment B).

In June 2007, Town staff presented NCDOT's revised design for the Smith Level Road project. The Board provided comments to NCDOT and received responses to those comments as indicated in Attachment C.

In November 2007, NCDOT held a citizen information workshop at Carrboro High School, soliciting public comment on the revised design. Attachment D is a summary of the comments received for that workshop and a post-workshop from NCDOT memo, regarding the major comments from the workshop.

On March 9, 2009 the North Carolina Department of Transportation held a public hearing on the design of the TIP Project U-2803: Smith Level Road at Carrboro Elementary. Attachment E is copy of the information packet provided at the NCDOT public hearing. There was an informal question and answer period from 4:30 PM until 6:30 PM where citizens could view the plans and speak with representatives from NCDOT. An estimated 15-20 people attended this part of the event. A formal hearing was conducted from 7:00 PM until approximately 8:30 PM, at which NCDOT staff reviewed the design and then invited attendees to present their comments. Six attendees offered their comments.

A general summary of the comments made at the public hearing is as follows:

- Opposition to the 4-lanes divided highway section of the plan
- Support for the sidewalks and bicycle lanes
- Questions regarding the data used to project future traffic volumes and intersection Level of Service
- Opposition to the median in the 4-lane section, preventing a left turn from Willow Oak Lane on to Smith Level Road (with a specific comment that there was no information on how this will impact traffic volume on Orchard Lane)
- Design does not reflect nature of the community or the community's commitment to alternative transportation
- Question regarding design of the road for 50 MPH
- Opposition to center turn lanes
- Lack of attention to bicycle and pedestrian safety at intersections
- Opposition to planning for the peak-hour of traffic
- Request that the Town hold a public hearing to accept public comment

Formal minutes from the hearing are not yet available from NCDOT.

Following the NCDOT hearing, citizens requested that there be an opportunity to share their comments with the Board of Aldermen and that the Board of Aldermen be given the opportunity to provide comments back to NCDOT, based on public input. In addition, several members of the public have submitted email comments to Town staff and members of the Board of Alderman in advance of the public hearing. These comments can be found in Attachment F.

As indicated in the purpose above, this public hearing is an opportunity for the Board of Aldermen to receive public comment and provide comments back to NCDOT. While NCDOT staff will be present at the public hearing to listen to the public comment, they will not be presenting to the Board. Comments made at the hearing will be forwarded to NCDOT staff for consideration.

NCDOT's timeline for the next steps is as follows:

- April 28, 2009 – NCDOT staff will conduct a post-hearing meeting to review the public comments, including comments made at the Board of Aldermen public hearing. NCDOT has requested that all Town comments be forwarded to them by April 24, 2009 so that they may be considered for discussion at this meeting.
- July 2009 – Right-of-way acquisition begins
- January 2011 – Construction begins

**FISCAL AND STAFF IMPACT**

There are no fiscal impacts with receiving public comments.

Once construction is scheduled and underway, the construction of the sidewalks will require a 30% Town match, estimated to be \$360,000.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen receive public comment and submit feedback to NCDOT.