

## Report of Meeting

Date and Time: Friday, May 1, 2015, 9:00 AM

Location: Christ Church Cathedral Auditorium, 45 Church Street, Hartford

Subject: Air Quality, Noise, and Vibration Special Topic Meeting

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### Air Quality Presentation

Deborah Howes welcomed everyone to the Air Quality, Noise, and Vibration Special Topic meeting and introduced Tom Herzog and Fang Yang, both of AECOM. She stated that they will be giving a presentation on air quality and noise to the attendees.

T. Herzog began the presentation by discussing that air quality is important because it affects human health. He described the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAA) and the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). There are six criteria pollutants that have NAAQS. Of these six, Hartford County is considered to be nonattainment for ozone, meaning that it does not meet the NAAQS. Hartford County is also considered a maintenance area for carbon monoxide (CO). Maintenance areas are those that were previously nonattainment, but have since become attainment through improved ambient conditions for that corresponding pollutant and an adopted State Implementation Plan (SIP) that commits the region to improve air quality conditions with transportation improvement measures and pollutant emissions budgets.

T. Herzog stated that the State of Connecticut is responsible for monitoring the ambient air conditions and maintaining the stations. There are two monitoring stations in our study area, and two additional stations in the region.

Because Hartford County is nonattainment for ozone and maintenance for CO, any project that receives federal funding must show that the project emissions are within the transportation budget set in the SIP and ambient conditions would not exceed the NAAQS.

### Air Quality Discussion

D. Howes asked the attendees if they had questions for T. Herzog and F. Yang. The following questions were raised.

Question - Would the tunnel vents have scrubbers on them similar to a power plant? Answer – It is possible, if the air quality pollutants from vents show violation at the NAAQS. However, other measures could be considered such as increasing the speeds of the tunnel ventilation fans that could increase air dispersion to move the tunnel air out faster.

F. Yang mentioned that the ambient air in Hartford is considered to be good. Though CTDOT is studying the air quality impacts of alternatives, there likely will not be major differences to the forecasted air quality among the alternatives. Air quality will not likely be the deciding factor for selecting the preferred alternative.

Question - Would the reduced number of interchanges affect the travel patterns and air quality on the local road network? Answer - F. Yang described how hot spot analysis works, noting that the team will model the worst case scenarios for all alternatives. He stated that the model accounts for the additional congestion on local roads.

Question - Is odor assessed? Answer No. Odor is an annoyance issue that has less of an effect on human health and has no ambient quality standards like criteria pollutants. However, it may be covered as part of air toxics to be discussed. .

#### Noise Presentation

T. Herzog next gave a short presentation on noise and noise impacts. He stated that Federal Highway Administration has established noise guidelines, and CTDOT has an adopted noise policy for the State of Connecticut. Their noise abatement criteria states that the most sensitive land use in this corridor is 66 dBA. Noise levels cannot exceed this level by more than 15dba. T. Herzog stated that there have been some noise exceedances in the current conditions.

T. Herzog noted that CTDOT, FHWA, FTA, and Hartford all have difference construction noise criteria. This project is classified as a Type 1 project because there will be substantial changes to the roadway. He continued on to discuss the barrier abatement criteria. Noise barriers are warranted if a substantial reduction in noise is possible, and the cost is less than \$55,000 per benefitted residence. For the study, noise data will be collected using portable air monitors.

#### Noise Discussion

D. Howes asked the attendees if they had questions for T. Herzog and F. Yang. The following questions were raised.

Question - If the highway drops in elevation near residences, should we expect that a noise barrier will be constructed? Answer - Yes, that is a likely outcome. Aesthetics come into play as well. The community could add more to enhance the look of the noise barriers.

Question – Will vibration be addressed as part of relocating the rail? Answer – Yes.

Question – Will vibration for tunnel fans be addressed? Answer – Yes, this is handled in the design phase.