Draft EIS Public Hearing Transcript

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

NEW YORK DISTRICT

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IN RE:

ROUTE 92 PUBLIC HEARING

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Radisson Hotel Princeton

4355 U.S. Route 1 South

Princeton, New Jersey

Thursday, May 20, 2004

B E F O R E:

LT. COLONEL KURT HOFFMANN, Deputy Commander

KOKO CRONIN, Regulatory Project Manager

JAMES PALMER, Assistant District Counsel

RUTHANNE UNGERLEIDER, C.R.R., C.S.R.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon. I'm going to ask you all to please just pay attention while we go through the steps required to ensure that this process is carried out accordingly to the regulations.

Before I go into the formal portions today, I just want to take a minute to get informal with you all and just remind you that we're about to exercise a process and a right that is something we've all worked very hard to be able to do, and I ask you to respect each other enough to let the comments be presented in a manner that can be heard by everybody, recorded, and that allows enough time for everyone who is interested in making a statement the time to do that.

We'll go through the formal proceedings here in a moment, but I'm just asking you all to remember this is a right and a process we've all worked hard to enjoy, but respect each other enough to let everyone enjoy the right and the process.

Thanks for that.

Ladies and gentlemen, if everyone would please come to order, we'd like to

get started.

Good afternoon. I'm Liuetenant Colonel Kurt Hoffmann. I'm the Deputy Commander of the Corps of Engineers in New York and I'll be the presiding officer on behalf of my boss at this hearing.

Seated at the dais with me today, on my right, Ms. Koko Cronin, regulatory project manager with the district regulatory branch, on my left, Mr. James Palmer, assistant district counsel.

Today's hearing is the first session of a public hearing being conducted by the United States Army Corps of Engineers to assist in the regulatory review of the Route 92 project proposed by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. Any comments that the public would like to make to be included in the administrative record of application needs to be presented at this public hearing or in writing to the Corps of Engineers by June 14, 2004. This is the closing date of the comment period.

So, that's the 14th of June, folks.

The purpose of this public

1 hearing is to obtain information and evidence and
2 receive comment on an application submitted to the
3 Corps of Engineers by the New Jersey Turnpike
4 Authority. The Turnpike Authority requests a
5 federal permit to perform construction activities
6 within the waters of the United States, including
7 wetlands. The Turnpike Authority proposes to
8 discharge fill material into approximately 12.03
9 acres of waters and wetlands for the purpose of
10 constructing a 6.7 mile highway.
11 The project, known as Route 92,
12 would be a high speed, limited access, toll
13 highway, linking Interchange 8A of the New Jersey
14 Turnpike in Monroe Township, passing through
15 Plainsboro Township and connecting with U.S. Route
16 1 in South Brunswick Township.
17 As mitigation for impacts to
18 wetlands and the waters of the United States, the
19 Turnpike Authority proposes to create fifty-seven
20 acres of wetlands and to preserve two hundred two
21 acres of wetlands and uplands.
22 The project site is located in
23 waters and wetlands adjacent to Devil's Brook of
24 the Raritan River basin in Townships of South
25 Brunswick, Plainsboro and Monroe, all within

1 Middlesex County, New Jersey.
2 At today's hearing we also seek
3 comments on the draft Environmental Impact
4 Statement prepared by the Corps of Engineers to
5 assist in the regulatory review of the
6 application. The draft Environmental Impact
7 Statement discusses a number of alternatives. The
8 Corps has not identified a preferred alternative
9 in the draft Environmental Impact Statement. And,
10 we welcome comments on the alternatives that are
11 presented.
12 After review of comments
13 received in response to the draft Environmental
14 Impact Statement the Corps of Engineers will
15 prepare a final Environmental Impact Statement.
16 Comments on the draft Environmental Impact
17 Statement will be addressed in the final impact
18 statement.
19 Because the proposed project
20 entails filling activities within waters of the
21 United States, including wetlands, a permit is
22 required from the Corps of Engineers pursuant to
23 Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The Corps of
24 Engineers is neither a proponent for, nor an
25 opponent of the proposed project. Our role is to

determine whether this project is in the overall public interest. This hearing will play an important part in that determination.

This hearing will be conducted according to the procedures set forth in Title 33 of the code of federal regulations Part 327.

Anyone present today may provide a written statements or proposed findings and recommendations for the hearing, but must be on file before the 14th of June, 2004.

All written comments should be directed to the mailing address or electronic mail address on our public notice and as shown on the slide.

Written comments can also be handed to Corps of Engineers staff posted at the registration table in the lobby, and you should have all seen them already today.

At this time I would like to explain the procedures that will govern the conduct of this hearing.

Anyone may make an oral or written statement concerning the subject matter of this hearing. Anyone may appear on his or her own behalf or be represented by counsel or other

1 representatives to present recommendations or
2 information. Cross-examination of witnesses will
3 not be permitted. Procedurally, I will call the
4 names of those individuals who have registered and
5 asked for an opportunity to speak. I ask that you
6 step up to and speak into the microphone, which is
7 located to my right, your left front. And, I ask
8 that you start by stating your name slowly and
9 then spelling it also slowly so that the
10 stenographer who is making record of your comments
11 is sure to give you the benefit of addressing your
12 comments back to you to the final.
13 If you're affiliated with any
14 organization or group, please state so, so that we
15 may also enter that information into the
16 administrative record.
17 It is important to everyone,
18 whatever your opinion on this matter, that this
19 hearing be conducted in an orderly manner.
20 Because of this I must ask that speakers keep
21 their presentations to five minutes or less. I
22 can't stress that enough. We don't have a very
23 large crowd here today, so that shouldn't be an
24 issue. Five minutes is ample time, and after five
25 minutes I will ask you to stand down and give the

1 next individual an opportunity for equal time.
2 Please limit your comments to
3 five minutes.
4 If you have a longer
5 presentation, please submit it in writing and
6 summarize it orally. That's enough.
7 Written statements that you
8 would like to submit for the record today should
9 be presented directly to the dais, we'll accept
10 those, or to the registration table at the
11 entrance to the room. Time permitting, we look to
12 provide an opportunity for rebuttal to any person
13 who wants to do so after all the speakers have
14 been heard.
15 I have the registration forms
16 that you have completed and I will call for each
17 speaker by name in the order listed in our public
18 notice announcing today's hearing. If you wish to
19 present testimony, you should know that you may
20 choose to tape record your comments in Kingston
21 room of the hotel instead of speaking at the
22 podium. This may become an attractive option for
23 you if it becomes a burden to wait your turn and,
24 also, if, in fact, we run out of time.
25 This option was described in a

1 handout that was distributed at the entrance to
2 this room. If you did not receive that handout,
3 please ask at the registration table for help in
4 that regard.
5 I will first call the federally
6 elected officials, followed by representatives of
7 federal agencies and appointed federal officials,
8 as set forth in the order noted in our public
9 notice.
10 A verbatim written record of
11 this public hearing is being made and a written
12 transcript will be made of tape recorded
13 statements taken in the Kingston room. The
14 hearing transcript will be available for purchase
15 at the Corps of Engineers at the cost of
16 reproduction. The cost of a copy will correspond
17 directly to the number of pages enclosed.
18 Everyone who has completed one
19 of the registration forms at the entrance to this
20 room will be contacted by the Corps of Engineers
21 in writing when the transcripts are available.
22 Again, if you wish to speak
23 this afternoon, you must fill out a registration
24 form. The comments made here, plus all written
25 information provided on or before the 14th of

June, public comment deadline, will be used to evaluate the probable impacts, including the cumulative impacts on the proposed activity on the public interest. The ultimate decision on the submitted application will reflect the national concern for both the protection and utilization of important resources.

As a last bit of administrative information, I remind everyone that smoking, eating or drinking is not allowed within the hearing room. And, yes, I know we have water up here, but that's because we're special, I guess.

I don't know.

Anyway, the rest of you can't have it.

Please turn off or mute all your cell phones and pagers and anything else that may disrupt the conduct of this hearing.

If anyone present wants additional information on the Route 92 project as a whole, representatives of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority are available in the lobby.

Now, before we begin taking your public comments I would like to introduce Mr. Bill Cesanek of CDM, the environmental consultant

1 assigned to the Corps of Engineers in the
2 preparation of the draft environmental statement.
3 Mr. Cesanak will provide a brief overview of the
4 draft Environmental Impact Statement.
5 Thank you.
6 MR. CESANEK: Thank you,
7 Colonel.
8 The Corps has asked us to
9 provide a brief overview of the project and the
10 Environmental Impact Statement, and this is really
11 being done to facilitate -- the environmental
12 impact process is being done to facilitate the
13 Corps' decision-making process.
14 An Environmental Impact
15 Statement has several standard sections, and
16 they're really meant to explore what the potential
17 effects of the project and the permit application
18 may be. There's the purpose and needs section,
19 which explores the objective of the project and
20 how it will function. There's a close examination
21 of alternatives to the proposed project. In this
22 case the New Jersey Turnpike Authority has
23 submitted a permit application for a proposed
24 Route 92 and the Corps has examined with their
25 consulting team a number of alternatives to that

1 project. There is also review of the existing
2 environment, and that is the characteristics of
3 the existing environment in the areas of all the
4 project alternatives.
5 That leads to determination
6 using a variety of environmental models and
7 technical analyses. Determination of
8 environmental impacts and effects that may result
9 from implementation of any one of the various
10 alternatives.
11 Once impacts are identified we
12 also look at potential mitigation actions for
13 those impacts.
14 And, finally, there is the
15 public involvement process, which this hearing
16 today is part of.
17 This is a map of the project
18 area and, essentially, this is to really just
19 locate the project. And, what we see on this map
20 is the location of Route 1, Route 130, and the
21 Turnpike as three major north/south corridors in
22 the project area. Also, the municipality of South
23 Brunswick, Plainsboro, Cranbury are some of the
24 key municipalities that were studied as part of
25 the project. In addition, one of the major

1 project alternatives is improvement of the Route 1
2 corridor up to the New Brunswick area.
3 The project purpose was
4 evaluated and studied very carefully, and those
5 elements are to provide linkage for through
6 traffic moving between U.S. Route 1, Route 130 and
7 the New Jersey Turnpike. That is, essentially, a
8 east/west route. They are to provide alternative
9 routes for north/south traffic currently using
10 Route 1 to relieve the congestion on Route 1 while
11 minimizing impacts to the abutting communities.
12 Also, one of the goals of the
13 project is to reserve the local streets or the
14 local traffic.
15 And, finally, it's to reduce
16 the presence of non-local truck traffic on the
17 local road network.
18 So, most of the project
19 alternatives were measured against these four
20 project goals.
21 The alternatives analysis
22 consisted of three major categories of
23 alternatives. We looked at existing and local
24 county roadway capacity improvements. So, those
25 are, essentially, widening and intersection

1 improvements to existing road system. The second
2 category were improvements to the existing
3 regional roadway system. And, those were the
4 larger major roads that might be able to be
5 improved in capacity. And, last, we looked at new
6 roadway facilities of which the Turnpike
7 Authority's application represents one of the
8 alternatives.
9 This is an example of a map
10 depicting several of the existing system
11 improvements. On this we can see Dey Road
12 widening, US EPA modified no build alternative, a
13 relocated Route 22, with extension to the
14 Turnpike. Some of these have been partially
15 implemented, Cranbury Neck Road widening.
16 So, this is just an example of
17 some of the alternatives that were looked at in
18 the process.
19 Also, new roads were evaluated.
20 There's the proposed Route 92, there was a Dey
21 Road parallel alignment looked at, a South
22 Brunswick modified alignment looked at, and some
23 US EPA suggested alignments.
24 As part of the alternatives
25 analysis we collected information on wetlands,

1 farmland preservation, parkland, residential
2 impacts, commercial impacts, public facility
3 impacts, and we also evaluated whether each of the
4 alternatives would meet the project purpose.
5 You can see for this whole list
6 of alternatives there were measurements and
7 evaluations performed.
8 Then, the alternatives were
9 compared and there was a sequence of analysis for
10 the sixteen alternatives, and the process,
11 essentially, was a screening analysis to eliminate
12 alternatives that would have the most impact on
13 the environment.
14 Projects with high wetland
15 impacts were eliminated first, with high farmland
16 preservation impacts were eliminated, parkland
17 impacts, high dislocation impacts, and projects
18 that did not meet the stated purpose and need.
19 And, this resulted in two major alternatives
20 recommended for future analysis, and those two
21 major alternatives included a number of sub
22 options within each of the alternatives. Those
23 were the Turnpike Authority proposed Route 92 with
24 terminus at Route 1, and sub alternatives were
25 evaluated, including a single lane design and a

1 design without an interchange and at Perrine Road.
2 The U.S. Route 1 widening was also evaluated with
3 and without signal removal.
4 Impacts and mitigation were
5 studied in detail for those alternatives that
6 passed through the screening process. And, we
7 looked very closely at impacts to streams and
8 flood plains, water quality impacts and receiving
9 streams due to stormwater runoff, impacts to
10 wetlands, wildlife habitat, residential and
11 commercial dislocations that might occur as a
12 result of the project alternatives, noise impacts,
13 air quality impacts both from the use of the new
14 transportation facility and from construction,
15 impacts to land use and development, smart growth
16 issues are examined in the EIS and traffic
17 effects. There is a great amount of detail in the
18 Environmental Impact Statement on this and I'm not
19 going to summarize that information now.
20 I would also like to present
21 Gary Davis, who was part of the consulting team
22 and who conducted some of the traffic analysis to
23 summarize some of the traffic issues.
24 Thank you.
25 MR. DAVIS: Thank you, Bill.

1 The traffic analysis was a very
2 important part of the studies that underlie this
3 draft environmental impact study and statement.
4 And, my purpose here is to provide you a brief
5 overview of some of the critical findings of that
6 study.
7 I'm going to deal with the
8 analysis methods, including the traffic modeling,
9 with implications of a no action alternative,
10 meaning no construction of Route 92, or the
11 alternatives that had been designated. I'm going
12 to describe the project purpose and need, and then
13 the effect of two of the build alternatives, the
14 Route 92 alternative and the Route 1 widening and
15 signal removal.
16 The analysis methods were,
17 essentially, a reworking of prior work as well as
18 an expansion into very advanced modeling methods
19 using a combination of regional modeling and local
20 modeling. Once we had the model sets in place we
21 did a thorough analysis of each primary
22 alternative for the year 2028, preparing travel
23 forecasts by traffic component, autos and trucks,
24 with an understanding of their origin and
25 destination characteristics, and, finally, did an

1 evaluation process using the highway capacity
2 manual software and various other methods for
3 analysis.
4 The no action alternative is a
5 very important part of the study, and we spent a
6 lot of time with this. This is, as we all know, a
7 very high growth region. We anticipate that over
8 the twenty-seven year period from the 2001 base
9 year to 2028 the population in this five town
10 region will increase by about nineteen percent,
11 but that employment will increase by about two
12 thirds. At the same time, there are various
13 roadway improvements that have already been
14 scheduled and some have even been implemented.
15 These are what we call the no
16 action network assumptions, which are projects
17 which we included as part of the underlying
18 assumptions of the system.
19 When we run the models, account
20 for the various population employment
21 characteristics and network conditions, we analyze
22 then the network performance that will result.
23 This is just one image from the
24 EIS which shows traffic conditions in the morning
25 peak hour in the year 2001. We see some red spots

1 and purple spots along Route 1, which correspond
2 with areas where there is extensive congestion
3 today and along 130 and along the New Jersey
4 Turnpike.
5 Looking forward into the future
6 you see much more purple, much more red, not only
7 on Route 1, not only on the Turnpike, but also on
8 the cross Dey Road, Plainsboro Road, Cranbury Neck
9 Road, and the overall east/west local and
10 secondary roads serving the area. And,
11 essentially, we see substantially more traffic
12 growth occurring and congestion resulting from
13 that. We see increased congestion levels, we see
14 westbound demand that will exceed capacity overall
15 by twenty-five percent in the westbound direction,
16 and in some places the volumes will be more than
17 double the capacity. Traffic at thirteen into
18 seventeen locations we analyzed will exceed
19 capacity. Non-local traffic will more than double
20 and truck volumes will increase by about a third.
21 So, as a result of that we
22 moved into determining what the project purpose
23 was and we identified several elements to the
24 project purpose.
25 First of all was to provide a

1 linkage for through traffic moving between U.S.
2 Route 1, Route 130 and the New Jersey Turnpike.
3 Second was to provide
4 alternative routes for north/south traffic that
5 currently uses U.S. Route 1, and this would be
6 designed to relieve congestion on Route 1 while
7 minimizing impacts to the communities that abut
8 Route 1.
9 Third was to reserve the local
10 streets in the region for local traffic,
11 preserving the character, or attempting to
12 preserve the character of those sensitive local
13 communities. And, in parallel with that, reduce
14 the presence of non-local truck traffic on the
15 local roadway network as well and shift that
16 traffic to a connector highway so that the
17 character of the communities would be preserved.
18 The objectives for this project
19 then in response to that purpose were a couple.
20 First of all, to establish a road system that
21 reserves local streets for local traffic and
22 circulation that provides a high speed route for
23 traffic moving between Route 1, 130 and the
24 Turnpike. To provide alternative routes for
25 north/south traffic currently using Route 1. The

1 congestion in the future will only be worse than
2 it is today and the intent of the project is then
3 to relieve congestion, improve mobility, and
4 minimize impacts on the abutting communities.
5 Thirdly, reduce the presence of
6 non-local truck traffic in the local communities.
7 And, finally, to work to ensure
8 that the created capacity is not eroded by
9 unsustainable and uncoordinated development.
10 Two of the alternatives that we
11 looked at then and which progressed to a more
12 detailed study is the Route 92 development, which
13 I'll discuss first. If that roadway were to be
14 constructed as proposed in the EIS, there is
15 substantial increase in volume shown by the red on
16 Route 92 itself because of the traffic that would
17 be attracted to it and an increase of traffic on
18 Route 1 feeding it and on the New Jersey Turnpike,
19 and then, accordingly, decreases in traffic at
20 various locations, particularly on the cross
21 streets of 522, Dey Road, Plainsboro Road.
22 The results, if you remember
23 those earlier slides, is that there's considerably
24 less purple and red, which indicates over
25 capacity, congested conditions with the

1 construction of Route 92. There continues to be
2 some congestion on the Turnpike, there continues
3 to be some congestion in critical locations on
4 Route 1. Overall, considerably less.
5 The characteristics or result
6 of this alternative is total traffic on east/west
7 and local and secondary roads will be reduced by
8 about eighteen percent. Substantial through
9 traffic reductions will result on local and
10 secondary east/west roads. Route 1 volumes will
11 be reduced at currently constricted locations.
12 Truck volumes on local and secondary east/west
13 roads will decrease by about seventeen percent.
14 And, countering that, truck volumes on Ridge Road,
15 between Route 1 and 27, towards Kingston, will
16 increase slightly, but not significantly.
17 The other alternative that we
18 looked at was the widening of Route 1 and with the
19 removal of signals. In this alternative, of
20 course, the improvements are along Route 1.
21 The interesting thing that
22 occurs is there's substantial addition to the
23 capacity of Route 1 under the alternative, but at
24 the same time it attracts traffic to Route 1 so
25 that we see substantially more traffic on Route 1

1 and less traffic as indicated in the green on the
2 Turnpike, on 130, and on the cross roads. The
3 result, however, is that the traffic growth on
4 Route 1 that results from attracting traffic
5 really provides no net congestion relief on Route
6 1. In fact, the congestion is, if anything,
7 slightly worse on Route 1, and there is little
8 relief down in the Plainsboro Road/Cranbury Neck
9 Road area.
10 The final conclusions we
11 reached are that the total traffic on east/west
12 local and secondary roads will be decreased by
13 about ten percent. Not nearly as much as the
14 Route 92 build alternative. The modest through
15 traffic reductions will result on those local and
16 secondary east/west roads, but the Route 1 volumes
17 will substantially increase. The capacity
18 increase would be offset by attracted volumes.
19 And, truck volumes on local and secondary
20 east/west roads will decrease modestly.
21 That's the end of my
22 presentation, and we look forward to receiving
23 your comments throughout this afternoon and
24 evening, and I'm going to turn it back to the
25 Colonel at this point.

1 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: All
2 right, thank you, Bill.
3 For the benefit of those who
4 just joined us, I'm going to summarize what we're
5 supposed to do one more time.
6 First, I just want to recognize
7 the fact there is a lot of people in this room who
8 have, obviously, spent enough time, given enough
9 interest in this subject, that you came here
10 today. There are going to be different opinions.
11 Remember, this isn't a debate, nor is this the
12 decision brief. You're invited to make comment to
13 help in that decision, which is still pending.
14 So, respect each other's
15 differing opinions. Essentially, you have five
16 minutes to speak. I ask you to please stay within
17 the five minutes so that we don't have to
18 embarrass you publicly. And, shut off those cell
19 phones, will you, please?
20 We're going to begin then.
21 One more thing. For the
22 record, please state your name clearly before you
23 begin your comments and then spell your surname so
24 they can be entered accurately in the record.
25 All right, today we'll begin

PH-01

BBN-1

with State Assemblyman Mr. Bill Baroni.

MR. BARONI: Good afternoon, and thank you. My name is Bill Baroni, B-A-R-O-N-I. I'm a state assemblyman for the 14th District, representing seven communities, including three of the towns that were mentioned, Cranbury, Plainsboro and South Brunswick.

Before I begin I would like to give two thanks to the Army Corps. Colonel Hoffmann, thank you for your balance and the dignity with which you are conducting this hearing. I'm grateful for it, and all people in Central New Jersey.

I'd also like to thank Koko Cronin. Many of you may have spoken with her. It's my understanding, Koko, this may be your first full project. You're doing an excellent job. Colonel, I hope that's reflected in the record. She is an excellent part of the Army Corps.

Today we will hear a number of voices. We will hear the voices of people who seek to drive east and west in Central New Jersey and are confronted each and everyday by traffic backups. And, they are right.

BBN-1

We will hear voices today of people who live in Kendall Park who have to add forty minutes to their day to drive their kids across Route 1. And, they are right.

Today we will hear the voices of those who seek to protect our environment, our water, our farmland, who worry the impact of this project. And, they are right.

We will hear today from working men and women who worry about not having enough good construction jobs. And, they are right.

And, we will hear from some of the one thousand seven hundred and six people who the draft Environmental Impact Statement say live in the census blocks through which this road will go. And, they are right.

See, this road, estimated cost somewhere between three hundred and five hundred million dollars, raises a question, is it worth the price? And, I would suggest to the Army Corps, this analysis can be viewed through four questions whether or not it's worth the price. First, will this project actually fix the transportation problems of this region in Central New Jersey? Second, will this project so

1 devastate and hurt the environment that it's not
2 worth it? Third, will this project eliminate or
3 bring sprawl to a section of New Jersey that has
4 been inundated by it? And, finally, and equally
5 important, will this project bring good jobs to
6 hard working men and women in Central New Jersey?
7 We need to look at the answer
8 to these four questions in order to be able to
9 analyze whether or not it's worth the price and
10 worth putting the people in South Brunswick and
11 all of Central New Jersey through the process of
12 building and running this road.
13 If I may suggest, respectfully,
14 to those who disagree with me, the answer is no.
15 The first question is whether
16 or not it will fix the transportation problem.
17 Anyone who lives in Central New
18 Jersey realizes how difficult it is to go left and
19 right, north and south, each and everyday. And,
20 in about two-and-a-half hours, Colonel, you can go
21 stand outside the lobby and look at Route 1.
22 The proposed Route 92, and I
23 thank the engineers for their presentation, if I
24 may point out very briefly, a table that was not
25 presented. It's on Page 4-53 of the draft

BBN-2

BBN-3

BBN-4

1 Environmental Impact Statement.
2 One of the longest days in my
3 career in politics was sitting at the South
4 Brunswick Library reading the entire draft of the
5 EIS. One of the charts that jumped out at me was
6 chart 416. The chart prepared a no action, what
7 we have now, to Route 92.
8 U.S. 1 and Cozzens Lane fails
9 now, fails after Route 92. Meaning, the lowest
10 and worst possible intersection. U.S. 1 and Major
11 Sand Hill Road fails now, will fail after 92.
12 U.S. 1 and New Road fails now, will fail after 92.
13 Scutters Mill Road and Clarke's Crossing fails
14 now, will fail after 92. Scutters Mill and Dey
15 Road fails now, will fail after 92. U.S. 130 and
16 Dey Road fails now, and fails after 92. Dey Road
17 and County Road 535 fails now, fails after 92.
18 U.S. 130 and Friendship Road fails now, fails
19 after 92. Route 522 and Kingston Road fails now,
20 and fails under 92. U.S. 1 and 522 fails now, and
21 fails after 92.
22 I am not an engineer, I am a
23 lawyer, but even I can figure out that's not
24 success. What's worst, those people who live in
25 Kingston, the intersection of Route 27 and Raymond

BBN-5

Road now does not fail. It gets a B. It fails after 92.

I want to thank the Army Corps for the opportunity to speak on these issues. These are important concerns about the sprawl, protecting our environment and creating jobs. We can create those jobs, protect our environment and stop sprawl and do it in a way that does not destroy the quality of life in Central New Jersey.

This is the wrong road, in the wrong place, at the wrong time.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Baroni. And, I apologize for the way I pronounced your name.

I ask the rest of you to handle it exactly the same way. I'll give it my best shot. I have my glasses on. When it's your turn, just get up and correct me for the record. That's absolutely what you should do. And, thank you also for setting the tone for the way we'll conduct this.

Our next speaker will be Mr. Steven Cook, Chief of Staff for the Office of Senator Inverso.

PH-02

Please refer to comment group WC055 for comment codes.

MR. COOK: Thank you, Colonel.

I'm here on behalf of Senator Peter Inverso. I'm the senator's Chief of Staff. Today the senator had an obligation to be in the state senate. They are meeting and in session. He had some very important business that he had to take care of, but he asked that I present this statement for the record today, and I'd like to read this into the record.

Before I do, I'd like to also thank the Army Corps for this opportunity to allow the public to address their concerns regarding the draft EIS. This is probably one of the most crucial parts of any transportation project to have the input from the community, and I'm sure the community of South Brunswick very much appreciates it. I know Senator Inverso does.

This is a letter from Senator Inverso to the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

"Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the concerns that I have regarding the proposed Route 92 construction project. When first proposed I supported the original concept of the Route 92 project based on a much lower cost

1 projection and less impacts on the environment and
2 local communities. Since that time a U.S.
3 Environmental Protection Agency report refused to
4 support this project, identified environmental
5 impacts have generated additional concern, and the
6 cost estimate has skyrocketed. For these reasons,
7 I have recently opposed this project.
8 "Today I reiterate my
9 opposition to this project and ask that the
10 following two issues be addressed specifically by
11 those preparing the Environmental Impact Statement
12 for the United States Army Corps of Engineers.
13 "Past studies of the proposed
14 Route 92 project have called into question the
15 plan's ability to improve transportation in
16 southern Middlesex County. It is my understanding
17 that the New Jersey Department of Environmental
18 Protection's 1997 study indicated that the
19 Turnpike Authority did not demonstrate a demand
20 for the roadway's construction. Likewise, a 1988
21 study, paid for by the United States Environmental
22 Protection Agency, concluded that the construction
23 of Route 92 would only minimally reduce local
24 east/west traffic.
25 "I would like to understand how

1 two federal agencies, the US EPA and the U.S. Army
2 Corps of Engineers, can produce significantly
3 different conclusions based on the same factors.
4 I would ask that a comparison be performed by an
5 independent agency of the factors used by both
6 agencies and then any variation of these factors
7 identified be reviewed and clarified.
8 "Additionally, after the Route
9 92 draft Environmental Impact Statement was
10 released much discussion has been focused on the
11 review of alternatives discussed in the document.
12 It has occurred to me that factors relating to the
13 alternatives to Route 92 have not been fully
14 vetted during the development of the Route 92 EIS.
15 The widening of Route 1, improvements to 522, the
16 use of the proposed Route 1 Bus Rapid Transit
17 project and other scenarios must be discussed with
18 more community input to ensure that all legitimate
19 options are considered prior to endorsing any
20 course of action. A crucial source of this input
21 must be the local community and officials of South
22 Brunswick.
23 "If the outcry by my
24 legislative office is any indication of today's
25 response to the DEIS hearing, numerous local

1 residents and the local officials of South
2 Brunswick will articulate many concerns about a
3 lack of participation in the development of this
4 document. The high level of participation in this
5 hearing should highlight the need for additional
6 community input into the development of any
7 recommendation generated by the final Route 92
8 Environmental Impact Statement. The community
9 must be engaged in the debate of how to address
10 the traffic issues we all know exist in this
11 region.
12 "Public participation and
13 involvement are an important component of any
14 proposal or initiative. Considering the magnitude
15 and scope of the Route 92 proposal, it's
16 unfortunate that the input of local residents has
17 not seemed to have been solicited effectively
18 during this process.
19 "I would ask that the final 92
20 EIS discuss the option to not build at this time
21 in favor of a more focused discussion with the
22 community of the alternatives that have been
23 identified through this hearing and in the draft
24 EIS.
25 "I recognize the need to

address regional traffic concerns that exist, however, the serious impact concerns raised by the residents, combined with these questions raised in past studies, demonstrate the need for further dialogue on Route 92's construction. To move forward with the EIS process and recommend construction of this proposed roadway at this time would be unwise."

Signed Senator Inverso.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Cook.

Our next speaker will be Michael Gerrard, Township of South Brunswick.

MR. GERRARD: Thank you, Colonel.

PH-03

My name is Michael Gerrard, G-E-R-R-A-R-D. I'm an environmental attorney appearing on behalf of South Brunswick Township. We're very pleased that several years ago the Army Corps of Engineers made the decision to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for this project, but we are dismayed upon reading the draft environmental statement to find that at least two major federal laws in our view are violated by the

way the project has been pursued.

First, the National Environmental Policy Act, which requires a full analysis of the environmental impacts of proposed projects and their alternatives, and second, the Clean Water Act, which prohibits the destruction of wetlands unless there is a clear need to do so and only allows that if there are no practicable alternatives.

Neither of these requirements has been satisfied.

First, with respect to the National Environmental Policy Act, our technical consultants are still studying the draft EIS and will be submitting detailed comments by the June 14th comment deadline, but it is already clear that the draft Environmental Impact Statement fails to address many of the issues that we raised in the scoping hearing a year ago and that we set forth in our written scoping comments of June 15, 2000, or where it does address them only in a cursory, inadequate fashion.

SBTMG-1

Some of the examples of that are, first, the environmental impacts if Route 92 were ultimately to be extended west of Route 1 and

SBTMG-2

to go further west to Route 27 or to Route 206. We believe that if the road is built, the traffic pressures would inevitably lead to considerable pressure to extend the project further west. We don't think that Route 1 is a logical terminus and that it is impermissible segmentation not to have analyzed the environmental impacts, the destruction of wetlands, farmlands and species habitat and cultural resources and all of the other effects that would result from extending the road further west. We don't think that there was enough examination of the effects of the berms involved in the project on stormwater flow, wildlife movement or visual resources. There wasn't enough study of the presence of and impacts on those species of special concern that are known to be present in the area, such as the river otter or those where there are suitable habitat, such as the box turtle, Cooper's hawk, Savannah turtle, wood turtle, and other species that should have been much more carefully inventoried during the course of doing the studies.

With respect to the Clean Water Act, the wetlands regulation of the Corps and EPA require the establishment of a clear need of a

SBTMG-2

SBTMG-3

SBTMG-4

SBTMG-5

project for this kind of wetlands destruction to be allowed.

We don't think that case has been made. The Environmental Impact Statement does not fully compare the traffic conditions today to the future, with Route 92 to the future, without Route 92 side by side. When you compare them all together it becomes clear that the proposed highway would create only a trivial contribution to the relief of congestion and in some places would, in fact, be counterproductive.

SBTMG-5

There is a huge disruption, environmental disruption, at the cost of nearly half a billion dollars for very little transportation benefit. We think the economic and environmental impacts are wholly disproportionate to any benefit that might be relieved, might result from the project.

The EIS also justifies the need for the project by making unrealistic projections of future growth and projecting from that congestion, which is utilized in the models, to say that the project is necessary. The Environmental Impact Statement prematurely disregards the benefits of transportation demand

SBTMG-6

SBTMG-7

management. The EIS at Page 2-10 says that the potential cumulative reduction in vehicle miles traveled after an aggressive program of transportation demand management might be five to ten percent range. That is, actually, a very significant set of numbers given the traffic levels, and in contrast, Route 92 would actually increase vehicle miles traveled under many circumstances.

We think that focusing on those aggressive TDM measures is a far better way to achieve a good result at a much lower cost.

Route 522 was recently built in this area, providing many of the transportation benefits, and we think as we will set forth in our written comments that other proposed improvements, especially widening of Route 1, would achieve the benefits that are sought at far lower environmental and economic impact.

SBTMG-8

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Gerrard.

We will now hear from Carol Barrett, Senior Advisory Council, Deputy Mayor of South Brunswick.

PH-04

MS. BARRETT: My name is Carol Barrett, B-A-R-R-E-T-T. I'm the Deputy Mayor of South Brunswick. I am also the liaison to the Senior Advisory Council. I am also a union president, representing ten thousand members in the State of New Jersey.

I would first like to read a resolution from the Township of South Brunswick, which I will offer to you. It's a resolution, Township of South Brunswick, New Jersey.

"In support of the widening of Route 1 in South Brunswick Township,

"Whereas, Route 1 in North Brunswick and Route 1 in Plainsboro is three lanes wide, but in South Brunswick is only two lanes wide; and

"Whereas, as a result, traffic conditions on Route 1 in South Brunswick continue to worsen because of the narrowness of Route 1 in South Brunswick; and

"Whereas, for many years, South Brunswick has repeatedly communicated to the State of New Jersey that Route 1 in South Brunswick should be widened; and

"Whereas, instead of

1 constructing Route 92, the widening of Route 1 and
2 other transportation elements instead would
3 considerably alleviate the traffic congestion
4 within South Brunswick, as well as in North
5 Brunswick and Plainsboro; and
6 "Whereas, the widening of Route
7 1 instead of construction of Route 92 would be the
8 most beneficial use of funds for efforts to
9 address traffic conditions in this part of the
10 state; and
11 "Whereas, improving Route 1
12 instead of constructing Route 92 would still," and
13 I emphasis, "would still provide ample job
14 opportunities for residents of this State seeking
15 such jobs; and
16 "Whereas, the widening of Route
17 1 as opposed to the construction of Route 92 is a
18 much better alternative for relieving traffic
19 congestion, providing jobs and preserving the
20 environment, as well as much better use of
21 taxpayer funds in this State."
22 Before I run out of time I
23 would also, as a senior advisor, show to you in
24 just one week what our seniors have gathered,
25 petitions, letters to you. And, they're still

1 coming. We have probably five hundred here and we
2 are expecting another five or six hundred.
3 And, I will read this letter
4 from our seniors in South Brunswick, and it's to
5 you. And, we also will be forwarding a copy to
6 Mayor McGreevey.
7 "The South Brunswick Senior
8 Advisory Council opposes the construction of Route
9 92 on the grounds that it is detrimental to the
10 needs and welfare of the families of South
11 Brunswick. It is designed to run from Exit 8A of
12 the New Jersey Turnpike, across the southern part
13 of our township, to the intersection of Ridge Road
14 and Route 1. Those of us who live in South
15 Brunswick know that the sections of Route 92 that
16 are elevated," and I emphasize, this is an
17 elevated road, "will destroy one of the most
18 beautiful, natural areas in our township.
19 "In addition, 92 will generate
20 an enormous increase in traffic on the existing
21 two lanes in the historic Village of Kingston, as
22 well as polluting the air across South Brunswick's
23 entire southern border. But, perhaps the most
24 important of all, Route 92 will destroy or be
25 harmful to many of the homes, some of which belong

to senior citizens.

"Those advocating the construction of 92 will say it aids commuters going to Princeton University, Forrestal Village, and the corporations on Route 1.

"Government must decide, therefore, whom it will serve, commuters in their cars or South Brunswick families in their homes."

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Barrett.

Our next speaker will be Matthew Watkins, South Brunswick Township, Township Manager.

MR. WATKINS: Thank you. My name is Matt Watkins, W-A-T-K-I-N-S. I am the Township Manager in South Brunswick. I thank you for this opportunity to speak and to address this very important issue in South Brunswick.

PH-05

There are many reasons that have been presented to you that express our concern for the information provided in this draft Environmental Impact Statement. Despite our contention that this roadway is unnecessary, does not address the problems that have been

identified, and has a severe negative impact environmentally and from a functionality and quality of life for South Brunswick, I believe that there are a couple of points that should be brought out that need to be addressed as the process continues.

First of all, one who knows this township cannot help but notice that the mapping, at least that which is provided out in the lobby, is woefully outdated and inaccurate. And, I believe that somewhere along the line those inaccuracies should be addressed.

SBTMW-1

One other aspect that I did not see in the Environmental Impact Statement was the address of spillage on the roadway on the proposed Route 92 as a result of accidents.

One statistic that we do have and can provide to you through this hearing is that over the last ten years we have had approximately ninety-four accidents in this community that resulted in hazardous material being spilled.

So, that leads to the question as to how will the Route 92 and its construction handle spillage as a result of accidents?

SBTMW-2

SBTMW-2

Clearly, there will be a number of traffic, and truck traffic, which is identified as being handled through Route 92, will result in spillages on an average of seven per year, through one of the most environmentally sensitive areas in Central Jersey, and we see nowhere in the Environmental Impact Statement is this addressed on how that's going to be handled.

My responsibilities as the Township Manager is the appropriate distribution of the work force and resources to handle everything, including emergencies. And, through my chief of police and the office of emergency management we handle these type of issues, and we have to provide enough resources to handle such incidents.

So, I believe that if in the ongoing study, on the Environmental Impact Statement and the impact of this roadway, if that could be looked at and addressed appropriately, or at least reviewed in some aspect so that we have some understanding if the road should be built, hopefully it won't, but if it should, that we'll be able to handle this in the future.

We are concerned about our

environment, we are concerned about the health of what will remain of South Brunswick in this area, and we do not want to let that go by. So, we want to make sure that we're prepared. And, I would appreciate it if that would be addressed in the future studies.

Thank you very much.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Watkins.

Our next speaker will be Mr. Jeff Tittel, the Sierra Club.

Mr. Tittel.

MR. TITTEL: Thank you very much. Jeff Tittel, T-I-T-T-E-L, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.

PH-06

I appreciate you allowing me to come ahead of some other people. I have a legislative hearing in Trenton at 3:30 I have to be at. I will try to be brief. We'll have more detailed written comments and there will be other members of the Sierra Club who will speak this afternoon and tonight.

We firmly believe that the EIS is deficient in many ways. Part of what I see as one of the major flaws is that one of the

SCJT-1

SCJT-1

justifications for the potential roadway and its different alignments is based on bad planning, that we're going to be rewarding bad zoning and bad land use policies by saying because so much of this area is zoned for office, park and box stores, therefore, we need to build a highway.

That's backwards. You should be looking at the needs of a whole region when it comes to transportation planning and looking at existing roadways with the potential for widening or fixing roads, getting rid of lights, things like that, before you decide to build a new road.

So, I think that just on that alone it's deficient.

It's sort of like if you build it, they will come. A lot of those projects that are out there, or in the pipeline, won't get built because of the traffic situation in the area. Once you build a private driveway to places like Forrestal Center, then they can get marketed and they can get built. If you don't build a driveway, it's not going to happen.

So, it's the chicken and the egg.

Some of the approvals on some

of the older projects are running out. We should be working with the towns regionally and doing regional planning and doing down zoning and better smart growth policies, tied to transit, tied to bus ways, things like that, instead of just sprawling out throughout the region.

I think that's part of the problem, that we believe that this project should be held up, this EIS should be held up, and we should go back to the drawing board and actually work within the communities around here to come up with an overall comprehensive plan for the region before you start looking at what infrastructure you need to put in to promote growth.

SCJT-2

One of the concerns we have also is that, cutting through this slate it would take, the different scenarios would destroy a lot of open space where there's been a tremendous amount of public investment.

SCJT-3

The whole process with the state house division and conversion of public lands isn't addressed anywhere in this EIS.

Another real serious problem we have is that this whole region is out of attainment for ground level ozone and what will be

SCJT-4

the impact of this highway to both ground level ozone and the P-2 standard of particulates? We believe it will actually increase air pollution because of the traffic volumes and also potential for more traffic problems on Route 1 when you dump a two lane road onto an existing backed up road. It's not going to get better.

SCJT-4

To look at ground level ozone and particulates are two major things that I think haven't been addressed enough in this EIS and are deficient.

SCJT-5

On top of that, I believe it violates the State's SIP plan that they have with the EPA for clean air, where we're supposed to be looking for trip reductions, and this is definitely a trip generator.

SCJT-6

The other concern that I have is that we have priority wetlands. We have an area that's already been designated that. We know that there are endangered species also throughout this region. Especially wood turtles, bald eagle is not too far away. I don't believe the environmental assessment goes enough to look at the impact of this road, especially if it cuts through something like the Plainsboro Reserve,

where we know there's all kinds of documents of TIE.

The EIS seems to be missing a lot of that.

SCJT-6

Another major one that I see is, again, we're not looking at the region, we're looking very narrowly at a very small piece of it. We do have 522 in place, which is the alternative road that EPA Region II thought would be better to upgrade than to cut through priority wetland.

SCJT-7

On top of that, there's been a major new development happening with road policy and transit in the region, which is the designation of the Pennsylvania Turnpike extension off the Turnpike to connect to Route 95. Currently that connection, New Jersey Turnpike, Pennsylvania Turnpike, does not have an interchange at Route 95.

SCJT-8

Pennsylvania is talking about, and the D & R Bridge Commission is talking about putting an interchange at 95, widening the bridge over the Delaware, connecting 95 to New Jersey Turnpike in Burlington County just south of here.

That's going to make a major shift in traffic patterns because many of the

trucks that go up 95 and come up Route 1 and try to sneak over to the Turnpike will not do that now, they can just come from Philadelphia, cross the river there and go up the Turnpike.

It's going to change the traffic. It's going to change commuting patterns.

The concern I have is that's not even looked at in this EIS as part of the whole process.

So, what we would, basically, say is that we should go back, work with the communities and the people involved, do something similar to the Penns Neck bypass issue, where, actually, everybody got together, came up with a pretty good plan to resolve the local traffic issues, versus a new road that's going to bring more congestion, more pollution, more sprawl.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Tittel.

Mr. Ted Van Nessen next, please, from the South Brunswick Township Council.

MR. VAN NESSEN: Thank you very much. My name is Ted Van Nessen, councilman from South Brunswick. I appreciate this opportunity to

SCJT-8

PH-07

address the Army Corps on this critical issue.

By way of background, this is my fourth term on the governing body of South Brunswick. I'm a former mayor and have been employed previously with the New Jersey Department of Transportation. In both of those roles the issue of east/west travel through Central New Jersey is a clear and ever present issue and a clear and ever present problem. Route 92 alleges to address that issue.

The reality, as many of us believe, is that Route 92 is a private driveway. And, those who support it allege it's not.

Route 92 must do one of two things. It's either a private driveway, as we allege, or it's a regional solution to a regional problem, as its proponents allege, if Route 92 as it's originally conceived from the New Jersey Turnpike to Route 206 can conceivably be a regional solution to a regional problem.

What we have with Route 92 instead is a roadway that goes from the New Jersey Turnpike and terminates at Route 1.

Nowhere in the EIS or in any of the supporting documents is a discussion of what

SBTTV-1

SBTTV-1

happens next. What happens to the traffic that emanates from the New Jersey Turnpike and terminates on Route 1? Where does it go? One can only conclude that it is, in fact, a private driveway and that that traffic terminates at Forrestal Village.

Those who argue that it doesn't, where is it addressed in the EIS? What happens to towns such as Kingston, Rocky Hill, Griggstown, Blackwells Mills, East Millstone, Hopewell, Manville, East Amwell, Pennington? I think it's only Kingston that's addressed in all of the EIS.

SBTTV-2

Traffic, if it's not a private driveway and it doesn't terminate at Princeton Forrestal, needs to go somewhere.

By all accounts, Route 1 in South Brunswick is a failed roadway. I believe there are six, maybe seven, intersections in Route 1 which are deemed F intersections. Something has to happen.

It is inconceivable to place a greater traffic demand, which Route 92 arguably brings, it's inconceivable to put a greater traffic demand on Route 1 northbound or southbound

north of this proposed interchange between 92 and Route 1.

SBTTV-2

Locally, South Brunswick and other communities have been aggressively addressing the issue of east/west traffic in South Brunswick. We got Route 522, which is a four lane highway, indeed, connecting, ultimately, the exchange to the Turnpike and Route 1. It's in place. It's here. And, yet, there are elements of that, including the soon to be constructed final segment, which connects the last piece from Route 130 over to Route 535 just above the Turnpike interchange.

SBTTV-3

It's not addressed in the EIS.

Also underway is a redesign of Route 8A interchange, putting that traffic, in fact, right onto 535, where it would have easy and immediate access to the soon to be constructed last leg of Route 522. Not addressed in the EIS.

SBTTV-4

These all should be.

The principle of traffic and traffic volume is one of dispersion. Route 92 is quite the antithesis of the principle of dispersion. It's a concentrator. By any measure, Route 92 in order to be economically sufficient,

SBTTV-5

in order to be economically self sustainable as a toll roadway, it has to be a concentrator. It has to draw that traffic in both directions.

The antithesis of traffic planning and planning traffic engineer.

We encourage the Army Corps of Engineers to make sure that all transportation elements that are radially affected from this proposed roadway, both west of its terminus, north of its terminus, and on the eastern end over by Exit 8A, up through Route 535 and the appending Route 522, Route 535 interchange, be addressed, be reviewed, and that those traffic counts and traffic indicators be included in the EIS and a direct response be provided.

SBTTV-5

Secondly, if this is, indeed, a roadway that is not a private driveway and it's going to disburse traffic, there has to be a down line to that, and that down line has got to travel west.

That then raises the specter of segmentation, is this the first, and then there's more to follow to get it out to Route 206. Again, elements that need to be considered.

SBTTV-6

I thank you very much for your

time. I could go on for three hours more, but then everyone else here wants to speak.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Van Hessen.

Our next speaker will be Craig Marshall.

MR. MARSHALL Craig Marshall, M-A-R-S-H-A-L-L. I'm the Planning Director, Director of Planning and Community Development, if you want the whole thing, for South Brunswick Township.

PH-08

Please refer to comment group WC005 for comment codes.

Thank you, Colonel, for the opportunity to speak on the Route 92 DEIS.

I recently happened to hear President Bush give a speech on the radio from the Rookery Bay Reserve near the Everglades in Florida. The Rookery Bay ecosystem is a prime example of a nearly pristine, subtropical mangrove forested estuary. It represents one of the few remaining undisturbed mangrove estuaries in North America.

The wetlands proposed to be disturbed by Route 92 also have national significance. The draft Environmental Impact Statement reports the United States Fish and

1 Wildlife Service considers the wetlands in the
2 vicinity of proposed Route 92 as an aquatic
3 resource of national importance, in part because
4 of the presence of neotropical migrant birds.
5 There are also threatened
6 plants and animals in this area.
7 During his speech, the
8 President stated wetlands are essential to a
9 healthy and diverse environment. He mentioned
10 efforts at all levels of the public and private
11 sectors to slow the loss of wetlands and his goal
12 of providing an overall increase in wetlands every
13 year. The administration is working to restore,
14 improve and protect three million acres of
15 wetlands over the next five years.
16 Proposed Route 92 would
17 permanently disturb over twelve acres of wetlands
18 and temporarily disturb almost three acres. Over
19 one acre of wetland would be permanently shaded.
20 Therefore, about sixteen acres of wetlands are
21 impacted by this project.
22 President Bush is proposing
23 three hundred and forty-nine million dollars in
24 the 2005 budget to accomplish his goal, an
25 increase of fifty percent over 2001 funding

levels. These dollars will continue to fund the North American Wetlands Conservation Act signed by President Bush's father on December 13, 1989.

This act encourages partnerships among federal agencies and others to protect, restore, enhance and manage wetlands and other habitats for migratory birds, fish and wildlife. It provides for the maintenance of healthy populations of migratory birds in North America that rely on us for the protection, restoration and management of wetland ecosystems.

The DEIS, as I earlier noted, indicates the Route 92 wetlands as an aquatic resource of national importance. The environmental impact of this road is unacceptable. It runs afoul of the area's federal destination, as well as the goals of the President and the North American Wetlands Conservation Act put into effect almost fifteen years ago.

It is up to us to determine the future. Route 92 should not be a part of that future. The President and Congress are encouraging wetlands preservation. We should follow the pathway laid before us and reject this roadway.

Thank you very much.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Marshall.

We will next here from Shirley Eberle, councilwoman for Franklin Township.

MS. EBERLE: My name is Shirley Eberle, E-B-E-R-L-E. I am representing Franklin Township.

PH-09

I would like to read our resolution. It's a little long, so when my time is up, I won't be able to finish it, but it's still heart felt in what I'd be able to express.

First of all, I want to mention that Franklin Township is adamantly opposed to Route 92, and in our resolution that we have sent you we have all our reasoning outlined.

When my time is up, then I'll just submit it.

"Whereas, the following, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, NJTA, has proposed an extension of the Turnpike to Route 1 near the Village of Kingston, known as Route 92. The United States Environmental Protection Agency has three times rejected wetlands permits required to construct Route 92. The New Jersey Department of

1 Environmental Protection issued wetland permits to
2 construct 92, contradicting this decision to not
3 issue these permits. The NJTA has applied to the
4 United States Army Corps of Engineers to arbitrate
5 this dispute and issue permits, effectively
6 overriding the US EPA. The contractor that US ACA
7 hired to do the Route 92 EIS has done substantial
8 business with the New Jersey Turnpike Authority,
9 raising a strong question of serious conflicts of
10 interest in the preparation of the EIS.
11 "The EIS does not adequately
12 address the impacts Route 92 would have upon the
13 region and, particularly, the historic communities
14 of Kingston, Griggstown, Blackwells Mills and East
15 Millstone. Traffic sprawl and pollution from
16 Route 92 would particularly impact these
17 historical communities.
18 "Route 92 traffic would
19 increase congestion on the roads in Franklin
20 Township, making local traffic more difficult,
21 discourage more people bicycling, and reduce the
22 quality of life in Franklin Township's communities
23 and neighborhoods. With or without Route 92, all
24 but two local intersections in the DEIS study
25 still fail.

1 "We believe that Route 92, of
2 course, will reach into our underground aquifers,
3 which supply our drinking water.
4 "Alternatives to Route 92 are
5 already built, including Route 522, which is
6 within one mile of 92, runs parallel to it, and is
7 a free multi-tax highway, that can handle high
8 speed traffic.
9 "A study by the Delaware Valley
10 Regional Planning Commission concluded that Bus
11 Rapid Transit with feeder services, rather than
12 this route, is a most viable alternative. Route
13 92 would waste gas, New Jersey public funds for
14 transportation improvements in a manner which
15 would worsen the sprawl.
16 "Be it resolved by the Franklin
17 Township Council of Franklin Township, County of
18 Somerset, State of New Jersey, Franklin Township
19 renews its opposition to the construction of Route
20 92 in its present alignment. Franklin Township
21 urges Governor James E. McGreevey to cancel Route
22 92 now and instead to use the money to allocate
23 for Route 92 to fund transportation which will
24 reduce traffic rather than exacerbate these
25 problems, involve all the municipalities in no 92

coalition in a fair construction process to relieve traffic congestion in the region, similar to the successful project used in Penns Neck.

"Franklin Township urges the NJ DEP not to reissue wetland permits to construct Route 92 and to support the Baroni Inverso bill to dis-authorize the Turnpike's construction of Route 92."

Thank you very much.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mrs. Eberle.

We'll next hear from Mr. George Ververides, Middlesex County Department of Planning.

MR. VERVERIDES: Thank you, Colonel. And good afternoon, everybody.

PH-10

I will try to express the County's position, which is somewhat opposite to everything you heard so far.

George Ververides. I'm Director of County Planning with Middlesex County.

Middlesex County has been very, very concerned about the development that has been occurring throughout the County, but particularly to this region. Route 92 goes back some

forty-five years. This road initially, in order to meet the demands we felt back then started on Route 206, as was explained before, extended through Middlesex County, through the Townships of Plainsboro, Cranbury, South Brunswick, and terminated on Route 33, east of Hightstown. And, this was supposed to be a regional road, which we supported.

The road has, through many years, been modified to the extent where it is now proposed between the Turnpike Interchange 8A and Route 1. The Hightstown bypass, so to speak, has been constructed from 571 west of Hightstown to Route 33, east of Hightstown.

That's part of the network.

Our concern in development of course lies around hot spots like Interchange 8A, where over two, three million square feet of warehousing is occurring, and our concern is with the development of the Port facilities in Elizabeth, Jersey City, that these warehousing areas are going to become very, very important to that total project. And, as goods are brought to these warehouses, they need to be distributed. And, this is going to cause and compound the

MCGV1-1

MCGV1-2

traffic situation within our county.

We have always felt over the last forty years that good east/west movement through this region is paramount. Yes, we have seen construction of Route 522, a county road, which extends from Route 27 to 130. And, eventually, hopefully, over to Route 535. This helps to serve some of the local traffic needs. But, the regional needs that we see, truck traffic and the distribution of goods to our consumer markets, which I might add we have one of the largest consumer market areas within this part of the country, right in this region, and these goods need to be moved to these areas efficiently and effectively.

The County has always supported east/west movement within this region, and we feel that 92 will help to support that. We have good north/south traffic at the present time, served by Route 1, the New Jersey Turnpike, Route 130, and, also, we have the northeast corridor rail line, which, of course, serves our commutership.

The lack of east/west roads to connect these north/south alignments, of course, is important to us. And, we have looked at this

quite carefully and over the years we've supported the east/west movement of this county, particularly Route 92, by the Board of Chosen Freeholders, or transportation coordinating committee, which is made up of all the municipalities within this region and other parts of the County, our agricultural development board, which has looked at this from the perspective of the agricultural lands that might be affected.

We find that these areas that Route 92 traverses are not within the agricultural designated areas of the County, although they are agricultural areas, and none of these are under present protected easement programs. MCGV1-3

In terms of environment, we realize and we understand that the Route 92 now would have to be looked at with the new stormwater management rules in place, and this will have to be reviewed as well from that perspective. MCGV1-4

So, in total, our concerns are, of course, from the region's perspective. Yes, we would like -- we are aware of the concerns of South Brunswick Township because of the traffic that you feel is going to be generated, but at the same time to see the developments that are MCGV1-5

occurring in places like South Brunswick, South Brunswick, if you review the census for the year 2000, is the fastest growing township within this region of the County. And, with that increase in population we have to create proper movement of these people between jobs, between schools, between places of work and places of recreation.

MCGV1-5

We thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Ververides.

We'll next hear from Mr. Christopher Killmurray, South Brunswick Council.

MR. KILLMURRAY: Thank you.

PH-11

Good afternoon, everybody.

Obviously, by my button you can tell I oppose Route 92. I have great respect for my friends at the county, but I do respectfully disagree with the position you're taking on this roadway. The study we're looking at is a flawed study.

I don't want to take a lot of your time here because I feel that it's more important, it's nice, I appreciate that you're giving us the courtesy of letting the public

1 officials speak. At the end of the day it's more
2 important to listen to the people out here, the
3 residents who pay your salaries.
4 As I reviewed this I had one
5 simple question that came to my mind. I try to
6 look at things as simply as possible. I kept
7 saying to myself, how could one arm of the Federal
8 Government, the Army Corps of Engineers, ignore
9 the criticism that another arm of the Federal
10 Government had, the arm of the Federal Government
11 that's charged with protecting our environment,
12 the Federal Environmental Protection Agency?
13 They had legitimate criticism
14 of this project, and they're the arm that's
15 charged with protecting the environment.
16 With all due respect to the
17 Army Corps of Engineers, they tend to be the arm
18 of the government that's involved in questions
19 such as this, where they're looking at
20 developments.
21 I really think we need to focus
22 on what the EPA has to say about this. I don't
23 see how we can ignore their legitimate concerns.
24 I have some other concerns as I
25 reviewed this statement, reviewed this study. I'm

SBTCK-1

SBTCK-2

not certain if there ever was a real study or an in depth study of Route 1 traffic, who uses the road, where they coming from, where are they going, how can we guarantee that that's just going to evaporate, disappear, and this road is going to be the magic cure all for that?

I don't see that. I don't see the study contemplates that.

SBTCK-2

I also saw a flaw in that this study seemed to end in this area.

SBTCK-3

We all know the impact a road such as Route 92 will have. It's going to go far west of this area. How can you not look at the impact on Kingston and Somerset County towns, because, guess what, folks, you're next.

I appreciate the time you're giving us, and I hope you look at this and look at it as simply as I did and look at the legitimate concerns that the Federal EPA had.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Killmurray.

We'll next hear from Jeanette Kay Muser, Rocky Hill Planning Board.

Ms. Muser.

All right, we'll move onto Ann Zeman, Kingston Village Advisory Committee for Joint Townships of South Brunswick and Franklin. And, if Ms. Muser comes in, I'll put her back in order.

Ms. Zeman.

PH-12

MS. ZEMAN: Good afternoon. My name is Ann Zeman, Z-E-M-A-N. I'm the chair of the Kingston Village Advisory Committee for the Joint Townships of South Brunswick and Franklin.

Kingston is a designated village center under the state development and redevelopment plan, and our committee was established in order to ensure that certain planning goals of Kingston are incorporated formerly into the state plan through a planning implementation agenda, PIA, for the village and its environs. Our central objectives are preservation of the historic character of the village and the establishment of open space around the village.

KVAC-1

In the Committee's view, the Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Impact Statement fails to address the primary and secondary impact of proposed Route 92 and its

KVAC-1

construction on the historic Village of Kingston, its environs and other nearby historic communities in Central New Jersey. Particularly, those west of the terminus at Route 1.

The flaws and inconsistencies of the EIS are substantial and grave. They call into question the authority and validity of the entire process.

KVAC-2

In the EIS scoping meeting of June 8, 2000 the Army Corps of Engineers requested input from the public about what to include in their study. We sent representatives to this meeting and submitted a detailed memorandum to Mr. James Haggerty, at the time the lead Army officer for the Route 92 study. One week later Mr. Haggerty, on June 15th, after reviewing our memorandum and visiting Kingston, wrote to the chair of the Kingston Village task force, and I quote, "Both Joe Zabo and I have toured Kingston area. We are keenly aware of the historical significance of the Kingston community and are especially sensitive to the community's concerns regarding the Route 92 project. It is greatly because of the expression of these concerns that we are determining that an EIS is necessary for

this project."

In part, because of Mr. Haggerty's assurance that one of the primary goals of the EIS was to assess Route 92's impact on Kingston, our committee has carefully reviewed the EIS for the proposed Route 92 and its impact on the village center and environs, yet, there is virtually nothing in this report about Kingston. Where is it and why was it ignored when the Army Corps prepared the EIS?

KVAC-2

Kingston is mentioned, but barely mentioned, in one thousand two hundred pages. This EIS provides no estimate of Route 92's impact on Kingston's traffic flow, pedestrian safety, roadway conditions or maintenance, noise levels, air quality or water quality. It makes no assessment of the road's impact on the Cook natural area, a national land trust protected, less than one mile from the Route 92 terminus. It does not evaluate the highway's impact on the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, historic Rockingham, or the protected canal zone, historic homes to the west in Franklin, Rocky Hill and Griggstown.

KVAC-3

KVAC-4

KVAC-5

From our point of view, the EIS

is incomplete and wholly inadequate as an instrument for decision making. Proceeding with construction on Route 92 on the basis of this EIS is unthinkable and unconscionable.

KVAC-6

The little mention that is made of Kingston in the EIS is superficial, but the implications are, nonetheless, sobering and grave.

The most expansive treatment of Kingston we were able to find occurs on page executive summary thirteen, which states that "the historic Village of Kingston has expressed concerns regarding the volume of traffic using Kingston's local roads, particularly Ridge Heathcote, a two lane rural roadway without shoulders, which provides an east/west connection between Route 1 and Route 27."

The report does go on to say that if Route 92 is built, traffic models show an additional twenty trucks will use Ridge Heathcote Road during peek times.

KVAC-7

This was referred to earlier as a slight increase.

The trucks are the kind of vehicles so large they can barely negotiate the turns from Heathcote onto Main Street, but what is

peek time? And, as far as trucks are concerned, there is no peak traffic. Truck traffic doesn't behave the same way automobile traffic does. Truckers don't have to be at their desks by nine a.m. Truck traffic is steady and continuous for the better part of the workday from six a.m. to six p.m., and the homes along Ridge and Heathcote, according to this EIS, can expect to experience the noise, the exhaust and the vibration of twenty additional trucks every hour or one truck every three minutes over and above the volume that currently exists or would exist without Route 92.

KVAC-7

My one last point is that while the EIS predicts twenty additional trucks per hour, it is virtually silent on the number of cars. You have to back into the miles and miles of appendices at the end and try to add up all the intersections. And, I don't blame them. I wouldn't put it in there. I'd gloss over it because it's thousands of cars. The former study showed twelve thousand cars into Kingston and the EPA study showed fifteen thousand.

KVAC-8

So, what we're requesting is that we have a round table, much like the Penns Neck bypass, and that we urge the additional -- we

KVAC-9

KVAC-9

asked this in the original scope, and we ask you again, to please study the impact west of the terminus.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Zeman.

We're going to take a five-minute break. I'm going to give my stenographer a chance to get her fingers uncramped. I'm going to start right on time because we still have twenty of you that have signed up to speak, and if we don't even take a break for pause, that's a hundred additional minutes to go yet. I want to get you all up here.

In five minutes we'll start again.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Mr. Cohen.

Before we begin, I want to remind everyone again to state your name, then spell it, and be aware of where the microphone is at the stand, and please try to speak into it or adjust it so that you can only so that the stenographer is sure to capture accurately the statements that you're making. The air

conditioning here is causing her to have a problem hearing some of the commentary today. So, please speak clearly and into the microphone.

We're going to begin now with Mr. Edward Cohen, transportation coordinator for Monroe Township.

MR. COHEN: Thank you, Colonel. My name is Edward Cohen, C-O-H-E-N. I represent Monroe Township. The Mayor and the Township Council has gone on record several times endorsing the Route 92 concept. I'm here to specifically address an area around Exit 8A.

PH-13

Exit 8A consists of five entities, government entities, obviously, the New Jersey Turnpike, the State DOT with Route 32, the County of Middlesex with Route 535, the municipality of South Brunswick and the municipality of Monroe Township all have parcels of property around and on the area concerning Exit 8A. The traffic congestion surrounding Exit 8A is worsening with each passing month. State planners estimate that each weekday about twenty thousand cars and twenty-one hundred trucks squeeze onto the two lane roads that are found in the Exit 8A

area. The Exit 8A market continues to evolve as one of the nation's most dynamic industrial hubs. At the end of 2003 industrial leasing activity in the area reached an amazing forty-one million square feet. Current estimates are that this industrial development and its accompanying traffic growth will double by the year 2015.

It is more than obvious that something must be done and done as quickly as possible.

The State DOT recently had a meeting in Monroe Township called Congestion Busters, where they invited people of industry and municipalities and citizen groups to talk about how do we handle the existing traffic around Exit 8A.

The DOT considers the traffic around Exit 8A as the worst in the State. It is the number one area where this group, Congestion Busters, have been trying to reach solutions.

A review of the DEIS shows that there are no environmental impacts on the section one of Route 92. Section one is the half mile portion between Exit 8A and Route 130. There are no wetlands, no environmentally sensitive areas.

MOTEC-1

MOTEC-1

All of the entities involved, both formally and informally, in the area of Exit 8A, the entities that I just described, have endorsed the concept of expediting the construction of the section between Exit 8A and Route 130.

We strongly urge that the Corps specifically note in the final EIS that there are no impediments to the immediate approval and construction of section one of Route 92, the portion between Exit 8A and Route 130.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Cohen.

Our next speaker will be Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

PH-14

MR. NEWTON: Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am the New Jersey coordinator for the -- Damien Newton, N-E-W-T-O-N.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am the New Jersey coordinator for the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. The campaign is the region's leading nonprofit consortium of experts, planning organizations, activists, and environmental groups concerned with

1 transportation. Our mission is to achieve an
2 environmentally sound, economically efficient, and
3 socially just transportation network and system in
4 the thirty-two counties in and surrounding New
5 York City, including Central New Jersey and its
6 communities.
7 Toward that end we have
8 participated in numerous panel discussions,
9 projects, participation processes, planning
10 sessions, permit hearings and round tables
11 designed to help Central New Jersey make decisions
12 about how to save land use, to reduce trips and
13 traffic, and what transportation projects are
14 worth investing in and which are not worth
15 investing in.
16 We have testified and submitted
17 comments on Route 92 before, several times, in
18 fact. This is a rather old project. We have
19 heard today that planning for a project like this,
20 or this project, began some decades ago. To its
21 proponents this means that Route 92 has been
22 delayed too long. To us it proves that Route 92
23 comes from the past and that it belongs in the
24 past. A replica of the old way of thinking about
25 how to get from one place to another or how to

1 solve traffic congestion.
2 Unfortunately, as William
3 Faulkner wrote in Wick For A Nun, the past is
4 never dead, it is not even the past.
5 Truer words cannot be spoken of
6 Route 92. While each successive transportation
7 development has found reason to avoid its
8 construction, delay its permitting, redefine its
9 objectives, and then, finally, hand it off to the
10 Turnpike Authority, despite even a legislative
11 enactment, N.J.S.A. 27:23-23.8, urging its
12 completion and defining unlawfully its alignment
13 and termini, Route 92 has not advanced at all.
14 Prior Environmental Impact
15 Statements of the project occurred in 1986, 1994,
16 and 1999, along with several intervening traffic
17 studies. Costing as much as three hundred fifty
18 million dollars for just 6.7 miles of highway, or
19 fifty-two million dollars a mile. It is the
20 second most expensive highway New Jersey has
21 ever -- well, never built. Route 92 is nothing
22 less than a hot potato. Most elected officials
23 above the level of mayor don't want responsibility
24 for approving it, hence, the Army Corps'
25 involvement.

Before going into a lot of detail here of the five principle findings of the DEIS.

Route 92 won't improve gridlock. Out of the fourteen local intersections studied eleven will still fail during the morning rush in 2028 if Route 92 is built. Ten will also fail in the evening rush. Few drivers would use Route 92. Less than twenty percent of westbound trips in the morning rush will use Route 92 and less than one-third of evening eastbound through trips will also use it. Less than two hundred fifty trucks will use Route 92 during both the a.m. and p.m. peak hours. Though diverting trucks from local roads has been a big justification from the highway, Route 92 will promote sprawl. Route 92 will possibly develop sprawl development.

Route 92 will cost upwards of three hundred fifty million dollars at a time, when the State is borrowing hundreds of millions just to fix its existing roads and bridges.

Clearly, this is a highway that requires a lot of scrutiny.

The impact of traffic on Route 1, the impact of Route 92 on Route 1 north and

TSTCDN-1

TSTCDN-2

TSTCDN-3

TSTCDN-4

TSTCDN-5

TSTCDN-5

south during peak hour and peak period are important to know so that the project's ability to meets it's stated purpose and objective of diverting north/south trips from Route 1, thereby relieving congestion in the region may be judged, however, unlike the 1999 application and supplement by the Turnpike Authority, this DEIS contains no information about the trips that will be added to Route 1 by Route 92's construction south of Ridge Road in either the a.m. or p.m. rush hour period, nor is any intersection on Route 1 south of Ridge Road analyzed in terms of level of service or any other criteria in this DEIS.

In 1999 the Turnpike admitted that while Route 92 would reduce traffic on Route 1 north of Ridge Road significantly with traffic shifting to the Turnpike, "South of Ridge Road traffic on Route U.S. 1 increases."

See the January 6, 1999 Section 404 permit application at 19.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you.

MR. NEWTON: Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'll complete my testimony in the evening testimony period.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Newton.

Ms. Cathy Dowgin, please.

MS. DOWGIN: My name is Cathy Dowgin, D-O-W-G-I-N. For many years now I have fought to keep Route 92 from being constructed. For many years now I have said the same things that I will say now. Route 92 is not needed, will cost half a billion dollars, and will devastate many communities and the environment.

PH-15

Please refer to comment group WC054 for comment codes.

It's unclear whether new traffic studies were performed or not performed for this EIS. At the start of the process I questioned the Army Corps on this very issue. On May 1, 2001 I received an E-mail from Jim Haggerty at the Corps who said, and I quote, "We fully expect the contractor and/or their subcontractor to visit the planned route of the entire road."

He continued that the DEIS "is likely to contain an amalgamation of updated reports, as well as reports started from scratch. We would anticipate that, as a minimum, the traffic report -- at minimum, the traffic report would be started from scratch, since we are

1 requesting traffic data over a much wider area
2 than previously examined." But, on August 7th of
3 the same year he informed me via E-mail, "There
4 are no scheduled field visits by either us, the
5 third-party contractor or their subcontractors."
6 From these exchanges, plus the
7 lack of new information contained in the DEIS, one
8 would conclude that the traffic study portion of
9 the DEIS is sadly out of date. For this reason, I
10 would request that new traffic studies be
11 performed that take into account the completed
12 522, the extension of 522 to 535, and a requested
13 widening of Route 1 in South Brunswick Township.
14 Additionally, the study area
15 must be widened to include towns west of Route 1,
16 Kingston, Rocky Hill, the Hopewells, Montgomery
17 Township, Griggstown, Franklin, and, yes, even the
18 Princetons.
19 The Federal EPA has thrice said
20 no to Route 92 using the same information on which
21 the Army Corps has based their study. After four
22 years and approximately five million dollars all
23 we have from the Corps is an unusual and suspect
24 slant on old information. The reality is that
25 Route 92 will increase traffic on our local roads,

1 not reduce it. Route 92 will terminate at the
2 narrowest part of Route 1 in the vicinity of Ridge
3 Road, with traffic continuing onto Route 1
4 southbound, causing jams of titanic proportions.
5 Route 1 is now a commuter's nightmare and will,
6 according to the New Jersey Turnpike's own traffic
7 studies, get worse, not better.
8 Route 92 is not needed to
9 facilitate east/west traffic. The Army Corps'
10 DEIS shows us a grid with fifteen intersections
11 that are at D or F levels without Route 92. The
12 number of failing intersections does not change
13 with the construction of Route 92. There are many
14 alternatives to Route 92 that will satisfy the
15 need for better east/west traffic circulation,
16 including 522, which is less than two miles north
17 of the proposed Route 92 and will be extended to
18 535 within a year.
19 Most importantly, Route 522 is
20 free, so truckers are more likely to use it than
21 Route 92. And, there are enough access points to
22 make it useful to local residents as well as the
23 transients. There are many other ways to
24 facilitate traffic in the Central New Jersey area
25 and a round table that includes the residents and

governing bodies of the affected local towns must be put together in order to ensure that the best solution is put into place.

Governor McGreevey has pledged fiscal responsibility and an end to subsidized sprawl. Route 92 does exactly the opposite. Route 92 is 6.7 miles in length and is expected to cost over five hundred million dollars. Almost seventy-five million dollars per mile. And, that does not include wetland mitigation or highway maintenance.

The bill from Route 92 will very likely be even higher when all is said and done.

According to the Army Corps' study, Route 92 will save, at most, four minutes of travel time by the year 2028, resulting in a cost of over a hundred million dollars a minute. Are four minutes really worth ruining so much of our environment and wasting so much of our money?

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Dowgin.

Our next speaker will be Mr. Joseph McNamara, New Jersey LECES.

MR. McNAMARA: Thank you,

1 Colonel. My name is Joseph McNamara,
2 M-c-N-A-M-A-R-A. Today I'm representing two
3 organizations, primarily, though, the New Jersey
4 Society for Economic and Environmental
5 Development, where I'm president. SEED is the
6 acronym. We're a statewide aggregate for
7 investment both in the economy and environment.
8 We take a look at the balance approach in what we
9 need. We feel very strongly, you cannot have a
10 very good economic foundation or good environment
11 without the other. They're not mutually
12 exclusive.
13 Plus, my business office, which
14 is New Jersey LECES, is located at Interchange
15 Plaza at Exit 8A. I experienced for the last
16 eight years some of the growing populations,
17 business and traffic conditions in the area.
18 I think we can all agree, and
19 there's some differences here, obviously, that
20 over the next ten, twenty years, not only in
21 Middlesex County, but in New Jersey, our
22 population traffic is going to grow. The question
23 is, what do we do about it?
24 Some of the choices, some of
25 the solutions are very difficult. I think forums

1 like this are helpful at least to bring points of
2 view together.
3 It's important that we go back.
4 The role of this hearing is to look at the purpose
5 and need of this study, the Route 92 study. I
6 think we can generally agree that we got to
7 improve traffic flows, cars and trucks, between
8 east and west in Middlesex County, throughout the
9 State, but in this area, particularly with all the
10 industrial development that's happened, that's
11 planned and it's zoned for. Looking at that, if
12 that's the purpose. And, the other is to take as
13 much of the non-local traffic off our local
14 roadways.
15 How do we then come to some
16 solution?
17 We reviewed -- New Jersey SEED
18 reviewed all the alternatives in some detail. If
19 you look at some of the options, alternatives we
20 have, the first one, no build alternative is going
21 to increase traffic on local streets. I don't
22 think there's any question about that. We're
23 going to have the traffic whether we don't build
24 92, build 92, improve Route 1. Whatever it might
25 be, it's going to happen. So, if we don't do

anything, traffic on 522, Dey Road, all those going to the Turnpike, will increase.

Same thing with Route 1 improvements.

Yes, we got to look at Route 1. It's independent.

Even this DEIS suggests that if you widen Route 1, if you don't, it's going to increase traffic on the local roadways, which is against the purpose of this study and against what I think most of the people really want.

SEED-1

As we view it, Route 92 is the only one that meets this criteria. I heard something sort of interesting. I heard if we don't do anything, we'll increase traffic on local roads.

One of the things that was just mentioned by some others from South Brunswick, look at roadway improvements.

SEED-2

I know people that live in developments around 522. To me, if I lived in South Brunswick, and I don't, but widening of 522 would increase truck traffic and traffic by thousands and thousands. I think I read in the DEIS, sixty thousand cars a day. The impact on

residents that would have to be taken, impact on noise and air quality. Far greater than 92.

I think the analysis of the environmental impact is far more in depth that what's been betrayed here today. I think people in South Brunswick really should look at that 522 issue. I know people who have.

We have a problem. We got to find it. I have not heard anything in the comments, and some very good comments and things that should be taken into account, but I have not heard any solution to resolving from a regional standpoint the traffic situation here in Middlesex County. And, I also, since I have some time, question the idea of sprawl.

This is a regional road. It has two exit points with some limited accesses we have said. That is the antithesis of sprawl. Where you have sprawl is where you have highways with many exits and entrances. That promotes housing.

This, if anything, is anti-sprawl.

Cost wise, we talked about the cost. The New Jersey Turnpike, again, this may be

SEED-2

SEED-3

SEED-4

outside the scope, but since it's been raised, the cost of this project has been earmarked by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. If, indeed, we do nothing and all of a sudden 522 has to be widened to six lanes and you have to do some other improvements on Dey Road, that will have to be done by the State, county or local level. That means the individual taxpayers will have to pay for that.

SEED-4

This has been a carefully planned, carefully financed program, and I think you should give it strong consideration. Remember the alternatives, what may come back to bite you in the end. Time is everything.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. McNamara.

Our next speaker will be Edward Pfeiffer, Central New Jersey Group Sierra Club.

MR. PFEIFFER: Thank you. I'm Ed Pfeiffer, P-F-E-I-F-F-E-R. I'm the conservation chair for the Central Group Sierra Club. That's the local Sierra Club. I'd like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak before you today.

PH-17

Please refer to comment group WC053 for comment codes.

I'd like to raise some concerns

about the draft Environmental Impact Statement, and I'm going to restrict myself, basically, to that in its present form and ask you a few questions concerning that study as kind of examples of my concern and our concern, and realizing that our commentary is going to go beyond that when you get them in written form.

As we know, the Route 92 project will destroy approximately twelve plus acres of wetlands, transect the Plainsboro Preserve, fragment extensive wildlife habitat, potentially threaten endangered species in open space lands, specifically mentioned nesting bald eagles in that area, pave over approximately one hundred acres of land, and significantly impact additional public and farmlands. There's a lot at stake here. So, this makes it all the more imperative to get the study right, to seek additional input, and to update with new information as part of an ongoing process.

Certainly, the round table and the stakeholders process sounds like a really good way to go.

At the moment I don't think the study is complete. I think far from it. The

1 study needs further work. There are bases and
2 assumptions and methods that I can spot that need
3 further explanation and clarification.
4 So, anyway, I'd like the Army
5 Corps of Engineers to consider the following
6 questions as thoroughly and completely as possible
7 as part of our commentary:
8 Your group suggested at one
9 point in your study, alternatives examined, I
10 believe that's Section 2, that Route 92 will have
11 less impact on the Plainsboro Preserve than the US
12 EPA aligned route, and that the US EPA route will
13 have greater impacts to parkland and open space
14 than Route 92.
15 That doesn't make sense to me.
16 Could you explain your conclusions better?
17 In characterization of the
18 affected environment, Section 3, you apparently
19 rely on something called an FHWA wetlands
20 functional assessment system that gave you low
21 values for general diversity of wildlife habitat,
22 et cetera. Explain this in more detail. How
23 accurate, reliable and predictive is this system,
24 and was this method verified through any
25 independent observational on-site study?

1 Generally, speaking of all the
2 methods used in your wildlife studies, what are
3 their strengths and weaknesses? What does the
4 scientific literature say about their use? How
5 accurate are they?
6 Regarding SOC, species of
7 concern, are there other methods to confirm the
8 methods of species of concern other than using the
9 Natural Heritage Database. What are the
10 weaknesses of using this approach to study an
11 area? How many different methods can be used to
12 ensure complete confidence in the methodology of
13 the study? Shouldn't additional wildlife studies,
14 i.e., surveys be done?
15 Concerning the destroyed
16 cultural resources, the Van Pelt-Clark house in
17 2001, Dey Bayles house, what happened to these
18 houses? Explain that in more detail. And, the
19 Ayres-Lane farmstead, can you give us more details
20 on that? Have you considered the possibility that
21 there are other cultural resources that your study
22 may have missed?
23 In your Section 4, direct,
24 indirect, and cumulative impacts of the proposed
25 project and alternatives, noise impacts on

1 wildlife trying to cross below the bridges, was
2 this taken into account? What does the scientific
3 literature say about noise as a deterrent or
4 barrier to travel between habitats A and B? How
5 can stormwater management techniques protect
6 wildlife and wetlands from the pollution of toxic
7 vehicular related chemicals? What does the
8 scientific literature tell us about the success of
9 these techniques?
10 Mitigation action, Section 5,
11 regarding wetlends mitigation, NJTA wishes to
12 construct fifty-seven acres of additional acres to
13 mitigate the loss of wetlands. Why do you think
14 this will replace lost and fragmented habitat?
15 Projects in the past have failed to create new
16 wetlands. Literature suggests this cannot be
17 done.
18 Finally, some general questions
19 that I'd like to ask just about the Army Corps of
20 Engineers. These are kind of the questions that I
21 got on interviews and things like that.
22 What's your history in this
23 area? To the best of your knowledge, what has
24 been the impact of projects similar to this one on
25 the environment in terms of protecting endangered

species, mitigated fragmented wetlands, protecting wetlands pollution? What have been your past failures? What do you consider your successes?

In conclusion, let's do it right because we have the potential to destroy something here that we cannot replace.

Thanks again.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Pfeiffer.

Next will be Mr. George Hawkins, Executive Director, Stony Brook/Millstone Watershed Association.

PH-18

MR. HAWKINS: Good afternoon. My name is George Hawkins, H-A-W-K-I-N-S. I am the executive director of the Stony Brook/Millstone Watershed Association, which since 1949 has been working to improve the environment and natural resources in Central New Jersey. I'm grateful for the opportunity to comment on the environmental draft of the Environmental Impact Statement and would like to first start with reminding ourselves what the purpose of an EIS is under the National Environmental Policy Act, which it implements.

The effort that NEPA was

1 undertaking when it was first passed in 1970 was
2 to make sure that before any federal funds are
3 extended that a full range of alternatives are
4 analyzed so that we can make the best decisions as
5 a society about how our funds are expended.
6 One of the efforts of NEPA is
7 to look at impacts to environmental cumulative
8 individual secondary impacts, and evaluate them
9 across a series of alternatives, including no
10 build.
11 When considering these impacts
12 you got to also look, obviously, at the cost and
13 expense of the various projects at hand.
14 A quick review of this
15 document, which is actually difficult to do given
16 its length, suggests a very complicated analysis
17 here. The cost has been stated at somewhere in
18 the range of three hundred fifty to five hundred
19 million dollars. That is a rather extraordinary
20 number. Granted, some of these funds, a large
21 portion, may be from the Turnpike Authority, but
22 that money doesn't come from nowhere, it comes
23 from us ultimately.
24 So, this is an expenditure of
25 our funds.

SBMWA-1

So, the question is, in comparison to this expenditure what are the various impacts and benefits that we might receive? And, a reading of the document finds a very murky picture. On traffic there is a marginal improvement on almost, if any, on almost any of the alternatives for an expenditure of this size. Granted, a no build situation would yield a worse traffic situation in the future, but I don't think anybody in this room, any citizen of good conscious, believes we intend to do nothing in Central New Jersey. It's an inappropriate phase.

There's all sorts of fix it first projects of improving our roadways that can be undertaken at far less cost that will improve traffic.

So, no build is not quite the right phrase, and it's not fair to paint that as the alternative. There will be lots of other projects that can be done to improve traffic other than a non-92. Nonetheless, in all the alternatives there's only marginal benefits for a great expenditure.

SBMWA-2

On the environment the impact seemed very insignificant. Most of the loss was

put on wetlands.

We're grateful that one of the alternatives does reduce the loss of wetlands from what it would have been. There's fragmentation of forest, there's open space, there's farm fields, some of the more beautiful parts of our community that this road will go through. There was something called the big map that Commissioner Campbell had proposed, which is no longer in effect, but that was visual representation of ecological resources.

If you plot this road over what was the big map copying from this administration, there's almost entire areas that we would call red, and red meant don't build there because of significant environmental consequence.

Third is on the community.

There, certainly, is division in the communities here about pro and con on the road. I understand Plainsboro is very much in favor, we heard from South Brunswick and Kingston and other areas which are greatly opposed. There seems to be tremendous conflict.

So, what conclusion would you come from this?

SBMWA-2

SBMWA-3

SBMWA-4

SBMWA-5

SBMWA-6

First, we would recommend strongly, as have others, that a round table system be employed like we did for the Millstone bypass. John Coxton, of the Delaware Valley, far exceeded any other EIS in this region in obtaining the involvement of state, regional, county and local officials, as well as local and advocacy groups and other interested parties at the thirty-five round table meetings held since June 2001.

That was in two years. That was a shorter period of time than we waited for the EIS.

So, the round table did not take longer, it took shorter, and it had more opportunity for those of us that will forever have consequences of this road to understand its strengths and weaknesses and maybe come up with a set of solutions that would be in common.

So, we strongly suggest, as John Coxton supported, that a far more engaged public process for a road of this size and with this level of uncertainty and with this level of disagreement among communities, that one public comment period four years ago and then one today

is simply not enough to seek a consequence and a series of decisions. Maybe a lot of smaller ones instead of one big road, that might achieve our objectives.

I'd also like to mention once again, which you already heard me say, which is the fix it first idea.

There has been a great effort that what we really need in this state is constant improvement to many of the roadways that we already have. You can see them crumbling all around us. You would probably get agreement of everybody in this room. There would be no disagreement if we focused our attention and construction dollars and all sorts of jobs and improvements of traffic on improving infrastructure. We have to function as well as it could, along with improvements here and there, which would allow for transportation, rather than the permanent and massive expansion of a new road with such uncertain consequence and uncertain benefits.

SBMWA-7

So, we're hopeful that what tonight is is the beginning, this afternoon and tonight, of an extended public comment period

before such a very important decision is made on behalf of this state.

Thank you kindly.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Hawkins.

Before I introduce the next speaker, we're down to one hour for this session. Remember, there is another session tonight. There are eighteen speakers left. We're not going to get you all in. You can consider submitting written record, you can also consider taping your comments in the Kingston room in this building. I'm going to have to cut this off in just about an hour.

I'd like to next introduce Mr. Michael Paquette, Chief of Police, South Brunswick Police Department.

MR. PAQUETTE: Thank you, Colonel. Members of the Army Corps. Michael Paquette, P-A-Q-U-E-T-T-E. I'm the Chief of Police in South Brunswick Township. I'm also a resident of South Brunswick. And, I, like many of the other speakers, recognize that traffic is a monumental problem that must be broached. The question is how best to broach this regionalized

PH-19

problem?

Is Route 92 going to do what the conceptual plan says it's going to do? And, if that was to become a reality, that means, within a half hour, as you look out on your dinner brake, we won't see backup on Route 1 anymore, there will be no traffic on Old Ridge Road, and all the local roads will be empty so that police cars and emergency services can go back and forth unimpeded.

SBPD-1

I think everyone in this room knows that that is not, in fact, true.

When we talk about Route 92 and whether or not what is proposed will become the reality, one of those proposals is the truck traffic will now leave Route 1 and go on Route 92 to get to the Turnpike.

SBPD-2

If you're like me, not too many years ago when the Turnpike raised the tolls on the Turnpike, within two weeks of that raised toll the truck traffic doubled in South Brunswick. It has only gotten worse over time.

Now, being a realist, I would say that means people have an aversion to paying tolls. Route 92 being a toll road, is not going

to put the truck traffic on that road.

When we also talk about the impacts on the infrastructure in South Brunswick, I can tell you, at best, in the morning, a mile from here, from Ridge Road down to Raymond, we have localized gridlock every morning. For a mile south of that, at best, we have stop and go traffic. Have one accident, and we have regionalized gridlock.

I don't understand how, depending on which report you read, when they say that twelve to fifteen thousand more vehicles can be accommodated because of Route 92, it is not going to have an impact on South Brunswick, where that South Brunswick can afford this potential impact.

People may not know in the State of New Jersey where South Brunswick is, but all you have to tell them is that South Brunswick is where there's two lanes on Route 1. They know exactly where we are.

You are proposing fifteen thousand more cars in the throat of the hourglass. I can tell you as a law enforcement professional with almost twenty-seven years of experience in

SBPD-3

dealing with a multitude of matters, but traffic being one of the primary ones, that there is no way that this region, not just South Brunswick, this region, is going to be able to accommodate twelve to fifteen thousand more vehicles, regardless of whether they're automobiles or truck traffic.

SBPD-3

We need to find an option that's viable. Are there options out there that are viable, because I started off by saying I'm a realist, and I know we have to deal with the traffic problems and the traffic issues.

I think it's a mistake not to look at 522. 522, as a resident of South Brunswick, was a well thought out plan. It is a multi-lane highway. It accomplishes all the things that Route 92 is supposed to accomplish with none of the down sides that we just talked about from IS statement and all the other reports.

SBPD-4

See, being that realist I have to look at things in a cost benefit analysis. What is the cost to 92? What is the benefit to Route 92? And, when I make decisions for the police department, as "a businessman," what do I have to do? I have to say, do the benefits

SBPD-5

outweigh the negatives?

I can look at you, and I am looking at you straight in the eye and telling you with thirty-three years as a resident, twenty-seven years as a police officer, the benefits do not outweigh the negatives. The reverse is what is true.

SBPD-5

This is a monumental mistake. This is a formula for regionalized gridlock.

I know you're on a time limit. I guess the best way to put it is, I would challenge you during your dinner break, I know, Colonel, you said that you traveled the area at least sometimes. I don't know how frequently, but I'm glad you admitted it, so you're going to know at least some of what I'm asking you to do. Take your time, take a look outside in about a half hour, at five o'clock, because that will be better. Take a look outside at five o'clock on Route 1 and tell me that as people come home from work that Route 92 won't have an impact on Ridge Road, Raymond Road, Independence Way.

My final comment is this, when we talk about the infrastructure affect and the safety of our citizens, from Raymond Road and to

SBPD-6

Independence Way, north of us is Ridge Road, south of us is Independence Way, in the last four years we have had approximately two hundred accidents on Route 1 in those particular areas. I don't see Route 92 improving that. When those accidents occur, this whole town, Franklin, and all the other towns around us, shut down for a multitude of hours.

SBPD-6

I would ask you to look hard and fast at what Route 92 has to offer and then make the right decision as a viable offer for Route 522.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Chief Paquette.

Our next speaker will be Jeanette Muser. She was called earlier. Is she present now?

That one is out now.

Mr. Harold Switsgable.

Harold Switsgable?

Carolyn Peucker.

MS. PEUCKER: Hi, I'm Carolyn Peucker, P-E-U-C-K-E-R.

PH-20

I didn't expect to get called

so quick, so I'm not really ready. And, this is my son, Max. He's ten months old, and, hopefully, you'll be good for five minutes.

I've lived here for four years. I'm a scientist by training. I'm a graduate of Cook College Rutgers University, and I'm an environmental person by heart, and from the experiences that I had when I was in college.

I really think the environment is the most important thing to consider here, and I think the study -- I did not read it. I'll be honest with you. I have a very sick mother, and I have a young child, but from what I heard and what I read in the papers, it doesn't show that it's going to help, and it shows that it's going to hurt the environment.

CPE-1

That really should be the most important thing that we consider. And, I would just ask that you also consider all of us who live here, who are going to have to live with this. And, you guys don't, and we do, and I guess that's really all I have to say.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Peucker.

Our next speaker will be Elizabeth Sherer.

MS. SHERER: Thank you.

Hi, my name is Betsy Sherer, S-H-E-R-E-R. I'm from the Perrine Road Residents Association.

I grew up in northeastern New Jersey and saw firsthand the burgeoning sprawl of the '60s and beyond. Perhaps, we didn't know any better in those days, but we should know better now.

I applaud Governor McGreevey's smart growth initiative and the State's efforts to identify and protect the few remaining open spaces and environmental sensitive areas in this state.

Building Route 92 runs completely counter to both of these professed aims, as it would not only destroy the only remaining farmland and wetlands in Middlesex County, it would also encourage sprawl already designated by the State and federal government as environmental sensitive.

The fundamental issue here is not the false choice between doing nothing and building Route 92. Everyone knows how the area

PH-21

Please refer to comment group WC052 for comment codes.

1 has grown and resulting traffic problems. Actions
2 do need to be taken. However, there are several
3 more affected and far less evasive, destructive
4 and expensive ways to address these problems.
5 The DEIS does not identify
6 several of these options or even properly define
7 some of those that they do. For example, why was
8 Route 522 not evaluated at its true length, which
9 ends at Route 130? Why are current plans to
10 extend it all the way to Route 535 near Turnpike
11 8A not taken into account? How could you dump the
12 Route 92 traffic onto Route 1 without addressing
13 Route 1?
14 Instead of taking a broader and
15 more realistic approach, the DEIS evaluates each
16 of the few alternatives it does manage to identify
17 in isolation and then rejects them one by one as
18 if only one thing can be done at a time.
19 This is insanity. Has the
20 concept of multitasking somehow passed the Army
21 Corps by? The rights of solution should be a
22 combination of actions, taking into account
23 improving existing roadways and public
24 transportation options without further destroying
25 our environment and diminishing our quality of

life.

We can do better than Route 92. We need to start with a fair community based constrict process that works for the whole area.

The Route 92 DEIS makes no mention of community involvement in the decision making, yet, it is we, the community, that must live with whatever is built.

A local newspaper, South Brunswick Post, had an editorial last week. Here are some excerpts from the editorial and those questions for the record. The question is to phrase responsiveness to project purpose and need. In its draft EIS the Army Corps never asked if the road is needed, but assumed that it is. Its no action plan ignores the federal environmental act and it downplays the environmental impact of the highway. It is on this wobbly foundation that the Army Corps constricts its report. What the Army Corps did not ask are these questions, no less important than the ones they did ask.

One, how is the study area determined? Why were Kingston and the towns in Somerset County not considered? The highway is likely to channel cars and trucks towards Route

1 206 and 31, putting a new strain on local roads in
2 the region.
3 Two, how were the traffic
4 models used in the study developed?
5 Three, has anyone conducted a
6 study of who is using Route 1 and the local road
7 network now, where they are going and where are
8 they coming from? If not, how can we be sure
9 there will be a reduction in traffic?
10 Four, did the Army Corps factor
11 in the car's toll. A toll may act as a deterrent
12 for drivers, negating supposed benefits of the
13 highway.
14 Five, has the possibility that
15 Route 92 might attract new traffic been
16 considered, and if not, why not?
17 Ultimately, though the final
18 decision on this road is not the Army Corps, the
19 Army Corps is only responsible for determining the
20 faith of environmental permits, it is the
21 political decision makers of New Jersey, Governor
22 McGreevey, state legislature, New Jersey Turnpike
23 Authority, will have to decide whether to spend at
24 least four hundred million, or almost sixty
25 million dollars per mile, it all depends on who

you talk to. But, whatever it is, it's a huge number.

We residents need to make our case to the Army Corps today. We also need to light a fire under a political establishment that is powerful enough to turn plans for the highway into ash.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Sherer.

Our next speaker will be Edith Neimark, League of Women Voters. I can't read the rest, but League of Women Voters.

MS. NEIMARK: My name is Edith Neimark, N-E-I-M-A-R-K. I'm speaking for the League of Women Voters of the Princeton area and, parenthetically, I live in a development that is bisected by the divided highway, dual lane, newly built, Route 522.

The League of Women Voters of the Princeton area urges the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to reject the permit application of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority to fill in wetlands for the purpose of building a roadway known as Route 92.

PH-22

Please refer to comment group WC098 for comment codes.

The League of Women Voters of the Princeton area represent seven municipalities in the greater Princeton area, including both the Borough and Township of Princeton, Plainsboro, West Windsor, South Brunswick, Rocky Hill and Montgomery. All of these townships will be affected by the proposal to grant a permit to fill in wetlands for the proposed Route 92.

The League of Women Voters has a long standing position to "promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and the wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationship of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and water resources." We endorse land use policies and procedures and their relationship to human needs, population trends and ecological and socioeconomic factors.

The League feels strongly that this permit to fill in wetlands and the impact it will have on the environment does not achieve optimal balance between human needs and environmental qualities.

Our reasons are as follows:

One, Route 92 would bisect

1 through one of Middlesex County's largest and most
2 fragile pieces of remaining open land. Thirteen
3 acres of wetlands and three hundred acres of
4 farmland will be destroyed. Route 92 would also
5 cut through a nature preserve, endangered species
6 habitat and preserved open space.
7 The League strongly opposes any
8 development that compromises lateral habitats or
9 degrades freshwater wetlands.
10 Two, the New Jersey State plan
11 is compromised. Proposed Route 92 bisects an area
12 around Devil's Brook, designated in the New Jersey
13 State Development and Redevelopment Plan as PA-5,
14 the status New Jersey applies to its most
15 environmental sensitive areas. According to the
16 State plan, this means it should have the highest
17 degree of protection from development. Destroying
18 thirteen acres of wetland and designated open
19 space and farmland is inconsistent with the intent
20 of the state plan and redevelopment plan.
21 The League supports the New
22 Jersey State plan and does not support its
23 violation or compromise.
24 Three, this area is the site of
25 two aquifer recharges from which approximately

fifty percent of South Brunswick Township's water supply depends. The groundwater flow of these aquifers could be radically altered by the one hundred three acres of impervious surface and wetlands fill. In addition, the draft environmental impact study, DEIS, fails to address the increased non-point source pollution, including road salt, to the watershed and water supply, which would be caused by the additional traffic this proposed roadway would generate.

Four, the DEIS fails to adequately address the transportation issues for all areas that will be affected.

The League of Women Voters states in its transportation position of 1977 that the transportation planning process plays a high priority on energy conservation and social and environmental costs and benefits. The DEIS does not address conservation issues fully, stating that further analysis of public transit operational improvements is recommended, section 2.9, nor does it address the impacts on all communities within and surrounding the designated area, including abutting communities west of the terminus.

Without conservation, social or environment benefits, we receive little to offset the extremely high cost of the estimated four hundred million dollars for this plan. Therefore, the League of Women Voters of the Princeton area urges the Army Corps of Engineers to reject the application of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority and to continue to promote wetlands protection, open space preservation and sound transportation planning.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Neimark.

Our next speaker will be Jack Boekhout, South Brunswick Code Enforcement.

MR. BOEKHOUT: My name is Jack Boekhout, B-O-E-K-H-O-U-T. I live at 111 Friendship Road in South Brunswick, in the path of the roadway. If they build the road, they're going to take my house away. But, I'm not here to talk as a person for myself, I'm here to talk because the manager asked me to say a few comments about what I know in my office. I'm also the building subcode official for the Township of South Brunswick, and I've been working in that

PH-23

department for eighteen years.

What the environmental impact study failed to do is talk to us. They didn't come in our office and say what's going on, what's happening in the area?

SBTJB-1

We have people digging foundations out there in this area that's not wetlands and they're running into problems. Our soils are sandy, with some gravel mixed in. You go down a couple of feet and you got a layer of clay, solid clay.

I had seen two guys on a machine, you know you rent them machines, two guys dig a hole, going to put a post in for a deck, they hang on the machine, they get down a couple of feet, two guys cannot hold onto this machine because they're stuck into this clay.

What's it do? Is it a problem? Is it a wetlands? No, it's not a wetland. What it is is a problem because when it rains this layer of clay holds the water up against the foundation walls, and it stays there for three days, maybe five days, maybe ten days, and it don't go away.

Now, the engineer reports on

these sites come in, and they all say, "Well, this is great. The water level is three, four foot below the foundation elevation. Go ahead and build your project." We go out there for a footing inspection, the foundation is full of water.

On Miller Road, less than a mile away from where this roadway is going, the last foundation come in, stayed full of water for a week-and-a-half.

What happens to the runoff for the road that goes into this water that's sitting there?

SBTJB-2(A)

If you look at 111 Friendship Road, where I live, four hundred foot off Friendship Road, it's under water, but in three weeks it's going to be dry as a bone, because it rained last week, it's full of water.

I had a foundation blow out less than a mile away. Poured the concrete walls, steel in the walls, it rained, the water filled up, crashed the foundation in. The engineers couldn't figure it out. Scratched their head, said, "I don't know how this happened. Our water level is way below this foundation. How come the

water level crashed the foundation in?"

I don't know, but it happened.

I had another project come in, the engineer did his study, he says water table is well below the foundation.

I've been living here all my life, I've been going by there every winter, the farmer gets his tractor stuck in the field because it gets muddy, he can't get it out. The guy gives me the report, engineer, very high qualifications. He says, "Well, gee, there's not water out here. We can build all these homes." I looked at him. I said, "What, are you nuts? This guy's tractor sat there all winter every year for eighteen years. How can there be no water if he can't get his tractor out of the mud? No water?" I said, "I'll tell you what, I'll accept your report."

They started doing the work, five houses in the middle of the project, dug the footings, guess what, that water was supposed to be three foot below the footing, happened to be four foot higher than the footing. Filled it right up.

What I'm really trying to say is, engineer fancy studies are studies. Guy sits

down with a scientific approach, says what is it.

Let's look at the real world. What's there? Go look at the properties, walk around, stick a stick in the ground, dig a hole. What do we have? Right now if you take a look, you have perch water that don't go away for a period of time, and if this roadway is built, the runoff is going to go in there and it's really going to screw up the environment.

SBTJB-2(B)

Thank you very much.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Boekhout.

Our next speaker will be Paulette Pitrak.

MS. PITRAK: My name is Paulette Pitrak, and I'm a resident of the area, and I am located in an area known as the vegetative edge according to the study. I look right out on beautiful vegetation.

PH-24

I live at the end of Turkey Island Road, which is a fairly new development, and I will be able to watch 92 go up if it is so approved.

I don't like that idea.

I'm going to speak from the

heart, but I want it on record that I support totally the comments of Mr. Farber, Mr. Hawkins and Ms. Sherer, and I will submit a written report before the deadline period.

I watch Osprey land on the trees. I watch two mating red-tailed hawks. I watch all that. And, for me to have to watch a road to go up over those wetlands is just going to crush the area. And, I know it will cause harm to all the residents.

PP-1

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Pitrak.

Our next speaker will be Dr. Deborah Cutchim.

MS. CUTCHIM: My name is Dr. Deborah Cutchim. I live with the person you just heard crying.

PH-25

Yeah, as I listen to the people, various people offer you a view of Route 1 during your dinner hour. You can come home with us and have dinner and watch the hawks and the foxes and the deer and everybody else who happens to live in our backyard, which won't live in our backyard if this goes through.

I have a Ph.D. in political science, and I'm familiar with the commonly accepted research techniques and procedures used to evaluate large scale projects of this sort.

Perhaps, the most disturbing aspect of this study was its use of relatively old data. Census data represented the 2000 census data levels, traffic levels represented even older periods, some extending back as far as 1995. Use of 1995 aerial photos to analyze Route 1 is clearly inappropriate. Moreover, much of the information that was used in this report was taken from the New Jersey Turnpike Authority's own documents that clearly favored the building of the road. In fact, much of the information presented here is little more than a cut and paste of the wide variety of other studies with varying purposes, authors, scientific validity and timeliness.

This makes for a very sloppy analysis base.

As a resident of first Plainsboro and now South Brunswick since 1987 I can attest to the vast changes that are occurring in these communities on an annual basis. Current

DC-1

DC-2

DC-3

DC-4

DC-5

DC-5

data is available on many of these aspects from the local planning departments. You heard from the local service departments in our communities, as well as the many highly respected research institutions, all of which exist within a fifteen mile area.

There seems to be very little use of that information to make this report.

The failure to use current data in a report of such importance seems to be inexcusable.

DC-6

A related issue is the entire parameter of the study. The reader is struck by the fact that for each alternative offered in the study, despite the overall impact of many of the options being less than the proposed Route 92, each was rejected as "not meeting the objectives of the project."

It is unclear to me who set the parameters of this study as outlined in the three objectives, reserving local streets for local traffic, finding alternative routes for north/south traffic and dealing with non-local truck traffic.

The nature of these objectives

is important because each of them were used to reject the conclusions for each alternative pathway in favor of 92. Each local street option was rejected using the same language, "does not fulfill the project purpose," because it uses local roads to carry regional traffic.

While the options that were studied presented generally less problems and had more promise to resolve the issues of the traffic congestion and flow in a less obtrusive manner than building Route 92, Alternative A acts effectively to block all alternatives suggested in the study.

My question is, does that mean that there are no alternative routes given the study parameters?

Likewise, looking at Objective B, the only alternative route, north/south route in the area is Route 1 or Route 130.

Those of us who have lived in the community for some time will remember both when Route 130 and Route 1 were considered and largely used as the alternative north/south routes to the Turnpike when the Turnpike raised their fees in the mid 1990s, particularly by the

DC-6

DC-7

DC-7

non-local truck traffic. This had a major impact on making Route 1 being voted as the highway that most frustrates New Jersey motorists, as reported in the Star Ledger on November 7, 2003. Keep New Jersey moving Coalition of New Jersey Alliance conducted this non-scientific report for action. During the same period of time the New Jersey Department of Transportation determined that Route 1 is the most dangerous highway in New Jersey.

Based on this prior behavior, it seems unlikely that making it possible for trucks to pay a toll to simply be put onto an already over taxed road seems to make Option B unattainable with a proposed Route 92.

My question is, does this mean that there is really no alternative route?

The rest of my comments I'll put into writing and send to you, I just want to make one final statement.

I started studying political science in 1969. One of the first teachers I had taught me a term based on studying the TVA and the Army Corps of Engineers. It was boondoggle.

I never thought that thirty-five years later I'd be standing in a

boondoggle hearing.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Our next speaker will be Mr. Bill Wymer.

MR. WYMER: My name is Bill Wymer, W-Y-M-E-R, and I don't represent any groups, I just represent myself.

My wife and I moved to South Brunswick in 1988. We purchased a home in Dayton Center, where we had started a family and lived there for fifteen years. In 2003 we moved to Cranbury, where my wife, two children and I currently reside. During this time we watched as the area underwent significant development, all the townships in the area, South Brunswick, Plainsboro, Cranbury, West Windsor, Princeton, Franklin, and others approved zoning that allowed the building of large residential tracts, businesses and warehouses and warehouse space in and around our communities. These townships made these zoning approvals with the full knowledge and understanding that the supporting infrastructure would be required, including roadways appropriate for the volume and nature of the anticipated traffic. Everyone knew that existing roadways

PH-26

Please refer to comment group WC063 for comment codes.

1 were inadequate for the growth they were
2 anticipating and some solution needed to be done.
3 In addition to the local roads,
4 many passenger cars, commercial vehicles and heavy
5 trucks, including dump trucks and tractor-trailers
6 hauling municipal waste from the New York area,
7 are cutting through our little suburban
8 neighborhoods because of the lack of adequate
9 east/west connectors between the New Jersey
10 Turnpike and Route 1.
11 Anyone that travels on or lives
12 near the roads that we are using that lives near
13 these roads that are being used as a cut through
14 knows that the decision is long past the point of
15 deciding whether or not appropriate infrastructure
16 is needed. That decision was made, with all due
17 respect to the politicians that were here before,
18 that decision was made when they approved the zone
19 to build these things in the past. Now we're
20 stuck with the problem.
21 I'm not criticizing or passing
22 judgment on the zoning decisions that were made in
23 the past. Some residential building is
24 appropriate, and there are benefits to businesses
25 and warehouse space. I'm not criticizing that.

1 For example, when living in
2 South Brunswick I benefited from the property
3 taxes generated when South Brunswick encouraged
4 the building of warehouse space along Route 130.
5 That may have been a good decision, I don't know,
6 but these decisions have consequences. Namely,
7 the need for appropriate roads to support the
8 traffic generated from these zoning decisions that
9 were made.
10 Ignoring the need that is
11 created by these local zoning decisions simply
12 deteriorates the quality of life that we are
13 trying to maintain. For example, in my
14 neighborhood we have bermed hills and sidewalks to
15 enhance the quality of life in the community,
16 unfortunately, Dey Road is being used as a cut
17 through by tractor-trailers hauling municipal
18 sludge from New York, tractor-trailers hauling
19 goods to and from the Route 130 distribution
20 factories, dump trucks, and commuters cutting
21 through to New Jersey Turnpike and Route 1. This
22 creates dangerous traffic conditions in our
23 neighborhood, not to mention the noise and
24 congestion. As a result, I do not allow our
25 children to use the walkways near our house or

near the heavy traffic. Ignoring a situation is a decision that, clearly, negatively impacts our quality of life.

So, for me the need for some type of solution to the east/west connector problem between New Jersey Turnpike and Route 1 is appropriate and necessary. It is clear and unmistakable, but we have to do something. The real question here is, what are we going to do?

I took the time to read through the draft report from the Corps of Army Engineers. As you heard Mr. Baroni say, it took quite a while. It is a thick document, which you've seen out there. I compliment the Corps of Engineers for all the information that they have collected and put into this, and I realize that it's come from many, many different successive analyses that have been done. It is a comprehensive amount of work.

As I understand the report, there is no option that has all positive and no negative impact, however, there are alternatives where the positive outweighs the negative. No action is not an option. The decision to do nothing was eliminated once all those zones were

1 passed to build the development that we have now.
2 Trying to reduce demand with flex hours is a good
3 idea and maybe something we should do, but it's
4 not sufficient in and of itself.
5 When I look at the options for
6 simply widening roads, such as Route 522, making
7 it even wider in South Brunswick, widening Dey
8 Read in Cranbury, or widening Plainsboro Road, as
9 the report accurately reflects, this has
10 significant negative impact for the residents.
11 I have to say that's obvious.
12 I'm going to skip the rest of
13 this since time is up. Let me just say that in
14 reading the report I noticed -- I think Route 92
15 is the best alternative that's been presented to
16 us in this report. If there's something else
17 that's better, I'd like to hear about it, but I
18 don't see it in this report. So, I am encouraging
19 the building of Route 92 since I don't see any
20 other alternatives.
21 Thank you.
22 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank
23 you, Mr. Wymer.
24 Our next speaker will be Harold
25 Bellizio, former mayor and resident of South

PH-27

Brunswick.

MR. BELLIZIO: Thank you, Colonel. That's Harold Bellizio, B-E-L-L-I-Z-I-O.

I probably started on this project as mayor in 1984, before a lot of people ever got involved in it. We supported it. We supported it in a route. Members of my township committee at that time walked it, the former mayor walked it. Herb Wright has now passed away, but he was good enough to take people out there to see the way through.

We recognize, there are friends of mine and acquaintances of mine, et cetera, that were there, some of which would be in the way of it. When we did this we looked at it from the standpoint that we wouldn't drag this thing on forever. If they were going to have to be relocated or moved, that you should do it swiftly.

It's twenty years later. We're still here.

I remember talking to your predecessor at an earlier meeting at the Marriott. I told the Colonel at that particular point, one point that people are missing in this is that right now Route 1, between Bakers Basin, or the

1 Delaware River, and the Raritan River, are,
2 basically, 95.
3 I spoke to the Turnpike
4 Authority and said, why aren't you making that
5 point?
6 The point was, and Mr. Tittel
7 said it earlier -- which brought up a very strong
8 point. I wish our politicians and everybody would
9 get behind this and say, connect 95 to the
10 Turnpike, where it was supposed to be, which I
11 believe was Exit 6, if Tittel is right, we should
12 do it and we would take the traffic that's coming
13 through and using 95 between the Raritan River and
14 the Delaware River on U.S. 1, of which seven miles
15 of it is in South Brunswick.
16 Mike is right, we put up with
17 this. The hourglass effect was given to us, we're
18 two lanes in South Brunswick, with three lanes
19 coming in on both ends, north and south, from four
20 to six we go in North Brunswick and four to six
21 into Plainsboro, and we're stuck with what we have
22 at the largest point of U.S. 1.
23 I would say that there's
24 conditions on this. I really wanted 92 to be
25 built not as a toll road and to be built all the

way through to 206. That's not happening because we have the blockage to the west.

Now I hear the west hollering about what it's going to do for them. So, I feel for them, but I'm here on U.S. 1, and I'm here sixty-one years. I see U.S. 1 change. U.S. 1 is a problem. We are putting up with all the interstate traffic, not only through New York, but also from the northern ends, Middlesex and Union Counties, every bit of traffic going through from here to Pennsylvania and Ohio, convoys of garbage trucks. The politicians are remiss not to put them on trains and put them out on the rail.

U.S. 1 is being destroyed. We can't move on it. It's a traffic nightmare with one of those trucks coming down, they pile into -- Mike knows as chief of police that we have a mess to pick it up.

I think if 92 is going to be built in its present stage as a toll road, these are the points that I think we have to look at if it's going to be, then I think we have to have some positive things from it.

Widening of U.S. 1 through South Brunswick all the way to make it three lanes

HB-1

each way.

Two, excess lands that are along the Turnpike which were garnered by them from the New Jersey Department of Transportation was sold out to balance a budget many years ago, with the Florio administration. They got the problem now. Under their problem right now they are going to pay it from bonds that go through there and not through taxation to us.

HB-2

If they're going to build it, we should get 95 designated from here over until the new connection is there so that they force the trucks by state law or whatever, and secondly, that the interchanges out here that Chief Paquette asked you to look at in front of the Radisson here be upgraded to a standard situation so that it's an overpass that interconnects all of South Brunswick with a great separation and not be just the Turnpike's access. The Turnpike's tolls should be back from it.

HB-3

HB-4

If we don't have that, then that's just another problem, a thorn in our side if it is built. It should be built so that it has access, and included in that, and Mr. Ververides knows, I went after him years ago to put a

pedestrian walkway over there to connect our rails to trails over here, give people bike access, et cetera, from here all the way down to Princeton, down into Middlesex County.

I think if we're going to get anything, the excess property should be dedicated to the local communities that are not going to be used for the Turnpike's own use, so they can be used for passive and active recreation, the ponds for fishing, et cetera, and that we have the overpass properly included as an access not just for the Turnpike.

HB-5

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Bellizio.

PH-28

Our next speaker will be Joe Camarota.

MR. CAMAROTA: Good afternoon. My name is Joe Camarota, C-A-M-A-R-O-T-A.

I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to speak today and, basically, what I'd like to do is to read for the record the Home News editorial from April 24th of this year.

"Route 92 is a bad idea for any time to come. This week the Army Corps of

Engineers released its long awaited Environmental Impact Statement on Route 92, the controversial New Jersey Turnpike extension that would connect Interchange 8A with Route 1. Its conclusions are disturbing.

"By some form of voodoo logic the study boosts construction of the highway as a means of relieving Route 1 traffic when just the opposite would occur.

JC-1

"Researchers go on to amenably minimize the disastrous effects that the roadway would have on the region's environment.

JC-2

"Kingston resident, Steve Masacola, a long-time fighter against sprawl, put it best when he labeled the findings a green washing of facts.

"Among its numerous defects, Route 92 was sliced through one of Middlesex County's largest and most fragile pieces of remaining openland. Fourteen acres of wetlands and eighty acres of farmland will be destroyed.

JC-3

"The Environmental Protection Agency has already weighed this data and found it damming. The EPA has deemed the roadway unnecessary, rejecting the application numerous

times. Nor is there proof Route 92 would ease congestion. Quite the contrary, Route 92 would simply generate more cars and more sprawl, making congestion worse.

JC-4

"Historically significant and fragile communities, clustered near Route 1, will face irreparable harm, Masacola's Kingston neighborhood, and Dayton, among them.

JC-5

"The plan is fiscally peril less, if not downright irresponsible as well. The six mile long connection was projected to cost four hundred million dollars two years ago. That price tag has surely climbed. The cash strapped Turnpike Authority would be hard pressed not to raise tolls or seek help from the State. A state, by the way, that has a transportation funding crisis of its own.

JC-6

"But, money interests want to see the roadway become reality. Princeton University is one of those sponsors. The school decided in the 1970s to beef up its endowment by going into the land development business. The university owns more than thirteen hundred acres in Middlesex County, and since the 1970s the institution has become one of the areas most

JC-7

JC-7

active land developers. Princeton can expect a windfall if Route 92 is finished.

"So, too, can Plainsboro's Mayer Peter Cantu, a staunch advocate of Route 92, whose township would cash in on commercial ratables of enormous proportions.

"Support for Route 92 is all about profit taking, nothing more, but the public has other concerns in mind. Its health, its home and its collected piece of mind.

"On those scores, every bit of evidence points to one inconvertible fact, the highway should not be built now, later, or ever."

And, as a resident of South Brunswick, I plead with you to reject the application for Route 92. And, once again, I thank you for your time.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Camarota.

Our next speaker will be Nancy Bialler.

PH-29

MS. BIALLER: Ladies and gentlemen, Colonel, thank you very much. My name is Nancy Bialler, B-I-A-L-L-E-R, and I hope any negative comments you will not take personally.

When you first read the Army Corps of Engineers' DEIS for proposed Route 92 it seems apparent that the road should be built, however, when you examine it closely you realize it is like those adds for pills that promise to cure anything.

Recent studies show that brand blank is recommended by four out of five doctors, but when you read the fine print you discover that blanks are intended just for sinus headaches.

The study was done by the manufacturer. The leading brands were designed for something entirely different, and blank pills have rather nasty side effects.

The same can be said for Route 92 and this report. The problem has been misdiagnosed. The research data is faulty and has been misused. There are very, very nasty side effects, and worst of all, it doesn't work.

First, misdiagnosis.

The initial premise of Route 92 is favorably flawed, the objectives are too narrow, the Turnpike Authority proposes that the only solution to traffic congestion in the region is limited access east/west highway.

NB-1

This effectively removes other possible solutions from consideration.

NB-1

For example, Bus Rapid Transit not considered. Why? Extending the truck lanes of the Turnpike further south, not considered. Why? Widening Route 1, rejected. Route 522 as an alternative, rejected using old data and species assumes that the road would have to be widened. Why does the road have to be widened?

NB-2,3,4

NB-5

As for the data, apparently, a great deal has been recycled from earlier studies, but more worrying is that facts and figures are manipulated to prove a point, and in some areas significant data has not been gathered at all.

NB-6

Take the simple example, Route 92 corridor has been classified as suburban rather than rural so that lower emission standards prevail? Would the Corps please provide the rationale for this classification? Or the question of added truck traffic.

NB-7

In section one, future increases in truck traffic are used to justify building Route 92, but in section four, Page 10, the added traffic that would occur on Heathcote Road in Kingston by building Route 92 is dismissed

NB-8

NB-8

as something that can be mitigated. Would the Corps please explain?

We also need to look at data that has not been gathered.

NB-9

The Corps assumes that roads are just for driving, but they are not. I live on Perrine Road, which is rural in character, and all day long people walk, jog, bike, and simply stroll along. There's the stocky but determined man out running every morning, the 86-year-old retired plumber who takes a four mile constitutional, the four men from Dow Jones on their lunch break, the engineer's wife, the men and women gathering wild mushrooms, the cyclists, bird watchers, kids doing projects, the proposed Route 92 and concomitant changes on Perrine Road would put all this to an end.

Studying the habits and the needs of the residents should be in the scope of DEIS. Why is it not? How can you evaluate the impact of a project on a community if you do not talk to the people in it?

NB-10

From the very beginning this project has been one of non-inclusion. The very language of the report betrays this bias. See

NB-10

section one, Page 6. This EIS describes the project purpose and examines the benefits and impacts. Benefits and impacts. Why not benefits and detriments? Benefits and damages?

Many of these impacts read nasty side effects, have and will be discussed by others.

As for the conclusions, others will treat these at length, but let's look at two points in the DEIS.

NB-11

First, if Route 92 is built, eleven out of fourteen intersections will not be improved.

Second, and even more astonishing, is an admission in the executive summary, Page 15, that there is no provision for excess capacity.

Please explain.

Three hundred and fifty million dollars in 1994 dollars to improve three intersections, and it doesn't provide for excess capacity? Wasn't the whole point of this project to accommodate the future growth?

Ladies and gentlemen, with all due respect, they are trying to sell us snake oil.

1 The project is misconceived, poorly researched,
2 and even by the standards set by its proponents,
3 it does not succeed. However, this does not mean
4 we should do nothing to remedy the serious
5 transportation problems in this area. With
6 community input we can devise a plan that will
7 improve our road system for the present and future
8 without destroying the natural habitat and local
9 character that attracted us to Central Jersey to
10 begin with.
11 I call on the panel and
12 Governor McGreevey -- Governor McGreevey, not the
13 panel to keep his campaign promises, but I call on
14 the governor to keep his campaign promises and
15 reduce the sprawl and damage to the environment.
16 Thank you very much.
17 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank
18 you, Ms. Bialler.
19 We're at our limit, folks, but
20 I did insert the ten-minute break, so I'm going to
21 try to get two more speakers in.
22 I remind you all that if you
23 don't get a chance to speak here, you can record
24 your comments, you can provide a written record.
25 You can also re-register for the seven p.m.

hearing.

We'll now here from Jennifer Teacher.

I can't read the handwriting.

Tescher, perhaps.

Sandra Shapiro?

Ms. Shapiro?

Joan Murray.

Joan Murray?

MS. MURRAY: Thank you. I appreciate your enabling me to speak this afternoon because I don't like to drive after dark.

PH-30

I live just off of Raymond Road in Kingston area, and I am very concerned about what 92 would do to the Kingston area. I completely support Ann Zeman's testimony and Kathy Dowgin completely. I don't want to be redundant, but I would support them completely, and the same with Chief Paquette.

JMU-1

So, I just want to add my opposition to Route 92 as a taxpayer, and I've lived here for forty-five years. We moved down here because we liked the area and my husband worked at RCA at the time. But, I hope that the

area will remain as pleasant as it has been and not have to tolerate a 92.

Thank you very much.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Murray.

Marcia Pollack.

MS. POLLACK: My name is Marcia Pollack, P-O-L-L-A-C-K. I'm a resident of Kingston.

PH-31

Currently the traffic between Route 206 and Route 1 east takes a variety of routes through Princeton and West Windsor, through Kingston and Plainsboro, through Kendall Park and Dayton. Once you provide this excellent road all traffic from the 206 area will come through Kingston, a village with a 17th or 18th century road plan, a village where George Washington stopped on his way to winter in Morristown, a village with roads, including the road nearest to the terminus of Route 92, whose width is so restricted that one mile from this hotel the road squeezes to just twenty-five feet between the wall of the old Union Line Hotel and the wall of the house across the road.

MPO-1

How many lanes of Turnpike

MPO-2

traffic are you aiming here?

To do this to our village, founded in 1675, and it's irreplaceable history, to do this to our wetlands and our aquifer, to do this while other state agencies are fighting sprawl, to do this when New Jersey has tough budget problems ahead, to do this when the multi-lane Route 522 is less than a mile away and performs the same function, makes no sense.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Pollack.

Our final speaker then will be David Southgate?

Is Mr. Southgate present?

I'm going to go back and check these one more time.

Mr. Southgate, Jennifer Shapiro, Jennifer Tescher, Mr. Switsgable or Ms. Muser?

All right, that concludes this session. The next session is at seven p.m.

Thank you.

(Whereupon, the afternoon session is concluded.)

1 E V E N I N G S E S S I O N
2
3 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Ladies
4 and gentlemen, if everyone would please come to
5 order, we would like to get started.
6 Good evening. I'm Lieutenant
7 Colonel Kurt Hoffmann, Deputy Commander of the New
8 York District of the United States Army Corps of
9 Engineers. I am the presiding officer on behalf
10 of my boss, who couldn't make it today.
11 Seated at the dais with me
12 today, on my right is Mrs. Koko Cronin, regulatory
13 project manager of the district regulatory branch,
14 and on the left would be Mr. James Palmer, my
15 assistant district counsel, and he will shortly
16 join us, but I'm not going to wait.
17 Today's hearing is the second
18 session of a public hearing to be conducted by the
19 United States Army Corps of Engineers to assist in
20 the regulatory review of the Route 92 project
21 proposed by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.
22 Any comments the public would like to make to be
23 included in the administrative record of the
24 application need to be presented at this public
25 hearing or in writing to us at the Corps by June

14th.

I want to stress that again, by the 14th of June, please, because that does close the comment period.

The purpose of this public hearing is to obtain information, evidence and receive comment on an application submitted to the Corps of Engineers by the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. The Turnpike Authority requests a federal permit to perform construction activities in the waters of the United States, including wetlands. The Turnpike Authority proposes to discharge fill material into approximately 12.03 acres of waters and wetlands for the purpose of constructing a 6.7 mile highway. The project known as Route 92 would be a high speed, limited access, toll highway linking the Interchange 8A of the New Jersey Turnpike in Monroe Township, passing through Plainsboro Township and connecting with U.S. Route 1 in South Brunswick Township.

As mitigation for impacts to wetlands and waters of the United States, the Turnpike Authority proposes to create fifty-seven acres of wetlands and to preserve two hundred and two acres of wetlands and uplands.

The project site is located in waters and wetlands adjacent to Devil's Brook of the Raritan River in the Township of South Brunswick, Plainsboro, Monroe, all within Middlesex County, New Jersey.

At today's hearing we also seek comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the Corps of Engineers to assist in the regulatory review of the application.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement discusses a number of alternatives. The Corps has not identified a preferred alternative in the draft Environmental Impact Statement, and we welcome comments on the alternatives presented.

After review of comments received in response to the draft Environmental Impact Statement the Corps of Engineers will prepare a final Environmental Impact Statement. Comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement will be addressed in the final Environmental Impact Statement.

Because the proposed project entails filling activities within waters of the United States, including wetlands, a permit is

required from the Corps pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The Corps of Engineers is neither a proponent for, nor an opponent of the proposed project. Our role is to determine whether this project is in the overall public interest.

This hearing will play an important part in that determination. This hearing will be conducted according to the procedures set forth in Title 33 of the code of federal regulations, Part 327.

Anyone present today may provide written statements or proposed findings and recommendations for the hearing to be placed on file so long as you get it to us by the 14th of June. All written comments should be directed to the mailing address shown or to the electronic mail address on the public notice.

Written comments can also be handed to Corps engineer staff, posted today at the registration table in the lobby, and you all should have met them already.

At this time I would like to explain the procedures that will govern the

1 conduct of this public hearing.
2 Before I go any further, I just
3 want to recognize the fact that there are a lot of
4 good people in this room. All of you took time to
5 study this issue, all of you sacrificed time
6 tonight that you, clearly, would have otherwise
7 used some other way. There's going to be a
8 difference of opinion here, but, remember, this is
9 not a debate. This is not a decision brief. This
10 is not a question-and-answer period. This is an
11 opportunity for each of you to go on public record
12 to assist in the final determination.
13 Please respect each other's
14 differing opinions. State your case and then be
15 respectful enough to allow enough time for
16 everyone else to do the same, and I promise you
17 that everyone will benefit. But, respect each
18 other and the fact that you're all good people
19 that spent a lot of time waiting for the
20 opportunity to address this issue.
21 Thank you.
22 Anyone may appear on his or her
23 own behalf or be represented by counsel or other
24 representatives to present recommendations or
25 information. Cross-examination of witnesses will

1 not be permitted. Procedurally, I will call the
2 names of those individuals who have registered and
3 asked for an opportunity to speak. I ask that you
4 step up to and speak into the microphone at the
5 podium to my right, to your front left, and speak
6 so that everyone, including our stenographer, can
7 hear you.
8 We request that you begin your
9 presentation by stating your name and correcting
10 it if I mispronounce it, and I'm prone to do that,
11 so I don't mind, but correct at least your surname
12 when you get to the podium and then spell it.
13 This is for your own benefit so that when you see
14 your comments later recorded in the findings
15 you'll recognize your name at least.
16 State also any affiliation with
17 an organization or group, if any, so that we may
18 also have that information in our administrative
19 record.
20 It is important to everyone,
21 whatever your opinion on this matter, that this
22 hearing be conducted in an orderly manner.
23 Because of this I must ask that speakers keep
24 their presentations to five minutes or less. Ms.
25 Cronin will run a timer and at the one minute mark

1 will subtly hold up a sign that the speaker should
2 be able to see.
3 We're going to do our best not
4 to interrupt you or embarrass you, but I assure
5 you that as we get close to five minutes I will
6 have to stop you so that everyone here has an
7 opportunity to get that same shot at the five
8 minutes.
9 If you have a longer
10 presentation, please submit it in writing and
11 summarize it orally. That's an option.
12 Written statements that you
13 would like to submit for the record today should
14 be presented directly to the dais, or to the
15 registration table at the entrance. Time
16 permitting, we look to provide an opportunity for
17 rebuttal to any person who wants to do so after
18 all speakers have been heard.
19 I have the registration forms
20 that you've completed, and I will call for each
21 speaker by name in the order listed in the public
22 notice announcement of today's hearing. If you
23 wish to present testimony this evening, you should
24 note that you may instead choose to record your
25 comments in the Kingston room of this hotel, which

is on the same floor as we are on, out the doors, keep going, instead of speaking at the podium.

This may become an attractive option for you if it becomes a burden to wait, as this is a five hour session.

If you did not receive the handout, please ask at the registration table for help in that regard.

I will first call federally elected officials, followed by representatives of federal agencies and appointed federal officials, as set forth in the order noted in the public notice.

A verbatim written record of this public hearing is being made and a written transcript will be made of the tape recorded statements taken in the Kingston room. The hearing transcripts will be available for purchase from the Corps of Engineers at the cost of reproduction. The cost of a copy will correspond directly to the number of pages enclosed. Everyone who has completed one of the registration forms at the entrance to this room will be contacted by the Corps in writing when the transcripts are available.

Again, if you wish to speak this evening, you must fill out a registration form available at the table outside so we can put you in the cue.

Comments made here, plus all written information provided on or about the 14th of June, plus anything that's recorded next door, will be used to evaluate the probable impacts, including the cumulative impacts on the proposed activity on the public interest. The ultimate decision on the submitted application will reflect a national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources.

As a last bit of administrative information, I remind everyone, no smoking, no eating, no drinking, and, yes, we have drinks up here. I'm not sure myself why. I guess because I can't leave.

Anyway, the rest of you can.

Please turn off your pagers, your cell phones and anything that might disrupt the other speakers because we should all expect the same minimum amount of respect. That will certainly help with an efficient manner in conducting this.

1 If anyone present wants
2 additional information on the Route 92 project as
3 a whole, representatives of the New Jersey
4 Turnpike Authority are available in the lobby.
5 Now, before we begin taking
6 your public comment I would like to introduce Mr.
7 Bill Cesanek of CDM, the environmental consultant
8 that assisted the Corps of Engineers in the
9 preparation of the draft Environmental Impact
10 Statement. Mr. Cesanek will provide a brief
11 overview of the draft Environmental Impact
12 Statement.
13 MR. CESANEK: Thank you,
14 Colonel.
15 The Corps has asked us to
16 provide a brief overview of the Environmental
17 Impact Statement. This will be very short. I
18 will confine my comments really to the structure
19 and some of the principal ideas, and my comments
20 will be followed by those of our traffic analyst,
21 and then we'll turn it over to public comment.
22 The Environmental Impact
23 Statement that has been prepared for this project
24 contains a number of standard sections. Those
25 include the purpose and needs analysis. This is a

1 review of the function of the proposed project and
2 a measurement of the various alternatives in terms
3 of their opportunity to perform that function.
4 A wide range of alternatives
5 have been considered for the project, and I'll
6 talk about them in just a minute.
7 The existing environmental
8 conditions in the area of each of the alternatives
9 has been analyzed, data has been collected about
10 wetlands and streams and residential locations.
11 Then, from that the directing cumulative impacts
12 of the various alternatives have been analyzed and
13 discussed in the Environmental Impact Statement.
14 Where there are significant environmental impacts
15 we then evaluate the opportunity to mitigate those
16 impacts to reduce them or offset them, and then
17 there is the public involvement process, which
18 tonight's hearing is a part.
19 This is the project area in
20 Central New Jersey, and I just wanted to point out
21 that this is the Route 1 corridor, this is the
22 Route 130 corridor, and the Turnpike. The project
23 would run approximately through this area in South
24 Brunswick, and three of the key municipalities
25 that we have studied as part of the project

1 include South Brunswick, Plainsboro and Cranbury,
2 as well as the adjacent municipalities.
3 What you just saw was the
4 project purpose. That will be summarized by the
5 transportation consultant.
6 The alternatives analysis included three
7 categories of improvement alternatives,
8 improvements to existing local and county roads,
9 improvements to the existing regional roadway
10 system, that is, improvements to major highways,
11 and then, also, a consideration of new roadway
12 facilities. Of which the proposed Route 92 is
13 one.
14 This is a map just depicting
15 some of the improvements to the existing roads
16 that were analyzed. You see Dey Road widening,
17 potential widening of Cranbury neck, of Plainsboro
18 Cranbury. So, there are a whole series of
19 analyses that were conducted on improvements to
20 the existing transportation network.
21 In addition, again, an example
22 analysis was performed on potential new highway
23 routes to achieve the project purpose. Proposed
24 Route 92, a parallel road alignment for Dey Road,
25 parallel alignment for Plainsboro Cranbury Road.

1 As part of the alternatives
2 analysis the consulting team collected information
3 on wetland impacts, farmland preservation,
4 parkland, residential, commercial impacts, public
5 facilities, and whether the particular alternative
6 would meet project need. And, then, for all the
7 alternatives they were measured and compared.
8 There was a screening process
9 employed and alternatives were comparatively
10 evaluated, and those demonstrating the greatest
11 impacts were eliminated from future consideration
12 or for additional consideration. Those were high
13 wetland impacts, farmland impacts, parkland
14 impacts, high dislocation impacts were eliminated
15 from additional consideration, and that resulted
16 in two major alternatives, groups of alternatives
17 being recommended in addition to the no action
18 alternative.
19 Again, there's the no action,
20 the proposed Route 92 with terminus at Route 1 and
21 U.S. Route 1 widening, there are a series of sub
22 alternatives that were also considered within each
23 of those primary alternatives.
24 And, for these principal
25 alternatives detailed information was collected on

1 the environmental effects to streams, water
2 quality, wetlands, wildlife habitat, residential
3 and commercial dislocation, noise, air quality
4 effects, both during construction and during the
5 operation of the facility, land use development,
6 smart growth issues, and traffic effects on local
7 communities. And, details of all these are
8 presented in the Environmental Impact Statement.
9 For this part I'd like to turn
10 it over to Gary Davies. Thank you.
11 MR. DAVIES: Thank you, Bill.
12 The traffic analysis was a very
13 important part of this study and a key component
14 of the draft Environmental Impact Statement.
15 I'm going to very briefly talk
16 about some of the work that was done in the
17 traffic analysis and some of the key findings of
18 the analysis.
19 The methods that we used were
20 to use what we call travel modeling, where we use
21 computerized methods to forecast traffic
22 conditions. It's a merger of both regional
23 modeling techniques based on NJTPA and DVRPC,
24 coupled with the very detailed local traffic
25 model.

1 Underlying this was a
2 substantial set of new data and inventories that
3 are very current, origin destination surveys,
4 traffic counts, travel time studies, land use
5 analysis, reappraisal land use quantities and
6 forecast.
7 All of this lead to the ability
8 to analyze each of the primary alternatives that
9 Bill described.
10 We looked at the year 2028 as
11 our design condition, and for each of those we
12 prepared travel forecasts by component of autos
13 and trucks and then we evaluated the results using
14 highway capacity manual software and other
15 analytic methods for forecasting or evaluating how
16 well the transportation system would perform.
17 First of all, the no action,
18 meaning no construction related to the Route 92
19 project, we looked at what the affect of growth
20 would be. And, underlying that, of course, is
21 population and employment growth in the region.
22 Population over the
23 twenty-seven year period is expected to increase
24 at a fairly aggressive. That is about, overall,
25 about a nineteen percent increase. But, compared

1 to the employment, it's more modest.
2 Employment will increase over
3 that twenty-seven year period by about sixty-seven
4 percent, over what we see on the ground today.
5 We're at substantial expansion.
6 Also, as we look at the effects
7 of change and growth we have to account for the
8 changes in the highway system. So, we looked at
9 and accounted for all of the committed
10 transportation improvements in the vicinity of the
11 project and those that are funded. Some of these
12 have already been constructed. Most decision
13 documents are in place and are ready to go.
14 What results from this is an
15 estimate of traffic conditions in the future.
16 Now, this is the 2001. We are
17 just looking at the morning peak hour in this
18 particular slide. And, you can see where the
19 purple and red areas are. Those are congested
20 areas today, and as time goes on, that means in
21 2028 those will change into more purple, more red,
22 implying that along the Turnpike, along Route 130,
23 and especially along Route 1 and across east/west
24 highways, Cranbury Neck, Plainsboro, Dey Road, all
25 of the local system will begin to experience

1 substantial congestion over the twenty-eight year
2 period.
3 Congestion levels are expected
4 to get higher and demands are going to generally
5 increase and produce more congestion in the study
6 area.
7 Based upon this analysis then
8 the purpose of the project was defined. And, the
9 purposes are really four. One is to provide a
10 linkage for through traffic moving between U.S.
11 Route 1, U.S. Route 130, and the New Jersey
12 Turnpike. And, then to provide alternative routes
13 for north/south traffic that currently uses Route
14 1 to relieve congestion, particularly on the
15 northern stretches of Route 1 through South
16 Brunswick and North Brunswick, while minimizing
17 impacts to those abutting communities.
18 A very important purpose was to
19 reserve the local streets in the region for local
20 traffic and to, by implication, direct regional
21 traffic, through traffic, to regional facilities.
22 Put the traffic where it belongs.
23 And, finally, to reduce the
24 presence of non-local truck traffic on the local
25 network and shift such traffic to some sort of a

1 connector highway.
2 In order to accomplish those
3 purposes we defined the objectives for the
4 project. One was to establish a road system, as
5 I've said, that reserves local streets for local
6 traffic while providing a higher speed route for
7 traffic moving between Route 1, 130 and the
8 Turnpike. Secondly was to provide alternative
9 routes for north/south traffic. Thirdly, to
10 reduce the presence of non-local truck traffic in
11 those sensitive community areas that have a lot of
12 residential activity and pedestrian activity and
13 the community centers. And, finally, to work to
14 ensure that the capacity that we create isn't
15 eroded by unsustainable and unworthy in the
16 development.
17 Now, we focused on two specific
18 alternatives, the primary alternatives as Bill
19 described it, and these pictures from the dais
20 documents show the results. As you can see, the
21 red indicates locations where traffic volumes will
22 increase. And, of course, on Route 92 alignment
23 traffic volumes will increase, on Route 1 down
24 through Plainsboro and West Windsor traffic
25 volumes will increase, and on the Turnpike traffic

volumes will increase.

By implication, traffic volumes on Route 1 north of the Route 92 alignment through South Brunswick and through North Brunswick will decrease, as will volumes on Dey Road, Plainsboro Road, Route 522, the east/west local and secondary roadways through the study area will all decrease, thereby mitigating many of those congested conditions that we saw on that previous no action slide.

We see that Route 1 volumes will be reduced at many constricted locations, truck volumes will decrease and, generally, the system will benefit.

The other alternative that we looked at in great detail was the Route 1 widening, which would place an extra lane on Route 1 through South Brunswick and North Brunswick and remove the traffic signals as well. That additional capacity would do two things, it would improve travel conditions, but it would also cause much additional traffic to be attracted to Route 1. The benefit is that where we see the green, volumes would decrease on the cross east/west streets and on 130 and on the Turnpike, but the

1 impact of that would be that on Route 1 the travel
2 conditions would actually not be relieved because,
3 in fact, the widening on Route 1 would attract so
4 much traffic from other facilities, such as the
5 Route 27 and 130, that it would more than
6 compensate for the additional capacity. And, as a
7 consequence, we felt that there are some
8 significant issues with respect to this Route 1
9 alternative, but, at the same time, we would be
10 left with problems in the local cross streets.
11 We're looking forward to your
12 input tonight. The project team is anticipating
13 many comments from you that will be useful, and I
14 will turn it back to the Colonel now.
15 Thank you.
16 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: First I
17 want to announce that we found a set of keys.
18 They appear to be for a Volkswagen. So, if any of
19 you are operating a Volkswagen and don't have your
20 keys, you might want to go out and check with our
21 folks at the registration table.
22 I want to remind you all again
23 that there's no eating or drinking here. If you
24 happened to have made a mistake and brought a
25 drink in, I appreciate you disposing that as fast

as you can. It's a hotel room. I ask you to respect it.

All right. I'm going to summarize one more time, you have five minutes. Don't get into debate, don't take anything personal. Be clear when you speak into the microphone. State your name clearly and then please spell for us your surname.

We have no more public service announcements, therefore, at this time we'll begin with our first speaker, Mayor Peter Cantu, Township of Plainsboro.

MR. CANTU: Good evening. My name is Peter Cantu. I'm the Mayor of Plainsboro Township. I have served as Mayor of Plainsboro for twenty-four of the last thirty years.

Few, if any, public officials have been part of the Route 92 issue or other regional transportation issues as long as I have. I recognize clearly the challenges presented by the construction of a new highway and the important responsibilities carried by state and federal environmental agencies in protecting important environmental resources. In Plainsboro Township we take these issues very seriously.

PH-32

Please refer to comment set WC048 for comment codes.

1 And, our long record of open space farmland and
2 woodland preservation speaks for itself. In fact,
3 not far from here is the new Plainsboro Preserve.
4 This is land that we preserved to ensure that the
5 eventual Route 92 would not encourage growth in
6 that part of Plainsboro Township.
7 We believe that Route 92 is a
8 roadway essential not just to Plainsboro's future,
9 but also to that of the region. This is a
10 position that's not been arrived at cautiously or
11 emotionally, but one born of independent careful
12 evaluation.
13 It's clear from all the studies
14 that have been done that Route 92 is not only
15 needed, but it's critical to the transportation
16 circulation system of this region. Without Route
17 92 most of our major local intersections would
18 fail, if not in the not too distant future. In
19 fact, it seems the future traffic scenarios are
20 here already in many cases.
21 It is this sobering evaluation
22 and observations of existing and future conditions
23 that have lead our township committee to vote
24 consistently over the years to support the
25 construction of Route 92. This region cannot

afford to wait any longer for this critical transportation to be built. The construction of a 6.7 mile limited access highway to serve the east/west transportation link must move forward as presently planned.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement comprehensively addresses the advantages and disadvantages of all the transportation alternatives for this area, including a no build option. It looked at all the transportation alternatives and how they conformed to smart growth policies of the State, the County and the townships that are affected. The study found that the Route 92 alternative is the alternative that most effectively meets smart growth principles when compared to other alternatives, including the no build alternative.

One of the most frequently supported alternatives advocated by opponents of Route 92 is the expansion of 522 through South Brunswick. The EIS tells us that expanding Route 522 to six lanes would have a much greater human impact by necessitating destruction of some fifty-eight homes, making local travel more difficult, discouraging walking and bicycling, and

reducing the quality of life for adjacent neighborhoods. There are also wetland impacts that directly impact on Pigeon Swan State Park.

Add to that the fact that making 522 into six lanes will not reduce regional through traffic on east/west road systems. It is clear this is not a viable alternative.

The Township of Plainsboro consistently support a solution to this area's transportation problems. They'll be sensitive to both manmade and natural environments.

With that in mind, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority has proposed construction of approximately fifty-seven acres of wetlands as a mitigation. In addition, the Turnpike Authority proposes further mitigation in the form of the permanent preservation of two hundred two acres of existing forest and wetland and uplands in the vicinity of Friendship.

The DEIS is clear in stating that the construction of 92 will have the most benefit with the least amount of impact.

As mayor, it is my responsibility to safeguard Plainsboro's quality of life. We pride ourselves on the fact that

1 through successful long-term planning we have
2 created a key balance between development, the
3 preservation of open space and the creation of a
4 strong economic base. We adhered to the
5 principals of smart growth and the guidelines of
6 state plan. Smart growth cannot be accomplished
7 solely by local municipalities.
8 The Route 92 project has been
9 key to many of the land use decisions that have
10 been made and implemented during the past
11 twenty-five years. It is time for the State to
12 move forward by providing the appropriate missing
13 link, this important missing link to the regional
14 and state transportation system.
15 There is only so much a
16 community can do alone, and Plainsboro works with
17 its neighbors to find common ground and solution
18 to transportation problems. We are an active
19 participant and member of the Central Jersey
20 Transportation Forum. This regional body has
21 consistently supported the construction of Route
22 92. This forum has been held up in New Jersey as
23 the example of how to accomplish comprehensive
24 transportation planning in a multi-jurisdictional
25 region.

It's important that we do not make the mistake of avoiding a decision that while difficult, it's critical to the future of this region and residents.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mayor Cantu.

(Let the record indicate booing in the audience.)

Folks, I'll close this thing right now. I told you you're going to have differing opinions, but you're going to respect each other or expect the same. We will treat each other as we expect to be treated, and that was unacceptable. And, I'm a little bit surprised because the class of people that I've seen operating here this afternoon was not what I just saw displayed, and we won't have that again. You'll speak and you'll sit down. You may applaud. That's the end of it, folks.

I really appreciate you taking that to heart.

Now, we'll try in again.

Mr. Arthur Lehrhaupt, Planning Board Chairman, Township of Plainsboro.

MR. LEHRHAUPT: Good evening. My name is Arthur Lehrhaupt, L-E-H-R-H-A-U-P-T. I'm the chairperson of the Planning Board for the

PH-33

Please refer to comment group WC047 for comment codes.

1 Township of Plainsboro and have served in this
2 capacity for over fifteen years.
3 Over the years Plainsboro's
4 Planning Board has given careful consideration for
5 the need for this critical east/west limited
6 access transportation route. As the record shows,
7 Route 92 is a road that has been planned and
8 studied for over fifty years.
9 Plainsboro is becoming known
10 throughout New Jersey as the smart growth
11 township. Our master plan has taken a
12 comprehensive view of transportation and land use
13 planning. A major accomplishment has been open
14 space preservation, where we have been able to
15 preserve over fifty percent of the entire
16 community through such methods as farmland
17 preservation, clustering and outright purchases.
18 Through aggressive planning and preservation we
19 have concentrated our residential and commercial
20 areas along major transportation corridors and
21 have limited growth in areas that do not have good
22 access. Our community is served by mass transit
23 and we have planned for and built a comprehensive
24 bicycle and pedestrian network throughout the
25 entire community. This year we have the ground

1 breaking for our new village center, a mixed use
2 development in a walkable environment. Familiar
3 features of downtown, such as angled parking and a
4 town green, all adjacent to existing transit, will
5 be part of the Plainsboro Village Center.
6 Critics of Route 92 have stated
7 that the existing roads with minor changes can
8 handle the projected regional traffic. The no
9 build scenario and other scenarios that increase
10 the use of Dey Road, Plainsboro Road and Cranbury
11 Neck Road run counter to all the good planning
12 that has been accomplished and implemented. The
13 increase in volume that is projected on these
14 corridors and in the other scenarios that don't
15 include Route 92 would completely destroy and
16 bifurcate the community. Dey Road is being turned
17 into the de facto Route 92. Garbage trucks from
18 New York City use this route everyday, all day, to
19 get to their destination in Pennsylvania. The
20 speed and volume of vehicles along Dey Road are
21 steadily increasing and divide the community. In
22 order for our children to get to our community
23 park, to their new elementary school, or to our
24 new environmental education center in the
25 Plainsboro Preserve, they need to cross Dey Road.

1 Cranbury Neck Road, which goes
2 to the southern part of Plainsboro, is our
3 farmland preservation zone, where we have been
4 very successful in ensuring that it will be farmed
5 for generations to come. And, any increase in
6 interstate traffic will do damage to this
7 sensitive area.
8 And, Plainsboro Road has
9 recently been redesigned to make it pedestrian and
10 bicycle friendly.
11 All three of these roads are
12 inappropriate for carrying regional traffic. It
13 would not be smart planning. The fact is that
14 Route 92 is consistent with the overall planning
15 goals of Plainsboro Township, the County of
16 Middlesex, and the State plan. Route 92 will
17 connect the New Jersey Turnpike, Route 130 and
18 Route 1. Hierarchy of roads is essential to
19 ensuring that our existing infrastructure is used
20 for the types and volumes of traffic for which it
21 was designed and planned.
22 Dey Road, Plainsboro Road, and
23 Cranbury Neck Road were never planned or designed
24 to have increasing volume they receive as a result
25 of Route 92 not being built.

For the sake of twenty years of good planning and thoughtful land use decisions, it is imperative that this permit is approved and that this critical east/west road connection finally is built. This will empower the communities of Central New Jersey to be able to address the local transportation needs and problems that have been put off because of the delay of this decision.

Please act now for the sake of transportation mobility and good planning and approve this permit and allow this road to be built.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Lehrhaupt.

Our next speaker will be Robert Sheehan, Township Administrator, Plainsboro.

MR. SHEEHAN: Good evening. My name is Robert Sheehan, S-H-E-E-H-A-N. I'm the Township Administrator for Plainsboro Township. Prior to being appointed administrator I served as community development director and have been involved with the Route 92 issue for nearly eleven years. As such, I'm familiar with the many

PH-34

Please refer to comment group WC046 for comment codes.

1 studies that have been done during that time.
2 From the standpoint of good
3 planning, Route 92 is needed for the overall
4 fiscal health of Plainsboro Township and the
5 region.
6 In the early 1980s the New
7 Jersey Department of Transportation undertook the
8 State's first comprehensive corridor study to
9 determine how best to invest in this area. It
10 recommended construction to improve Route 1 and a
11 variety of other measures to better manage the
12 region's transportation infrastructure. This
13 study concluded that Route 92 was so essential to
14 the region that its construction was taken as a
15 given in every analysis that the DOT has conducted
16 since then.
17 Plainsboro Township embraced
18 the study and implemented many of the study's
19 recommendations. In fact, Route 1 in Plainsboro
20 is the only portion of Route 1 in Central New
21 Jersey that does not have an at grade
22 intersection.
23 Plainsboro has faithfully
24 followed good planning in this corridor and now
25 asks that the State be allowed to do their part.

1 Plainsboro did not just stop at
2 the DOT study. The Township also had three
3 independent professional evaluations conducted.
4 One in 1992, another in 1994, and a third in 1996.
5 All three came to the same conclusion, which is
6 that construction of Route 92 would not only be
7 beneficial, but that it is absolutely essential
8 for Plainsboro from both a transportation and
9 financial viewpoint. The study showed that absent
10 92 the extent of road construction required at the
11 local level just to maintain minimum levels of
12 service would be financially impossible. In
13 addition, the resulting local roadway network of
14 four and six lane roads will destroy our
15 community.
16 Any deterioration in our
17 quality of life would adversely impact many
18 existing businesses in Plainsboro. This business
19 base is a major contributor to the regional job
20 base and a major reason why many people moved to
21 this area and live here. Plainsboro has been able
22 to maintain its tax base and keep its property
23 taxes low because of the careful and thoughtful
24 planning that has been accomplished over the last
25 twenty years.

1 The Route 92 project has been
2 key to many of the land use decisions that
3 Plainsboro has made. There have been a number of
4 alternatives that have been proposed and studied.
5 The draft EIS is very clear on the impact of these
6 alternatives. The Dey Road parallel alignment and
7 the Plainsboro Cranbury Road alignment may have
8 less wetlands impact, but they would have
9 substantial impacts on preserved farmlands. And,
10 in the case of Dey Road, the parallel alignment
11 would cause the removal of over sixty homes.
12 Ironically, the US EPA
13 suggested alignment has a greater wetlands impact
14 than the other alternatives and has a substantial
15 parkland impact as well, while only partially
16 meeting the project purpose. The Dey Road
17 widening alternative will have wetlands impacts
18 and loss of homes, but most significantly, it
19 would continue to use our local roads to carry
20 regional traffic. It does not provide an
21 efficient connection to the Turnpike. It also
22 increases the burden on already stressed local
23 roadways.
24 In conclusion, Plainsboro has
25 actively pursued regional solutions to

1 transportation problems. All studies that have
2 been done to date have endorsed Route 92. It is
3 now time to build the last piece of our regional
4 transportation puzzle. The review process for
5 this project has been exhaustive, but as a result
6 we have a design that meets the region's
7 transportation needs, while minimizing
8 environmental impacts. It's time to act. It's
9 time to build this road.
10 Plainsboro requests the U.S.
11 Army Corps of Engineers New York District issue a
12 permit to allow the construction of Route 92 to
13 proceed.
14 Thank you.
15 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank
16 you, Mr. Sheehan.
17 Before we proceed I'm going to
18 ask everyone, I realize it's late, you may need to
19 take breaks independently, please use the door to
20 the rear right and not the ones closer, because it
21 is disrupting the speaker. I wouldn't do that to
22 you, don't do it to the next guy.
23 Please use the back door only.
24 Our next speaker will be Jon
25 Edwards. He is from the Hopewell Township

Committee.

PH-35

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you for this opportunity to speak. Jon Edwards, 178 Pennington Heart Road, Hopewell Township.

One town's interest is not necessarily the region's interest. It's certainly not our interest.

In terms of smart growth, we've certainly done our part. Since I've been elected in 1999 we've eliminated ten million square feet of industrial office park zoning. Our residential zoning has moved from two and three acre to six and thirteen acre zoning. We have, certainly, been at the forefront of smart growth.

HOTJE-1

I rise in steadfast opposition to the Route 92 project precisely because it will be disruptive to the region and certainly to areas west of Route 1.

Permit me to focus on that.

We have spent a tremendous amount of time reducing the amount of truck traffic on our local roads, notably Route 31. We're down twenty to forty percent.

I note the gentleman from Plainsboro talking about Dey Road. We have been

at the forefront, not simply focusing on our roads, but all roads. He's right that those trucks have no business being on those roads. You should join our effort in making certain that the ban on trucks is extended to 96-inch wide trucks, that we give our municipalities the right to enforce all of this legislation, and that local deliveries, those garbage trucks that are delivering New York City garbage, have no business being on his roads, our roads, or your roads. They should be on interstates.

Those are defined under New Jersey statutes as local deliveries. They are, clearly, not local deliveries. They are long haul trucks. It simply winds up pitying one community against another when we need to get together and find solutions that don't involve roads like this.

HOTJE-1

The draft Environmental Impact Study does not address the potential impact 92 would cause to the communities west of Route 27, including communities within Hopewell Township.

HOTJE-2

The DEIS statement of purpose and need excludes viable alternatives to Route 92 for relieving regional traffic.

HOTJE-3

With or without 92, all but two

local intersections in the DEIS study area still fail according to the Army Corps' latest study in the EIS.

HOTJE-4

Route 92 would potentially cause a significant degradation of service on our Route 518. Alternatives to Route 92 are already built, including 522 and I-95, a free, multi-access highway that can handle high speed traffic.

HOTJE-5

Another alternative, bus rapid transit, is a viable alternative to help address the serious congestion problems along Route 1 which 92 purports to address.

HOTJE-6

Route 92 would waste scarce New Jersey public funds for transportation improvements. These are funds that are very badly needed to repair existing transportation infrastructure.

HOTJE-7

The Regional Planning Partnership has already expressed an interest in extending Route 92 through property owned by NJ DOT to Montgomery Township. Such an extension to Route 92 would greatly worsen all of our problems in Hopewell Township, which Route 92 in its present alignment would cause, including traffic,

HOTJE-8

HOTJE-8

sprawl, pollution, noise, loss of open space, and loss of quality of life.

Hopewell Township has consistently opposed this project in resolution 1999 and 2000. We have renewed our opposition unanimously.

I want to tell you, in Hopewell Township, getting a unanimous vote is quite a thing, and we've done it.

And, I offer a copy of that resolution into the record and I thank you for the opportunity to speak here.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Edwards.

Next up will be Deborah Johnson, former Mayor of South Brunswick.

PH-36

MR. JOHNSON: Good evening. Deborah Johnson, J-O-H-N-S-O-N.

Good evening. Again, my name is Deborah Johnson. I grew up in South Brunswick and currently reside in South Brunswick Township. For approximately ten years I have been involved with the no 92 initiative, and this experience has been long and challenging.

My understanding is that the purpose of this hearing is to solicit comments from the public in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of proposed Route 92. In order to determine a proposed Route 92 is in the overall public interest and not just in the interest of institutional power brokers, such as Princeton University.

It is my understanding that the benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the construction of proposed Route 92 must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments.

As articulated, the benefits/objectives of proposed Route 92 is to, one, establish a road system that acts to reserve the local streets for local traffic.

In reality, once Route 92 dumps its traffic onto Route 1, the traffic will have no place to go but through the local roads of South Brunswick, including Kingston and Princeton, Rocky Hill, Griggstown, Montgomery and Hopewell. An entire chain of unique and special historic communities.

DJ-1

In addition, the Turnpike's own

DJ-2

studies have shown that proposed Route 92 will increase traffic southbound on Route 1.

The loss of historic villages and the astronomical cost of construction, some estimates up to a half billion dollars in current dollars, and the reality of worsening traffic in some areas tips the scale heavily against Route 92.

DJ-3

Another articulated objective of Route 92 is to provide a connection to alternative routes to north/south traffic that currently use Route 1. A town that hosts Routes 1, 27, 130, and the Township can reasonably articulate it has its fair share of regional traffic roadways, yet, South Brunswick has contributed to the east/west connector 522.

South Brunswick has, like other communities in the region, they have done more than its fair share to attempt to relieve congestion and improve mobility and circulation of the area roadway system. We have even endeavored to work with the State to widen Route 1 in order to alleviate congestion. In return for these efforts we as a community for many years have had to live with the very real concern that the State

will, yet, and still build a roadway, Route 92, that will clearly destroy the character of our community and considerably damage our quality of life in order to create a driveway for large corporate interests in Plainsboro.

DJ-3

The scale here, again, heavily tips against the construction of Route 92.

Finally, the third stated objective of proposed Route 92 is to reduce the presence of non-local truck traffic on the local roadway network.

Trucks will not leave free roads to pay tolls on a Turnpike spur, they will continue to use the routes they are currently using, for when they do a cost benefit analysis they will find that the three seconds they could possibly save under the best circumstances on proposed Route 92 is not worth yet another toll.

DJ-4

However, proposed Route 92 will destroy pristine wetlands, cause toxic wetlands to leach into South Brunswick aquifers, which will affect the drinking water of our town, would be built on the smallest and vulnerable aquifer in the State of New Jersey.

DJ-5

These are the very real concerns that the communities involved have lived

1 with for years. Not to mention those among us who
2 would lose homes and businesses.
3 The loss of pristine wetlands,
4 the poisoning of our drinking waters, the economic
5 burden on taxpayers to build this costly toxin,
6 for our children, our families, our way of life,
7 this is what we've been living with for over many
8 decades.
9 The scale tips sharply against
10 Route 92.
11 In conclusion, when I was
12 privileged to serve the Township of South
13 Brunswick in an elected capacity there were many
14 challenges to be faced, dangerous fires at such
15 places as Iron Mountain, financial challenges, the
16 anthrax scare, and our losses during 9/11. Yet,
17 the residents of South Brunswick stayed together
18 and pulled together and moved on. In 1997, when
19 the EIS came out, we thought long last we could
20 also move on from the Route 92, as well. But, no
21 such luck, large cooperate institutions needing to
22 make even more money continue to press their
23 cause.
24 So, those living in the
25 effected areas continue to daily face the ever

present threat of the loss of the quality of life we have worked for to build for ourselves. It is amazing that we still stand with such strength in the face of our daily terror, but we will because we have to. To be destroyed because of the greed of the few is not an option.

I hope today that the Army Corps of Engineers will listen to us and offer us the ability to have an inclusive community process such as the one you placed with the Penns Neck bypass, which would, among others, include the community, expert consultants, unions and various government representatives.

DJ-6

Once an inclusive round table is established, once one is established, I am sure it will be clear to all that there are better alternatives than Route 92 and Route 92 should not be built and the permits not issued.

Thank you this evening for your time.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Johnson.

Our next speaker will be Rob Wolfe, Princeton Forrestal Center.

MR. WOLFE: Bob Wolfe,

PH-37

Please refer to comment group WC050 for comment codes.

W-O-L-F-E. I'm the general manager of Princeton Forrestal Center.

We would like to compliment the Army Corps of Engineers on the draft Environmental Impact Statement. The document is comprehensive, professionally impressive, and quite readable. It thoroughly addresses all the items mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act and it addresses directly the important smart growth and state planning issues that have been so widely bandied about by supporters and detractors. The report thoroughly explores the affected environment and the impacts of Route 92 and all of the alternative. The study identifies sixteen road alternatives and various demand strategy, that cover just about any idea that anyone has ever tossed out. The draft clearly establishes that whatever we do or do not do there are environmental consequences. Even the no action alternative is negative environmental impacts.

I believe it is clear that Route 92 as proposed has been carefully located and designed to minimize the inevitable environmental impacts. Most impressive is the new traffic study, which has been totally revised and

1 expanded to reflect current traffic data. The
2 study thoroughly and professionally assesses the
3 projected growth in population and employment and
4 the traffic therefrom. It demonstrates
5 conclusively that Route 92 will substantially
6 reduce traffic on most existing local roads and it
7 will do so far better than any of the
8 alternatives. The average traffic reduction is
9 eighteen percent. On average, almost one out of
10 every five cars will shift from the local road
11 system.
12 The report directly addresses
13 Route 92 in the context of the state plan and
14 smart growth. The highway connects two major
15 developed areas, Exit 8A and the Route 1 corridor.
16 These areas are designated planning area two in
17 the state plan in which growth is to be
18 encouraged.
19 Because the highway must go
20 through an area that is designated environmentally
21 sensitive, it was deliberately designed to have no
22 intersections in that area. The only places one
23 can get on and off the highway is in already
24 highly developed areas that are designated
25 planning area two to encourage growth.

The highway design is responsive to and consistent with the state plan and it was designed with smart growth principals in mind.

Smart growth does not mean no roads should ever be built any time, anywhere, it means that when roads are built they should separate regional from local traffic, discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas, and help sustain development where it's planned to be.

This may be one of the few advantages in the intolerably long delay in this project. The delay enabled us to learn from past mistakes so that Route 92 has been designed smart in order to avoid the pitfalls of the past.

Finally, the report correctly points out that Route 92 is to accommodate growth which has already occurred, or is already in the process of occurring.

When Princeton Forrestal Center was being planned and approved in 1975, we pointed out that Route 92 was needed to handle then existing traffic, as well as the projected growth. Everyone expected Route 92 to be built in the near

future back in 1975. The need has intensified in the almost three decades that have passed. It's been almost eight years since the New Jersey Turnpike Authority applied for a wetlands permit for Route 92. It's been almost six years since the jurisdiction was transferred to the Army Corps of Engineers. In that time the projected impacts on wetlands has been substantially reduced. The NEPA process deserves the credit for this. But, it has taken an incredibly long time. Traffic continues to worsen on roads that were never intended to handle these levels. The planning was predicated on the construction of Route 92 and it is needed more than ever.

The draft thoroughly documents the environmental and traffic impacts.

We hope you will make a rapid decision to permit the road. The region deserves the decision and it needs Route 92.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Wolfe.

Our next speaker will be Karen Linder, Princeton Greenways Association.

MS. LINDER: My name is Karen

PH-38

Linder, L-I-N-D-E-R. I'm a trustee for the Kingston Greenways Association. Our primary mission is to preserve and protect the green belt around the Village of Kingston.

Kingston is rich in preserved lands, including the Cook natural area and the most heavily traversed segment of the D&R Canal, a new two hundred acre tract parkland in what used to be the Princeton nurseries is about to be projected as a result of a complicated negotiation between its owners, Princeton University, and the Flumer family, and South Brunswick Township and Green Acres.

This new preserve, which will link the Cook preserve and the canal, will be bordered by Ridge Road and bisected by Mapleton Road. The two closest east/west roads, the proposed Route 92 terminus in Kingston.

Further to the west lies the Trap Rock Quarry, which is bordered by Route 603 in Kingston, said road being the continuation of Laurel Avenue into Rocky Hill.

When Trap Rock Quarry is eventually depleted its mine recovery plant calls for conversion of the quarry into a reservoir.

KGAI-1

KGAI-1

Its remaining land is in Somerset County's Master Plan as a proposed new state park.

I only want to mention these properties because westbound traffic that is fed onto Ridge Road by Route 92 will ultimately be followed right through the middle of our green belt. Traffic noise from the vehicular traffic will detract from the serenity of these properties, polluting runoff will have a negative impact on Heathcote Brook water quality, and, hence, our treating water and light pollution from the plant.

Yet, I see no mention or recognition of the negative impact that Route 92 will have on Kingston's parklands and preserves. Why wasn't this considered? I think this is an important oversight in the draft EIS, especially since you, yourself, chose to eliminate from further consideration many alternatives to Route 92 that you felt had significant impacts to parklands and preserves.

Number two, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service maintains lists of so-called species of concern, and I see mention of Cooper's hawk and Savannah sparrow, both state listed

threatened in the DIS.

The Kingston Greenways Association has a lot of birds in our ranks and we just wanted you to know that we have reported sightings of four species of concern, namely, Savannah sparrow, Osprey, and Cooper's hawk. In addition, you probably heard about the bald eagle. There's confirmed to be nesting within a few miles of terminus of this road.

KGAI-2

Could you comment on the proposed negative effect proposed Route 92 is going to have on these endangered species in Kingston, outside of your study area?

Lastly, Section 4.9, Page 258 of the first volume, I did read it, states that New Jersey Transportation Authority plans to enhance the stormwater management designs for Route 92 to ensure compliance with New Jersey DEP's reasonably adapted stormwater management regulations, however, it doesn't appear that any of these revised approaches are described in the draft EIS. When will these be available for review and comment? And, how can we properly assess the environmental impact of the project if we don't know which you're really going to do?

KGAI-3

KGAI-3

Our final comment, Kingston Greenway Association is in favor of and supports the State's new stormwater regulations, but could you please comment on the affect of compliance with the stormwater regulations and what affect it's going to have on the overall cost of the project? I'm assuming that such compliance might have the potential to add several million dollars to the cost of proposed Route 92.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Linder.

We will now hear from Richard Poller, South Brunswick Environmental Commission.

All right, we'll next hear from --

MS. ZEMAN: I'm not Richard, but I'm speaking in his place.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: I also see you're on the list to speak later. Will this list satisfy both requirements?

MS. ZEMAN: Yes.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Okay. Please continue.

MS. ZEMAN: My name is Ann

PH-39

Zeman, Z-E-M-A-N. I'm speaking on behalf of the environmental commission of the South Brunswick Township.

We urge the Army Corps of Engineers to refuse to issue a permit to discharge fill material into the wetlands for the construction of Route 92. The environmental commission, whose mission it is to monitor all matters related to the environmental quality of the Township, feels that the draft Environmental Impact Study minimizes the disastrous effects that the proposed Route 92 would have on the region's environment. SBTAZ-1

Route 92 would bisect through one of Middlesex County's largest and most fragile pieces of remaining open land. Almost fourteen acres of wetlands, and nearly three hundred acres of farmland would be destroyed. SBTAZ-2 SBTAZ-3

Route 92 would also cut through a nature preserve, endangered species habitat and preserved open space. SBTAZ-4

It would also pollute an aquifer recharge area with roadway contaminants, especially salt and others. SBTAZ-5

Route 92 bisects an area around SBTAZ-6

Devil's Brook, designated in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan as PA-5, the status New Jersey applies to its most environmentally sensitive areas. A PA-5 category is meant to have the greatest degree of protection from development.

The sixteen hundred acre site is the second largest PA-5 area in Middlesex County and comprises one-third of all the PA-5 land in the County. Why would the New Jersey Transit Authority and the State of New Jersey want to compromise this land when the State plan clearly directs, and I quote, "infrastructure investment decisions should encourage growth in areas that are already developed or are currently developing and should discourage development, sprawl into undeveloped areas."

SBTAZ-6

On the destruction of nearly fifteen acres of wetlands discussed in the DEIS, this contains very little information on the proposed mitigation to create wetlands, with no evaluation that this mitigation would succeed.

SBTAZ-7

There are numerous studies showing how difficult wetlands creation is, that created wetlands lack ecological diversity,

habitat value of natural wetlands.

Bradley Campbell, the Commissioner for the State Department of Environmental Protection, said himself that wetlands mitigation is "always a last resort" and has been a dismal failure in the past.

Why was this mitigation not evaluated and is this included in the estimated cost of four hundred million?

SBTAZ-7

Section 3.10 of the DEIS, "Known Contaminated Sites," contains a listing at 24 Friendship Road, classified as a level C-1, which means that it has the potential for groundwater contamination. The EIS states that no information was available from the SRP southern field office regarding this, which we feel is really unacceptable. How will this plume be addressed, and how will this contamination impact the groundwater?

SBTAZ-8

The DEIS also states that the proposed Route 92 is expected to meet EPA regulations of air quality emissions, however, the environmental commission questions why the EIS designated the area suburban, which meets the EPA regulations, since 3.9 miles of the 6.7 total

SBTAZ-9

mileage, or fifty-eight percent, is zoned rural residential and it is all farmland. Why wasn't this evaluated as rural for these emissions? Use of the more accurate rural would show that emissions for air quality would not meet the EPA emissions.

SBTAZ-9

A major concern in South Brunswick is the recent increase in impervious coverage over the whole entire township. The proposed Route 92 would add at least a hundred and three acres of impervious surface, a large enough area to be of significant concern.

SBTAZ-10

It should be noted that the alternative examined by the EIS, widening of Route 1, would result in a much lower increase of impervious surface. Construction of the road would represent a real setback in the efforts to limit impervious surface in the South Brunswick area, and the effect it would have would negate the effect of previous acquisition of about a hundred forty acres of open space in this area.

SBTAZ-11

The more recent state stormwater regulations now mandate special stormwater recharge requirements under new construction, which help eliminate some of the

SBTAZ-12

more serious effects of runoff. Yet, EIS is completely inadequate and does not explain how new stormwater regulations will be met. And, we'd like, also, a full explanation of how the regulations will be compiled with.

SBTAZ-12

Given the increases in population, water demand will also increase, and the likelihood of additional water supply will come from the aquifer in this area. Was the New Jersey DEP watershed management and water allocation consulted for this? I see no indication of that.

SBTAZ-13

A further negative impact on the proposed Route 92 would be the chemical pollution caused by salt runoff. Again, this would be much greater than the consequence of Route 1 widening.

SBTAZ-14

We are greatly concerned about salt intrusion into the aquifer and potable wells into the Route 92 corridor. In 1999 the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection notified the Monroe Township Municipal Utility Authority that salt water intrusion was indicated in the region for monitoring wells. Monroe Township MUA responded that this chloride was, and

I quote, "due to the road salting practices of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority and the County Road Department."

SBTAZ-14

This is in a letter dated June 1, 1999 from the executive director to the DEP, and I encourage you to get a copy.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Ma'am, I'm going to have to ask you to wrap it up.

MS. ZEMAN: We'd ask you to address this. We are very concerned. This was not addressed in the DEIS.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: You can always provide a written comment. Please wrap it up.

MS. ZEMAN: We urge you to address the salt issue. We also urge you to not give a permit for the wetlands of the fill. And, I'll write the other stuff.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you.

We will next here from Dr. Robert K. Tucker, Dayton Village Citizens' Coalition.

PH-40

MR. TUCKER: I'm Robert Tucker, T-U-C-K-E-R. I'm here representing the Dayton

Please refer to comment group WC056 for comment codes.

1 Village Citizens' Coalition, a nonprofit citizens
2 organization formed for promoting quality of life,
3 historical preservation and environmental
4 protection.
5 The coalition is opposed to
6 construction of Route 92 because of its
7 destruction of wetlands and crucial wildlife and
8 endangered plant habitat it would cause, its
9 potential for contamination of our water resources
10 and the disruption of the quality of life in our
11 community.
12 My qualifications include a
13 Ph.D. in zoology from Duke University with a
14 specialty in aquatic ecology. I served eighteen
15 years in the New Jersey Department of
16 Environmental Protection, ten years of which as
17 their chief scientist. While at NJ DEP in the
18 late '70s, early '80s, I supervised the first
19 statewide study of toxic substances and
20 groundwater and drinking water in the State. For
21 the last four years I've been principal
22 investigator in a US EPA national science
23 foundation grant to study wetlands function. I'm
24 currently serving as a governor's appointee to the
25 New Jersey Wetlands Mitigation Council.

1 The coalition objects to the
2 destruction of wetlands and the further
3 degradation of the surrounding wetlands, the
4 surface waters and groundwater, by contaminated
5 runoff and by the destruction of valuable habitat.
6 We actually see that the destruction of wetlands
7 is greater than what is listed in the EIS.
8 First of all, because when
9 jurisdiction for the permit was handed back from
10 EPA to the Corps, the delineation reverted to the
11 1987 manual.
12 In '88, '89 representatives
13 from the Corps, US EPA, the Natural Resources
14 Conservation Service, and the Fish & Wildlife
15 Service got together and came up with a much more
16 scientifically dependable way to delineate
17 wetlands. And, they thought this had been agreed
18 to, but in '91, because of developers impacting
19 congress, going back and lobbying congress and
20 threatening the Corps' appropriations, the Corps
21 evidently gave in and went back to their 1987
22 delineation manual.
23 So, we certainly object to
24 using this non-scientific and unacceptable
25 delineation. It means that at least two acres

1 that should be listed and impacted are not so
2 listed.
3 But, even more important is the
4 fact that this road will impact, by the runoff
5 from the road, and the aerial transport of
6 contaminants, a greater area of wetlands, and by
7 cutting up the area, fractionating the area, the
8 habitat, it will cause destruction over a wider
9 area.
10 New Jersey has already lost
11 probably greater than forty percent of its
12 wetlands up to 1985, and is still losing wetlands
13 that aren't being replaced or mitigated, as Ann
14 Zeman pointed out. A lot of the mitigation
15 doesn't work. From my experience, and from
16 studies that have been done in New Jersey, more
17 than fifty percent of the mitigation projects
18 fail. And, even when they are, apparently,
19 successful, most zoologists see that they don't
20 really come up to the ecological conditions of
21 natural wetlands. They don't have the vitality,
22 the diversity of natural wetlands.
23 In the EIS we notice that there
24 are acknowledgements of endangered species in the
25 area, although the Department of Transportation

1 has received an LOI from NJ DEP saying that there
2 are no endangered animals right in the area, but
3 we know that they are around there. And, it's
4 very, very difficult to find rare endangered
5 animals. In fact, because they're rare it makes
6 it particularly harder to find them.
7 I have written comments, so
8 I'll try to summarize quickly.
9 The other point is that the
10 water quality, even though the stormwater
11 regulations might be followed, there are bridges
12 over the area, and we just have to look at the
13 situation that I've observed over Rocky Brook,
14 just south of Route 33 and east of Hightstown,
15 where a bridge over the Turnpike -- I mean a
16 bridge on the Turnpike over Rocky Brook, clearly,
17 puts all kind of contaminants in the brook. And,
18 you can see the effects on the biota and on the
19 water quality.
20 So, for these reasons we very
21 much object to Route 92 and ask that the permit
22 not be allowed.
23 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank
24 you, Dr. Tucker.
25 Folks, we're going to take a

1 five-minute break, but before you stand up I'm
2 just going to review the bidding here. We have
3 forty-nine more good people who have spent a lot
4 of time and have patiently sat and listened to
5 those who have spoken so far. It's all the more
6 important that you absolutely keep your verbal
7 comments to five minutes out of respect for
8 everyone else. We can take written record. You
9 can also make a tape recording separate from this.
10 But, please summarize your points so that you can
11 all get a shot. Forty-nine people, do the math,
12 that's over four hours straight at five minutes a
13 piece if we don't allocate time just to walk up to
14 the microphone and then be recognized as you sit
15 down.
16 This is going to be a long
17 evening.
18 We're going to take a
19 five-minute break. I want Laura Lynch ready to
20 go. I will start this in five minutes. The rest
21 of you just can quietly come in through the back
22 door.
23 (Whereupon, a short recess is
24 taken.)
25 LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: I ask you

to please take your seats. We'll hear from Laura Lynch.

I ask you to please take your seats and save the comments for the break.

Laura, before you start, I just want to let you all know, what I'm going to do is call two names for now on, the speaker who will come up next and then I'll put first on deck. That might save us a minute or two, times forty-nine is almost an hour.

I don't mean to confuse anybody, but I'll call the next speaker and then first on deck so you can mentally prepare ourselves.

MS. LYNCH: Laura Lynch, L-A-U-R-A, L-Y-N-C-H. I'm speaking here tonight representing the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, with over twenty thousand members. I was also a participant in the Penns Neck area EIS partners round table, which ended just a few months ago.

The Sierra Club will be delivering to the Army Corps a page-by-page filleting of the DEIS, but tonight I'm just going to read a few minutes of comments.

PH-41

Please refer to comment group WC057 for comment codes.

1 There was a lot of wishful
2 thinking in this DEIS. There was a lot of proof
3 by blatant discertification that wetland
4 mitigation works, that car and truck drivers will
5 pay tolls when a free alternative exists, that
6 enactment and enforcement of truck restrictions on
7 Heathcote and Ridge Roads will have it, that a
8 sixteen to twenty-five percent reduction in
9 through traffic will be noticeable, that there has
10 been a consensus among communities that Route 92
11 was the best alternative.
12 Where is the proof for any of
13 these assumptions?
14 The best available evidence,
15 some provided by the New Jersey Department of
16 Environmental Protection around the New Jersey
17 Turnpike Authority, leaves little doubt that much
18 of what is written in the DEIS is wrong.
19 Wetlands mitigation does not
20 work. The DEP says as much. Trucks crowd Route 1
21 and its vicinity because they are avoiding New
22 Jersey Turnpike tolls. Adding another toll road
23 will not solve this problem. There is no proof in
24 the DEIS that drivers will choose a toll road over
25 several free alternatives.

1 The Heathcote and Ridgewood
2 communities will have to show the burden of a
3 potential truck ban enforcement without any
4 financial aid from the New Jersey Turnpike.
5 What is lacking from the DEIS
6 is any proof of community involvement, any sense
7 of discussions, suggestions or compromises. The
8 goals in this DEIS seem to have been tailored to
9 fit Route 92 as if the road had been planned long
10 before the goals were written.
11 The real problem is ramped over
12 development of Route 1, coupled with the lack of
13 mass transit. Because there are a few east/west
14 roads in the area traffic congestion is
15 exacerbated, because Route 522 is under used, and
16 the recently designed Penns Neck area improvements
17 to Route 1 will aid in smoother throw to traffic.
18 Route 92, on the other handle,
19 by the Army Corps' own admission, hastens
20 development along Route 1.
21 The Sierra Club favors the DEIS
22 option of Route 1 widening with signal removal.
23 It leaves the Plainsboro Reserve intact. It is
24 almost as successful at congestion relief as Route
25 92 is, although no options truly solve the

problem.

Funds for Route 92 could be diverted toward road repairs and public transit, both of which are sorely needed. Route 1 signal removal continues the project that the DOT started along Route 1 from I-95 to West Windsor, but what is the most important issue at hand, and what has been left out of the DEIS, is community involvement. The public participation section of the DEIS, a document of one thousand three hundred thirteen pages, is just half a page. Public outcry that has lasted over fifty years certainly needs more.

The only workable solution to this problem is to listen to what those affected by Route 92 have to say and to work towards a compromise. Conflict mediation succeeded in West Windsor, and it can succeed here too.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: All right. Thank you, Ms. Lynch.

Next up will be Jan Ten Broek, followed by Diane Brake on deck, please.

MS. TEN BROEK: Jan TenBroek of Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition. I'll

PH-42

keep it very short.

I thank the Army Corps of Engineers for keeping the overall public interest in mind, and you're sworn to do so. The problem here is that the financial community, the financial interest in the particular project, seem to override the public interest of the fragile surrounding communities, such as Kingston, Griggstown. And, there are many other areas which are going to be very negatively impacted by this development, and we hope that the Army Corps of Engineers will consider the overall public interest and deny this application.

MVPCJT-1

Thank you.

MS. BRAKE: Diane Brake, B-R-A-K-E. I'm the president of the Regional Planning Partnership, which is a nonprofit organization formed in 1968 to advocate smart growth and regional cooperation.

PH-43

I will submit written comments that are more extensive, but I wanted to speak tonight because I wanted to put on the record that an organization like my own, that looks at the region more broadly, and has looked at this for a long time, has come to the conclusion that Route

1 92 should be built. And, I come here not being
2 from an organization that normally supports the
3 construction of highways. In fact, we opposed the
4 construction of 95 through the Sourland Mountains,
5 particularly because it was an environmentally
6 sensitive area, with no other infrastructure, very
7 little development, and would open up a new area
8 for suburban development.
9 At the time, and this was in
10 the late '70s, we proposed that the 95 corridor
11 would more appropriately be the Turnpike and that
12 the money that was going to be spent on the 95
13 through Sourland Mountains should be spent instead
14 on improving the connection between the Turnpike
15 and Route 1, another important regional connector,
16 where growth should be developed, where there was
17 already infrastructure, there was already
18 development, there were many county roads.
19 So, we are a multi-goal
20 organization, looking at economic growth,
21 environmental protection, and social justice.
22 And, in that context we have to look at the big
23 picture. How do we support all of these things,
24 environmental protection and development? We do
25 it by choosing a location. And, it always has to

be located somewhere because the growth that we have heard about from the projections in the study are from land use development, from the towns, many of which public officials were here tonight. We know, for example, we have been following the development in the Route 1 corridor for the last thirty-five years, we have looked at the current development on the books in South Brunswick Township, where they have tens of millions of square feet already approved, and tens of millions more square feet on the books to be developed in the area of 8A. And, that's not even to mention tens of thousands of housing units that could be developed in that area as well.

We have recommended that infrastructure be limited in access so that it does not create sprawl, that the interchanges on 92 are restricted to growth areas.

We've been very disappointed that the center development that we've advocated for thirty-five years has not been embraced by local governments in order to make sure that we can have a viable transit alternative. We support those who oppose roads because they often increase auto dependency, but we ask you to look at roads

that also can serve to make a better network to connect road based transit.

We have supported the Central Jersey Transportation Forum, where twenty towns have been getting together looking at land use and transportation, and we were particularly struck by the first page of the EIS, where you wrote that it is important to have the land use integrated with the infrastructure development. And, we certainly hope that the agencies responsible for the construction of this road will do everything in their power to ensure that the development that happens is centered, less auto dependent, and with a regional view about where development should be and where conservation should be. We recognize that wherever development happens, there are environmental impacts. What is a question here is a matter of choice of where this should be, and we feel that having looked at this for the last thirty-five years, that this is the right location, that this is careful planning, that the NEPA process has worked, even with a different definition of wetlands the design of this road has changed significantly to reduce the impacts on wetlands. We are glad for the delay because the

RPP-1

RPP-2

new stormwater rules will even improve the water quality even more, but we do hope now that those stormwater rules are in place. The Turnpike has committed to meeting those stormwater obligations. The Corps issued the permit.

RPP-2

Thank you, very much. We'll be submitting more comments written.

Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Ms. Brake.

Mr. Joe Peters, will be followed by Doug O'Malley, N.J. PIRG.

PH-44

MR. PETERS: Thank you.

P-E-T-E-R-S.

Please refer to comment group WC058B for comment codes.

What I want to do is just go through this real quick.

We're here, really, to discuss the merits of a roadway that has a long and checkered past, one that was considered at one point the gateway to the shore, as a free ride from Central Jersey to the shore, but is now a lonely 6.7 toll road that will never pay for itself, while destroying over thirteen acres of natural wetlands, and can never be replaced, and ravishing the pristine farmlands of Southern

1 Middlesex County in the process. The loss of the
2 natural wetlands is probably the most devastating,
3 since I happen to live next door.
4 To prove that wetlands can
5 never be artificially created, three years ago New
6 Jersey DOT tried to create them, and now we have
7 fifty mosquito infested acres of mud that used to
8 be fertile farmland, with very little active life
9 in it. They would have been better off digging a
10 pit, filling it with water and stocking fish in it
11 so outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy it. Unlike the
12 Plainsboro Preserve across the street.
13 There are questions that need
14 to be asked about this road. As my old college
15 professor once said, engineers can build anything,
16 but balancing the needs of the project with the
17 needs of the community is the challenge.
18 This is what we have here, a
19 road that could be built, but does it really fit
20 the surroundings of and help the community? Even
21 if it does, was it really worth it?
22 Looking at the EIS, there's
23 also one other piece that needs to be looked at
24 even more. Why was the scope, need and the
25 purpose of the project written the way it was? It

1 was written so narrowly that the only possible
2 solution to it was Route 92.
3 I think what we need to do is
4 look at the reasoning behind the scope and
5 purpose, and we must investigate more deeply the
6 people who wrote it and what were their
7 intentions.
8 In reviewing the traffic
9 section of the EIS I noticed some information.
10 Looking at Appendix C, which
11 was the truck traffic and car traffic, I want to
12 know what the definition of regional traffic is.
13 Is it really traffic that's leaving the Turnpike
14 heading to South Jersey and Pennsylvania and
15 points west, or is it just commuter traffic?
16 And, in reply to Plainsboro Township, I
17 have a couple of questions. How can you state
18 that the Plainsboro Township Master Plan is good
19 planning if your commercial buildings were
20 approved without the needed infrastructure to
21 support it? Was your master plan developed with
22 92, a road that you have no control over, being
23 constructed included in it? And, if not, how
24 could you not think that Dey and Plainsboro Roads
25 would not have increased traffic as they have

today?

Now, I notice that we had people from labor here. I just wanted to mention to them that we, who are against Route 92, are not against labor. What we want to do is support labor in the building of the alternatives to Route 92. We believe that the amount of moneys available for the alternatives would be equal to or greater than any cost of construction of Route 92. And, if they would think about it, they would come and support us.

I believe also that the proponents of Route 92 have so sold labor a damaged bill of goods. They're afraid that we will prevail in defeating this project, and they have made us out to be against labor.

Also, nowhere in the EIS have I discovered is there any cost benefit analysis of the building of Route 92 versus the building of the alternatives. Not just the single alternative, but all of the alternatives. I believe that is missing and should be received.

Now, the building of the alternatives to Route 92 are in themselves not an answer to the traffic problems that face the area.

1 Combining them is something that needs to be
2 addressed and taken into the mix before any
3 decision can be made to see if this road should be
4 built. This should include the widening of Route
5 1 with and without traffic signals, the extension
6 of 522 to Route 535, the improvement of Route 535
7 at the intersection of the Turnpike underpass,
8 redesign of both Exit 8A and the Route 32 and
9 Route 130 intersections, the widening of both Dey
10 and Plainsboro Roads in areas with a possible
11 Cranbury bypass for Plainsboro Road, and the
12 modifications of Scutter Mills and Dey Roads
13 intersection and the increase of Dey Road.
14 Finally, what is not apparent
15 but a very plausible solution is the extension of
16 the truck/car lanes further south on the Turnpike
17 from Exit 8A to 7A intersecting with I-195 in
18 Hamilton. This needed improvement would not only
19 decrease the amount of regional traffic on local
20 roads, but also decrease the capacity of the
21 Turnpike itself. For anyone who lives near Route
22 130, it is commonly known as the Cranbury squeeze,
23 and is the bigger hindrance of traffic staying on
24 the Turnpike besides its toll. The extension of
25 this traffic would allow smoother traffic. Also,

it would also achieve one direction of Route 92 --

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: All right, Mr. Peters.

MR. PETERS: -- to reduce the presence of non-local truck traffic on the local roadway network and shift the traffic to a commuter highway, besides increasing the traffic of the Turnpike to its logical exit of 7A, which is the gateway to the shore.

If the Turnpike doesn't look at these viable options, they're doing the citizens of New Jersey, as well as the citizens of Middlesex County and Mercer County, an injustice.

I appeal to you that Route 92 not be built and the alternatives be examined in more detail.

Thank you very much.

PH-45

MR. O'MALLEY: Douglas O'Malley, O-M-A-L-L-E-Y. I'm representing New Jersey PIRG, Public Interest Research Group. We have over twenty thousand members across the State.

I'll be referring to comments we'll be submitting jointly with the New Jersey Sierra Club. These comments were prepared by Ed

Lloyd, an environmental law professor at Columbia Law School, as well as Jim Tripp, a general counsel for environmental defense.

First off, I want to start by saying that, really, the two ghosts looking over tonight's hearings are of Jane Jacobs and Mr. Robert Moses. And, there's two competing values that are represented by those ghosts, one is roads over people, and the second is an honest and thorough questioning of planners who don't necessarily always take into account the concerns of the people.

Quite simply, there are many concerns with this road. Number one, the idea of this will help to ameliorate traffic concerns on Route 1, and after the construction of 92 failing grades will still be present at Route 1 and Cozzens Lane, Route 1 and Major Road, Route 1 and the New Road, Scutters Mill Road, Scutters Mill Road, Dey Road, Scutters Mill Road and Crossing Road, Route 130, Dey Road at Route 535, Route 130 at Friendship Road, Route 532 at Kingston Road, Route 1 at Route 532, as well as a ranking of E at Route 27 and Raymond Road, which is significant because that is currently ranked as a B.

NJPIRG-1

That, obviously, leads us to the conclusion that this will not help those failing grades at those intersections.

NJPIRG-1

We also need to consider the cost of this road.

NJPIRG-2

We currently in the State of New Jersey are bonding our way out of our transportation woes. We are borrowing money, as it stands, to fix the roads that we have. That is unsustainable.

Obviously, the State needs to address this issue, but one way not to help it certainly would be to spend upwards of five hundred million dollars on this road.

The third general point I want to make is kind of, really, an important one, and that's the concept of induced growth. It is not adequately represented in the EIS.

NJPIRG-3

Now I'd like to refer to some technical points in the EIS that should be addressed. Seven points.

The first is, nowhere to be found is peak periods and peak hours analyzed.

NJPIRG-4

The second point is that the statement contains no information about the trips or traffic volume that

NJPIRG-5

will be added to Route 1 by Route 92 construction south of Ridge Road in either the a.m. or p.m. peak hour or period. Point number three, similar to the request in item two, we are requesting that the Army Corps clarify the traffic volume on Route 1 south, Ridge Road, beyond the red or other colored lines presented in Figures 4.1 through Figures 4.6. Point four, the statement does not contain trunk line volume numbers or level of service on the Turnpike at present or in 2028, northbound and southbound, for a.m. peak hours or periods segregated by trucks and autos, nor the existing number of autos and trucks exiting and entering at Interchange 8, or 7 or 7A or 8A or 9 during both a.m. or peak hour periods. Point five, most of the information presented in the current statement is presented in terms of peak period and peak volume, not annual or daily average traffic. Point six, ACS 2000, signalized intersection tables for volume, of Part C of the appendix do not seem to match the graphic maps later in Part C. Which volume or numbers is the reader supposed to comment and rely on? These are relatively technical matters. The last one, perhaps in my mind the most important, that is the

NJPIRG-5

NJPIRG-6

NJPIRG-7

NJPIRG-8

NJPIRG-9

vehicle miles traveled compared with the no action course or a course of building Route 92.

The vehicle miles of travel projections do not appear in the induced development or the transportation section in Chapter 4, but only in the air quality sections, and then without explanation. Moreover, these figures when they do appear present a scenario that really is unsustainable, a concept that under a no action scenario in 2028 there would be more traffic than with Route 92.

NJPIRG-10

The additional comments to this will be found in the written statements. Thank you.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Next up will be Mr. Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign, followed by Robert von Zumbusch, Delaware and Raritan Canal Coalition.

Mr. Newton, please.

All right, then, Mr. von Zumbusch.

Thank you.

Mr. von Zumbusch will be followed by Corrington Wong, Kingston Historical Society.

PH-46

MR. von ZUMBUSCH: Robert von Zumbusch. I'm a trustee of the Delaware & Raritan Canal Coalition. We have over twenty associated organizations. Some of those organizations have taken a stand on Route 92. We are still in the process of reviewing and still continuing to review the DEIS, however, we have come to some conclusions already, and I think it's fair to say that we will certainly not support the present alignment of Route 92.

DRCC-1

One of the things that has been said is that Route 92 would connect two centers of activity, Exit 8A and Route 1. Route 1 is not a center, it's a corridor. And, that makes all the difference in the world. Because, the definition of the purpose of this is looking for a higher aerial route connecting the two. What is really not necessary is not such a system, but a network.

I think there's no question Plainsboro has gone through great efforts to provide smart growth in Plainsboro for Plainsboro, but not for the region. And, I think this is really very important.

To think that designing all the developments at Darn Road and other roads were not

designed so as to handle this traffic, and after all, only sixteen percent was considered regional traffic, the rest of it is local traffic, and it's already over burdened. I think there's a fault there. And, to expect that another town -- and no town here is perfect in its planning. I think that other towns also have this.

I think what we do have, though, is a certain disagreement, and there has not been equal and fair input and the opportunity to look at all alternatives.

DRCC-2

Many of the alternatives that were summarily dismissed in the Corps' report really were stacked in such a way, why does 522 have to be six lanes? That immediately puts all sorts of environmental impacts on it, on that alternative, which really doesn't have to be. It can be two lanes and just extend it instead of widened an extended.

DRCC-3

That's just an example. But, it seems to me that what we have is Route 130, Route 1, which can act as distribution roads, essentially, to a certain extent, and then we should have multiple roads connecting them. And, they will handle both local and regional traffic.

DRCC-4

I don't think we need a single.

The other thing about the single road is it enters Route 1 at its narrowest point, where traffic is already a problem.

DRCC-5

I think there is universal -- not universal, but there is, generally, very broad consensus that Route 1 needs to be widened, whether or not Route 92 is built. And, I think it needs to be addressed before Route 92 is built.

DRCC-6

What we observe is that the widening of Route 1 be put on a fast track immediately. We're not suggesting at this point that -- I'm not going to say 92 absolutely could not be built or what-have-you, but what we do need to do is that we do need to go through a process of what is known as conflict mitigation or round table. Many of the same people who have suggested supporting Route 92 also were strong supporters of this round table approach. I think this is a very good approach. Also, some of the people who were opposed to 92 supported this. And, several of our associated organizations were involved in this process, and we talked to them extensively, and all of them were in favor of this. And, I think that this is really what we should do.

DRCC-7

I think another important thing is the impact on areas west of Route 1, which really has not been addressed, particularly in Kingston, and after the Corps of Engineers stated that one of the reasons for the EIS was its impact on Kingston.

DRCC-8

So, we will certainly submit more detailed, and I will not read my footnotes now. I gather I'm running out of time. So, I will go on. But, one other thing I would like to mention, most towns in this area have been involved also in trying to push for a natural heritage area, the crossroads of the revolution in New Jersey. The American Revolution.

DRCC-9

That has not been mentioned at all in here.

Ridge Road is the route that Washington took to the Battle of Monmouth.

Thank you very much.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. von Zumbusch. And, now, Corrington Wong.

MR. von ZUMBUSCH: I believe Mr. Wong has not arrived.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Did Damien Newton make it back.

MR. NEWTON: Yes. Right here.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Damien Newton is up, followed by Lincoln Hollister from the Sensible Transportation Options Partnership.

Did I get that right?

Lincoln Hollister will be following Mr. Newton Damien.

MR. NEWTON: Damien Newton, N-E-W-T-O-N.

PH-47

I brought with us representation of the governor. I'm sorry, its not to scale, for everyone that's been asking. He's a little taller.

Although today's hearing has been convened by the Army Corps of Engineers and it's Army Corps staff sitting in front of you, everyone should be aware that this hearing is a part of the environmental process, and Route 92 is a proposal of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority. The chair and top staff of the Turnpike Authority are appointed and answer to the governor. The project and policy decisions the New Jersey Turnpike Authority makes are decisions of the McGreevey administration.

So, people who are opposed to

this road should not only let the Army Corps know their positions, but also let Governor McGreevey's office.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify again today. I'm the New Jersey coordinator for the Tri-State Transportation Campaign. The campaign is the region's leading nonprofit consortium of experts, planning organizations, activists, and environmental groups concerned with transportation. Our mission is to achieve an environmental sound, economically efficient, and socially just transportation network and system in the thirty-two counties in and surrounding New York City, including Central New Jersey and the surrounding communities.

From where I left off this afternoon, unlike the 1999 application that the Turnpike Authority submitted, this Environmental Impact Statement contains no information about the trips that would be added to Route 1 by Route 92 construction south of Ridge Road in either the a.m. or p.m. peak hour period, nor is any intersection on Route 1 south of Ridge Road analyzed in terms of level of service or any other criteria in the DEIS.

TSTCDN2-1

TSTCDN2-1

In 1999 the Turnpike itself admitted, while Route 92 will reduce traffic on Route 1 north of Ridge Road significantly with traffic shifting to the Turnpike, south of Ridge Road traffic on Route U.S. 1 increases. See January 6, 1999.

Indeed, as Figure 5 from that application makes clear, volume would increase south of Ridge Road from about 48,300 trips to 67,000 trips. The additional 19,400 trips, 10,600 of them added trips south of Ridge Road alone according to Figure 6 in that document, can be expected to be added by Route 92's construction.

Now, between the two hearings today I drove my colleague to Princeton Junction so she could catch a train home tonight, and I got to be telling you, on the way back, going south on Route 1, I was not thinking, if only there was 10,600 more cars.

TSTCDN2-2

This DEIS does not reveal what the projected added trips are south of Ridge Road, like the 1999 application, nor does it project the levels of service at these intersections at both a.m. and p.m. peak hour and period compared to the existing 2001 conditions and the trend 2028 no

build scenario.

Obviously, this is known information. We request this information be made public so that motorists who use Route 1, residents of West Windsor, the Princetons, investors in properties and developers, as well as local elected officials, understand that Route 92 will significantly increase traffic conditions on the fast growing Route 1 during peak hours.

TSTCDN2-2

Despite this added traffic to Route 1, one of the other objectives of the Turnpike as to its stated purpose is to "reduce the presence of non-local traffic on the local roadway network and shifting such traffic to Route 92." DEIS Part 1, Page 8. Yet, Route 92 would do a poor job of reducing non-local truck traffic and shifting such traffic to Route 92 by 2028.

TSTCDN2-3

Twenty-four years from now, in the a.m. peak hour, Route 92 is projected to attract just one hundred seventy-six trucks eastbound and fifty-nine trucks westbound. In the p.m. peak hour period in 2028 Route 92 would attract just seventy-two trucks eastbound and one hundred twenty-nine trucks westbound, at the price of three hundred fifty million dollars at least.

TSTCDN2-4

Another traffic thing, fourteen intersections were studied. I'm sure you probably heard this already. Eleven will still fail during the morning rush in 2028 if Route 92 was built, ten would fail in the evening rush.

Three hundred fifty million dollars and three of fourteen will pass. I don't think you can get a baseball contract for three hundred fifty million if you're going to go three for fourteen.

One of my last points is we heard a lot about local input, local people being involved in the process. Could all the local people that are opposed to Route 92 raise their hands, please?

TSTCDN2-5

I don't think the local people have been involved in the drafting of this project. I encourage that there be more local input before this project goes forward.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Mr. Hollister.

Before you begin, Mr. Newton, I do, unfortunately, have to remind you and everyone here that these are formal proceedings and that the procedures set forth here are in Title 33, the

code of the federal regulation, Part 327, and I am going to have to allow my counsel to speak now for the record.

MR. PALMER: I'm sorry, Mr. Newton, do you intend to enter that poster in evidence?

MR. NEWTON: I was not planning on entering it.

MR. PALMER: Okay, fine. Thank you very much.

The problem was, Mr. Newton, if you had intended to enter it, we could not accept it. I would have to ask you to describe it verbally for the record.

LT. COLONEL HOFFMANN: Mr. Hollister, the floor is yours.

MR. HOLLISTER: I am Lincoln Hollister, H-O-L-L-I-S-T-E-R. I represent the organization "Sensible Transportation Options Partnership," otherwise known as STOP. STOP was created to develop an alternate sensible option to the former Millstone Bypass. The Millstone Bypass Wolfe destroyed the Washington Road Elm AlleeL, and other environmentally sensitive resources. We participated in the Penns Neck area EIS partner's

PH-48

Please refer to comment group WC060 for comment codes.

round table process. This process lead to a road design that not only protected the environment, but also significantly reduced present and projected congestion in the Penns Neck area. It was a win-win solution.

The environment we protected is spectacular. It was even found suitable for a pair of American bald eagles to build a nest in Plainsboro, where one or more eaglets are now being raised.

I have read that American bald eagles have a foraging radius of about five miles from their nest. The Plainsboro Preserve, with its bass-laden lake, is well within this range. The Plainsboro Preserve is a place worthy of its name, a preserve in the midst of New Jersey sprawl.

Route 92 will pass through this preserve. Will anyone, including the nesting pair of American bald eagles, want to continue to seek tranquility in a place where there is the constant roar of traffic?

My first question for the Army Corps of Engineers is whether the impact on the habitat of the nesting pair of American bald

eagles was considered in drafting the DEIS, and if so, what were the findings?

On reading through the DEIS I could not find an answer to this question.

My second question regarding the environment concerns noise. In the DEIS I could not find the values for noise measurements at the Audubon nature center at Plainsboro Preserve. Are they in the DEIS?

Given the short distance from Route 92, and given the traffic levels expected on Route 92, how much added noise will there be at the Audubon nature center?

I was very confused by the traffic analysis. I did not see in the maps and discussion that the new Route 522 was taken account of. Some widening of Route 1, improvement of a couple of interchanges, and completion of the planned extension of Route 522 seem to me would accomplish the stated goals of Route 522.

What am I missing here?

My question is, has the traffic analysis considered the traffic flow on the new Route 522?

I am also puzzled by statements

1 to the effect that traffic numbers in the models
2 incorporate the Penns Neck roadway. In the
3 appendix of the Route 92 DEIS, where this roadway
4 is described, I see that what is described is a
5 four year old preferred alternative of the
6 environmental assessment. This alternative was
7 rejected in the Penns Neck area EIS. Is it really
8 true that the rejected roadway system was the one
9 used, this is the question, was that the one used
10 in the regional traffic analyses of the Route 92
11 DEIS?
12 Finally, the N.J. Department of
13 Transportation came up with a bold and successful
14 structure for bringing all concerned citizens and
15 stakeholders into one room to come up with a
16 reasonable plan. This was done at our round table
17 meetings that were superbly managed by a
18 professional conflict resolution team. Surely,
19 such a successful process can be done again. The
20 result is jobs, preserved environment, improved
21 traffic mobility and satisfied residents who would
22 of had to have lived with the consequences of
23 badly designed and irreversible road construction.
24 What am I missing here?
25 My question is, please, why not

have a similar process for Route 92 or its functional equivalent?

(Whereupon, the stenographer is relieved.)

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: We will next ask Elizabeth Palius of the Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition, followed by Frank Chrinko.

PH-49

MS. PALIUS: Elizabeth Palius. I live in Montgomery Township and I'm chair of the Millstone Valley Preservation Coalition.

Some things about the 92 proposal are perfectly clear, some things are rather unclear at this point. That Plainsboro would want this road built serves their developmental need takes, traffic out of Plainsboro, puts it in South Brunswick. I can see why Plainsboro likes it, I see why South Brunswick does not. I can see why Princeton University likes this. I can see why the labor unions in the State, the Governor has a lot of voters who are union members that like this, that puts people to work. That's the obvious part.

The not so obvious part are some questions when the DEIS was written, mass transit

MVPCEP-1

MVPCEP-1

was never discussed.

MVPCEP-2

Two. How can in good conscience anybody consider, with a tight budget in the State, spending such an enormous sum of money on such a limited roadway?

MVPCEP-3

Three, four, how can wetlands, in fact, be created if they are a natural thing and it's taken Mother Nature hundreds of years; how can engineers say, okay, we will go out and make wetlands. The answer is they can't, but that question was never answered.

MVPCEP-4

Is 92 a north-south facilitator or east-west facilitator? That's not clear either. If it's a north-south facilitator, wouldn't the area be better served by either widening Route 1 or widening the Turnpike? If it's an east-west facilitator, why does it stop magically at Route 1? Where does the traffic go?

MVPCEP-5

You know, in New York people used to make these incredible jokes about the Long Island Expressway. In New Jersey we've got Route 1. Rush hour we're pretty much in the same place. So the idea of bringing more traffic to Route 1, which is already not going anyplace, doesn't seem to make any sense. And I would really like to know how is

this thing developed not taking that fact into consideration?

MVPCEP-5

The area that would be very much impacted by the completion of 92. It's a very historic area in the Millstone Valley. We have a scenic byway which was approved by the State of New Jersey and we got funding from the Federal Highway Administration to create a quarter management plan quiet recently and that work is in process and the historical value of the 12 districts on the State National Register that make up the Millstone Valley were really never discussed and yet any road that ends at Ridge Road and Route 1 obviously is going to dump an enormous amount of traffic in the historic districts and on the scenic byway and I think that needs to be addressed as well.

MVPCEP-6

And lastly, if there is a problem, and you need to find a solution, why come up with something and try to ram it down people's throats? Not have smart, not very popular and not very successful.

I think, since transportation and roadway is very definitely a regional area, what you need to do, rather than issue the permits and move ahead with 92 as proposed, is gather all of

MVPCEP-7

the people who have vested interests in transportation together and negotiate a settlement.

We too will be handing in some written comments. I thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Chrinko.

MR. CHRINKO: Frank Chrinko. I've been a resident of South Brunswick 45 years. Prior to building my home in South Brunswick I had property in East Brunswick and with plans to settle there. The New Jersey Turnpike thwarted those plans by announcing its proposal to build the Turnpike just a few hundred feet from my property.

I'm a life-long resident of Middlesex County an I'm here to show my opposition to another intrusion by the New Jersey Turnpike to build in my hometown.

Historically route 92 is a planner's nightmare. Almost 60 years ago it was proposed as the Princeton bypass intended to connect Route 206 in the west with Route 33 in the east. The road was praised by the Princetons, the University, Plainsboro, West Windsor, plus many other towns that were trying to keep traffic out of their communities.

The bypass was never built. Then

MVPCEP-7

PH-50

Please refer to comment set WC061 for comment codes.

about 20 to 25 years ago the same Princeton coalition of communities succeeded in having an interstate link designated by the then Governor Kean. Once again to keep the traffic out of their communities. That decision had the affect of making Route 1 what it is today. That DEIS designation of the interstate link was one of only two such DEIS designations, in the history of the interstate highway system.

I have served as Mayor, Township committeeman, industrial commission, chairman and member of the Route 1 study commission during my years in South Brunswick Township.

My 20 years of Public Service tell me what is going on here is wrong. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Environmental Study, with all due respect, is grievously flawed. It deals far less with the roads impact on the environment than with the affect on traffic and other non-environmental matters. It could not have been better written by the New Jersey Turnpike publicist.

For the record, I will state that we do not need Route 92. It's a 20th century antiquity. We already have an east-west roadway,

it's called Route 522. Try it, you'll like it. It's a completed four-lane limited access non-toll road and it is now able to take you from Route 27 in the west to Route 130 in the east with a commitment to extend it to the Turnpike itself. Why do we need another east west highway?

Six questions are appropriate and should be answered.

Why was Route 522, an existing road largely ignored by the study, even the maps in the study make Route 522 almost imperceptible, why was it hidden?

What will happen to the existing Route 32, formerly known as Foresgate Drive, will it be co-opted by the proposed 92?

I got an answer to this question in the lobby earlier and it may not be appropriate.

How will properties along Route 32 between 130 and Jamesburg obtain access without being required to pay a toll?

That was answered and the answer is no toll for those people on Foresgate Drive.

Why wasn't the use of Route 522 explored in order to have it connect to the toll

within a stones throw of where 522 will be built?

Should a non-bias commission be appointed to determine if there really is a need for 92? I don't believe that, some suggestions were made here tonight along those lines, and I don't believe there is any other way it should be done by a completely non-biased commission.

Finally, how will the proposed 92 effect the quality of life on Route 1, Kingston, Rocky Hill, Kendall Park, Monmouth Junction and all the existing local roads in the area?

I plead with you, do not approve this road. Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: And thank you Mr. Chrinko.

Our next speaker will be Edmund A. Luciano, Jr., Councilman of South Brunswick Township followed, by Geri Luongo.

PH-51

MR. LUCIANO, JR.: Thank you very much.

Today I don't have many statements to make, just a lot of questions.

SBTEL-1

Has anyone studied the South Brunswick Master Plan for circulation and for growth that we've put in existence since 1991 and 1992? I did

not see that reported or referred to in any of your study. Number 1.

SBTEL-1

Number 2. I'm also, and I also did not see environmentally any of the residual environmental damage that's going to be caused by the building of the roadway. You're going to have vehicles moving in and out of the local areas in South Brunswick Township. They are going to rumble through the town, they are going to take some of the older homes and their foundations and crack them especially if you start to go through Kingston Road. We have historic homes. The streets are very narrow. When you come down into where the area is you would like to build Route 92, you will be going through farming area. It's active farming area. That means people are giving us food to eat and you will be in that very area having large diesel vehicles putting out diesel particulates in the very air, in the area of the food we eat.

SBTEL-2

SBTEL-3

Thirdly, you're going to have areas that are wetlands, marshland whatever you want to call them. No one has put a study to say how it's going to affect the wildlife that's there during the construction, nor how it's going to affect it after the construction.

SBTEL-4

SBTEL-4

Also you have not taken into account, nor have I seen it written anywhere, what is going to happen to the area as it is being built, versus after it's being built. The footprint afterward is much smaller than the area disturbed.

No where in the DEIS does it talk about that damage and does it talk about how you're going to remediate the damage.

That brings me to another point of remediation. South Brunswick Township is going to take the brunt of this construction. I would like to know as a Councilman for my town how much money the New Jersey Turnpike Authority is going to give South Brunswick Township to fix our roads and intersections that are going to be ruined by the weight of the trucks carrying the rock and all the other building debris that you need to build the elevated road. It should not fall on the back of our taxpayers.

SBTEL-5

Hopefully somewhere in your bonding you can find money to pay South Brunswick for the damage you are going to be causing. I think that's only fair.

SBTEL-6

I'd also like to know the first bond that was issued. It was for how much money, 350

SBTEL-6

million? Anybody up there? No? Nobody knows. Okay.

Has that bond money been spent and how much has been spent? If you don't know, I would like to have the answers to those questions because by my own estimates you have expended all of the money that your bonding issues covered. You're going to have go into a second bonding issue.

I would like to know how much money that is going to be and where is it going to be bonded from, general obligation bond from the State of New Jersey through the DOT, or coming through the Turnpike and through increased tolls?

SBTEL-7

The reason for that is I would like to know and it was not put into the DEIS. If you raise the tolls on the Turnpike, exactly how much more traffic do you think is going to be put onto Route 1 to be diverted off of the Turnpike so as to avoid the tolls because that's now going to increase the traffic on Route 1 North and South.

SBTEL-8

And I guess my final point is, has anyone looked at the Route 522 and Hightstown bypass? 522 was built by South Brunswick Township. If you were to look at those, they almost mirror what 92 is doing. I would submit that area north

and south of what is known as the Forrestal area you can easily build a very accessible interchange into 522 from the Turnpike for a lot less money than what we are talking about here to build a roadway that's going nowhere.

SBTEL-8

I guess I'll finish on this final question, that is, a road that might have had a purpose 60 years ago and it might have been a road that was built with the best of intentions needs to be re-examined, re-evaluated based upon what's in existence today and what's here today. We are having sprawl only because 92 is being talked about. Imagine the sprawl that 92 is going to bring into the north and southbound lanes in the area where it is going to drop off the traffic.

SBTEL-9

That's against Governor McGreevy, both in the smart map, also against environmentalists I talked to and against the plans that we have for our area. I just think you need to sit down and re-evaluate because there is enough problems in New Jersey that if you were to take almost a billion dollars -- and I'll guarantee you the State next-door -- if this road comes in at less than a billion dollars I'll buy the three of you all the dinners you want.

Your roadway is going to cost you $1 billion when it's all said and done. Thank you. I would like a re-estimate of what the road is now going to cost. 300 million is already gone.

SBTEL-9

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Will be followed by Geri Luongo. I'll ask for Nancy Carringer, South Brunswick resident. And Nancy will be followed by Joe Schwartz. Thank you.

MS. CARRINGER: I appreciate this opportunity to share my reactions to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and to share my thoughts about Route 92 and I would ask if you had a good dinner and did you enjoy your view of Route 1 at dinner, at the dinner hour?

PH-52

Please refer to comment group WC062 for comment codes.

I'm a life-long resident of South Brunswick Township. I went to elementary school here. I followed my career in education here in South Brunswick. I've watched the area change from a farming community, which surrounds four historic villages, to a suburban district of over 33,000 resident and a high school of over 2000 students.

Discussion of Route 92 has been around for longer than I can remember. When South Brunswick was a farming community, Route 92 was really kind of laughed at, who needed it. Now with

1 the suburban sprawl and the accompanying
2 development of the Route 1 corridor traffic,
3 congestion is tremendous. There is no denying
4 that.
5 In the early '90s it was rush hours
6 that were bad when people were going to and from
7 work. Now it's constant from seven in the morning
8 to ten o'clock at night. The rush hours are still
9 the heaviest. There is no good time to drive Route
10 1 except perhaps midnight to 6:00 A.M. and, yes,
11 there is demand for east-west access road. Ridge
12 Road, Deans Lane, Friendship Road weren't built to
13 handle the volume of current conditions.
14 So why do I oppose Route 92? There is
15 several reasons.
16 There is a relatively new four-lane
17 road traveling east-west. We heard a lot about it.
18 Route 522 provides rapid access from Route 27 to
19 Route 1, Route 130 and when completed will provide
20 four-lane access to Cranbury, South River Road and
21 the Turnpike and the construction of that,
22 according to Mayor Gamteise, will start in
23 September. The construction of the last phase,
24 September of this year, it will be finished before
25 we ever move on with further discussions of Route

1 92. It will provide east-west relief without the
2 environmental damage the current plans for 92 would
3 incur.
4 Any east-west roadway would do to
5 volume, would add to the volume which travels Route
6 1. Route 1 is not able to handle the numbers,
7 especially in South Brunswick where it's only two
8 lanes north and two lanes south. Route 1 needs to
9 be widened and signals need to be removed.
10 I would reiterate what Police Chief
11 Michael Baket said this afternoon. We are in the
12 funnel part of the hour glass and we do have 400
13 accidents every year between Independence Way and
14 Route 522.
15 The projected cost of Route 92 in
16 1993, as I understand it, was $400 million to build
17 6.7 miles. The 2004 cost would be much greater
18 than that amount and money would be far better
19 spent on improvements to Route 1.
20 A question for the DEIS, which I would
21 like considered, is why is Route 522 defined as a
22 six-lane highway alternative when Route 92 is only
23 proposed as a four-lane roadway?
24 Why does 522 have to be six lanes when
25 Route 92 is only proposed for four lanes? Route

522 is now currently four lanes.

I would also like to know the source of information on the traffic studies showing the need to relieve east-west congestion.

What studies have been done on the north-south traffic flow on Route 1?

What is meant by local traffic? Is local traffic what I do when I drive from my home to come here? Is it from New Brunswick to Princeton? What is local traffic?

Something needs to be done, gets no argument from this community member. I support the Sierra Club views of the DEIS and support their conclusion, conflict mediation, which includes public participation. Would not only be helpful to all the state holders, but result in a far superior exclusion to traffic congestion in Central Jersey. The proposed Route 92 is not the right answer.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Schwartz will be the final speaker followed by a five-minute break.

MR. SCHWARTZ: Joe Scwartz. I live in South Brunswick in Kingston and I thank you for this opportunity to speak.

PH-53

I'm here to stand with my fellow citizens in opposition to Route 92. Nothing I read or heard convinces me that Route 92 will have any benefit for my community. I'm not a traffic expert or an environmental expert and others have stated the opposition viewpoint much more eloquently than I can, but I have lived in New Jersey all my life. I've spent 25 years driving on the New Jersey Turnpike and it seems to me they've got all they can handle trying to manage the road they already have.

The Turnpike Authority has very little credibility with me in terms of how to build, run or maintain a road. Telling us that building another highway is a solution to our traffic problems is like telling to an obese person the solution to their weight problem is to buy a bigger pair of pants.

JSC-1

Isn't it time for us here in central New Jersey to get a bit more creative than to pave over a little space we have left. The cost alone makes this problem obscene, especially in the financial straits our state is in. The State can't adequately fund its schools and now they want over 500 million, maybe a billion dollars to build a

JSC-2

road into Forrestal. That does not make sense to me, it's offensive.

Why do we have zoning laws and laws protecting our wetland and environment if people can go out to destroy them?

JSC-3

I urge you to deny this permit and protect the community from this unnecessary project. Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Schwartz.

Following the break I would ask Mr. Mark Halmo to be ready to speak and following him Mark Rogers.

(RECESS TAKEN)(AFTER RECESS)

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Mark Halmo.

MR. HALMO: Good evening. My name is Mark Halmo and I've been a resident of South Brunswick for nearly nine years. I'm here to express my opposition to the construction of Route 92.

PH-54

Please refer to comment group WC064 for comment codes.

I have lived all my life in neighboring towns, born and raised in East Brunswick, 16 years in North Brunswick and now with my family I reside in Dayton. I've seen this area grow in leaps and bound, witnessed the expansion of

highways, the onslaught of single-family and condominium projects and sadly the encroachment of ever-dwindling areas of natural reserves.

But I've also seen things that encourage me to believe it's not too late to re-affirm our responsibility for the land and skies.

As I enjoy the great outdoors, I've been graced with the sights of several endangered species struggling to make a comeback right here in area of the proposed highway, the red shoulder hawk, the piping plover, just to name two. I have also seen wood ducks nesting as nature had intended, in a hollow tree., and most recently a bird I thought I would never see in this area.

On Tuesday, April 27, 2004 at approximately 5:45 p.m. My son and I were walking our doing in Sondek Park, which lies very near the intersection of New and Friendship Roads and in very close proximity of the suggested path of Route 92.

While we walked along the tree line at the Park's southern border. I took note of a rather large bird flying toward us. As the bird approached, I was taken aback at what I was seeing.

1 And what I was seeing was a Bald
2 Eagle. With a white head, white tail and leggings,
3 and a wing span five to six feet across. This was
4 adult to be sure.
5 The Eagle flew about 15 feet above
6 tree-top level and passed within 60 feet of my now
7 stationary position.
8 To further add to this remarkable
9 sight, in its talons it clutched a rabbit. I am
10 doubtless as to the identity of this magnificent
11 creature, as I have had several other experiences
12 with eagles in flight, namely, at Merrill Creek
13 Reservoir and preserve in Sussex County.
14 I have also had the good fortune to
15 photograph eagles in the wild during a recent trip
16 to Florida. As this bird continued its flight due
17 southwest, I marveled at how lucky we are as a
18 community to have such a creature, an icon of this
19 great nation, a symbol recognized as America
20 throughout the world, right here in South
21 Brunswick.
22 My euphoria, however, was short lived
23 as I remembered Route 92, and the noise, the
24 pollution, and the everlasting destruction of
25 environmentally sensitive habitat it would bring.

1 Eagles are non-migratory, territorial
2 and in need of solitude. Any chance of expanding
3 their numbers would surely be lost.
4 The call for serving the needs of the
5 many has been bandied about, how it's imperative
6 this roadway be built for economic growth, and the
7 convenience of the motoring public.
8 As for convenience, I say there lies a
9 viable alternative route just north of this not
10 really needed toll road, as Route 522 currently
11 supports the east-west flow of traffic, and which,
12 at considerably less cot, both in dollars and
13 environmental impact, could be extended through a
14 section of town that is home to many warehouses, a
15 short distance from Exit 8A via Routes 130 and 32
16 or Cranbury Road, or if the Turnpike Authority is
17 so set on building something,
18 perhaps a new interchange where 522 passes
19 over the Turnpike should be their agenda.
20 As for serving the needs of the many,
21 consider this. Consider the generation of
22 Americans of today and tomorrow. We are in a most
23 admirable position. We have at our fingertips an
24 opportunity to provide a truly unique, a truly
25 American experience to all citizens of all ages of

all walks of life.

By declining the permits for 92, we are electing to support stewardship of the land, the quality life of this towns's residents and the wildlife that depends on us to do the right thing.

I urge you that this assault by asphalt be put to rest once and for all.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Halmo.

During the break some people opted not to speak. I notice I stated the speaker to follow Mr. Holmo and cannot confirm that we are still on this schedule. I show Mr. Mark Rogers scheduled to speak next. Does that follow what everybody remembers? There was a shift during the break. Mr. Mark Rogers.

Michael Braverman. Mr. Braverman is followed by Bob Luszcz.

MR. BRAVERMAN: Michael Braverman and I'm a resident of Plainsboro. I have some comments specific to the study itself.

PH-55

Specifically first of all in section 5.3.6, Endangered Species-Southern Arrowhead.

MB-1

This report is vague and doesn't take

MB-1

into account the runoff or water levels of species survival. I presume it's referring to Saggitaria calcyina; S. calycina spongiosa; S. cuneata; S. filiformis, S. latifolia var pubescens; S. subulata; and S. teres.

This report is also misleading in that it does not give any description of the status of this plant which is has a State element rank of S1.

S-1 defined as critically imperiled in New Jersey because of extreme rarity.

The report also states that 25 percent of the population would be endangered, but it does not give any description of how that number was obtained.

In regard to mitigation, the report suggests the transplanting or starting seed from existing plants in the area or seeds from other areas be used.

The division of Parks and forestry has also noted their lack of experience with transplantation. That is directly in the report itself.

To remove seeds from local plants would be decreasing the chances of those individuals surviving in their natural habitat.

Seeds falling in the vicinity of the mother plant are logically in their best habitat. Removing seeds would not replace destroyed plants, but simply removing existing or potential populations around. The other option mentioned is to bring in seed from the Southeastern United States and this is a very important point. Because the collection or importation is contrary to a 1993 recommendation by the Army Corps of Engineers themselves out of their research station in Vicksburg Mississippi -- and I have a citation attached -- that's because only the biotypes present may be locally adapted and there is a risk of importing diseases, which are not present in this area.

MB-1

Section 3.3.5.1 notes records in 2002, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection National Heritage Program lists endangered species or species of concern in the proposed highway 92 area, these plants were not surveyed because they used a map to determine which habitats had potential for supporting these plants. They did not do surveys of many of these plants listed as being present in the DEP report. This is an inadequate survey of the area.

MB-2

For example of how this oversight

MB-3

method is flawed, pale dogwood, cornus amomum var schuetzeana is listed on the state list of endangered plants. Yet on page 3-36 cornus amomum, which is misspelled as comus is mentioned is being present. Other misspellings of even common plants such as bluegrass which is misspelled as Pao palensis, should be Poa pratensis, bring into question the quality of the study.

MB-3

The highway 92 plan is also in violation of the Governor's Save Corridors Act. I have a copy of the press release attached. It specifically mentions the intersection of Ridge Road and U.S. 1 is unsafe due to congestion. This is exactly where highway 92 is bringing traffic.

MB-4

I am in favor of widening and removing traffic signals from Route 1 because this would benefit the people of Middlesex and Mercer County, which is really what they want.

There are also several problems with table ES-1 which is at the very beginning of the report. It's misleading in that it only lists preserved farm land which conveniently avoids the fact Highway 92 impacts about 10 times more farmland than any other alternative.

MB-5

As stated on page ES 18, it states

Highway 92 would impact about 288 acres of farmland.

MB-5

ES 14 mentions Plainsboro supports Highway 92, but as a resident of Plainsboro I'm against Highway 92.

MB-6

More specifically on page ES 14, it's misleading in that it mentions South Brunswick zoning laws as somehow in agreement with highway construction while the Township of South Brunswick is on record as being against highway 82. Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Braverman.

Zoya Pugh. Ms. Pugh will be followed by Gene Lennon.

MS. PUGH: Zoya Pugh. My family and I have lived on Friendship Road for 27 years now. Thank you for letting me speak tonight.

PH-56

The Route 92 project is a flagrant example of corporate welfare as can be imagined. Millions of taxpayers and motorists will be paying perhaps as much as a billion dollars to do little more than bolster the real estate holdings of Princeton University. It will create more traffic problems than it will solve and ultimately may not

ZP-1

ZP-2

even be used by those motorists who stand to save a few minutes off their trips.

ZP-2

My first question is, has anyone done a survey to ascertain how many motorists and truckers will use the roadway, considering the hefty tolls, and will they continue to use it until tolls are increased substantially?

ZP-3

After all, the projected tolls are based on decade-old figures and even back then they were not expected to have much impact on what this project will incur. Not only are we paying a hefty monetary price to benefit Princeton University and a few other beneficiaries of this pork barrel project, but we and our grandchildren pay an incalculable price of environmental losses as a result of this behemoth roadway.

I have been hearing supporters' arguments, one being the Princeton board which used to oppose the road, but now a spokesman for the proponents. It branded the environmentalist's arguments and concerns relating to the environmental impacts and bring kneejerk, nonsensical bogus answers. It claimed the area along the highway can be screened as agricultural or dedicated as open space according to smart

growth model.

The editorial statement was referring to Route 55 and state there is no reason Route 92 can't offer the same attraction to motorists in our region of the State.

I'm not that knowledgeable about Route 55. I do know the area along the 92 path, there are hundreds of acres of wetland, a number of creeks. This highway will not drop neatly from the sky, but a messy process. Many more than 14 acres of wetland will be impacted. The delicate balance of nature that exists will be rudely upset. Sophisticated engineering techniques might be able to deal with some runoff, but there is no way they can effectively shield delicate wetlands.

ZP-4

ZP-5

The plan only relates to the 14 acres that will be filled. What about the additional hundreds of acres that will be severely degraded by paved-over and compacted and otherwise disturbed? Who is going to supervise these efforts, what will they cost and who will be accountable to regulate? Any good field ecologist can tell you that even a dirt service road can have a very negative impact on animal and plant populations. No one can even imagine the catastrophic affects.

ZP-6

ZP-7

Sure the landscape can remain reasonably attractive to motorists. As the editorial states, it may look green and natural to the untrained eye of the motorist speeding along at 65 miles an hour, but, in fact, it will be a landscape that will be permanently and dramatically altered and depleted of the many live species.

Please deny permits to the New Jersey Turnpike. Thank you.

PH-57

MR. LENNON: Gene Lennon. Thank you for the opportunity.

I haven't heard anybody mention yet so far in these discussions, and I like to preface this by saying I have a tremendous amount of respect for the technical expertise for the Army Corps of Engineers. However, it's important somebody Brunswick talk about S2188 in these discussions. Does anybody know about that?

There is a reason I see the hair on some of the back of your necks standing up there.

GL-1

I have here a press release that's about two weeks old from the office of to Tom Daschle, U.S. Senator from South Dakota. I'll read a little bit from this.

Washington, D.C. Senator Tom Daschle

GL-1

recently offered new legislation to reform the Army Corps of Engineers. Co-sponsored by Senators John McCain and Russ Feingold, the Corps of Engineers Modernization and Improvement Act of 2003 would revise the processes used by the Corps to design and construct civil works and other projects throughout the United States to provide better oversight and review of proposed projects.

This legislation will provide an important new independent review panel to ensure that Corps decisions are not unduly influenced by political concerns.

I repeat this is current legislation, brand-new stuff, although bouncing around in Washington for a couple of years. And problems with the Corps go way back, going back to the 1800s.

There is a lot of recent stuff that brings this to attention now. This is important for everybody to know about because Congress, various members of Congress, a lot of environmental and other organizations are gathering together to point out the fact the Corps can't be universally trusted in their decision-making.

It's important for us opposed to 92 to

GL-1

see as a possible tool for us the fact this is not an appropriate time for the Corps to make these decisions while Congress is discussing the viability of them as a decision-making organization for this type of issue.

So I have with me a great deal of information. Five minutes is certainly not long enough to go into the long history with the Corps, but I have information I'll be happy to give you.

This is not intended as a personal slight against those of you, but this is an important tool for those of us fighting Route 92. We should all understand the Corps has for whatever reason their own agenda. Some of this will prove that. Congress looking into these issues will prove that.

We must accept this is a political process. We need to go over this by going after the Governor. One of the ways to go after the Governor is by telling him it's outrageous for him to use the Corps of Engineering as the governing body to make this determination when Congress is investigating them for their inability to make these kind of determinations without being unduly influenced by political issues, financial issues

and a whole bunch of other things. This is simply not appropriate at this time for the Corps to be doing this.

GL-1

Again I apologize if it seems I'm attacking you directly. It's not my intention. It's very important we all send letters to the Governor, even if you already sent him a letter.

Send a new letter saying you just heard about this and it's outrageous for the Governor to make his decision based on the Corps decision-making process being the fact they are being investigated by the Congress for their decision-making.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Lennon.

We are going to now hear from Mr. David Southgate and following Mr. Southgate will be Tari Pantaleo.

MR. SOUTHGATE: Thank you. I live on Ridge Road between Kingston and Route 1. So you can imagine my interest in Route 92.

PH-58

Please refer to comment group WC066 for comment codes.

I've read substantial parts of DEIS. It is an impressive document which presents accurate research on many of the issues involved in

1 the proposed construction of Route 92. However,
2 there are a number of features of the document with
3 which I'm not impressed, in which it is incomplete,
4 incorrect, misleading and wrong-headed. I'll deal
5 with these in turn, as they affect our particular
6 situation on Ridge Road.
7 One. Incomplete.
8 Nowhere can I find comments on light
9 pollution. Our current situation on Ridge Road is
10 presently dark and quiet at night, despite our
11 nearness to Route 1. I suspect that if the
12 interchange is built with tall light poles on an
13 elevated road structure, as is often the case, a
14 nighttime peacefulness will be severely disrupted.
15 Why was this issue not addressed in the EIS.
16 Two. Incorrect.
17 This is one of the more egregious
18 directions of the DEIS. It states Route 92 will
19 reduce traffic on local roads and quotes an average
20 value. But the local roads have been selected to
21 include only those on which the traffic study shows
22 a reduction. Roads west of Route 1, such as our
23 part of Ridge Road, are not on the so-called
24 screenline crossing, even though they are in the
25 traffic study area. These excluded roads have an

1 increase of traffic due to Route 92 and they are as
2 much local roads as are those on the screenline
3 crossing. To exclude these roads from
4 consideration is just plain cooking the books.
5 It's a well-known way of doing it.
6 Three. Misleading.
7 A number of alternative road
8 development scenarios have been determined not to
9 have the capability of dealing with the anticipated
10 traffic situation. However, one which is quoted as
11 being a partial solution has not been considered
12 seriously enough, that is, the widening of Route 1,
13 removal of lights and the extension and combined
14 with the improvement of Route 522. Those go
15 hand-in-hand. Why was this combination option not
16 considered?
17 The discussion of Route 522 considers
18 only widening to three lanes. That's not shown to
19 be needed. That does not consider the combination
20 with Route 1 improvements.
21 In addition, the environmental impact
22 of widening Route 522 I believe is exaggerated.
23 Similarly, the environmental impact of improving
24 Route 1 is misrepresented. Not that there is no
25 environmental impact, but such construction will be

1 proven to Route 1, will be needed in any case, it
2 should be done. It is significant to bring Route 1
3 up to the correct current standards for such items
4 as stormwater handling and for safety.
5 These should not be considered as
6 detrimental factors. I do oppose Route 1 and 522
7 combined improvement alternative, would result in
8 substantial drop in traffic through Kingston and on
9 Ridge Road and parallel roads.
10 I believe I speak for many in the
11 Kingston areas in deploring what appears to be a
12 bias in the DEIS in preferring the construction of
13 92 to this alternative, which many well be
14 lower-cost, less destructive and more effective.
15 Finally, wrong-headed. This is a
16 bigger issue.
17 The DEIS deals with many issues, large
18 and small. One issue which may be bigger than all
19 the areas is that 92 is a vital part of regional
20 overdevelopment. There is bowing in the DEIS to
21 the need to "collaborate closely with local
22 communities to ensure development occurs in
23 sustainable patterns."
24 Nowhere do we see the decrying of
25 overdevelopment of wall-to-wall blacktopped

suburbia in New Jersey with just little patches of open space. Surely this is the major environmental impact, that 92 is part of a general overdevelopment system.

I would like to point out simply allocating money for 92 does not automatically guarantee that it is spent on 92. I maintain this money, hundreds of million dollars, shouldn't be spent on 92, it should be spent on environmental preservation so that 92 is not needed and this alternative should be forcibly posited in the EIS so the public can see the true choice that exists.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Ms. Pantaleo.

MS. PANTALEO: Tari Pantaleo. Good evening. Thank you for your time.

PH-59

I've been a Plainsboro resident for 17 years. One of the finest achievements of that span of time has been the creation of the Plainsboro preserve. The DEIS notes the Route 92 project would pass through the preserve separating 12 and a half acres of the property from the rest of the preserve by virtue of an elevated roadway over the preserve.

TPI-1

It is stated on page ES 13 that the

project would not significantly affect the wildlife and aesthetic value of the entire property. I can't fathom how any discretion of this open space can be contemplated.

TPI-1

To raise just one question. If I'm birding in the vicinity of the roadway, assuming bird population in the area will not be affected by this road, exactly what decibel level will that section of Plainsboro preserve experience? Will I be able to detect bird song in the presence of traffic noise on a road estimated to carry more than 40,000 vehicles per day?

TPI-2

My second question I put to you as one who has worked in the Village of Kingston for the last 25 years. I have deep concerns about the negative consequences Route 92 will have in this area.

To address just one of these. One of the primary goals of proposed Route 92 is to reduce the presence of non-local truck traffic on the local road and shift it to the highway; however, the DEIS goes on to estimate at peak an additional 20 trucks per hour will pass through Kingston on Ridge Road as a result of the construction on Route 92. Exactly how is this in keeping with your

TPI-3

stated goals?

Thank you for answering these questions and the many others raised today.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Jeanne Wacker, Ms. Jeanne Wacker?

Mr. Duke Wiser, who will be followed by Francis Cap.

PH-60

MR. WISER: I live on Ridge Road in Kingston.

I would like to ask the following questions be answered before the final DEIS is released.

DW-1

What was the statement of work that the Army Corps gave Camp Dresser McKee?

Why did the Army Corps fail to specify the geographical boundaries of the EIS in the statement of work to Camp Dresser McKee?

Why did the Army Corps fail to specify the scope and purpose of the DEIS in the statement of work to CDM?

Who and what agency were the originators for the statement of work and the geographical boundaries that actually appears in the draft EIS?

DW-2

How much did the Turnpike Authority

pay the Army Corps, CDM and any other subcontractors for the draft EIS?

DW-2

What are the dates, dollar amounts and titles of all business done by CDM and any of its subcontractors for the EIS, for the New Jersey Turnpike Authority since 1990?

DW-3

In the EIS scoping meeting of June 2000, it's specifically requested an independent consultant be retained for this EIS to ensure unbiased accuracy.

We are aware CDM has done a substantial amount of business with the Turnpike Authority and in all likelihood is still doing business with them. What specifics measures did the Army Corps take to detect or prevent such egregious conflicts of interest?

Why did these measures fail to the extent the Army Corps hired a long-term partner of the Turnpike Authority to guard against environmental damage by the Turnpike Authority?

The estimated traffic flows and other projections in the EIS are utterly worthless as decision-making tools unless some statistical error measure is known, such as their limits of error or standard deviations.

DW-4

Furthermore, measured values are worthless for decision making unless similar error analysis is done. For each measured or estimated numerical value in the draft EIS, what are its error bounds or standard deviation?

DW-4

Inbound Section II, the EIS rejected several alternatives to Route 92, such as the EPA alternatives and Route 522. No objective numerical criteria for rejecting theses alternatives are given.

What are the objective, numerical criteria under which each of the alternatives was rejected?

Certain combinations of the rejected alternatives were considered, but many more potentially effective combinations were not. For each possible combination of alternatives, what were the objective, numerical criteria for considering or not considering that combination?

DW-5

The draft EIS states that public input was collected for the EIS in several ways. However, the draft EIS does not state that any such input was actually factored into the process and in the Army Corps statement of work for EIS reflected no consideration of public input.

DW-6

Why did the Army Corps seemingly dispense with all public input on the EIS scope of work? If it did not, then what public input was used in which specific parts of the statement of work, the DEIS and the final EIS? DW-6

Why did the traffic studies not study the local roads and intersections which would be worst hit by the east-west traffic induced by Route 92? DW-7

Ridge, Heathcote and Laurel Avenues in Kingston, Canal Road in Franklin Township, Route 603, 518 and 206 in Rocky Hill and Hopewell and Nassau Street, Route 27 in Princeton?

A designated New Jersey scenic byway connects directly to the Route 92 study area. NJDOT is also seeking Federal designation of this scenic byway. DW-8

What is the name and location of the scenic byway? What impacts would Route 92 have on the scenic byway? And where would these impacts to this scenic byway be included in the EIS?

Have you made arrangements with the Microsoft Corporation to publish their copyrighted material in the EIS? DW-9

The entire purpose of the proposed DW-10

roadway is to save people time; however, this would seem to boil down to a few minutes a day per driver. Were non-driving time saving alternatives considered?

For example, for a lot less money a high speed Internet connection could save people lot more time than Route 92 seems to. There would seem to be a myriad of other such alternatives.

If these were not considered, why not?

DW-10

Finally, Donald Sweeney, a former employee of the Army Corps, blew the whistle on a similar study to this one. As an indirect result, the Pentagon rebuked the Army Corps of Engineers for manipulating studies and a systematic bias favoring large construction projects.

DW-11

At what address may I send Mr. Sweeney a thank you letter?

Thank you for your time. You have many, many, many, many more questions like this in writing and look forward to your detailed answers. Thanks.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Cap.

MR. CAP: Francis Cap.

PH-61

I've resided in the Township for over 16 years now and have been involved as an observer

and participated in this debate since 1968. Since that time we've experienced a transfer of the roadways, development rights from a purely public interest, the Department of Transportation to, what may be loosely defined as an autonomous body, the Turnpike. Of private good, I've met with the Governor past, state, county and local officials with a group called NO 92. The button should have more information than NO 92, but we couldn't include a lot of the questions that were brought to you guys here this evening.

We have experienced personally warm welcomes. The NO 92 group provided points to the Turnpike Authority. Usually stacked with proponents and far less decorum than you've provided us today. None of this has embittered me or clarity in which I wish to convey this evening.

This roadway, once touted as a regional planning tool, has vastly changed in concept from its inception. As a regional planning tool it no longer continues to merit the resources required to build it. Regional traffic studies may conclude enabling the Turnpike Authority to build, but not without first exploring many, many more improvements in the process. After review I would

FCA-1

highly doubt that we would come to the conclusion of that enablement.

If the improvements on Route 1 systems, seemingly held hostage by this author against us, and the debate of 92 need to be included in the build-out study and analysis.

FCA-1

The completion and extension of Route 92, the currently built east-west roadway is proposed to continue to Route 535. The realignment of the Turnpike through Exit 7, to remove the bottleneck which presently diverts Authority traffic onto the local roads, requires further analysis.

FCA-2

I find it humorous it does count as far as traffic mitigation in terms of development and empowerment of this roadway in their scenario. The residential section of the study of the New York Turnpike Authority Exit 8B, either at 522, 530 terminus or Hightstown or further down should also be included in the portion of this analysis.

FCA-3

The widening of the road to mirror the effectiveness of South Brunswick Township's 522 for east-west traffic flow need to be included.

FCA-4

The syndrome of other Townships steering this missing link of the transportation

FCA-5

puzzle through my backyard and our community have an equal responsibility actions through both local, county improvements on existing north-south and east-west roadways.

FCA-5

The hearing minutes and subsequent analysis need to be incorporated before a decision is rendered for the results to be fair, impartial and sound. If the hearings are only designed to interpret material from the builder, the benefactor, without looking microscopically at the region, then justice cannot be served this day.

FCA-6

One can argue the improvements outlined create and stimulate jobs and smart growth as existing zoning is to increased development. It will stimulate commercial development along Routes 1 and 130, both inside and outside this Township. It will maintain the home rule of local governance.

FCA-7

Someone once said if you build it, they will come.

I'm proposing, if you improve them, we will stay, they will come and all will prosper.

In summary, regional traffic issues cannot be remedied with a single look at a single road primarily situated in a single Township. The enabling label, the granting of the permit, if

supported without a holistic look by the Corps, would be a disservice to you, this flag and all.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Ed Lugin. Following Mr. Lugin would be Mr. Mark Peel.

PH-62

MR. LUGIN: Ed Lugin. I live in Monmouth Junction, South Brunswick Township.

The reason I came here tonight -- I don't have a preplanned speech because I didn't intend to come here because I knew nothing about this meeting until I received some information from a friend of mine that there was a discussion and the prime alternate for Route 92 was Route 522.

So I came here and listened to a lot of information. I can see why everybody is upset about 92.

I live between New Road and 522. I don't live in a warehouse, but anyway there is quite a few people that live on 522. I'm learning a little bit. I probably like to get a transcript of this after and look at it a little more to understand a little more.

Just from the meeting tonight, I see two things and heard some things that confuse me very much.

One is that this 92 seems to be a personal corridor of some kind for advocates of real estate, Princeton University area and so forth by talking to some people here, their opinion. I guess that's true to some extent.

EL-1

Another thing is it seems to be a road that goes nowhere. The Councilman from South Brunswick I think said that.

EL-2

Another thing that confuses me is Route 522 is an alternate. Route 92 would go to where Ridge Road and Route 1 meet. 522 goes to Route 1 approximately, I would think from driving it, a mile, mile and a half north of there. I think the impact is the same, two roads going nowhere.

EL-3

Why did South Brunswick Township, if they said they spent the money to build 522, spend the money to a road that goes nowhere? That's another thing that confused me. If you hook that up with the Turnpike with the extension, you go down 522 in the morning towards Route 1 and make a left turn going south on 1, unless you want to go into somebody's housing development, that's the way you will go. It might take you two or three lights to make the turn which might be one and a half, two

EL-4

and a half, three minutes. That's without it being extended to the Turnpike.

EL-4

What's going to be the impact of traffic once extended to the Turnpike? It will take 15 minutes to make a left turn on Route 1. Route 1 is bogged down anyway.

I'm a little confused why either road is going to Route 1 when nothing happens to Route 1 and Route 1 can't handle the traffic it has now.

That's all I wanted to say, my personal opinion of the meeting. I need to read more about it and maybe I'll see some other things.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Peel.

PH-63

MR. PEEL: Mark Peel. Kingston Village.

MPE-1

On page 4-52 of the Draft EIS is a chart that summarizes the benefits of 92. The road will shave an average of 2.5 minutes off an area commute by the year 2028.

With this document we've taken "smart growth" to new levels of Orwellian absurdity: A proposal to fill critical wetlands and dump thousands of vehicles in the Village of Kingston, at a cost of 400 million, in order to save

MPE-1

commuters two and a half minutes.

This EIS is extremely timid in its projections, but my guess is even the two and a half minutes savings are vastly overstated. We need only look a few miles to the north to see what effect Route 92 will have on Central New Jersey.

Earlier this evening some evoked the spirit of Robert Moses. I'll tell you a story about him.

In his biography of Robert Moses, The Power Broker, historian Robert Caro traces the sprawl and congestion repeatedly induced by Moses's gargantuan highway projects.

At the ribbon cutting for the Grand Central Parkway, politicians and press praised the new highway saying, "It would solve the problem of access to Long Island 'for generations'".

But the Grand Central Parkway solved the problem for about three weeks. Then it was the site of what the Herald Tribune called the greatest traffic tie-up in the history of the New York Metropolitan area.

This was in 1936 and I think you could argue this traffic jam has persisted as the daily routine without interruption for 68 years.

Moses's answer to this fiasco is that more highways and bridges were needed. So a succession of parkways and freeways encircled New York and Long Island like choking vines, all of them jammed to capacity within months of opening.

One of them is like this road, Bronx-Whitestone bridge six million three hundred vehicles in the first year. It carried at the end of that year traffic experts calculated it only reduced traffic on the neighboring Triborough Bridge by 122,000 trips. Somehow that bridge generated six million additional new motor trips. It had not improved traffic at all, it made it worse.

Where in this EIS are the projected increases that are sure to come if Route 92 is built? The EIS was clearly prepared with the assumption our traffic problems are caused by inadequate roads. This is insanity.

MPE-2

New Jersey needs transportation solutions, not more roads. Get out on any New Jersey highway at virtually anytime of day and you will see an endless parade of single occupant vehicles. The one car family is a distant memory. The average New Jersey household now owns 2.4 motor

MPE-2

vehicles. The highest in the nation. Even high school seniors drive to school. The costs are enormous. Kids aren't safe on the streets, not because of pedophiles, but because from cars whizzing through neighborhoods at ridiculous speeds.

Route 92 is emblematic of the worse of this car culture. Traffic in Central New Jersey is impossible because there are too many cars making too many trips that cover too many miles.

When Route 92 was resuscitated back in 1998, the number 1 selling car in American was the Toyota Camry. It average 22 miles to the gallon and emitted eight point six tons of greenhouse gas in an average year. That's when all this study started.

Today the best selling vehicle is the Ford Explorer. It consumes 33 percent more fuel than the Camry and produces 28 percent more greenhouse emissions, 11 tons per vehicle per year.

An EIS study of alternatives that fails to come to terms with the impact of bigger, greedier, dirtier, more dangerous personal vehicles, making longer and longer daily commutes is not an EIS at all: it is a suicide packet.

MPE-3

Under what concept of sound regional planning do we pave over wetlands and sacrifice historic villages so that commuters in gas guzzling SUVs can save two and a half minutes in their 15 mile commute?

A sane transportation policy would help localities recover the true cost of single occupant automobiles in the form of commuter taxes and fuel consumption, emissions, distance traveled and vehicle size and type. Measures that might encourage people to live nearer where they work.

Spending 350 or 400 or 500 million to make it easier to pursue our present self-destructive course is like handling an alcoholic a bottle of booze or perhaps more accurately like a parent who can't control an unruly child.

We, the driving public, who whine about gas prices and now sending soldiers to war to keep the flow of oil coming, we are that spoiled child. Instead of pandering to our gas guzzling appetite like a craven parent who tries to by the kids love, this should be what we are doing to our environment and communities. We need a good spanking.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: We are going to take a five-minute break.

(RECESS TAKEN.)(AFTER RECESS.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Please cease your individual discussions and I'm asking you to please approach the podium.

Dorothy Renk. Then David W. Luck.

MS. RENK: My name is Dorothy Renk. I'm a resident of Kingston.

Dear Corps members: We've noticed some items overlooked by the study and would like to know if you would take these into account.

Number one alternates to 92 have already been built such as Route 522 which can handle high-speed traffic.

Two. 92 would increase pollution of your air because it drops off traffic right at Ridge Road which leads to our town and several others. Alkaline is one of the toxins from gasoline emissions that causes cancer and the town already has a higher than average incident of cancer.

92 will cause toxic runoff into our underground aquifers that supply our drinking

PH-64

Please refer to comment group WC067 for comment codes.

water. Thus it will pollute our water wells. 92 destroys our wetlands, our Township wetlands, and we were promised by politicians all the way up to the governor's office that wetlands would be preserved.

We basically will now and in the future flip the bill for 92, a road which we do not want built. How can you let this happen?

We have to ask now a study that addresses none of our, our towns or our Township's concerns be fair in determining whether or not 92 should be built. Please say no to 92. Work on bearing the quality of life in our town and Townships.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: I need to be clear about this. David W. luck, president, and George G. Luck, trustee and past chief, Kingston volunteer, fire company 1.

MR. LUCK: My name is David Luck. I am the president of the Kingston volunteer fire company and I represent to you this evening the volunteer firefighters of the Kingston community that will be responding to call and do respond to calls now in this area.

PH-65

ICVFC-1

Our main concern is one we expressed previously at the last public meeting and is one of response-types. In fact, since our last public meeting here in this facility, we had an incident, we could not pull out of our fire department to respond to a call to this hotel because of the traffic.

Second, when we are responding to an emergency. With the advent of Route 92 construction, we see only things getting worse. We have been in the fire service now for over 80 years and in that time we've seen no matter what type of road construction takes place, things only get worse. We've never seen any type of construction in the way of traffic and highways that has improved situations.

We are in a growing community, understandable. But again the response time is very critical for us.

ICVFC-2

We also wanted to bring to light a concern in reviewing the report, and that is, the inaccuracy of our response area. It was indicated in the report that Kingston covered the southwest portion to the Route 92. I'll stand before you tonight and explain to you that the response area

of the volunteer fire department along Route 1 corridor extends from Independence Way, which is the borderline of South Brunswick and Plainsboro up to and through Route 522, both on the east and west sides of Route 1.

In fact, in that Ridge Road area we cover up to and the area of Greenlands Boulevard and Perrine Road, both of which are on the eastbound side of Route 1.

We ask the record be properly reflected of the coverage area of the fire department.

ICVFC-2

As a primary response unit, our concern is the response time. We noted in the report you had indications one way of alleviating some of the concerns for high-speed traffic were traffic humps. Traffic humps are something on a thoroughfare the Kingston Fire Department is opposed to. They do have a direct impact on our response time and for a thoroughfare of any sort that is connecting one area to another, we would be opposed to any type of humps that would take that type of action. We ask you give that consideration and address that in your follow-up.

ICVFC-3

I guess parts that have struck me as

we reviewed the whole report is that the emphasis on reserving local streets for the local traffic and we would love to do that, but we in the Village of Kingston realize we are on a thoroughfare that dates back to the times of the Indians and that was Route 27, was an Indian trail that has evolved over the period of time and we understand as time moves forward things change, but we also know that with good planning and review of the other options and considerations have been presented already this evening, there are alternatives to the Route 92. We ask that be given consideration.

ICVFC-4

I think the chief of police earlier today reported on the number of traffic injuries on Route 1. Specifically addressing the area we covered from 522 down through Independence Way, that's a concern for us as well.

ICVFC-5

The other area that we have found a number of our calls, in fact, the increase in our response has been in the area of the hotels. Kingston for a very small community covers seven, soon to be eight hotels/motels in this area. 75 percent of those require access through this intersection here, Route 1/Ridge Road. That is for us very critical and covers a very large part of a

transient population and we are very concerned for that. We ask that be given consideration as well.

I thank you for your time.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Thank you, Chief Luck.

Sol Tuller. On deck Carl Postman.

MR. TULLER: Sol Tuller. I live in Kingston. I'm not a member of any group, association, board. I'm not an elected official, not an un-elected official. I just live here.

If my remarks seem a little bit just off the cuff, they are. I just decided to speak as I came in here today.

I noticed the map outside. It's a good map, it shows the alternates. Doesn't show the Kingston or Rocky Hill historic site. A gentleman pointed to a slight and showed Kingston. It was obvious from the slide and word. The study was basically in the Plainsboro area. I feel the study has been done in point A to B plus 100 feet either way. It didn't consider the communities that might be destroyed by this road.

If we talk about the effect on the area, we have to use the word "area" in a much larger context literally. I don't like to cast

ICVFC-5

PH-67

ST-1

aspersions on elected officials. I will anyway right now.

I think that the elected officials of Plainsboro are very shortsighted and I think I will digress. I don't consider it a digression. There is a complex built down the road from me. My personal feeling is I don't think they worried about the traffic that much because the traffic will be in Kingston and that small part of Plainsboro. Most of Plainsboro is the other side of Route 1.

ST-2

When I hear the support for Route 92, I feel deja vu. I don't answer to this stuff. I don't think Route 92 is it. Deja vu.

I think it should be said, for my remarks, you should be congratulated for the way you've run this meeting. Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: I'm struggling with this name. Carl Postman.

William Flimmer? William J. Buchanan? Geri Luongo.

PH-68

MR. BUCHANAN: William J. Buchanan.

I'm a resident of Monmouth Junction. South Brunswick Township Environmental Engineer with 20 years experience with Federal, state,

municipal, Government agencies. I wish to address concerns for the Draft EIS design, Route 92 and water quality issues, Section 4.

The EIS states the stormwater from proposed Route 92 could carry significant amounts of vehicle related contaminants from the roadway 92 surface and groundwater resources.

The design and EIS proposes detention basins to mitigate this problem, except the area near AmTrak lines will have stormwater flow directly into the adjacent wetlands. Is it acceptable to destroy the wetlands or does this prohibit actually the construction of this particular section of roadway?

The EIS notes the design engineer may be required to add additional treatment or demonstrate the proposed stormwater basins remove 80 percent of the total intended solids load. It is imperative the final EIS addresses this design criteria even if it demonstrates Route 92 is no longer feasible.

WJB-1

The concern of South Brunswick, water supply. The EIS indicates the Route 92 project will not impact the current water supply. What about future water supply? 50 percent growth in 20

WJB-2

years is indicated by EIS. The Bureau of Water Allocation and should manage this management program.

WJB-2

This agency was not consulted on this issue. Final EIS must address this issue. South Brunswick, where will it get its water in the future?

WJB-3

As a construction engineer, I've loaded about 200 truckloads of various fill material. I've spoke with many truckers in this period of time. New Jersey Turnpike officials seem to believe that truckers like to pay tolls. Why are so many interstate truckers on Route 130 and bypassing the New Jersey Turnpike? Truckers will use 522 instead.

I believe New Jersey Turnpike should perhaps consider adding benches and maybe a walkway and bike path as there probably will not be any traffic on Route 92, but 522 instead.

A final EIS must be issued with the public input prior to the issuance of a permit for this roadway. I would be pleased to read this EIS in its final form.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Geri Luongo.

Alan Goldsmith.

MR. GOLDSMITH: Resident of Kingston. I lived in New Jersey for nine years, all of that time in Kingston.

PH-69

I did have prepared remarks, but everybody has spoken so eloquently and cogently and powerfully about why Route 92 should not get built, I can't hope to compete with that. I just want to go on record as being against it also.

AG-1

I was struck when I drove to Exit 8A on the Turnpike from Route 1 in Kingston to see what the big deal was. I was shocked at the amount of time it took, 10 to 12 minutes. Along very good roads. This was during rush hour in both directions and included stopping for three lights I think.

To spend this kind of money, hundreds of millions of dollars, this state can ill-afford to destroy precious farmland and wetlands just to save three to five minutes, is absurd, it's scandalous. I think that all this energy and time has been spent to discuss this road when there are existing roads that are perfectly adequate. I don't understand it.

As I drive around this state, one of

the things that really strikes me is the way that areas, neighborhoods and communities are sliced up by ribbons of concrete. One road just a few hundred yards from another road just so people can get from one location that's already been destroyed to another location that's in the process of being destroyed. It just makes no sense to me and I think it's a sign, something Mark was referring to.

The sickness of our society that we can send this ridiculous elevated roadway through a pristine area just to fill the private bank accounts of developers, add to Princeton University's already bloated endowment. It's not serving the public. At all.

AG-2

I wish that was taken into account, not just the money of powerful interest.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Thank you, Mr. Goldsmith. Mr. Hwong.

MR. HWONG: Corrington Hwong.

PH-70

Last time I spoke to a similar type panel was in 2000 and two things have changed.

One, I have to wear glasses now to read; the other one, my son's is an officer in the Corps and in 2000 he was in Cutter Unit, he was in

Afganistan, today he's in Iraq.

The Kingston Historic Society encourages the Corps to address impact of the proposed Route 92 on the immediately adjacent and extended regional historic communities and areas to Kingston. Numerous communities, most with districts and sites on the National Register of Historic Sites and Places, will be negatively impacted by the proposed Route 92.

CHW-1

To the north and west of the intersection of Route 1 and proposed Route 92, this includes the villages and National Historic Districts of Kingston, Griggstown, and East Millstone and the River Road National Historic District in Montgomery Township. Nearby the Kingston Village National Historic District are the sister National Register Historic sites and districts of Rockingham, the house where George Washington resided while the Continental Congress met at Nassau Hall, Princeton University, the Red Maple Farm National Historic District and the Withington estate, Heathcote Farm, National Historic District. And several other National Register Historic Districts: The Kingston Mill, the Delaware and Raritan Canal and Lake Carnegie.

CHW-1

Between the Kingston Village and the Red Maple Farm National Historic Districts are the Jediah Higgins house, the oldest residence in Franklin Township, and the Higgins family cemetery. The cemetery dates to the early 1700s. 200 yards from the Higgins family cemetery is a slave cemetery. Both sites are under archeological study by the Kingston Historical Society and the Higgins family, people who have inhabited Kingston since 1675.

Three other National Register Historic Districts and Sites that warrant special study for negative impact by additional traffic that may be generated by a Route 92 are the Princeton National Historic District, the Princeton battlefield, Stony Settlement Historic District Quaker Bridge, and the Lawrence Township Historic District, which includes the Lawrenceville school, a National Historic landmark. All three Districts' locations are located sited along what is known as the Kings Highway, a National Registered Historic Road. The road ties together and lies adjacent to no less than 15 National Registered Historic Districts, sites and landmarks.

In all instances, Kingston Historic

CHW-1

Society is concerned that added noxious and acidic gasses plus traffic induced vibration will contribute to the accelerated destruction of these National Historic Districts or sites.

Witness in Kingston Village at the intersection of Main Street, Route 27, and Heathcote Brood Road, the soot covered walls of buildings. The road only provides a 20 foot width within which trailer trucks and trucks carrying crushed stone travel daily through a purely residential area.

It is this very road on June 25, 1778 that the Continental Army matched their way through Kingston in 100 degree heat chasing English troops and engaging the Brittish at the battle of Monmouth. The previous year, the Continentals had defeated the English at the battle of Princeton and camped in Kingston after the battle. At that time Washington held his famous conference on horseback in the Kingston Presbyterian Church cemetery. It was at the cemetery that Washington and his generals decided had to march north through the Millstone Valley along what is now Laural Avenue, and Canal and River Roads, and winter at Jockey Hollow National Park, Morristown rather than attack

1 the English munitions depot and paymaster in New
2 Brunwick.
3 Please note heading eastward from the
4 center of Kingston, Heathcote Brook Road continues
5 into Ridge Road, the very road that this Radisson
6 Hotel is sited. 222 years ago, the Continental
7 troops passed right by the building that this
8 hearing is being held.
9 The National Parks Service conducted a
10 National Heritage Corridor study for roadways which
11 link the major American Revolutionary war
12 battlefield sites in New Jersey.
13 Indeed, Kingston may be viewed as the
14 center of the Crossroads of the Revolution.
15 Robert Caro's The Power Broker, a
16 biography of road-builder Robert Moses, carries the
17 theme that additional roads do not remove excessive
18 traffic, but rather attract more traffic to the
19 newly constructed road. New roads and bridges are
20 traffic magnets.
21 The Kingston Historical Society
22 encourages the Corps to thoroughly study potential
23 additional traffic that would be attracted to and
24 through communities north and west of the terminus
25 of the proposed Route 92 and Route 1.

1 Increased traffic does not improve
2 congestion or traffic movement or the quality of
3 life of the residents of Griggstown, East
4 Millstone, Montgomery, Kingston, Rocky Hill,
5 Hillsborough, millstone, Hopewell Borough, Hopewell
6 Township, Pennington, Franklin, East Amwell or The
7 West Amwells.
8 Increased traffic does not make the
9 communities noted viable. Increased traffic makes
10 it difficult for people to live in the communities
11 due to the annoyance of constant traffic, a change
12 in the historically rural character of the
13 villages, increased pollution from noxious and
14 acidic gases, hydrocarbons, noise and light and
15 vibration.
16 The Society is concerned with the
17 character of historic villages and roads which run
18 through these fragile communities. We ask the
19 Corps to have a degree of sensitivity about the
20 negative impact increasing traffic would have on
21 changing the rural character of these communities
22 and roads. The reason these villages and roads
23 have been identified as National Historic
24 Districts, landmarks and sites is their unique
25 character.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Mr. Tim Sibley.

Suzzane and Christopher Rolcke.

Steven Reichenstein. On deck Lou Corsuro.

PH-71

MR. REICHENSTEIN: Steve Reichenstein. Thank you for the way you are conducting our hearings and having them and being our guests. I thank all the people in the community that did all this research and presented all the details and facts.

I feel so honored to be in this community. We do come out after work and do this work and getting together and exercising our democratic rights and live in a country where we can do it.

SR-1

I'm not happy with the facts of the program as I'm hearing it. Sounds like a limited information, some questionable information about the area. It's an old idea that seems to not be getting better with age and we're not listening, doesn't seem to be a lot of serious consideration, other alternatives.

Communities have been developing, dealing with the issue and are available and seems like there is a few people who want this to be done

and a lot of people who don't.

It's politics of division, labor against the community. Lot of negativism going on. That's disappointing.

I hope we listen to what people are saying tonight, look at more of the alternatives, look at more of the information plan, what happens at the end of this road, the next step, where does it go, what's happening there and where we go next.

Thank you. Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Lou Corsuro.

Mr. Tom O'Toole.

Mr. Jeremy Pollack. Then Ashok Mishra would be on deck.

MR. POLLACK: Jeremy Pollack. Resident of Kingston, South Brunswick Township for the last 30 plus years.

PH-72

There have been a lot of hats worn tonight. One hat I haven't seen worn, this is not a prop. I came here tonight by bicycle. I'm going home by bicycle.

You're probably amused by the light at the top. It's a light until I turn it on and it blinks too. I'll spare you that.

It's a memorial light I added to this

1 helmet several months ago, after one of the sons of
2 my co-workers was killed on Route 1 where the
3 roadway narrows, where Plainsboro maintains a
4 tunnel on Route 1 and the lack of length of that
5 tunnel creates a pitch point to the roadway. If
6 you travel there you will see the guardrails on
7 either side are hit all the time by vehicles. I
8 don't know the exact circumstances of this young
9 man's death, but it raises the issue, yes, we need
10 to widen Route 1, and also raises the issue of, I
11 have to say carelessness or maybe something worse
12 on the part of Princeton University not lengthening
13 the tunnel they maintain on Route 1, allowing Route
14 1 to be wide enough to have normal traffic lanes
15 and shoulders.
16 As I already stated, I came here on a
17 bicycle. I'm a bicycle commuter everyday,
18 year-round, in the rain and snow and everything. I
19 commute round trip just about a bit longer than the
20 proposed 92. My round trip is about seven and a
21 half miles or thereabouts. Round trip takes me
22 about 30 minutes.
23 On many occasions at work, other
24 people stop me in the hallway and ask me, gee, I
25 passed you on the way here this morning, yet later

I see you got here before I did. How do you do it?

The answer is simple. Driving fast for short spurts is not necessarily the fastest way to get between two points. Slower and steadier progress often gets you there sooner. It's the old hare and turtle story all over again.

JPO1-1

I don't know if anybody has time to read The New York Times today. I'm sure all of you have been very busy preparing for this hearing. The New York Times had a topically related article and I want to read a few extracts from that and get into the record. Titled Economic Scene, Does Highway Spending Really Payoff, by Virginia Postrel.

JPO1-2

In theory infrastructure investments benefit taxpayers indirectly by increasing the nation's wealth.

How effective is this investment?

In an article in the March issue of The Journal of Urban Economics, two economists look at exactly how highway spending increases productivity by lowering business' inventory and logistics costs and calculate how the returns on highway spending have changed over time.

To make that calculation, Chad Shirley

of the Rand Corporation, that's research and development, original think tank, and Clifford Winston of the Brookings Institution, in Washington, a think tank, used census data on the inventory levels at 50,000 to 75,000 individual plants from 1973 to 1996. They looked at how infrastructure investment, both within each plant's state and across state lines, affected those costs holding constant other influences like interest rates and changing inventory practices.

The results are striking. Infrastructure spending does indeed lower inventory and logistics costs, increasing productivity. But at the rate of return plummeted over time from more than 15 percent in the 1970s to less than 5 percent in the '80s and '90s. These figures are corrected for inflation.

There is a logical reason for these diminishing returns.

This applies to highway construction. By the late '70s, the Interstate Highway System was substantially completed, the economists write. During the past two decades, the primary objective of highway spending has shifted from expanding the nation's capital stock to maintaining it.

1 Undoubtedly, the improvement in costs and service
2 from such investments and the concomitant reduction
3 in plants'[inventories cannot compare with those
4 produced by the construction of thousands of miles
5 of new roads.
6 Transportation economists meanwhile
7 have looked at the specific details of the system:
8 How roads are paid for, where they are built, what
9 tradeoffs are made between up-front construction
10 costs and maintenance, whether the road users pay
11 the full costs they incur and so forth.
12 Here is the punch line.
13 The research has consistently found
14 very poor performance, lots of inefficiencies, Dr.
15 Winston said. The stuff is mispriced, the stuff is
16 improperly built, there is a huge amount of waste.
17 How could infrastructure spending be
18 both productive and inefficient?
19 Consider the choice between the
20 immediate cost of building thicker roads in the
21 first place and long-term costs of repairing
22 thinner roads as they wear down. An economic
23 calculation would have suggested thicker interstate
24 highways, even ignore the cost of construction and
25 traffic repairs.

Drivers might not care much about economic returns if highway --

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Sir, we will read the rest of the article later. You are out of time.

You can have a concluding remark.

MR. POLLACK: During the period Robert Moses was plowing roadways in and around New York, William Vickrey, the traffic commissioner for Figurola LaGuardia, was to have said, we thought we were making room for cars, but we ended up making more room for cars.

It seems some people are determined to do the same thing in this area too.

Thank you.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Ashok Mishra.

Tony Beesley. Forwood Wise on deck.

MR. BEESLEY: Tony Beesley. I live at 3 Euclid Avenue, one block southeast of Route 27, between Academy, which is a continuation of Mapletown Road and Heathcote, a continuation of Ridge Road. So it's right close to the center of the Village.

PH-73

I haven't had a chance to study the report that other people are talking about or other

relevant documents. I've learned a lot from what other people have said. It's a testament to the quality and sense of community of the people that live around here.

My comments are much more kind of small scale and related to my own family situation and people that live on our street.

My wife and I, two children, age one and four, moved in here fairly recently. We were attracted to Kingston because we wanted to live in a place where we could do things on foot and bicycles instead of driving. From our house we can walk to the Delaware and Raritan Canal, walk to the deli and bakery and post office and fruit, vegetable market and other small businesses in Kingston.

In addition to the canal trail, by the Delaware and Raritan Canal trail, there is an extension trail that connects it to the Cook nature preserve just to the northeast of Ridge Road. That trail, actually you have to cross over Mapletown and Ridge Road to get to the Cook nature preserve. These are roads which would potentially be impacted by Route 92.

In addition, we spend a lot of time in

our yard and also we go to the playground across Route 27 and to get there, we go along Mapletown and cross over 27 and take Laurel up to the school where there is an open field and playground. That would also be impacted by Route 92. That's something we like to do and do it quite a bit.

We also spend a lot of time in our yard talking about and in the case of our children playing with our neighbors. Three of the dozen or so houses on our block have children, grandchildren are over every Saturday when the children's parents are out of the house.

Another aspect I like about living here, I bicycle commute to work. I work at Noah Laboratory which is on the Plainsboro Forrestal Campus and ride along Mapletown Road and take Sayrewood through a tunnel and it takes me to work. It's a really nice ride and a nice alternate to driving and something I look forward to.

Presently we are very happy with the situation in Kingston, for all the things I've said. It's a nice group of people, nice environment lots of parks and things that are offered.

However, there is one aspect that we

TB-1

are concerned about and that is there is quite a bit of traffic on where Mapletown and Ridge Road meet up with 27. These roads are used a lot by cars, trucks, sometimes 18-wheelers. Used most of the time including evenings and weekends, especially during morning rush hours. The traffic on Mapletown Road waiting to cross Route 27 routinely extends back across the Heathcote.

This kind of traffic makes it difficult and potentially dangerous to cross Mapletown, the cars obscure the view of the traffic on the opposite lane. Is it up or getting close? This is something I have to do everyday.

Another problem is some drivers cruise Euclid. The majority of the drivers are considerate, but at times, especially during rush hour when people are frustrated, we have cars driving through at unsafe speeds.

I hope when my children are older they will be able to play on the road as I did when I was a child. With watching our children and ourselves and thoughtful planning locally, I think we can maintain and preserve and even improve the safety and quality of life we have right now.

If Route 92 is built, I don't think we

TB-1

TB-2

will have a chance. The traffic is bound to increase in your Village. Not only will rush hour conditions get worse, but become the norm for the whole day and perhaps with an increased proportion of trucks.

TB-2

My family and many others who also seem to walk around their Village will suffer a setback in terms of safety and quality of life.

I know these concerns seem selfish. I understand there are other alternatives of Route 92 and proposed alignment. I'm not in favor of building any of these alternatives in place of 92. These will lead to degradation and safety and families impacted by those roads. It is time for transportation planners to make a genuine and serious effort to find alternatives that will enhance transportation and bike trails.

TB-3

I would like to thank you for the opportunity of sharing my concerns and thank everyone else for coming out.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Duke Wiser.

Debra Johnson.

Karen Linder spoke already.

MS. LINDER: Karen Linder.

PH-74

To mitigate the affects on the

KGA2-1

wetlands New Jersey Transportation Authority proposes to construct a 57-acre wetland north and south of the proposed highway alignment east of Pressed Road.

However, at the end of the Draft EIS, in a letter dated May 4, '99, page 907 of Volume II, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife services expressed doubts about the mitigation proposed. They noted on page 918, wetlands at both sites would be constructed from upland fields by removing soils down to the water table.

Approximately three feet of soil would be removed from the southern mitigation site, approximately 10 feet of soil from the northern mitigation site.

They went on to say, successful construction of forested wetlands is difficult in this situation and made even more difficult by the removal of substantial quantities of soil in attempting to provide appropriate hydrologic conditions.

I'm not a wetland engineer, but I am a gardener. Common sense tells me if I dug a 10 foot hole in my garden and then tried to grow something in the crappy subsoil in the bottom of that hole,

nothing would grow.

But I could find no description in the Draft EIS of exactly what would be done after the so-called wetland was dug out. How can the public properly assess the environmental impact of this wetlands mission or its chance for success if there is no actual mitigation plan for identification?

If the plan is to dig a hole down to the subsoil and see what goes, I would tell you to go back to mitigation school.

KGA2-1

Finally a comment, I won't speak to the traffic. A lot people have done it. I will speak to the traffic maps provided in the Draft EIS. Much of the numerical data provided on those maps had no road names. You had to spend a lot of time looking around saying, is that my road.

KGA2-2

The print that showed the traffic numbers was in a font about a half, maybe two, requirement to blow the document to about 400 times to be able to see it. When you blow it up that big you can't see any comprehensive sections of the map. That's a request for the next time. Perhaps this was intentional, you didn't really want people like us to look at those numbers. It was very user unfriendly.

KGA2-2

In the future, scale the font up just a little bit.

Thanks.

LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: Steven Georges.

PH-75

MR. GEORGES: Steven Georges and I live in the Plainsboro Walk development of South Brunswick.

I would like to thank you for having this session tonight and everybody for coming down. I really admired all the thoughts of wisdom.

I would like to go back to one of the prophets of an earlier generation who said, they paved paradise and put up a parking lot.

I live in South Brunswick with my family, we moved from New York City about six years ago. All the people that are against this -- the pros for this are to reduce a commute time by three and a half minutes. I think we really have to be honest with what is the pro for this. The pro is there are a number of interests that would like to build this road. There are other alternatives that are not just building roads.

For several years I commuted everyday to New York. I took the bus from the 8A parking lot. When I first moved to town I could go there

any time of the day or night and park easily. In the last three years, if you are not there by 7:30, you can't park.

So I wrote a Councilman in South Brunswick and asked, why doesn't this get expanded.

And he said, good question.

All the land around it is owned by the New Jersey Turnpike. So I said, so this is so they can get more people to be on their road and now they want to build another road?

I don't get it. Why aren't some of the alternatives expanding park and rides? SG-1

Today I rode my bicycle down through Kingston to Princeton Forrestal campus where I have a new start-up company. I'm very glad I'm working here in the Plainsboro area. As I rode through I just said, how would the character of all of this area that attracted my family here change.

I would like to just end with saying, first, do no harm and I think that building this road is something that once you do it you can't go back.

So I really think we need more public discourse and want to congratulate everybody for coming down tonight. Thank you. SG-2

1 LTC. KURT HOFFMANN: That concludes the
2 list, unless someone who intended to speak but
3 missed their calling has now arrived. I'll
4 certainly give you an opportunity.
5 Let it be noted there are no
6 additional speakers. That concludes the session
7 then this is the end of the hearing.
8 Thank you.
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10 (TIME NOTICED: 11:25 p.m.)
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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

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4 I, ALBERT M. CITTONE, a Certified Court
5 Reporter and Notary Public of the State of New
6 Jersey, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the statements,
7 colloquy and testimony hereinbefore set forth is a
8 true record of the proceedings.
9 I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not related to
10 any of the parties in this action by blood or
11 marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the
12 outcome of this matter.
13 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
14 hand this 2nd day of June 2002.

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19 ALBERT M. CITTONE
20 Notary Public of the State of New Jersey

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, RUTHANNE UNGERLEIDER, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the deposition of said witness(es) who were first duly sworn by me, on the date and place hereinbefore set forth.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither attorney, nor counsel for, nor related to or employed by, any of the parties to the action in which this deposition was taken, and further that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed in this action, nor am I financially interested in this case.

RUTHANNE UNGERLEIDER, C.S.R.